

Editorial.

PROSPECTS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

There are few men in our day better qualified than Dr. Duff to answer, with regard to the Christian Church, the question, "Watchman, what of the night?" He is a man of long experience in Christian work. He is a man of varied experience. He is a man of extensive travel over Europe, Asia, Africa and America. He is a man of large acquaintance with the leading men in the different Protestant Churches of the world. In the Providence of God he occupies, therefore, the position of the watchman on the fire-watcher's tower, under whose eye the whole city is, and at whose voice men ought to awake.

From his vantage height, Dr. Duff, in his "Crisis of the Christian Church," from which we made extracts in our August number, looks first *backward* over the past, and from his rapid historical survey, deduces what he calls the "downward law of degeneracy."

"Man's nature," he says, "once infected with the disease of sin, or moral evil, immediately came under the fell influence of its ever downward tendency—a tendency so strongly marked, and so invariable, that it may well be designated the *law*, the inflexible downward *law of degeneracy*, ending, if not arrested, in hopeless decay, corruption and death, as regards true religion and pure morals."

This statement, the existence in other words of this law of degeneracy, he proves by citing instances such as the apostasy of the Church at the time of the flood, at the time of Abraham, at the time of the Babylonish captivity, at the time of the destruction of the Jewish nation, at the time of the Reformation. In the face of such instances and other facts that might be adduced, it cannot be denied that the tendency of

men, of society, of nations, of churches, is away from God, and downward, excepting in so far as God by special means arrests this downward course. This law is so notorious that a heathen poet—Virgil—notices it in his famous words;—

Facilis decensus Averno; &c.

"The descent to hell is easy," he says, "but to retrace one's steps, to regain the lost position, this is work, this is hard toil."

Having thus surveyed the past, and established from it this sorrowful law, Dr. Duff then looks *around* and asserts that under the influence of this law the Christianity of our day is on the borders of perilous times. In his view the fatal, downward tendency that has so often brought the cause of God to the verge of extinction, has once more set in with alarming force, threatening, unless timeously arrested, a widespread apostasy from Christian faith and Christian virtue.

"It looks," he says, "as if the whole legion of known or possible evils previously pent up, had been suddenly let loose to embroil the whole world of humanity in tumult and confusion."

After specifying the various evil agencies at work—Popery, infidel literature, licentiousness, avarice, spirit of lawlessness, he concludes, "that it has come to pass that the world, with the whole of which we have to do, and it with us whether we will or no, has been brought into a state of crisis,—an oecumenical or world-wide crisis,—such as it has never been in before, since Christianity itself was born in the manger cradle of Bethlehem."

Now with regard to this conclusion, so like in many respects to the estimate Paul made of the Christianity of his closing days—"They shall turn away from the truth and be turned into fables," II. Tim. 4, 4. We remark:—

1. That our common Christianity is undoubtedly in imminent peril. The venerable watchman speaks of no imaginary phantoms that startle the timid. His graphic, glowing, we almost said, frightful delineations, are of things that have a real existence, and not of things that rise fantastically on the vision of the aged, when the grasshopper is a burden and desire fails. Every day, such is the rapidity of things, shows men in new and startling light, the power and boldness of Jesuitism and Rationalism—the two extremes, between which lie a broad territory of pestilential error. And the Church of Christ owes gratitude to the man who breaks its peace,—an unthankful task,—by crying aloud, sparing not, lifting up his voice like a trumpet. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

2. That the conflict for all this is hopeful. The discouraging aspect of things arises not so much from God's people falling away as from others who were with them, but not of them, going out from them. It is not that the water is becoming more muddy, but that the sediment by being precipitated is more visible. The light inside the dwelling is not burning less brightly, though without the night is darkening into midnight gloom. Let us hear what another watchman on the tower of Zion says of the night. If Dr. Duff has been forty years in the work of missions, Dr. Robert Hailey has been fifty years in pastoral and professoral work at the centre of Christian thought in England. Speaking of the English Independents, and their progress during the last fifty years, he says:—

“Our fathers looked out of the dim and hazy windows of their old meeting-houses on crowds for whom they felt they could do nothing; and now no man or woman in the courts of this great city is regarded as utterly hopeless, or out of the reach of our city missionaries. You have expended a great deal of money in Sunday schools, and on town and city missionaries, and you have been abundantly compensated in the elevation of the whole moral character of the community. In the last fifty years the change is wonderful.

As to our own denomination, the progress is remarkable. We have done noble work for others, and we are improving ourselves. Don't tell me our preachers are not better than they once were. I believe they preach better, and they are better men. We now preach the gospel more directly, more earnestly, more affectionately and freely. The men of the earlier period used often to dispute with each other—Calvinists with Arminians; and the bitter words of Toplady and John Wesley found utterance among their followers; but Arminians prayed like Calvinists, and Calvinists preached like Arminians. An anecdote is told of Rowland Hill that, after preaching a sermon to prove that it was impossible for any man to fall away from grace, he leant over the pulpit and said, ‘I should not recommend any of you to try it.’ There is less rigidity, less stiffness in the preaching of the present day. Old Congregational preachers used to busy themselves with questions such as those which occupied the thoughts of Jonathan Edwards, Andrew Fuller, and Edward Williams, as though the great foundations of our faith depended on the niceties of metaphysical reasoning. I believe we are preaching more fervently than ever Christ crucified—Christ, the Friend of the sinner, the enemy of no man, the kind Friend—none kinder—that gave his life for his friends. I think little of other matters now; little of controversies, little of old divisions. I think now of one great truth—the preaching of the simple gospel,—Christ crucified to save sinners. Standing here in my old age, I am happy to express my assent and consent to that one doctrine. I refer to no other; and to that I say, Amen and Amen!”

3. That the conflict, though hopeful, is still so serious and perilous as to call for greater zeal and more unity among Christians. Dr. Duff is too wise a man, and altogether of too practical a cast of mind to play the role of an alarmist and to write thus, as the boy cried wolf, simply for the pleasure of seeing people frightened. From beginning to end of his address he has one definite practical object in view. He counts up the numbers of the enemy, he defines their position, he describes their strongholds and their weapons that he may (1) rouse the Christian army, inclined to lethargy, to action, and that he may (2) unite its forces into one general effort for the common defense. The church in which he is a recognized leader was on the verge of

splitting, and he asks them how they can be guilty of such a cruel blunder, with such an enemy in front of them. And then rising above local things and sectional interests he speaks, as he has a right to do, from his age, his talents, and his fame, to the Evangelical Churches of Christendom, and asks them how they can be so secure and how they can perpetuate their divisions in face of such a menacing foe. That we are not wrong in thus defining the practical object of this trumpet-blast, our readers can judge by the following extracts:—

Now the question—the grand practical question—that forces itself upon us all, whether we like it or not, as in the sight of the heart-searching God, is this—What have we done, in our individual capacity, as professing members of the body of Christ? and what have we done in our collective capacity as a corporate organized Church of Christ, our living Head and King? What have we ever done, in our individual and collective capacity, to stem, or arrest, or hurl back the prodigious rush and torrent of the mighty flood of error, and unbelief, and abounding wickedness, which is already desolating our fairest and most fertile plains, already rising above the lesser hills, and threatening ere long to overtop the loftiest summit of our Christian Ararat, where for ages the ark of the everlasting covenant has in security rested, and thus submerge the whole realm of settled order and true godliness, social and moral worth, in every region under heaven?

What, then, I must again repeat it, in the face of all the multitudinous and gigantic forces with which we have to contend at home, and the stupendous, and hitherto, to a great extent, unassailed and unbroken hostile systems of the Papal and Greek Churches, Mohammedanism, Brahminism, Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Fetishism, with endless nondescript minor systems with which we have to contend abroad, have any or all of us, individually or collectively, done to meet the demands of so tremendous a crisis in the destinies of the world and universal man? Why, if the plain truth must be told, or being told, can be endured, instead of *Done, done, done*, Echo answers, and continues still to answer, *What, what, what?*

What little we may have done, or attempted to do, is so utterly insignificant in itself; so utterly disproportioned to what we might and ought to have done; so absolutely incommensurate with the imperative requirements of the mighty crisis, that it really looks like

adding insult and mockery to our robbery of God. For what do our unduly inflated and loudly-trumpeted doings after all amount to? Why, to my own mind—and I so put it in all humility, as I wish to commit no one but myself—desiring that the whole scathe and scorn of so apparently ungenerous and unpalatable a remark may fall exclusively on my own devoted head—to my own mind's eye, then, after years of close observation in the four quarters of the globe, and much thought bestowed on the subject, the whole of our doings, individual and collective, in the aggregate and in the face of the most tremendous crisis in the whole range of the world's eventful history—really looks nothing wiser, nothing better, nothing more adequate, than would be the foolish and insane attempt at erecting a puny rampart of straw to arrest the progress and ravage of a blazing conflagration, or holding up a frail and brittle reed to break the force of a raging hurricane; or putting down a few cartfuls of loose sand to roll back the waters of Niagara, or any other thundering cataract!

Let these words should grate on our ears, accustomed to hear so much of the great things we are all the time doing for Christ, let us remember that they are the words of one who has labored in Asia, where upwards of half the people have never yet even heard the name of Jesus, and one who has visited Africa, where a whole continent lies, we might say, untouched by Christian Missions. Having thus described what the churches have done for the Christianization of the world—"putting down a few cartfuls of sand to roll back the waters of Niagara,"—he calls on them to cease from their denominational strife, and realizing the multitude and strength of the enemy, to combine their scattered forces and resolutely to make up their minds for a world-wide struggle for Christ:

Alas, alas! that all this imagining of what might and ought to be should seem to be little else than the language of bitter irony or contemptuous derision. Instead of any such wise combination and loyally intended effort, what have we all—that is, all of us, members of the several evangelic Churches of Christendom—actually done? Done! Why, we have flung wisdom and loyalty, good sense and right feeling, to the winds of heaven and the billows of the deep! We have, basely or stupidly, listened to and entertained the eun-

ning suggestions of the foul tempter—the implacable foe of Messiah the Prince, as well as of our own souls, and the souls of hundreds of millions besides—listened, I say, as surely as our grand-parent listened to his glozing lies in the form of the subtle serpent that haunted the bowers of Eden, and with the same disastrous effect! We have, consequently, in a great measure, turned aside from the vast field of the world; we have reared our separate castles and towers of offence and defence; established our own distinctive causes and ends—and, instead of the one glorious standard and banner for our combined forces, conspicuously exhibiting the significant words, “Unite and conquer,” under the leadership of the Captain of our salvation—we have set up a thousand petty standards and flags, each with the fatal words, “Divide and conquer”—which can only mean divide and conquer in the service of him who is the prince of darkness, Apollyon, the Destroyer—lord and monarch of the bottomless abyss!

There need be no fear on the part of our readers that Dr. Duff is in danger of drifting into the “*comprehension*” of Dr. Stanley. Dr. Stanley’s comprehension has for its object to keep up the English Establishment as a kind of Noah’s ark. That Dr. Duff’s cry for unity is of another kind can be seen from his own words:—

“What, then,” it may, by some of the more active spirits, be asked, “would you have us to do? Abandon the consideration and settlement of all minor questions whatsoever of a merely local or purely intestine character, and devote ourselves exclusively to what you reckon the more important affairs of the world-wide crisis?” No, no; nothing of the kind. Christ, as Head over all things to his Church, has to do with these lesser matters as well as with the greater. And what we ought peremptorily to determine is, that the lesser be attended to as the lesser, receive due and proportional consideration, and that, too, in the spirit that shall be most honoring to Christ, most conducive to the promotion of his cause, and most profitable to all concerned, and, being thus duly and wisely considered, be amicably adjusted and speedily despatched. It should be ever borne in mind that men will continue to feel and judge for themselves if they are worthy of the name of *men*, and so long as there are *freemen* to feel and think, and that, therefore, differences of judgment on all manner of subjects may be expected to rise between them. Indeed, from the endless diversities in the original constitution and capacities of different minds, and the endless diversities in their training and culture, as well as the infinitely varied, modifying cir-

cumstances by which they are severally encompassed, it must needs be that, except under a grinding, crushing, all-pervading, resistless despotism, there shall be numberless differences of judgment, of greater or lesser divergency, concerning almost all manner of topics, whether these admit of being reduced to substantive, definite formulas or not; and, consequently, an unavoidable admission of an equal number and diversity of questions which should be regarded as matters for mutual, friendly, brotherly forbearance, unless not only the Church of Christ, but society at large, be congealed into a frozen mass, as destitute of life, and warmth, and verdure as the fields of polar ice, or turned into a universal bear-garden, for men to bite and devour one another.

Surely such were the views under the influence of which the celebrated Chillingworth, the most powerful controversialist of his day, was led to remark, “In other things” (i.e., things not clearly revealed in God’s Word), “I will take no man’s liberty of judgment from him, neither shall any man take mine from me. I will think no man the worse man nor the worse Christian, I will love no man the less, for differing in opinion from me. And what measure I mete to others I expect from them again.” And if all professedly Christian men were to deal with each other on this noble scriptural model, they could not fail to treat each other in the spirit of meekness, gentleness and patience, generosity and confidence, brotherly kindness and charity, reverentially respecting each other’s feelings, judgments, and conscientious convictions. The strong would learn tenderly to bear and forbear with the infirmities of the weak, and the weak would not, in mere captiousness, or wilfulness, or obstinacy, or wrong or strong-headedness, flippantly or ignorantly criticise the, to them, unintelligible thinkings, sayings, and doings of the strong. And when real differences of judgment would arise, as arise from time to time they must, it would no longer be to make these the occasions of unseemly contention, or strife, or bitter variance before the world, still less of threatened ruptures or of schismatic separations, which might come to be stigmatized by impartial onlookers as the scandal of the Christian Church. No; but a ground and call for looking at them more minutely and scrutinizingly, with the coolness, calmness, and impartiality of judge, and the tenderness, delicacy, and loving-kindness of brethren in the Lord—in order, if possible, to discover and lay bare their secret and subtle lurking causes, with a specific view to their mitigation or removal, being resolutely determined, the Lord helping them, mutually to bear and forbear with one another, agreeably to the oft-repeated injunctions as well as example of the Lord and His

apostles, until the day dawn and the night shadows of doubt and difficulty flee away, and all see eye to eye, and feel heart to heart, under the sunshine and glow of the Sun of Righteousness, beaming in cloudless radiance on their previously benighted souls!

Let us not for a moment imagine that the alarm thus sounded is the cry of despair. Such a word is unknown to the Christian as applicable to the Church of Christ. There is one element of stability in possession of the church of our day, not referred to by Dr. Duff, which is a guaranty that the apostasy he dreads shall not, cannot be, equal in extent and depth to the great apostasies of the flood, the captivity, and the middle ages. The element of stability under God, is the printed Bible. It is a remarkable fact, in the history of the Jews, that from the time Ezra (their second Moses) called the nation to the study of the Scripture, multiplied copies of them, and set afloat the belief "that where there is no Book of the law there can be no synagogue," from that time till this time the Jews have never fallen into their besetting sin of idolatry. From this sin it was not the sorrows of their long captivity that saved them, for sin drowns—alas, how soon!—the voice of the inward witness, but it was the Bibles of Ezra, the mass meetings for Bible-reading, the Bibles in the synagogue, the testimony of the outward witness—the word of God that liveth and abideth for ever—heard every Sabbath, and multiplied on every side. Our Bibles, in every house, (would we could say in every common school, and high school and college) the Bible in every Sabbath school, in every church, in every country, in almost every language, the Bible dashing from its breast as a ship the ocean-spray, all the efforts to stop its onward progress to be THE Book of the civilized world, this Bible will be the means, under God, of saving the Church from sinking to the woeful condition whence Luther's voice awoke it. This, however, does not seem to be Dr. Duff's view; but we must not withhold, although this article is already too

long, the eloquent, cheering words with which he concludes:—

Bad as things now may be, they may yet become infinitely worse. And that such is the probability, as regards the future, is my own decided conviction and belief. But what of all that to him who calmly and securely rests on the immovable rock of Jehovah's promise?

Though to the eye of sense or of finite understanding it might look as if the powers of evil now at work really threatened to extinguish every luminary in the firmament of Divine truth, and leave the world, morally and religiously, in a state of darkness and of chaos as complete as it would be, physically, if sun, moon, and stars were wiped away from the canopy of heaven, not even then would the true believer in the Bible—that blessed book of books—be for a moment staggered. He could still cheerfully hold on his way and exultingly sing—

"Faith, mighty faith, God's promise sees,
And looks on that alone,
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries, 'It shall be done.'"

And done it shall be assuredly, in God's own good time. When the great world-wide crisis shall have reached the zenith of its development, and the hope of all but the true believer has given place to the wildest despair, as if the Lord had forsaken or forgotten the world and His own along with it, then, oh, then, will be his time for effectual interposition—

"Just at the last distressing hour
The Lord displays delivering power;
The mount of danger is the place
Where we shall see surprising grace."

Surprising grace, indeed! For then will He, who is King and Governor among the nations, and, as such, has never for a moment relaxed His hold of the reins of mediatorial government, in ways of mercy and of judgment inscrutable to us now, usher this sin-laden and sin-distracted world, purged and purified, into scenes of glory surpassing fable.

And when the great design, purposed from all eternity, to which specific reference was made at the opening of this address, shall thus be consummated—when creation, providence, and redemption shall be brought to their final issue—when the decrees and dispensations of the Almighty shall be triumphantly vindicated—when Satan, the grand adversary of God and man, with his rebel angels and the spirits of the incorrigible unbeliever and hardened reprobate, with sin, and death, and hell, shall be cast for ever into the bottomless pit of perdition—when the mediatorial kingdom, or kingdom of grace, consisting of all the members of the redeemed Church—a great multitude, praised be God! as represented to the holy seer in Apocalyptic vision, which no man

could number, of all nations and kindreds, and people and tongues—with souls and bodies glorified, and reigning with Christ as kings and priests, shall be delivered as trophies of victory to the Father—the former to remain everlasting monuments to the praise and glory of God's power and justice, and immeasurable hatred of sin; the latter, eternal monuments to the praise and glory of God's love and mercy, and the inexhaustible treasures of his wisdom and grace;—then shall stability and righteousness, harmony and peace, be restored, and for ever perpetuated through the rejoicing universe of God! Then shall it be conspicuously and eternally made manifest to all holy intelligence that the great Creator originally made all things for Himself—for the illustration of His own glory, more especially in connection with the holiness and boundless felicity of His redeemed creatures—that he is, in the absolute fulness of its sig-

nificancy, the "All in all"—and that, in the triumphant issue of all His plans and purposes, and most signally, in the exaltation and glorification of countless myriads out of the wreck and ruin of the fall, He shall Himself be infinitely glorified! And then, too, if through believing acceptance of the offered salvation we are privileged to secure a valid title-deed to an inheritance so transcendent in glory and infinite in duration, through the incarnation and victorious sufferings and atoning death of our adored Immanuel—the second Adam—the Lord from heaven—we shall, as regards our own eternal interests, have no reason to regret, rather, in some true and important sense, shall have abundant reason to rejoice that the first Adam once fell, and that for us the cool shades of Paradise Lost have been blessedly exchanged for the never-ending sunshine of Paradise Regained!

Living Preachers.

THE ONE TALENT.

BY THE REV. R. THOMAS.

"But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money."
—MATT. XXV. 18.

I have not chosen this passage in order to speak to you this morning on the Parable of the Talents as a whole; but simply for the purpose of addressing one class of persons who seem to be very largely overlooked, and who are willing to remain in an obscurity which is neither healthy for themselves nor for others. It is true that the violet loves the shade, but then it manages to bloom there—to thrive and multiply. It makes itself known by its delicate, agreeable perfume. It does not hide itself in the earth. No flower is more sought for, and in an invalid's room none more grateful. There are some Christians like towering cedars, some like branching oaks, some like willows by the water-courses. There are others like spring flowers; they are so modest and bashful that you must seek them and bring them into the light. They much prefer the shade. But, as we none of us live to ourselves, such a disposition must not be looked up-

on with too much favour. *Modesty* may become a disease. If a lady be so bashful that she never dare venture into the streets without a thick veil over her features, her sensitiveness of organization must be diseased. So in Christian congregations, there is a reserve about some which needs to be broken down. They never emerge into the daylight. They are timid, full of distrust—a distrust which almost amounts to self-communication. Now, the subject which suggested itself to my mind as I read these words was this—*The temptation to depreciate small abilities and scanty opportunities.*

I do not mean to aver that this is universally the case. On the contrary, we often find men with strong desires to occupy positions for which they have no discernable fitness. With these I do not wish that we should concern ourselves this morning. With quite another class, indeed; with those who are conscious that they have no great and shining abilities, and who, in consequence, are disposed to think, I have no abilities at all; I am not as others; I cannot preach; I cannot teach; I cannot feel at home in any department of

Christian service whatsoever. At first, such despond. By-and-by they consent to this condition of things, and accept it as inevitable. Now, Christian brethren, I must have a word or two with those of you who belong to this department of Christian life. You see that God has given to some five talents; to others two; to others one. Very few of us have the five, not many of us have more than the two. But there is no Christian without a talent of some sort, the employment of which would bring good to himself and blessing to others. But, with the one talent, there is very often indeed a tendency to depreciate it. Having stated so much in a general way, let me now press upon your willing attention the thoughts of the text, not exactly in the order in which they are given, but beginning with the most important first; this, namely—

Everything we possess is God's. It was "his lord's money" that this man hid. It was something given him in trust. He had not created it. It could not, therefore, be his. He had no right to use it as he liked. "Have I not a right to do what I will with my own?" asks the ungodly man. Yes, sir, decidedly; but what is your own? To begin with, physical life is not your own. It was by God's law that it was originated. Mental life is not your own; it is God's gift. The earth you walk on is not your own. The air you breathe is not your own. It seems to me that such men commence with a wrong idea of things. And if the parent idea be wrong, all the children of it will be wrong too. But I am not speaking with infidels, but with seekers after truth, and with Christian men and women who are trusting in Christ. But are not we, my brethren, apt to forget that what we possess we hold in trust from God? The brain-power we have; the love-power we have; the money-power we have—these we hold in trust for God. They are ours, so to employ them as that He shall have the profit. This lower life is only the promise of a higher life. It is

the groundwork on which we are to build up a spiritual temple. Just as the rays of the sun in spring-time strike on the dead earth, so that the seed deposited in it begins to sprout and put forth, till a beautiful flower appears, so likewise the influences of the Holy Spirit are continually operating upon this human nature of ours. Out of it that celestial agent develops the graces of the Spirit and the fruits of holiness. And everything about us ought so to be ordered as that in it there shall be the confession, I am not my own: I am God's. Nothing have I that I have not received! Now, I am afraid that much of our life is utterly wanting in such confession. We forget God our Maker, and Christ our Redeemer. I believe that much of the non-success that many men meet with is attributable to this fact, that they practically forget God. Do we remember, in our domestic arrangements, that we belong to God? Is there a household acknowledgment of the fact? Do we daily confess before children and dependents that we are God's? And that, not by word simply! Do we confess it in the way we dispose of our gains? Nothing put by for Christ's kingdom? A paltry sixpence whenever there happens to be a collection is all with many who claim the title of Christian. How can such read the words of our Lord without feeling pangs of inconsistency!—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things (about which ye are so anxious) shall be added unto you."

But if everything we possess be the gift of God, since the life, health, and ability by which we obtain it is God's, are we not under obligation so to use everything as that God's glory shall be promoted thereby? I cannot see how we can escape the inference. To dig in the earth and hide a talent is to dishonour God. It is to rob self also. Now many persons take to themselves credit for great humility, when they ought to reproach themselves with great indolence. There is a spiritual indo-

lence, which is as fatal to the soul of man as bodily indolence is to the temporal prospects. I don't know anything much more humiliating to a youth than to say of him, he is an indolent fellow; indolent in school, indolent in business, indolent at home, indolent abroad. Such a charge ought to cover a man with shame. And if, in the common concerns of ordinary life, the charge of indolence be so humiliating to a man, ought it not to be equally so to a Christian? I do not charge any of you with this state. That be far from me. But to those who are distrustful of themselves I say that you, my friends, lay yourselves open to the charge. I bid you put away distrust. Break out from your nervousness. Don't hide the one talent God has bestowed. Come forth from your hiding-place. Let the light God has given you shine. How strange—is it not!—that while we resent all depreciation of our *natural* powers—of our mental powers—we should yet consent to undervalue our spiritual abilities? Brethren, believe me, this is a temptation of the evil one—so subtle that a large number of timid souls are willing to listen to it. But, how can you believe that God has sent you into the world with nothing to do for Him? I believe that in the whole realm of evidence there is nothing so conclusive of being under the influence of the Holy Spirit as the inability to be quiet so long as we see that there is work to be done for the Master. People will be found ready to remind me we are not saved by works. That I grant. If there were no Christ in existence, and no Atonement under the shelter of which we lived, all our work could not win salvation. If I had no Redeemer to offer my fellow men, why preach? If I had no Gospel—no good news—why disturb the air with perpetual babblements? No man *can* work without hope, without faith. And the ground of hope and faith is Christ's declaration, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." The man who has a restless disposition to

work for Christ has the best evidence that the Christian world can furnish of being a partaker in the blessings of Christ's resurrection. No amount of human effort can bring Christ down from above, or raise Him from the dead. But I will tell you what Christian effort does. It clears the *brain* of doubts. It has a marvellous power in that direction. It acts like bodily exercise. Nothing like vigorous movement to dispel a fit of despondency. I pity those poor souls whose lives are not full of employment. How they can be well in health or happy in mind I know not. And as with the *body*, so with the *soul*. The Do-nothings are the Know-nothings. He that doeth the will of God shall know of the doctrine. It is the only way to know. It is God's way. Then, again, Christian effort purifies the *affections*. You know the difference between a running stream and a stagnant pool. That is the difference between the state of the affections when exercised on a worthy object, and when unmoved to holy effort. Now, I press upon the distrustful—upon those who think too little of their abilities—upon the humble souls that bewail their nakedness and poverty—upon such as, having one talent *only*, have felt, "There is no place of activity for me in the Christian Church," the necessity of moving out of a position so false. In Christ's name I do it. Look at this man who digged in the earth and hid his lord's money! How neglect of duty obscured his perceptions. "I knew thee, that thou wert a hard man—reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not straved; and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth." *I was afraid!*—There was the interest from his banking account. *I was afraid!*—There was the state of his soul consequent on idleness. "I was afraid!" That state of soul corresponds to paralysis of body. And how many of our friends never make one step of progress for this very reason!—"I was afraid!" If this man had used

his talent he would have lost his fear. He would have been a happy man. As it was, he was miserable; and his *life-long* misery ought to be a rebuke to any who are engaged in the profitless work of digging in the earth to hide "their Lord's money." Christian brethren, whatever God gives us; whatever ability, power, or talent, let us use it in such a way that He shall be honoured. Has He given you power of prevailing prayer? Use that daily and systematically for the Church's sake, for we want men and women of prayer. Has He given you *money power*? Use it. You cannot have a better banker than God. You cannot get a heavier interest than in the Kingdom of Heaven. It is a bank that will never break; a company that will never defraud its shareholders. You get the spiritual and the eternal for the temporary and transient; the certain for the uncertain—"treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through or steal."

Have you brain power, or speech power, or power of guiding the helm of the ship—administrative ability? Use it. Have you the power to teach—the power to gain the confidence of the little child? Who has not? Oh, use it! Cultivate the one talent, and so cultivate it that it shall be as near perfection as you can make it. The great defect of our Church life seems to me to be that when one gets a willing horse, he is put to all kinds of work, and his efficiency in any one direction is spoiled. You know quite well that if you have a good draught-horse, of heavy build, you must not set him to run in a carriage. And if you have a light Arab for riding, you must not put him in a drag. Let us learn wisdom from anywhere. A man ought to consult his inclinations, and then work in that direction. If he be a teacher, let him try to be the best of teachers. If a treasurer, a model treasurer. If a man of order, let him cultivate the genius of arrangement, until everything about the house of God be

unexceptionable. Every one of us—not a soul excepted—has some talent, the cultivation of which will enoble us. Let us dig it out, if we have hidden it, and so employ it that God may be glorified. Let us take it and lay it at the feet of our Jesus, and daily ask His blessing on it; so that when we see Him as He is, He may have His own with interest. There is an Eastern allegory which, it seems to me, has a close relationship to this parable:—

A merchant going abroad for a time gave respectively to two of his friends, two sacks of wheat each, to take care of, against his return. Years passed; he came back, and applied for them again. The first took him into his storehouse, and showed him the bags of grain; but they were mildewed and worthless. The other led him out into the open country, and pointed out field after field of waving corn, the produce of the two sacks given him. Said the merchant, as he gazed, "You have indeed been a faithful friend; give me two sacks of that wheat. The rest shall be thine." I leave you to make your own application of the allegory.

Let me now ask you to fix your attention on *one or two reasons for the state of mind in which we find so many timid, distrustful Christians*. They are afraid, consequently they hide their talent.

First of all there is misapprehension as to what a Christian is. That most wretched practice of putting Ecclesiasticism first, and pure Bible Christianity in a secondary place, has done us infinite harm in this respect. Ask many a man, intelligent enough in regard to ordinary matters, what a Christian is, and the answer you will get will be in this style:—"A Christian is a man born in a Christian country." The answer may not be in these words, but it will amount to this. Now, if you can find me anything in the New Testament to support such a position, you will open my eyes to what I have never seen there before. There never has been yet a country

worthy to be called a Christian country. That would imply a Christian Parliament, Christian laws, New Testament principles incorporated in acts of legislation. Let me see a country taking the New Testament as a book of last appeal in its legislation, and I will own it is a Christian country; but not till then. To say that all who have had the water of baptism sprinkled on their brows are Christians *because* of that is utterly to misuse the ordinance, which *declares* something about God, not something about the child—nothing further than this, at any rate, that it has a right to all the privileges of Christ's Kingdom. A Christian is one who witnesses to Christ in his daily life. Life includes speech and action. To be as are they who make no claim of relationship to our Lord would be strange inconsistency. If we use ourselves, our time, our powers, our money, our property of any kind even as they who, by their conduct, declare they have no soul to be saved, then it is better for us to have done with calling ourselves Christians. We are lowering the name in the eyes of the world around us. We make it stand for nothing. It is like a swindler's forged bill; there is nothing to represent it. It remains for the Evangelical Churches of England to rescue the name of Christian from its fallen condition. "Ye are my witnesses," said our Divine Head. "Ye are the salt of the earth!" "Ye are the light of the world!" Is a witness dumb? Is salt inactive? Is light valueless? The least we dare ask of you, my brethren, is that you would discard these loose applications of the word "Christian," which are as frequent as they are misleading, and stick resolutely to the New Testament. Let us leave mere ecclesiastics to their squabblings, and for our doctrines, our opinions, our practices go to the New Testament. If we would only give the same implicit obedience to the New Testament principles which the Romish Church claims from her children, instead of being bound in fetters and

chains, we should rise to the dignity of Christ's freemen.

A second reason for that fear, which makes a Christian "dig in the earth" and hide his Lord's gifts, is this—*distrust of God's grace*. "I shall never be able to do so and so." But who goeth a warfare at his own charges? If you are Christ's soldier, fighting His battles, wearing His regimentals, and marching under His flag, will He, who has called you to be a soldier, not provide all things necessary? Venture on Him, venture wholly. Suppose a *student* were to begin his studies with, "I shall never reach such a point?" Suppose a *tradesman* were to begin his business with, "I shall never succeed?" Suppose a *labourer* were to begin his day's work with, "I shall never get through?" Would there not be universal stagnation all around us? Everywhere men *must* walk by faith, and the more faith the more success. How often do we hear that confidence is half the battle! We must trample on distrust. We must crush down despondency. Take thou, oh timid one, God's promises, and they shall be as bread, as meat, as water of life to thee.

But now, as a final word—our own spiritual life requires that we shall not bury our one talent, whatever it be. There is a penalty attached to sloth as well as to positive wickedness. It is so in relation to *this* world's welfare, and so in respect to the soul's interests. We can only keep what we have by using it. "Take, therefore, the talent from him"—the unused talent—was the master's verdict. The other day I met with a curious myth illustrative of this point. It comes from the East, from Mahomedanism; but is very expressive. A tribe of men, says the story, dwelt on the shores of the Dead Sea. They had forgotten all about truth, and had taken up with lies; and were fast verging towards the saddest possible condition. Whereupon, it pleased a kind Providence to send them the prophet Moses with an instructive word of warning.

But no—the men of the Dead Sea discovered that there was no comeliness in this Moses—no truth in his words; they received him with scoffs and jeers. Moses withdrew, but the laws of nature did not withdraw. The men of the Dead Sea, says the narrative, when next he visited them, were all “changed into apes;” sitting on the trees there, grinning now in the most unaffected manner, gibbering and chattering very genuine nonsense. There they sit and chatter to this hour, “only, I believe every Sabbath there returns to them a bewildered, half-consciousness, half-remembrance, seeming to have some distant idea that once they were of another order. They made no use of their souls, and so they have lost them. Their worship on the Sabbath now is to roost there, and half-remember that they once had souls. There is no little truth in this old Moslem myth. *They made no use of their souls, and so have lost them.* Brethren, that is God’s law. We keep what we use. We lose what we neglect to use.

Oh, then, for our own sakes, as well as for Christ’s sake, for He has identified Himself with us, let us use whatever talent we each possess. By worship let us keep our power of worship. By using faith let us keep faith. By using the power of charity let us keep the Divine love. Yea, not only keep, but enlarge our capacity—be every day growing in all that is of God, *growing* on the Divine side—for only so can we subdue the animal powers and make them good servants. Let the modest, the self-distrustful, the timid and the trembling be warned. Every Christian has some talent from Christ. Use means multiplication; non-use deprivation. Oh, then, would be something more than hear. could bear should we ever hear words like these from our Lord’s lips—“Thou wicked and slothful servant! Take, therefore, the talent from him. To every one that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away, even that which he seemeth to have.”

Poetry.

THE FOUR ASPECTS.

I.

From out my chamber window, one misty morn in spring,
When my heart was light and joyful as the sweet birds on the wing,
I gazed upon yon mountain,—an outline of pearly gray—
It rose sharp-edged against the sky, on that long-past sweet spring day.

And I sang to my heart’s glad beating,—ah! how it did beat then,—
“My life shall stand out thus *shamely*, if I live amongst evil men:
With a faith thus clear and strong, and a true heart in my breast,
I need not fear what the future will bring, while I always do my best.”

For I felt on that joyous morning as if troubles could never rise,
But the path which Christ called “narrow,” would be easy to one so wise;

And I thought myself far better than some, who have long since gone to God:
Oh, pride was strong in that strong young heart, which never had felt the rod.

II.

From out my chamber window, in the sultry summer time,
I looked on the well-known mountain—a man *then* in my prime;
The self-same outline met mine eye; but the picture was now filled in,
And alas! oh God forgive me—alas! with how much of sin!

As I sighed to my heart’s strong throbbing, I said, “Surely man is vain;”
For I knew that for all my fair promise, I had just been like other men;
Bright hopes had vanished, and love grown cold, and my steps had oft turned aside
From the beautiful path I had chalked for myself in my self-sufficient pride.

As the glowing sun, thro’ the quivering haze,
showed crevice and crack and scar

On the mountain side, so Thy light, O God!
had showed me what mortals are.
I had learned a lesson I ne'er could forget,
though I lived for a thousand years,
To add to my hope humility, and to temper
my joy with fears.

III.

Out from my chamber window, on a quiet
autumn day,
I gazed on the mountain, a sobered man whose
hair was streaked with gray:
The golden fields on its swelling sides longed
for the reapers to come, —
And I, too, I was waiting for the angels to
take me home.

The cold spring rains and the summer winds
had ripened the heavy ears, —
And my soul too had been betted by the
tossings and the tears;
They were bitter and hard to bear, I wot, and
my heart was wounded sore;
But the pilgrim recks not of the thorns when
the journey is almost o'er.

My only thought was to watch and wait for
the coming of the King,
To *whisper* to others about His love when my
soul refused to *sing*,
And to thank the grace which had led me on
safely from day to day,
And to live and love for the dear Lord's sake,
till the shadows flee away.

IV.

And now from my chamber window in the
winter time I gaze;
They've wheeled me to it, the tender hands,
for I'm old and full of days:
As far as my dim eyes tell me, the mountain
is covered with snow,
There is nothing seen save the outline-form
as I saw it long ago

Oh! long ago! how long ago, when on that
bright spring day
I watched it, and laid my plans for life (but I
drive the thought away),
When I nothing knew of the world's vain
ways, and I planned it in my pride,
When I nothing knew of my perverse heart
nor my need of the CRUCIFIED.

But yonder the mountain stands unchanged,
tho' I am changed sore;
And He is my friend who changeth not, but
abideth for evermore;
And I hold His promise within my hand, that
my sins will He cast out of sight,
And receive my soul for His dear Son's sake —
oh, mercy, infinite!

And as on yonder mountain, the scars on its
swelling side
That spoke to me of my shortcomings, my
stubbornness and pride,
Now, now are hidden all beneath the heaven-
sent snowy dress,
So shall my sins be covered by His perfect
righteousness. J. C. K.

THERE'S ONLY ONE.

There's only One on whose dear arm
We safely lay our thoughts to rest;
There's only One who knows the depth
Of sorrow in each stricken breast.

There's only One who knows the truth
Amid this world's deceit and lies,
There's only One who views each case
With *just, unselfish* candid eyes.

There's only One who marks the wish,
Nor cruelly, severely blames;
There's only One too full of love
To put aside the weakest claims.

There's only One whose pity falls
Like dew upon the wounded heart;
There's only one who never stirs,
Though enemy and friend depart.

There's only One, when none are by,
To wipe away the falling tear;
There's only One to heal the wound,
And stay the weak one's timid fear.

There's only One who's never harsh,
But tenderness itself to all;
There's only One who knows each heart,
And listens to its faintest call.

There's only One who understands
And enters into all we feel;
There's only One who views each spring
And each perplexing inner wheel.

There's only One who *can* support,
And who sufficient grace can give
To bear up under every grief,
And spotless in this world to live.

There's only One who will abide
When loved ones in the grave are cold,
There's only One who'll go with me
When this long, painful journey's told.

There's only One I'm sure will watch
O'er every dear one whom I love;
There's Only one can sanctify
And bring them safe to heaven above.

O blessed Jesus, Friend of friends,
Come, hide us nenth thy sheltering arm;
Come down amid this wicked world,
And keep us from its guilt and harm.

Thou art the One, the only One
For whom no love too warm can flow;
Thou art the One, the only One
In whom there's *perfect* rest below.

Christian Thought.

REFORM WITHOUT THE GOSPEL.

REV. GEORGE B. CHEEVER, D.D.

Under the head of that practical Atheism of which we are in danger, may be properly brought the schemes of self-styled philanthropists, (some of them most amiable, well-meaning visionaries,) who would bring society to perfection without the aid of the gospel of Christ, or by schemes and means into which God in the gospel does not enter as an element. One is strongly reminded by these schemes of those "vagabond Jews, exorcists," who took upon themselves in Paul's time to cast out the evil spirits of society. But these philanthropists, though they had no faith in the gospel and no experience of its power, did nevertheless call over them that had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, "We adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth." It was not the power of the gospel which they sought to apply, but they availed themselves of the name. But it would not do. The men with the evil spirits leaped upon them and overcame them, so that they fled from them naked and wounded.

Some of our modern reformers do in the same manner call over the evils of society the name of Christ, though they do not rely upon the power of the gospel, but leave it quite out of all their calculations for progress and perfectibility. Others have not even the grace to make the pretence of proceeding on gospel principles, and others again boldly reject the gospel and its institutions. In every case, unless their reliance for the regeneration of society be upon that divine efficacy of which God in Christ is the only source, the evils they proceed against will be sure to react against them,

will leap upon them and overcome them, and send them away naked and wounded.

There is one thing which these reformers without the gospel leave entirely out of view, in their schemes of perfectibility in society, and that is, the universal depravity of man. But a man is incomparably more wild and absurd in omitting this consideration in morals, than a mechanic would be who should build and apply a machine without calculating the power of friction. Without an allowance made for this universal depravity, and a superhuman provision against it, the projectors of the best and most benevolent schemes for the improvement of society must inevitably be disappointed. And whenever they are at all successful, they owe even their temporary success to the power of that very gospel, to the influences of that very Christianity, which they think they can do without, and in utter neglect of which they mean to make a perfect, loving world.

John Foster, in speaking on this topic, observes that without all doubt "the main strength of human feelings consists in the love of sensual gratification, of distinction, of power, and of money." And he asks, in reference to the schemes of pure reason and virtue, by which philanthropists would regenerate society without relying on the gospel, by what suicidal inconsistency such selfish principles are to be brought to the accomplishment of schemes which, they cannot fail to perceive, are plotting against their own indulgence? He says he is "reminded of the Spanish story of a village where the devil, having made the people excessively wicked, was punished by being compelled to assume the

appearance and habit of a friar, and to preach so eloquently, in spite of his internal repugnance and rage, that the inhabitants were completely reformed." But the evil passions of the human heart are not to be caught, and in this manner made preachers of virtue against themselves; they cannot be bound and made to work for the reformation of society; "they have far too perfect an instinct to be trepanned into such an employment of their force." But these being "the preponderating agents in the human heart, what *other* active principles of it can the renovator of human character call to his effectual aid?"

Sometimes, for a little while, the proposed reform itself seems to gratify these active selfish principles, and so far they will lend their assistance, and seem to be subdued into the cause of purity and virtue. "But the moment that the reforming projector summons their co-operation to a service in which they must desert their own abject and corrupt character, they will desert *him*. As long as he is condemned to depend for the efficacy of his schemes on the aid of so much pure propensity as he shall find in the corrupted subject, he will be nearly in the case of a man attempting to climb a tree by laying hold, first on this side and then on that, on some rotten twig, which still breaks off in his hands, and lets him fall among the nettles."

Some reformers have great confidence in the natural *humanity* of mankind; the difficulty is to get their lever under it. But without the grace of the gospel, it is a vain and transitory impulse. Of the humanity of the people of England, "a nation which extols its own generous virtues to the sky," Foster remarked, in reference to the long unavailing appeals respecting the slave-trade, that the wickedness "would have remained as immovable as the continent of Africa, if the legislature had not been forced into a conviction that, on the whole, the slave-trade was not advantageous in point of pecuniary interest." The corrupt nature of man is a thing which the advocates of

human perfectibility without the gospel are unwilling to admit into their calculations; hence alone, if for no other reason, they are destined always to prove visionaries, and to be disappointed in their schemes. They must have an agency to go before them, and change human nature for them; but that agency must be superhuman, and that agency they reject.

It is a powerful passage with which Foster closes his fifth letter on the application of the epithet Romantic. "All the speculations and schemes," he says, "of the sanguine projectors of all ages, have left the world still a prey to infinite legions of vices and miseries, an immortal band, which has trampled in scorn on the monuments and the dust of self-idolising men who dreamed each in his day that they were born to chase these evils out of the earth. If these vain demi-gods of an hour, who trusted to change the world, and who perhaps wished to change it only to make it a temple to their fame, could be awaked from the unmarked graves into which they sunk, to look a little while round on the world for some traces of success of their projects, would they not be eager to retire again into the chambers of death, to hide the shame of their remembered presumption? The wars and tyranny, the rancour, cruelty, and revenge, together with all the other unnumbered crimes and vices with which the earth is still invested, are enough, if the whole mass could be brought within the bounds of any one, even the most extensive empire, to constitute its whole population literally infernals, all but their being incarnate; and that indeed they would soon, through mutual destruction, cease to be. Hitherto, the fatal cause of these evils, the corruption of the human heart, has sported with the weakness, or seduced the strength, of all human contrivances to subdue them. Nor do I see any signs as yet that we are commencing a better era, in which the means that have failed before, or the expedients of a new and more fortunate invention,

shall become irresistible, like the sword of Michael, in our hands. The nature of man still casts ominous conjecture on the whole success. While *that* is corrupt, it will pervert even the very schemes and operations by which the world should be improved, though their first principles were pure as heaven; and revolutions, great discoveries, augmented science, and new forms of polity, will become in effect what may be denominated the sublime mechanism of depravity."

If men would reform the world, let them first come to Christ, and experience *his* reforming power in their own hearts, and then will they see clearly how to move upon the hearts of others, and how to conquer the evils of society. We begin right, then, only when we begin with divine grace in our own hearts, and an humble but confident reliance on the Power that is at length to subdue the world.

ABNORMAL GROWTH. †

REV. JOSIAH BULL IN *Sunday at Home*.

Religion and growth are essentially connected, just because religion is a thing of life, and we can form no idea of life apart from growth, increase, development. And *here* we have life in its highest, most godlike form—spiritual life. That life can least of all be dormant, inactive. There is no real life in idolatry, because it is false religion, no life in formalism, because it is but the semblance of true religion; but when religion really exists in a man—let simply, however, in its dogmatic form, but possessing his whole being, having transformed him into the Divine image—that man lives unto God.

Now, much might be said of the nature and importance of this spiritual growth—of its great source—of the hindrances to it—and the means of its attainment, and, in connection with the two last points, of the solemn duty devolving upon every one bearing the Christian name to strive to overcome the one, and diligently avail himself of

the other. But it is not our object now to enter into these considerations. Our purpose is to give utterance to some few thoughts on the less frequently considered topic of what we would term 'abnormal growth,' in the Christian—that is, a process which does not follow the Divine law of growth.

And first: There is *Stunted growth*—a growth scarcely perceptible. I have watched a flowering shrub in my garden. It continued month after month, it did not grow, it did not flower, but neither did it die. It was indeed a bad season, and nothing prospered save the plants which were naturally vigorous or well-established; but the growth of this plant was emphatically stunted.—There is a child. He increases in age, but not in stature; he does not grow, and the anxious mother says to her husband, "I'm afraid that child will be a dwarf." Thus the law of growth does not operate where we naturally and justly look for its manifestation, and it troubles us. And are not these illustrations just the description of what we see in some professing Christians? They do not grow, there is no progress, they are lukewarm, neither cold nor hot. And, alas! is there not often the secret, possibly unconscious delusion—"I am a Christian, converted; I am in the Church, God's garden? It is enough." And just as the best things, the highest truths, are most capable of abuse, so here the Scripture doctrines of election and regeneration are perverted from their high and holy meaning and abused, to the soul's infinite damage. I once knew a man who was addicted to the vice of drunkenness; and in his fits of intoxication he was very fond of boasting that he was converted under Mr. Newton, whose ministry he had attended in early life.

Ah, in what striking contrast is such miserable religion as this to that for which the Great Husbandman looks, and which his unerring hand describes in Holy Scripture, as that of the godly man, who is like a tree planted by the rivers of water, bringing forth fruit in

his season, his leaf never withering, and all that he does prospering. How different, too, from the development of grace in the child Jesus, who, as He grew in stature, grew also in wisdom and in favour with God and man, or from that of the advanced Christian, who brings forth fruit in old age, flourishing in the courts of the Lord's house like the noble and prolific palm-tree, and growing like the stately cedar of Lebanon.

Another form of this evil is, second: *Downward growth.* We have seen childhood in all its brightness and beauty and lifefulness. That child is not to us, if we think at all, merely a parent's plaything, a precious pet to be dandled and caressed. It is a life to grow, to develop into manhood with all its powers and capacities for good. Again we see the little one, and its bright young life is withering, disease has clutched it in its fatal embrace, and now our one feeling is of sorrow and hopelessness, unless a merciful God interpose to stay the evil. And surely with grief far deeper, because with less alleviation, we look upon the withering of the early promise of a Christian life, when that light, just now so bright, has gradually grown dim, when the apostle's mournful inquiry must be made of such backsliders, "Ye did run well; what hath hindered you?" True, it must often be the Christian's painful confession that his soul cleaves to the dust, but how many are there with whom it is thus, who, unawakened to a sense of their real spiritual necessity, never add the prayer, "Quicken Thou me, according to thy word." To go back, to follow the Master afar off, to wander out of the way, and to allow the thorns of worldly care and riches and pleasure, the reviving power of inbred corruption, to choke the good seed, so that it has become unfruitful—oh this, this is truly mournful, and should challenge the most earnest and thoughtful inquiry. Perchance there may be some who read these words who may be ready to exclaim,—

"Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and His Word."

Oh, then, let them pray for the return of the Holy Spirit, that sweet messenger of true peace; let them pull down from their heart's throne the idols that have usurped the place of God, and they shall know again the blessedness of spiritual growth, the sweet consciousness of progress in the Divine life.

Third: *Fruitless growth.* The growth of leaves only—mere profession. For a fruit-tree to bear no fruit is just to frustrate the very design of its existence; so for a Christian to have that name, and yet to be no Christian in heart and life, is an anomaly just as great. We are told that, on the morning of a memorable day, when our blessed Lord went from Bethany to Jerusalem, He was hungry, and seeing in the way an early, forward fig-tree full of promise of fruit, He went up to it. It ought to have had fruit, but it had leaves only; and we know what befell that tree. And so, in like manner, the tree in the parable which defatted the purpose of the Great Husbandman; year after year He came seeking fruit, and found none. Now of what avail are these leaves? However fresh and bright in their greenness, however they glitter when the sun's early rays light up the drops of morning dew which have fallen on them, however soft and sweet their music as they are stirred by the gentle breeze, and however grateful the shade they afford—they have no fruit. These things are well in their place, so profession is well and right when it is the expression of a reality, but a very poor thing, however showy, when it is the substitute for that reality. It is a dishonour to God and a miserable deception often to the man himself. And in the cursing of the fruitless but most pretentious fig-tree did not Christ intend to teach us this solemn lesson? Surely it is a sad reflection that there is now-a-days so much of this mere profession in

the church—arising, indeed, not altogether from a positive intention to deceive, but rather from thoughtless ignorance of the true character and demands of religion. And may we not add here the melancholy fact, that the partaking of the Lord's Supper, or the joining a Christian church, is not unfrequently a pillow for this state of spiritual slumber. Oh, the importance and duty of seeing to it that our Christianity is a reality, lest, after all, we become castaways.

Fourth: *Irregular growth.* One of the most beautiful of our smaller timber trees is the silver birch, truly designated the Lady of the Woods. The lustre of its bark, its slender and pendant branches, its delicate foliage, make it an object of attraction wherever it is grown. But then this tree, so graceful, unless very carefully tended, is subject, from its very delicacy, to suffer from contortion in its stem, and from the force of the wind, to lose its upright position—evils which will only be prevented by well staking and tying. Now just so there are in the church amiable, lovely characters, young converts, perhaps, and some of the gentler sex, who are everything that is attractive. Theirs is the charity that thinks no evil, the kindness and compassion that sympathises with distress, and theirs the ready hand to relieve it. They teach the young, love the house of prayer, and strive to cultivate their heavenly life. And yet in some things they are wanting. There is, it may be, about their religion a tinge of sentimentalism, there may be too much self complacency. They may have a tendency to extreme views in the non-essentials of religion; yea, in certain associations there may be strong ritualistic leanings, which, like some parasitical plants destroying the vigorous growth of the tree they seem to adorn, are injurious to what is most vital in religion. And this is often accompanied with the idolatry of man. There may even be doctrinal error. They are led away by the sleight of men. Or again, some pet theme is taken up, as

unfulfilled prophecy, absorbing the mind and diverting it from what is more practical. Now it is only by thoughtfulness, by prayer, by the inwrought perception of Scripture truth, by the staking and tying of the tree, that these evils can be prevented, and unless it be so, such irregularities of growth will surely mar and spoil the beauty of the Divine life.

And now, fifth: There is what we may term *inequality of growth.* A tree will sometimes send up a strong sucker from the root, or some vigorous branch from the stem, overtopping all the rest, and by no means adding to the beauty of the plant; and as you see it you say that shoot must be stopped—it is unsuitable, injurious. And is there not a like inequality in the religious life of some Christians—as when we see a zeal that is without knowledge, or it may be a great concern for them that are without, but little regard for those at home; attention to public work to the sacrifice of private duties; ever running after this and that preacher—in this sense not keepers at home? Such professors are great sermon tasters and critics, great talkers about religion, to the neglect of heart culture. They make a fair show in the flesh, but their true spiritual life lacks the beauty of holiness, and they make but little true growth.

Lastly: There is *Discased growth.* In some professors there is real growth, but it is marred and spoiled by what is represented in the unsightly excrescences and cankers of the tree. There is moroseness, uncharitableness, fault finding, doggedness, an opposition to all change, how much soever that change may be unquestioned improvement. I knew an old man who habitually objected to every proposed change by saying, "It always was so." No matter whether it had been always bad or always good, once sound, but now rotten and worn out. But the singular fact is, that beneath these ugly incrustations there really often is the undergrowth of a truly religious life; and there is, perhaps, more of seeming than of actual

wrong. Such temperaments are often allied with a good deal of strength, and that strength, as well as its accompanying evils, finds place in their religion. Just as I believe it is a fact that some of those trees which bear the most precious fruits are the most subject to canker and blight. Still, to say the least, this is not a comfortable Christianity; and yet I think we find a proof of its reality in the fact that such characters do often wonderfully soften and get free, perhaps through special Divine discipline, from what is thus evil—a consummation after which they should surely earnestly strive. A consideration of the courtesy, the spirit of intelligent self-denial, the liberality and largeness of heart which our blessed Lord enjoins upon his followers, with earnest prayer for Divine aid, will be found the best means of overcoming these inconsistencies.

Such, then, are some of those abnormal growths which mar the beauty of the Divine life. Alas! our religion, like everything else in this sinful world, partakes of its imperfections, and while so many elements of evil exist it must be so. Still it is a solemn duty resting on all Christians to strive after perfection. Let us reflect how blessed and beautiful a thing is true spiritual growth, and that to cultivate it is the work God has given us to do here. Let us look at home, examine our spiritual life in the light of revealed truth. I may be congratulating myself on the possession of some one spiritual grace while I am destitute of some others equally important; and it may be that my religious life is in other respects but a too feeble expression of Bible religion, lacking the vigour and completeness it ought to possess. While we may feel how just in their self-application are the familiar lines of Cowper—

“For sure of all the plants that share
The notice of thy Father’s eye,
None proves less grateful to His care,
Or yields Him meaner fruit than I—”

let us earnestly seek those heavenly influences which shall revive our drooping

graces and make us as trees of righteousness, bringing forth fruit unto God. Then may we look hopefully to that coming time when, beneath a brighter sun, and in a more genial atmosphere, we shall yield a richer produce than the luscious grapes of Esheol and the pomegranates and the figs which the spies of old brought from the Land of Promise, saying to the wondering congregation of Israel, “Surely the land floweth with milk and honey, and this is the fruit of it.”

CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

REV. J. C. RYLE, D.D.

“But we preach Christ Crucified.”—1 Cor. i. 23.

The doctrine of Christ crucified is *the grand peculiarity of the Christian Religion*. Other religions have laws and moral precepts,—forms and ceremonies, rewards and punishments. But other religions cannot tell us of a dying Saviour. They cannot show us the cross. This is the crown and glory of the Gospel. This is that special comfort which belongs to it alone. Miserable indeed is that religious teaching which calls itself Christian, and yet contains nothing of the cross. A man who teaches in this way, might as well profess to explain the solar system, and yet tell his hearers nothing about the sun.

The doctrine of Christ crucified is *the strength of a minister*. I for one would not be without it for the world. I should feel like a soldier without arms,—like an artist without his pencil,—like a pilot without his compass,—like a labourer without his tools. Let others, if they will, preach the law and morality. Let others hold forth the terrors of hell, and the joys of heaven. Let others dwell on the sacraments and the church. Give me the cross of Christ. This is the only lever which has ever turned the world upside down hitherto, and made men forsake their sins. And if this will not, nothing will. A man may begin preaching with a perfect knowledge of Latin,

Greek, and Hebrew, but he will do little or no good among his hearers unless he knows something of the cross. Never was there a minister who did much for the conversion of souls, who did not dwell much on Christ crucified. Luther, Rutherford, Whitefield and McCheyne, were most eminently preachers of the cross. This is the preaching that the Holy Ghost delights to bless. He loves to honor those who honor the cross.

The doctrine of Christ crucified is the secret of all missionary success. Nothing but this has ever moved the hearts of the heathen. Just according as this has been lifted up missions have prospered. This is the weapon that has won victories over hearts of every kind, in every quarter of the globe. Greenlanders, Africans, South-sea Islanders, Hindoos, Chinese, all have felt its power. Just as that huge iron tube which crosses the Menai Straits, is more affected and bent by half an hour's sunshine than by all the dead weight that can be placed in it, so in like manner the hearts of savages have melted before the cross, when every other argument seemed to move them no more than stones. "Brethren," said a North-American Indian after his conversion, "I have been a heathen. I know how heathens think. Once a preacher came and began to explain to us that there was a God; but we told him to return to the place from whence he came. Another preacher came and told us not to lie, nor steal, nor drink; but we did not heed him. At last another came into my hut one day, and said, 'I am come to you in the name of the Lord of heaven and earth. He sends to let you know that He will make you happy, and deliver you from misery. For this end He became a man, gave His life a ransom, and shed His blood for sinners.' I could not forget his words. I told them to the other Indians, and an awakening began among us. I say, therefore, preach the sufferings and death of Christ, our Saviour,

if you wish your words to gain entrance among the heathen." Never indeed did the devil triumph so thoroughly as when he persuaded the Jesuit missionaries in China to keep back the story of the cross!

The doctrine of Christ crucified is the foundation of a church's prosperity. No church will ever be honored in which Christ crucified is not continually lifted up. Nothing whatever can make up for the want of the cross. Without it all things may be done decently and in order. Without it there may be splendid ceremonies,—beautiful music,—gorgeous churches,—learned ministers,—crowded communion tables,—huge collections for the poor. But without the cross no good will be done. Dark hearts will not be enlightened. Proud hearts will not be humbled. Mourning hearts will not be comforted. Fainting hearts will not be cheered. Sermons about the catholic church and an apostolic ministry,—sermons about baptism and the Lord's Supper,—sermons about unity and schism,—sermons about feasts and communion,—sermons about fathers and saints,—such sermons will never make up for the absence of sermons about the cross of Christ. They may amuse some. *They will feed none.* A gorgeous banqueting room, and splendid gold plate on the table, will never make up to a hungry man for the want of food. Christ crucified is God's grand ordinance of doing good to men. Whenever a church keeps back Christ crucified, or puts anything whatever in that foremost place, which Christ crucified should always have, from that moment a church ceases to be useful. Without Christ crucified in her pulpits, a church is little better than a cumberer of the ground, a dead carcase, a well without water, a barren fig-tree, a sleeping watchman, a silent trumpet, a dumb witness, an ambassador without terms of peace, a messenger without tidings, a light-house without fire, a stumbling-block to weak believers, a comfort to infidels, a hot-

bed for formalism, a joy to the devil, and an offence to God.

The doctrine of Christ crucified is the *grand centre of union* among true Christians. Our outward differences are many without doubt. One man is an Episcopalian, another is a Presbyterian,—one is an Independent, another a Baptist,—one is a Calvinist, another an Arminian,—one is a Lutheran, another a Plymouth Brother,—one is a friend to establishments, another a friend to the voluntary system,—one is a friend to liturgies, another is a friend to extempore prayer. But, after all, what shall we hear about most of these differences in heaven? Nothing, most probably; nothing at all. *Does a man*

really and sincerely glory in the cross of Christ? That is the grand question. If he does, he is my brother;—we are travelling in the same road. We are journeying towards a home where Christ is all, and everything outward in religion will be forgotten. But if he does not glory in the cross of Christ, I cannot feel comfort about him. Union on outward points only is union only for time. Union about the cross is union for eternity. Error on outward points is only a skin-deep disease. Error about the cross is disease at the heart. Union about outward points is a mere man-made union. Union about the cross of Christ can only be produced by the Holy Ghost.

Christian Life.

JOHN HUSS.

From the *True Catholic*.

John Huss first saw the light five hundred years ago. He was born on July 6, 1373, at a small place near the borders of Bohemia. His origin was obscure, like that of not a few whom God has designed for great undertakings. M. de Bonnechese states, in his well-known work, "The Reformers before the Reformation," that Huss, like Luther, was the child of respectable country folk, who spared no sacrifice to have him educated—good and simple people, who only thought to secure for him a happy future in having him so well instructed in sacred and secular literature, and never dreamed that even then they were, with all their care, adorning a victim for sacrifice.

Huss received his early instruction at the public school of a neighboring town, and subsequently studied at the University of Prague, where it is said he paid much attention to the Scriptures, the Latin fathers, Church history, and the like. He became bachelor of theology in 1394, master of arts in 1396, and

a divinity professor in 1400. Near the date last mentioned, he was appointed chaplain or confessor to the Queen, and two years later we find him one of the preachers of a privately founded chapel, known as the Chapel of Bethlehem. His office near the Queen reminds us that our King Richard the Second had married Anne, who was sister to Wenceslaus, King of Bohemia. This lady is very highly spoken of—so much so, that Archbishop Arundel, of York, who pronounced her funeral eulogy, calls attention to her possession of the Gospels in English, with commentaries thereupon. "She had sent to him for his inspection and judgment," he said, "her four English translations of the Gospel; he had found them true and faithful. It appeared to him a wonderful instance of godliness that so great a lady should humbly condescend to study such excellent books, and he never knew a woman of such extraordinary piety." The marriage of Anne brought about frequent intercourse between England and Bohemia, and as it happened when Wycliffe's opinions and books were attracting so much attention, it is not to

be wondered at that the circumstance favoured the spread of the Englishman's views in Bohemia. Some who accompanied or followed the Queen appear to have received the new views, one such being a Bohemian gentleman, afterwards so famous as the friend in life and follower in death of John Huss—no other, in fact, than Jerome of Prague.

Bohemia had, even before Huss appeared, been honoured with various faithful preachers, who had, as Merle d'Aubigné says, "raised their voices against the corruption of public morals, and had been the means of conversion to a great number of people." One such had declared in his sermons and his writings that owing to the influence of Rome, the Church was corrupted and fallen. He compared the clergy of Rome to the woman of the Apocalypse—drunk with the blood of the saints. All these facts, and others not mentioned, show how the soil was already to some extent prepared in Bohemia when John Huss entered upon his public career, at the very date of the death of the English Chaucer. Like many more, he seems at first to have imagined that he might declaim against the vices and abuses which ecclesiastics practised, encouraged, and allowed. This had been done almost everywhere with more or less impunity, but nowhere had it realized any great success unless it was accompanied by that spiritual element which gives its life to all vital preaching. The Bethlehem preacher was probably, if not certainly, suspicious, at first, of the soundness of some of the opinions which Wycliffe's works propounded; but his love of fairness and truth led him to study these works, and to become an advocate of some of the views for which the hierarchy hated them. He also became more thoroughly under the influence of divine grace.

The superstitions of the common people were vigorously assailed by him, and false miracles were relentlessly exposed and denounced. Meanwhile Englishmen from Oxford came to Prague, and questioned the power of the Pope. Huss

in part favoured their views. The works of Wycliffe also began to find translators into the Bohemian, and still more important were versions from the Holy Scriptures in the language of the people. His enemies prohibited in succession the agencies which favoured a reformation, and consequently his brief career was a succession of struggles. The books of Wycliffe were burned, the preacher was prohibited from preaching in his chapel, and at length Cardinal Colonna pronounced sentence of excommunication against him. But Huss could not be silenced; and when the Pope, Gregory XII., published an indulgence in favour of those who joined a crusade against the King of Naples, Huss protested. Matters proceeded so far that Prague was put under an interdict, which in those days was an evil of no common order. Huss was compelled to retire, but in his retirement he wrote and preached in support of the principles he had received, and eventually he was required to attend the Council then sitting at Constance. Before reaching his destination he received a safe conduct from the Emperor—a document of no value, as events demonstrated. Huss was vexed and harassed, and deprived of his liberty by his accusers, who gave him no proper opportunity of defending himself. No one understood his danger better than himself, but he retained his integrity from the beginning. His last appearance before the Council was on July 6, 1415, when he was formally condemned and degraded, and led away to the stake. First they burned his books, and then they lighted the faggots which consumed him to ashes. He sang psalms until the smoke stifled him, and passed away as true a martyr as ever died for the name of Christ. His ashes were cast into the Rhine, as were those of his old friend, Jerome of Prague, who suffered in like manner a few months later.

THE CONVERSION OF A JEWISH RABBI.

NARRATED BY HIMSELF.

Dear Christian Friends,—In compliance with your request, I will endeavour to give you a brief outline of the manner in which the Lord, in his infinite mercy, drew me unto Himself. May his Spirit guide and keep me from self! Born of strictly orthodox Jewish parents, who watched most tenderly over my religious training, I was placed, at the age of seven, in a Jewish boarding-school. I had stayed there two years, when I was deprived for ever of a fond mother's love and care. After this heavy bereavement, my father removed me to the Jewish Institution at Lower Norwood, whence I was taken in my sixteenth year, to undergo a course of training as teacher in the great Jewish School, Spitalfields. Here I remained till my one-and-twentieth year, when I was appointed by the Chief Rabbi to the office of head master in the Jewish School, West Hartlepool. I also occasionally preached, whereby I gladdened the heart of my father and relations, who had always considered me adapted for this vocation. My sermons were so enjoyed by the congregation and so favourably commented upon by the Jewish press, that I was induced to adopt a course of religious reading, with the view of ultimately gaining a permanent rank in the Jewish pulpit. I therefore devoted myself assiduously to the study of the Old Testament, and began to read it with more earnest mind and deeper thought.

From my earliest boyhood, I was seriously inclined, and I frequently indulged in mental inquiries into the solemn relationship between God and man. Modern Judaism, with its machinery of forms, never could satisfy the cravings of my soul. Also, from regard to my father, who enjoys an established reputation among learned and orthodox Jews, for piety and Talmudical knowledge, as well as from my dislike to half-measures, I resolved as I approached

manhood, to lead a strictly Jewish life; but the mechanical service of the synagogue, the mere lip-prayer by the majority of worshippers, who did not understand the language, which they used as their sacred oracles, the dull rotation of meaningless ceremonies, and the disorder which frequently prevailed, sadly proved the absence of God's vivifying Spirit, and thus I received no spiritual encouragement to persist very long in my earnest resolution. I had never gone further than giving a casual utterance to my doubts on the accuracy of Jewish interpretations on certain Biblical passages, such as Gen. iii. 15; xlix. 10; Psa. ii. ; xvi. 10; cx. ; Isa. vii. 4; ix, 6; liii. ; Jer. xxiii. 5, 6; etc. Looking upon my future career as a most solemn and responsible one towards God and man, I resolved to judge for myself, and casting aside all preconceived notions which had been stored in my mind by Jewish expounders, and allowing the Word of God to be its own interpreter, I pursued my investigations with untiring effort.

The further I advanced my inquiries, the firmer grew my knowledge of the defective elements in the Judaic principles, and how utterly irreconcilable they were to the sublime doctrines of the Old Testament. My perplexities kept pace with the development of my views. I fully recognized the vagueness that existed in the religion of my fathers, and I groped for the hidden clue that would bring vitality to the same. Though I had often heard of Jesus, whom the Gentiles worshipped as their Saviour and Redeemer, yet the marked aversion and contempt with which this blessed name was associated by the Jews had hitherto deterred me from reading the New Testament. An esteemed Jewish friend, with whom I was in correspondence, asked whether I had ever read it, and if not, would strongly advise me to do so; he also presented me with a copy of one in Hebrew, which he had received at the Bible-stand, Crystal Palace.

On reading the Gospel according to

St. Matthew, it seemed as if a new world opened itself before me, for in it I discovered the key to the hidden treasures of the Old Testament. The arguments of St. Paul, in his Epistles, seemed to be conclusive, especially the one to the Hebrews. The Levitical ordinances were no longer without meaning to me. The types set forth there of the high-priesthood, the sacrifices, the sprinkling of the mercy-seat, the scapegoat, and the day of atonement were made plain to me, as the prefigurations of Christ, his baptism and ministry, his crucifixion, his resurrection, his mediation for us with the Father, and the forgiveness of our sins through his vicarious sacrifice. I now perceived my total ignorance of heavenly things, and felt I was a lost sinner. Our heavenly Father knows best what inward struggles I had to endure. Urged by a secret monitor within me, I searched the Scriptures, and became convinced that He of whom Moses and the prophets wrote, must have been Jesus of Nazareth, whom my forefathers rejected. I felt quite undone, and in wrestling with God in prayer, I remembered that He so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. With a contrite heart and a broken spirit, I henceforth prayed in the name of Jesus. Through his precious blood I felt I had full access unto the Father, that his righteousness was imputed to me, and that He bore my sins on the cross. A heavenly joy from the quickening influence of God's Holy Spirit pervaded my heart, and I became conscious of its change. It was now out of the question to become a Jewish preacher.

Having, by the grace of God, thus far prevailed over my inward struggles, outward ones commenced. I was anxious to make known to my father the change of my religious views, and took advantage of a visit he paid me to ask his opinion on Isa. liii. and other Messianic passages, which he explained most unsatisfactorily by asserting that Israel was

referred to therein. His grief and consternation were indescribable when I told him that I believed they all alluded to Jesus Christ—the hope and expectation of the patriarchs and all the inspired writers of the Old Testament—God incarnate. With tears in his eyes he entreated me not to speak thus to him, adding that only a pious Jew could be a child of God. When he saw that remonstrances could not shake my Christian belief, he said I must be deranged in mind, and affirmed that if ever I should profess Christ publicly, he would have to mourn me as dead. I gave up my appointment, and returned to London.

It is most painful to recollect the torment I endured at the time. My father wished me to come and reside with him, in order to deprive me of all Christian intercourse. But the wise Disposer of events mercifully intervened. I was induced to take another appointment as Hebrew master in a Jewish boarding-school at Kew. Being a secret believer in the Divine Redeemer, I occupied a most untenable position. Oh, how wretched I felt! How I yearned to throw off the unbearable yoke! Was it possible to restrain the propelling influence of the Spirit? Ought filial affection or any worldly consideration to interfere betwixt man and his God? "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me." "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life." Here were two texts spoken by our Saviour, the one reproachful and condemnatory, the other overflowing with love and consolation, that were like balm to my soul, and called forth all my confidence. Through consulting a dear Christian friend, who had always watched over my spiritual progress with the most tender solicitude, I was led to form the acquaintance of Mr. Alexander, of the Bible-stand, Crystal Palace. He, as a Hebrew Christian,

could find sympathize with and enter into all my difficulties. He reminded me of Christ's words, "If you confess Me before men, I will also confess you before my Father which is in heaven;" and "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." I now fully realized my wrong position, and perceived that only one course was open to me—to resign my post, and openly acknowledge Jesus my Saviour.

When I communicated my wish to resign to the principal of the academy, he expressed regret, and begged to know my reason. I unhesitatingly replied that I was a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and dared no longer conceal the fact. With the utmost amazement the venerable man contemplated me, as he raised his trembling hands and exclaimed, "I could weep for you." After a long discussion, he gave me a pamphlet written by a Jew against Christianity, and begged me to read it carefully. While reading this paper, a letter reached me from the Swansea Jewish congregation, tendering me, by recommendation of the Chief Rabbi, the post of minister and teacher. While the tempter thus provoked me, I received a letter from Mr. Alexander, full of exhortation and spiritual comfort. I replied to the Swansea congregation, and the Chief Rabbi, thankfully declining their united offer. To the principal of the academy I wrote that, "independent of profuse analogies contained in the Old Testament to the life and character of Jesus Christ, I found Leviticus an insurmountable barrier to my mind if I excluded the light of the gospel. He would remember that the only merit a Hebrew had during the existence of the temple in coming to God rested in a sacrifice. That sacrifice was even not accepted but through the mediation of a high priest. It is proved by Scripture that no pardon could be obtained without the shedding of blood; for 'it is the blood that maketh an atonement,' and 'without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.' What now for a sacrifice, and where a high

priest? The whole Word of God pointed to Jesus, the Messiah, who came into this world to offer Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of all mankind, and to be ever after their great Intercessor, their Prince of Peace. The Spirit of God having enlightened me so as to discern the great value of this merciful proclamation, I could no longer refrain from giving free utterance to the joy and gratitude with which my heart abounded."

The principal came to me the same morning, and said I might depart at once. He expressed his sincere sympathy for my relations, and said he could only attribute my wilful destruction of my position and fair prospects in the Jewish community to a state of *non compos mentis*! I telegraphed to Mr. Alexander, who welcomed me with open arms. Here I received that spiritual comfort and share in Christian intercourse for which my soul had so long panted. By prayer and meditation I now prepared myself for publicly confessing the Lord Jesus. I was accordingly introduced to the Rev. Mr. Graham, who administered the sacred rite of baptism to me on Sunday evening, February 2, in presence of a large and devout congregation.

It was the most solemn moment in the history of my life, and will ever remain engraven on my heart as the grand foretaste of a heavenly bliss. Resting on the arm of Jesus, sure that no earthly influence can deprive me of this support; rejoicing in the knowledge that He is my Saviour; firm in the belief that He died for my sins, rose again for my justification, ascended to heaven, and sits now at the right hand of God, whence He will come to judge the quick and the dead: I joyfully take up the cross to follow my Divine Redeemer.

In consequence of a letter which I wrote to my relations, my elder brother was telegraphed for from Paris; he came at once, in the hope of hindering my baptism. It would be too painful to relate the interview between us. Oh, how I pity my beloved father! Oh that the scales would fall from his eyes,

and the veil be removed from his heart? I have written to him, giving a reason for the faith that is within me, assuring him that, next to God, he would ever have the first place in my affection.

May the Lord graciously soften the heart of my relations towards me, and use me as an humble instrument to lead them and others to the knowledge of the truth as revealed in the gospel of Christ! In the midst of my trials my soul continues to experience the divine presence of that Spirit which beareth witness with my spirit that I am Christ's, and that there is nothing in this world that can separate me from Him; and it is my earnest and humble desire, if God graciously spares my life, and deems me fit, to consecrate it to His service, in whatever obscure corner of His vineyard it may please Him to place me.

Begging that you, my dear Christian friends, will sometimes think of me when before the throne of grace, I remain, sincerely yours in Jesus,

ERNEST J. TURCKHEIM.

1, *Lebanon cillars, Oakfield-park, Croydon.*

MRS. JOHNS WILLIAMS; THE MISSIONARY'S WIFE.

REV. H. ALLEN.

It is possible that many of our readers who are familiar enough with the leading incidents of the life of the martyred missionary of Erromanga may have never read about his wife. She died in London some years ago (1852).

Mrs. J. Williams was the youngest child of Thomas and Mary Chawner, of Denson Hall, Cheadle, Staffordshire, where she was born, September 29th, 1795. Her parents were of that class (less numerous in the present day, it is hoped) who think that attendance at Church, and a moral life, are a certain means of securing their eternal salvation. She never, therefore, enjoyed early religious training. But it pleased God, in the following manner, to awaken in her young mind serious impressions,

which, with the exception of a short interval, continued to deepen and to expand, until her piety became marked for its humility, its fervour, and loveliness.

Happening one day to open a New Testament, she read a passage describing the sufferings and death of our Lord. Her attention was rivetted, and her mind deeply affected; but she did not open her heart to any one, until observing that the name of Christ occurred at the close of every prayer, she ventured to ask her mother why that name was repeated so often. The explanation was given; and the portions of Scripture showing the Saviour's condescension and love for sinners, let a flood of light into her mind, and she resolved to give herself to him. "I thought," she said, in her simplicity and earnestness, "I would become very good, in order that I might go to heaven, and live with Him there." In one so young (she was at this time only about seven years old), she displayed a singular longing after a fuller knowledge of the gospel, and an ardent desire to lead a holy life; nor did she neglect any opportunity of promoting them, as is shown, not only by the pleasure with which she committed to memory, in solitude, all of Watts' "Songs for Children," but by the following incident:—She observed that her parents occasionally received the Lord's Supper, and during the previous week her father not only appeared much altered in demeanour, and more reserved, but that he very frequently retired to read. Longing to know the contents of the little work, which she imagined wrought this change, she seized an opportunity of looking into it; but while intent in its perusal, he entered the room, severely reproved her for presuming to touch such a holy book, and threatened her with punishment if ever seen with it again. Her tears flowed freely; mingled emotions swelled her breast; she was pained to think that she had committed a sin; troubled at the thought of her unfitness to read a

holy book; yet resolved, in the simplicity of her innocent mind, to save all her money to buy one for herself, to read when she had become a better child.

Mr. and Mrs. Chawner, with their two daughters, came to London in 1809. He was unhappily engaged in a lawsuit, delay succeeded delay, and every postponement demanded fresh funds, until all was exhausted. Mr. Chawner, disappointed and broken-hearted, left his family in London, and saw them no more, as he died shortly afterwards, at Wolverhampton. Mrs. Williams shared with her mother and sister the difficulties of contracted means. But they were in London; they attended the Tabernacle; they heard John Hyatt, and his ministry was as balm to their wounded hearts.

Many of her early religious impressions seem to have been partially effaced at the school to which she was sent prior to leaving Denson. But a sermon by the Rev. Alexander Fletcher recalled them in all their depth and power. She once said, "I thought he was preaching to me the whole time, as every word applied to me." A flame was kindled in her breast, which was now inextinguishable. With her mother and sister she joined the church at the Tabernacle, became greatly attached to John Hyatt, and was constant in her attendance at all the services and meetings. Her piety deepened, and increasing love for Christ led her to wish to be engaged more fully in his service. The success of missionary labours excited her interest, and it at length became her "constant prayer that she might be sent to the heathen, to tell *them* of the love of Christ." Nor was it long before her prayer was answered, as her sincere piety, her singleness of mind, her regularity at the sanctuary, her apparent as well as expressed desire for the welfare of the heathen, won the heart of one who had already consecrated himself to the great work. In October, 1816, she was united to John Williams, also a member of the Tabernacle; and in November they

embarked in the prosecution of their great enterprise.

Mrs. Williams often poured forth her heartfelt acknowledgments to the great Disposer of Events for so marvellously introducing her into the missionary work. Born in circumstances of comparative ease and affluence, her brothers and sisters educated suitably to their early position and bright prospects, and her own education commenced in the same manner; yet were these prospects blighted, that affluence swept away, and the life of ease exchanged for one of sore trial. Nevertheless, the contemplation of the chain of events which brought her to London, afforded her never-ending thankfulness, as the shipwreck of these worldly advantages was, in the providence of God, the salvation of her soul.

The wife of a missionary, such as John Williams, has indeed need to summon no ordinary resolution, and to exercise no ordinary degree of self-denial. Those who have read the "Narrative of Missionary Enterprises," and the "Life," by the Rev. Ebenezer Prout, will have noticed how often her patience, her wisdom, her strength of soul, and her spirit of self-sacrifice were put to severe test.

The following extract from one of Mr. Williams' letters to the late Rev. Matthew Wilks, will also furnish some idea of the labours of his wife in the missionary field:—"My dear Mrs. Williams has obtained a tolerable proficiency in the language, and holds a meeting with about twenty or more of the most pious natives, which she conducts much to my satisfaction. They read a chapter, verse by verse, and converse upon it. They then deliver their sentiments upon a topic proposed the previous week. Another work of my good wife is amongst the poor old women, the lame, the blind, and the deaf. These she has formed into a class, which she meets twice a week. She has induced them all to procure bonnets, which she has trimmed for them, and those who had no decent clothes she has clad. A seat in the chapel is set apart for them. They are

about forty in number. When this class was first formed, Mrs. Williams made a large feast for them. On this occasion the speeches of the poor old women were simple and affecting. I will give you a few of them: 'We were as dead, now are we come to life. We were old and decrepid, now are we young again. We were despised and neglected, now we are sought out by our elder sister, and eating what our ancestors never saw or heard of—English food—in the house of the "Orom-udua" (missionary or teacher). We were dirty and ragged, now we have good clothes, and even coverings for our heads. We thought our days were past, and that we should never come back again into the world; we were laid aside as castaways, but now we are beginning to live again. It is good we lived to see these days. To the word and compassion of God are we indebted.' They now have frequent feasts, at which I generally call. Besides attending to these, she is continually employed cutting gowns, teaching the females to sew, &c., &c. Mrs. Wilks would be delighted with even the very floors of our habitation. Come in who will, we have always a comfortable table to spread before them; and as I have no reason to inquire, 'What shall I eat, what shall I drink, or wherewithal shall I be clothed?' everything being admirably provided, I can with undivided attention apply myself to the various duties I am called to discharge."

Wherever Mrs. Williams went, she, like her husband, so identified herself with their wants, their feelings, and their interests, that she, with him, shared the warm affection of the natives. She continually received numerous demonstrations of this regard, and her simple wish was a command. At Samoa she was invariably called by them "mama," not merely out of respect to her age and position, but from pure love for her person. And few widows, or, perhaps none, ever received such manifestations of sympathy and kindness as

she did, when the mournful intelligence of her widowhood became known. All, from the oldest and highest, to the youngest and least, had some word of compassion and consolation, some token of affection. And in the deep waters of this affliction, her Christian soul, tried as few are, found shelter in that unfailing Refuge which she had always sought, and never failed to secure. She has sometimes alluded to this period of her life, and said that the contemplation of those hours of trial fully assured her of the preciousness of the gospel, the infinite compassion and mercy of her God, without whose sustaining hand she would assuredly have sunk.

Overtaken by the calamity with which the Christian world is already acquainted, Mrs. Williams bade a final adieu to the South Sea Islands in 1811, and after a short stay at Sydney, where she received great attention from many sympathising friends, she reached England in October, 1812. She joined the church at Stepney, then under the pastoral care of the late Rev. Dr. Joseph Fletcher, to whom she became much attached, and who showed her much kindness. The following extract from a journal is dated June, 1813.—"Sabbath. This morning I heard Dr. Reed at Stepney, his text was, 'And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God,' &c. Men have a purpose for all they do, and so has God. Among other things he said, 'For what purpose were you afflicted, or bereaved of your dearest earthly relative or friend, whom you thought it impossible to live without? Say, would you have been without them? Have they not been the means of bringing you nearer to God?' O, yes! my heart was with him the whole time; they were my own thoughts. I trust I do feel resigned to the will of my heavenly Father—ready when he shall call me hence. My desire is always to realise his presence, and to be assured that he is to be with me at all times."

In July 1845, on removing to Isling-

ton, she writes: "On the 18th of July we removed to Paul's Terrace. May the Lord dwell with us and be our portion! I have had the privilege of joining the church at Union Chapel. May God of his infinite mercy pour out upon me and mine an abundant influence of his Holy Spirit, that we may be his holy and sanctified ones here below, and glorified saints with him in his kingdom!"

Her prayers for her children, and her desires for their spiritual welfare, were continual and most earnest. From the earliest, her sense of maternal responsibility was great, and with the very dawnings of intelligence she began, by example and teaching, to inculcate the truths of the gospel.

Mr. Prout, in his excellent "Life of John Williams," has truthfully depicted the character of Mrs. Williams, as a pattern of every excellence required in the wife of a missionary; as, in heroism, notwithstanding her striking modesty and apparent timidity, the equal of her intrepid husband, and in patient endurance his superior.

It was in the winter of 1849-50 that the first symptoms of that disease, which was so severely to try her "patient endurance," decidedly manifested themselves. Few can imagine the acuteness of the suffering which she endured before she sought medical aid. In the spring, however, her family called in the aid of a gentleman who had been the means of restoring her health on a previous occasion. But his skill was unavailing. She gradually became worse until October, when Dr. Risdon Bennett kindly consented to undertake her then apparently hopeless case. He succeeded in so far restoring her as to enable her, in the summer of 1851, to visit a friend in Cambridge-shire, with whom she would have continued for some time, as she was much better, had not a fresh source of anxiety compelled her to return to London, to be under the immediate eye of her kind physician. She had for many months

entirely lost the use of her legs, and was obliged to be lifted about; nevertheless, her spirits were good, her patience unabated, her humble and firm reliance upon her Saviour unswerving. The illness of one of her sons in the winter was a source of great anxiety to her, which for a time appeared to occasion her much bodily suffering. But nothing yet caused her friends to apprehend that her life would be cut short, as on his recovery she also rallied, and it was hoped that the approaching summer would have been favorable to her restoration. These hopes, however, were soon disappointed, for her sufferings greatly increased; and during the whole month of May, these were of the most distressing character. She was never free from the most acute pain. All that medical skill could devise failed to alleviate it. Her weakness gradually increased, and on the 15th of June, at half-past 8 P.M., her heavenly Father was pleased to answer her prayers, and gently to release her from those deep and troubled waters which he had in his providence called her to pass through. Her faculties were preserved to her to the very last. She recognized both her sons on their entrance into her room, "Lord, I thank thee!" were the last intelligible words she uttered.

In the paroxysms of severe suffering sometimes she would exclaim, "How long, O Lord, how long?" or else, "Will the Lord be favorable no more? Is His mercy clean gone for ever?" But when God's infinite love and mercy were alluded to, "Yes! oh, yes! he is merciful and gracious; I will trust in him even to the end."

A friend came one evening to see her, who, speaking of Christ as the believer's friend and refuge in time of need, "Oh, yes! Mr. Prout," she said, with great emphasis, "He is my only refuge, what should I do without him?"

A friend one day said to her, "What a happy meeting you will have with your dear Mr. Williams in heaven!"

"Oh, yes," she answered. "what a day that will be! what a blessed day!"

When a partial cessation of pain would enable her, she would repeat hymns or passages of Scripture; but, towards her end, her memory failed her, and she would request some one near her to remind her of what she had forgotten.

Her weakness increasing, she could not bear to have much either read or said to her. But she seemed in constant prayer. Indeed, her soul was ever in communion with her Lord, as her ejaculations were, "Lord, have mercy upon me!" "Lord, take me!" "Lord, be merciful to a *poor* sinner!" She could never allow any reference to be made to the life she had spent in

the service of her Lord; and to her privations and trials as meriting any reward. "Oh, no!" she would exclaim, "don't mention it; I am only an unworthy sinner."

She often requested those around her to pray that she might be speedily released, to join her Lord.

Great was her interest in the salvation of the souls of those about her. She said to one of her attendants one day, "Shall I meet you in heaven?" and repeated the question three times. Then she added, "Pray, pray, that I may soon be released, and that we may meet in heaven."

Almost her last expression was, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Oh, come *quickly!*"

Christian Work.

CANADA.—There is no Christian work in Canada of more interest and importance, all things considered, than the work carried on in the Province of Quebec by the French Canadian Missionary Society. It is not simply that the Society is doing a spiritual work in the way of leading men to the liberty with which Christ makes his people free, but they are helping to solve by moral means, the social and civil problem that lies hid in the presence of Popery in such magnitude in the very centre of our Dominion. We commend to the careful attention of readers, and to their grateful thanksgiving, the opening sentences of this year's report which has just reached us. In our next issue, we will give some details of the practical work of a Society with which we wish our readers to become very intimate.

"Another year's labor in connection with French Canadian Evangelization has passed away, carrying with it its full share of encouragement and difficulties, which seem ever to be associated with the prosecution of God's work in this sin-stricken world. The many public renunciations of the Church of Rome throughout the Province; the growth of French Protestantism in localities where, un-

til lately, unbroken Romanism prevailed; a larger average in the sale and circulation of the Scriptures; and, what with God's blessing may be a token of larger success in the future, an extending spirit of inquiry on the part of the people; each and all denote extraordinary changes when comparing the present with the state of this Province at the formation of the Society thirty-four years ago.

The spirit of the age has set in so strongly against the ecclesiastical feudalism that has for so long a time prevailed here, that changes in the social and national characteristics of the people must sooner or later be brought about. To preserve them from the too prevalent infidelity of old France, and to lead them to the knowledge and acceptance of the Gospel of God's grace, is the first and ardent desire of every true friend of this Society. Were the adherents of Evangelical religion disposed to let them alone, as some would recommend, there would be nothing to counterbalance other and evil influences that are constantly extending. It may be long, or it may be a short time, before these expected changes will be effected, but, whatever be either the immediate or the distant future, the Christian's duty calls upon him to act *to day*. Souls are perishing for lack of knowledge; men and women are denied their heaven-born birth-right, and they know it not, and the 'children of the light' are unmistakably called upon to be 'good stewards of the manifold grace of God.'

The growing intelligence and independence of the French Canadian population opens the

door for the profitable employment of additional labourers amongst them. The increased number of small churches and scattered converts, unable to contribute much towards meeting the spiritual and educational disadvantages so many of them labour under, also necessitates an increase in the missionary staff."

The scene at Antigonish, Nova Scotia, a few weeks ago, cannot soon be forgotten by Protestants. It is a fact of meaning that two men, ministers of the gospel, were set upon by a Popish mob and stoned because these ministers were Protestants and they gave utterance in a Protestant Church to Protestant doctrines. The meaning of the fact is this—That Popery is now as of old intolerant and persecuting in its spirit. This church, wherever it takes root, kills out like a Upas tree all toleration and kindly feeling towards those that differ from it. It takes root in Spain and we have the Inquisition: it takes root in Ireland, and the kindest and most genial peasantry in the world become under its influence—Fenians. It takes root in some corners of Scotland,—some of the western Isles—and there it converts Scotchmen, who are considered law-abiding people, into the fierce hunting wolves that raged after Mr. Chiniquy and Mr. Goodfellow, and round the house in which they took shelter at Antigonish. It is no excuse that Mr. Chiniquy left the church of Rome. Archbishop Manning is not thus treated for having left the Protestant church. It is no excuse that Mr. Chiniquy says bitter things. Do we stone priests every time they say bitter things against Protestants? It is no excuse that priests are not responsible for the actions of their people—in this instance priest McGillivray says that though he is sorry for Mr. Goodfellow he is glad that Mr. Chiniquy was stoned. This stoning of these men calls Protestants not to angry words, or angry feelings, but to *Christian work*. It is a timely reminder of the sad truth that Protestants have forgotten the duty they owe to Scotch Catholics in Nova Scotia

and in Glengarry of Ontario. "We remember well," says the *Halifax Witness*, "how emphatically Dr. Geddie urged a mission to the Roman Catholics in Inverness county. Travelling with him through that noble county, we have seen him point to this spot and that spot as the place where a Missionary might be stationed. He was confident that speedy and great success would crown the effort though a brisk persecution might be expected for a year or two. The Highland Roman Catholics have claims on us not less strong than the claims of our Acadian brethren. Let us then be up and doing, and repay the cruel treatment of our ministers at Antigonish by sending the Gospel torch into the dark places and strongholds of Romanism. The Acadian Mission must first be attended to, for it is upon our hands, and it presents an aspect of most precious promise to us. Fruit has already been gathered, and there is the promise of a bounteous harvest. But the turn of the Scotch will come."

UNITED STATES.—The Young Men's Christian Association held lately its Convocation in Poughkeepsie, New York. The following glimpse of the gathering is from the *Christian Weekly*:

"It would be difficult, I think, to find anywhere in the world a finer looking body of young men than that which is in Convention, in the church adjoining me as I write. It embraces representatives from nearly every section of the country, and from every branch of the church of Christ. It embraces young men, full of the ardour of their first love, and old men who have grown gray in the Master's service. It embraces men of professional culture, men of business talent, men right from the mechanic's bench. It embraces men endowed with wealth, and men who are rich only in faith, hope and charity. But I defy the astutest observer to detect the imaginary line which separates the classes. The Convention is a living and eloquent sermon on the text, 'One in Christ Jesus.'

"That which impresses me as beyond everything else characteristic of the Convention in all its exercises, is the love for Christ that glows in the hearts of its members, whether it is a welcome-meeting like that at the Opera House last night, or a prayer-meeting like those of this morning and this afternoon, or a

discussion on General Secretaries or General Committees, or Temptations to Young Men, or Pernicious Literature—the constant recurrence is to Christ, only Christ. It is the keynote of the opening meeting: for Christ we have come, in Christ is our joy and our strength. It is the one sacred source of might to which every discussion recurs. It is Christ in the State Convention which is to give it power; Christ in literature which is to cast out the devil; Christ in the individual soul which is to make it efficient for God and humanity. Even in the business meeting the same irrepressible fervour breaks forth in songs and prayers that are interjected in every discussion, and forbid it from ever becoming an acrimonious debate.

"I am scarcely less impressed by the working earnestness of this body and all its members. It hardly seems possible that they are American young men. The writer, whoever he was, who asserted that Americans were born stump-speakers, would retract his libel in the presence of this assemblage. A five minutes rule is rigidly enforced—no I am mistaken. It enforces itself. It is rarely that the little bell rings. If these Conventions did nothing else they would do good service in abolishing rhetoric and compelling a severe simplicity. There is no 'splurge,' no declamation, no tendency to it; there would be no toleration of it. It is wonderful to see how straight every speaker goes to the heart of his subject; how instantly he stops when he gets through. I wish that all our theological students could attend, at least, one Y. M. C. A. Convention as a means of education in the art of condensation and brevity."

ENGLAND.—The second private conference of members of the Church of England, and of other Protestant denominations anxious to arrive at some action to prevent the spread of Ritualism in the Church of England, and to preserve the Protestant faith, was held last Tuesday afternoon in the National Club, Whitehall Gardens, London. There were more than 100 clergymen and laymen present, belonging to the Church of England, English Presbyterian, and Wesleyan Methodist denominations; two or three members of the Congregational Church. The proceedings lasted about three hours, and there was a free interchange of opinion. On the motion of Lord Ebury, the Earl of Shaftesbury was requested to preside. Letters of apology were read from the Earl of Chichester and other noblemen

and gentlemen, expressing sympathy with the object of the meeting. The Rev. E. V. Bligh (Church of England) and the Rev. Dr. Donald Fraser (English Presbyterian) explained what had been already done for the cause they had met to promote. They stated that the present conference was larger than the former one. Mr. Bligh and other Church of England clergymen who afterwards spoke gave an alarming account of the spread of Ritualism; but Lord Shaftesbury said that as matters were the disease had not extended to the laity, whom he described as the rank and file, but had seized hold upon the field-m Marshals, generals, and the subordinate officers. Dr. Fraser, in his speech, which was well received by the conference, said that he did not allow himself to be fettered by his views as a Presbyterian looking only to his own denomination, but was more concerned for the Protestantism of the nation, in which he could safely say all Presbyterians were deeply interested. He urged a revision of the Prayerbook and the Rubrics so as to deprive the Ritualists of the argument that they were justified in their Romish opinions by what was stated there, and he enforced that Church of England ministers must not look to mere defence associations, but to the race Protestantism as their proper ground if the battle of the Protestant faith was to be successfully fought. He also counselled more fraternal feelings on their part to their Nonconformist brethren, and urged an appeal to the people of the country.

A letter from the Rev. Dr. Stoughton (Congregationalist) was read, expressing regret that he was not able to be present, as he had intended, from his sympathy with the object of the movement, but in justice stating that the true Protestants in the Church of England must first set about helping themselves before they ought to call upon Nonconformists. The Rev. Mr. Russell, in his few remarks, said that the leading Congregational ministers were conspicu-

ous by their absence, and that that spoke volumes as to their feelings in relation to the movement, and he did not wonder at their absence, considering their views on the question of Establishment and disestablishment. Mr. Samuel Morley, M. P., when requested by Lord Shaftesbury to address the meeting, said he could not at that stage take any part in the proceedings till he saw what was to be definitely proposed, but that he came to express sympathy with the object. Mr. Arthur, among other remarks, said that the Wesleys did not trouble themselves with disestablishment, but he was convinced that if the true-hearted men of the Church of England allowed that institution to be deprotestantised, and the cause of the Reformation and of the Lord to be betrayed, as the Ritualists were doing, the Wesleys would passionately go in for disestablishment. The Rev. Capel Molyneux, in strong terms, urged extensive revision of the Prayer-book and of the formularies, and the removal of all passages about absolution and confession, on which the Ritualists rested their arguments in justification of what they were doing. He said that he would at all times rather see disestablishment than the continuance of the present state of things. There were here some expressions of dissent. After a number of other speakers had addressed the conference, Lord Ebury proposed the appointment of a committee. The noble Chairman said he regarded the committee as a vigilance one to stimulate other committees already in existence, and to endeavour to arouse the public opinion of the country on the important Protestant interests that were imperilled. The following resolutions were ultimately unanimously adopted:—

That Nonconformists as well as Churchmen have the right to insist that the Church of England, while it exists as an Establishment, shall exist only as a Protestant institution. That considering the growth of Romanist principles within the National Church, this meet-

ing calls upon all Protestant Englishmen to use their utmost efforts to complete the Reformation, and by all means at their disposal to secure the pure teaching of Protestant truth throughout the empire. That a wise and judicious revision of the formularies of the Church of England, as fixed by the Acts of Uniformity, is chiefly needed in order to take away the alleged support which Ritualism finds in those formularies, and to promote more friendly relations with those non-Episcopalian bodies which accept the great leading doctrines of the Protestant Reformation. That some common action is desirable in order to bring public opinion to bear upon the Legislature for the accomplishment of these objects.

FRANCE.—An enterprise, says a correspondent of the *True Catholic*, of an unexampled character has been commenced and carried on with vigour and success in the capital. One who was a commissioned officer in the Church at home has relinquished his former position, with all its emoluments, and has given himself up to a mode of warfare of his own invention. The Rev. R. W. M'All, F.L.S., late of the town of the martyred Rowland Taylor—Hadleigh, in Suffolk—has had the honour of inaugurating a mode of holy service that bids fair to spread blessing amid the operative class in the suburbs of gay and godless Paris. To this special work our beloved friend, with his excellent wife—a help mete for him—has given up his life and energy. The mournful condition of that “banned race,” which seemed to have the curses of Cain and Canaan upon them—the forlorn remnant of the Communists—filled the soul of our friends with deep commiseration. Many of these misguided men were the *agents* in the fratricidal struggle; but they left wives and widows, sons and daughters, to be the *victims* of their misdeeds. The wail of sorrow reached these Christian hearts. Being interpreted, it came to them thus: “No man

careth for our souls;" and so they left home, country, and church for the love of the lost and perishing. One distinguishing mark of this effort has been the selection of most unchurchlike buildings, and most informal methods of conducting the public "conferences" (lectures). In different outlying quarters of Paris, shops in public thoroughfares have been engaged which now are thronged whenever opened by those whose presence is especially sought. Tracts without number, and portions of Scripture more than this deponent is able to state, have been given away. Children's meetings in the week, and Sunday-schools on the great day of rest and work, as well as classes of gratuitous instruction, have been established. At the present, an average of about 250 persons a-day are gathered under new influences in connection with this remarkable movement.

Addresses and readings (not exceeding ten minutes), interspersed with Scripture and prayer, and enlivened by frequent songs of praise, chiefly set to English tunes and written by the English head and heart of the work, form the main characteristics and attractions of these services. Good has been done through the year and a-half during which this mission has been carried on, and good increasing must be, we firmly believe, the result of an enterprise so begun and continued.

ITALY.—A Florence correspondent of the *Evangelical Christendom* says:—"The one thing to be feared in Italy today, and the fact to awaken the greatest religious activity throughout Christendom on her behalf, is not priestcraft, or the unscrupulous machinations of the Romish Church, but the reaction from the bondage of superstition and the influence of a false faith to the opposite extreme of bold Atheism and infidelity. An intelligent gentleman in Genoa said to me a few weeks ago, that he was for many years a devout Roman Catholic, but could not longer sanction the false and superstitious dogmas of the Church

in whose communion he had been reared. He came to the conclusion that if God sanctioned such teachings, he could not be a Christian. Knowing no better and purer faith, he drifted into the utter darkness of Atheism. After a bitter experience of soul-darkness and unbelief, he was guided to the truth as it is in Jesus. Now he is a confirmed and joyful believer in Christ and His salvation.

"It is a great ambition to acquire property enough to be able to preach a free Gospel to his countrymen.

"A few days ago I was in a town not many miles from Florence, and one of the most important business men of the town told me—and I have reason to believe his statement—that of the 2500 people in the town not more than 800 remained steadfast to the Roman Catholic Church. A few professed Protestantism, and asked to be gathered into a Protestant Church, and the rest were either avowed Atheists, or utterly indifferent to the claims of religion.

"Now is the time to enter Italy with the Gospel; now is the time to raise up a trained and educated ministry among the Italians, upon whom the light of a better faith is just dawning."

SPAIN.—The traditional stagnation of this land is gone, writes the Madrid correspondent of the *True Catholic*. For better or worse, problems of greatest moment are being wrought out, no one venturing to predict the end. What the Romish Church has lost in Spain, in power and prestige, during these few years of free thought and religious liberty, it would be hard to estimate. Nor am I at all prepared to say that what has been lost to Romanism has been gained by infidelity. The Romish Church in Spain, prior to 1868, was full of infidelity. Its priesthood was infidel to the core. Among the women, a few were and are sincere and devout; the great mass knew their religion only as a form, and practised it as a balance of power or set-off as against the world; the fanatic, on the other hand, with most show of

zeal, has least of the reality, and with such religion too often degenerated into a cover for vice. Of the men, not one in fifty, or perhaps a hundred, practised confession, or otherwise conformed to the precepts of the Church, from conviction; and the outward conformity due to a desire to escape being discredited, produced in all classes and in both sexes its sure result—hypocrisy, unbelief, and hardness of heart.

However hard the opposition, the Gospel finds, wherever preached, not only the hearing ear but also hearts that respond. Opposition, indeed, on the part of the Romish Church commonly defeats its end, and draws attention to the truths of the Gospel. In Cartagena lately—for all we write can be fortified by examples—two Jesuit preachers carried on a mission—that is, delivered a series of sermons on successive nights against Protestantism; but the result was, to fill the Evangelical Church, and induce the pastor to preach also, nine successive nights, upon the distinctive doctrines of the Gospel, to overflowing audiences. In Mahon, such has been the violent preaching of some of the priests, that on a recent occasion, in the Church of St. Louis, one of the auditory, shocked by the unchristian words he heard, rose from his seat and cried out, "What are you preaching about? Come down from the pulpit!" In the same town the alcalde found it necessary lately to address a note to the rector of the principal church, intimating that "if the preachers did not change their system, startling events would be witnessed in Mahon."

In some parts, especially where the Carlists predominate, the colporteurs have gone through great perils in their work of selling the Scriptures. One whose sphere of labour is in the province of Burgos has been warned on several occasions that his life was sought; another, in the province of Almeria, was lately beaten and stoned by a crowd led on by the priest and the alcalde, and with difficulty escaped with his life.

In many of the country towns and villages the priests are quietly leaving their posts, seeing that they are not likely to get more pay. It would be very interesting to know the exact truth upon this point; my own impression, founded on inquiries made as to what has passed in very different provinces, is that hundreds of priests have quietly retired and turned to farming or other occupations. Others are driven to desperation, and seek to retain their office by force—some by violence of controversy and intrigue, others by that of arms. Of the latter little need be said. It is well known that some of the most violent of those heading the murderous robber-bands of Carlism are priests; their crimes consecrated by prayer and the blessing of the Church. And it is remarkable that against these their bishops make no protest, although in some instances the civil governors have addressed the bishops of their respective dioceses, complaining of the conduct of the priests. The ecclesiastical authorities, ever on the alert to repress the doctrines of Christ, quick to pronounce censure on every one who prefers the Bible to holy water, observe a significant silence when their clergy commit outrages that dishonor the age. A large number assiduously attempt to preach down the new doctrines, which are rapidly spreading among the people.

GERMANY.—On the 1th of June last, seventy-seven Old Catholic Delegates (57 laymen and 20 priests) met according to previous arrangement, at Cologne, and proceeded to the election of a bishop! The age of Dr. Dollinger placing him out of account, the choice of the electors fell on Dr. Joseph Reinkens, who has been for some years past a professor of theology at Breslau. He is in his fiftieth year, and has been a priest in the Church of Rome for nearly a quarter of a century. A serious difficulty, however, has unexpectedly arisen. The Jansenist Archbishop of Utrecht, who was to have consecrated him, died on the very day of

the election. The Bishopric of Haarlem is at this moment vacant. And there remains only one man—The Bishop of Deventer—who is believed to possess the needful qualifications for performing the ceremony. It may well be supposed that the Jesuits look upon this critical state of matters as an indication of the divine displeasure, and some of them must be under a great temptation at present to nip the now schism in the bud by making the Bishopric of Deventer vacant likewise. Jansenism in a valid church form would then become extinct; and Dr. Reinkens' orders would for ever after be sneered at as on a level with those of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

SYRIA.—One of the Missionaries at Harpoot writes in the *Harpoot News*:—“The chief direct labour among the Mohammedans in Turkey is by the sale of the Scriptures, which are found in the hands of many. Visiting the pasha of this district a few days since, we were not a little surprised to find him thoroughly at home in opening to chapter and verse in the New Testament, a copy of which was in his possession. We, at his own request, recently furnished the military pasha here with a Bible, and some time since sold copies to the cali and the chief of the custom-house. Sales of Testaments in the Turkish tongue and character are becoming quite frequent.

“It must be confessed, that few seem to feel any spiritual interest in it as God's Book. Their chief aim seems to be to gratify curiosity somewhat as we should in reading the Koran. They, however, acknowledge the Scriptures to be from God, but say that they have been corrupted.

“They take much satisfaction in turning text against text. Calling recently upon a Turkish goldsmith, to whom I had sold a Testament, he brought it out, with marginal annotations for my explanation. Most of them were on the words of Jesus,—references from passages in which He

declares His divinity to those presenting His humanity, and vice versa.

“But these discussions are spreading light, and many, chiefly the more intelligent among the military class, confess that the truth is with us, and that ere long their own system must give place to ours.

“But it is more encouraging to learn of here and there one who appears really to love the truth. A humble Protestant brother was some time since travelling in the mountainous district to the south of Harpoot, and resting by the wayside, when a Turkish horseman dismounted and sat down beside him with the question, ‘Do you know how to read?’ The Turk then drew a Testament from his bosom, and reading a chapter in John's Gospel, led in prayer, pleading the merits of Jesus.

“His story was that he was from a village to the north of Harpoot; that having been enlightened by this Testament he was threatened with violence by his relatives, who had twice employed Koorls to attack him; and that he was fleeing for his life. There surely was no apparent motive for telling an untruth, and may we not hope that among the many into whose hands the Scriptures have fallen there are not a few who, like Joseph of Arimathea, are disciples of Jesus, though secretly for fear of the Turks, and who like him will at length come out boldly on the Lord's side?”

INDIA:—One of the most interesting parts of Mission work in India is the effort to reach the native women. Of this work *Miss Hook* writes:—“The doors in the zenanas are black, heavy wooden ones, often so low that it is a daily process to strike the top of one's head, unless the mind is upon the surroundings. A little chain on the outside is used to fasten and lock the door at the top. When it is fastened on the inner side, we rattle the chain and hear a drawn out oh!—‘Mem ashchen’—which is the servant calling to the boy or

lady of the house that the lady is coming. In one house I go through the door, pass through a mud apartment out into an open square court, surrounded by the house. The sun is shining pleasantly, and one of my pupils is very frequently employed in taking her bath or throwing water over her. I pass through, telling her to come quickly, and in a few moments she enters with a clean saree rolled about her, and we sit down in a little room about eight feet square, with ground floor looking out upon the court. She gives me a chair with a mat under my feet and sits on the floor before me. Two of her sisters-in-law come from the other side of the house, and the three go on with lessons; such as reading some book on various subjects, or some of the stories prepared to illustrate Christian truths, catechism, a verse of Scripture, writing, geography, arithmetic, and lastly one of the Bible stories, on which we talk awhile.

"Often many others come in and sit down to listen, or make their remarks upon our personal appearance. Sometimes we get their attention by singing a hymn, and then talk to them and tell them about Jesus Christ.

The old women are very fond of saying that we all agree Christ is only an embodiment of God, like their Krishna; but we tell them, No, that will never do, their Krishna was exceedingly wicked, and Jesus Christ was sinless. When they find we know anything about him, they laugh and give up the argument. We go on in this way from house to house; sometimes we have only one pupil, but these are the families of the best classes of society. Yet they and their houses contrast strangely with the homes in our own blessed land, with the soft velvet carpet and luxurious chairs, &c. You there only find such miserable dwellings among the most degraded objects of charity, and it is not because they are poor, but they know nothing better. Some know that we live in a more

civilized way, but they regard their customs as unchangeable. When we tell them that when England was a heathen land they were much the same, they are much pleased. Some are more enlightened, and say that they have observed God gives every blessing to Christian nations.

AFRICA.—*Rev. Samuel H. Edgerley*, in his recent journey to the interior towards the Niger, had many precious opportunities of proclaiming the Gospel to those who had never heard it. He thus describes his visit to

UYANGA.

"On the evening of our arrival in Uyanga the king summoned a meeting of *everybody*, 'to hear what the white men have to say.' Shortly after sunset the people began to crowd into the public square before and around the egbo house. The king and chiefs met in the egbo house, and the rest, from the towns, in the open square. It was by far the largest turn-out we had seen since we left Calabar. The king sat on his clay erection covered with skins in the centre of the building, we immediately on his left, and the chiefs seemingly near to or far from him according to rank or seniority. In front of him, and clear of the skin on which his feet rested, squatted several youths—likely the future great men of the tribe. Several oil-lamps blazed in front of the king—the only light the audience had by which to see and be seen. Within our honoured circle we were not crowded, yet we had no room to spare; but beyond a few feet radius from the king's seat the people were packed like herrings in a barrel, and outside the endeavour of each was to get as close as possible to us. Those outside must have been the most comfortably situated, for the walls of the house being only half up to the eaves, they could hear quite well and had fresh air in addition, which the insiders had not.

"Curiosity was stamped on every countenance, fear on some, and grati-

cation on that of the king. He received us into the house very courteously, shook our hands, hoped we were well, and showed us our seats, then commanding silence, he told us the people were glad to see us, and would be glad to hear what we had got to say. This being the intimation to us to begin, according to arrangement I spoke first, told them that we came neither for war nor trade, but in peace, and to establish friendship and give information. We all spoke more or less, Ukpabio and I most, about God and man, sin and a Saviour, life and death, and time and eternity. This was the first time Jesus was proclaimed in the place; few had seen white people before. We knew we would not be long among them, and therefore we were anxious to tell as much of the truth as possible. All listened attentively, but some seemed disappointed that we had not come to open trade with them. We spoke a long time, but could not enter deeply into any subject, lest the variety of subjects should confuse their minds. We were obliged to give them only the 'first principles,' in the simplest form, and do so over and over again, and in different connections at each repetition. The king gave us good help by repeating what we said, though he slipped once or twice. His slips did good rather than harm, for his chiefs corrected him every time, showing that they understood what had been said; and by their corrections they attracted greater attention from the crowd, and impressed the subject more on the minds of all. We concluded with prayer, first telling them what prayer was, and its why and how. They all knew what prayer was; but the quiet, reverent manner in which our petitions were expressed, and *on their behalf*, seemed new to them; but still they remained quiet to the last. After prayer we told them that we had intended giving them two days, but that having already been longer on our way than we originally intended, we must

leave early on the morrow. This intimation was not acceptable to the people; for while we were preparing our quarters for the night the king sent a request that, seeing they had waited for us ever since they had a town, they hoped we would stay eight days at least among them; and besides he had sent to call all the Uyanga people to come and see us, and if we did not wait they would be much disappointed."

CHINA.—The remarkable work of grace in Formosa still advances with unabated power. Converts carry the good tidings into new districts. Interest is awakened, stations are opened, and the hand of the Lord being with His servants, many believe and turn to the Lord. It is instructive to observe by what varied instrumentality the Divine Worker accomplishes His gracious ends. At one place fifty or sixty hearers were gathered in, and a new chapel built, chiefly through the faithful testimony of a poor cripple, who had been baptized the previous year. At another, where a new and promising station has been opened during the past year, the progress of the truth has been entirely due to the energetic appeals and consistent life of an earnest unpaid evangelist who belongs to the learned class. "It was quite refreshing," Mr. Ritchie writes, with reference to his educated convert, "to listen to an exposition of the doctrines of the Cross from a mind which for nearly half a century has drunk from the streams of the Confucian philosophy, but has now turned such wisdom to account in preaching Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God."

At all the stations in Formosa, twenty-two in number, 255 adults were baptised during the year. The total membership is 784, and the average attendance at the Lord's-day services is but ten short of 2000.

The adult membership of all the churches connected with the Mission is now 1632, and the average attendance at the Lord's-day services is little short

of 3500. This work bears the image and superscription of its Divine Author. It has been tested by careful examination and close observation of the inquirers and converts on the part of our Missionaries. They believe and feel that it is our God.

Fiji Islands.—The Rev. Frederick Greeves says:—

"I have heard one of our Missionaries say, that he stood once in the presence of a savage Fijian chief—a man in whose presence a human life was not worth a fish-hook—he said to that man, 'What does your religion teach you to do to your enemies?'

"'Kill them, and eat them,' said the chief, handling his club as if he were about to begin with the Missionary.

"'Now,' said the Missionary, 'listen to my religion,' and he read to him some verses of our Lord's Sermon on the Mount: 'I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.'

"'O!' said the Fijian, 'that is a good thing; that would suit Fiji.'

"And then the Missionary turned to the 12th chapter of Romans, and read to him: 'Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.'

"Again the Fijian chief said that this was a good thing, and would suit his people; and he sent for a teacher to come and instruct his subjects. And what has been the result of our Fijian Mission? Why we have a King there a Christian; his name is Ebenezer, for hitherto the Lord hath helped us. We have a Queen there a Christian; her name is Lydia, for her heart the Lord hath opened. Her two daughters are Christians; the one is a class-leader, and the other is president of the Band of Hope in the island.

"We have given to these people a Christian literature, in which there is not a single bad book, and I hope it will be very long before there is any bad book in the Fijian language. We have given them a code of laws of which we can say this at least, that it is quite as equitable and a great deal more intelligible than the law of Great Britain."

Practical Papers.

HOW TO GET PEACE.

(From the Life of MARTIN BOOS.)

Bachlin, a farmer's widow, the sister of Brunner's servant, was often invited to Posthuberg by the two latter; but knowing that they only wished to warn her against her pastor and his faith, she would not listen to the invitation. Instead of this, she went on one occasion to the clergyman, and complained to him of the distress she felt in her conscience, that notwithstanding all her confessions

and her striving after piety, she had neither rest nor peace of heart.

"No one is to blame for this," said the clergyman, "but your unbelief."

Bachlin.—"And yet it seems to me, that I believe all that you preach."

Boos.—"No, you do not believe all."

Bachlin.—"Yes, I assure you, I believe all."

Boos.—"Mark, I will immediately preach something to you, which you certainly do not believe."

Bachlin.—"That must indeed be something strange."

Boos.—"I now preach and say unto you in God's name, Be of good cheer, Bachlin, thy sins are forgiven thee; for Christ has suffered for thee, and paid thy ransom. You have only to believe this, and all will be right. Do you believe what I say?"

The woman, touched and perplexed, was unable to answer in the affirmative. Instead of joyfully replying, "Yes, I believe it," she tried to support herself with the broken reed of an arm of flesh and said, "Yes, but I first wish to make a proper confession."

Boos.—"You have often done this already, and have never yet attained any peace of conscience: nor will you, though you confess again and again."

Bachlin.—"But for what reason?"

Boos.—"Because you seek to obtain the forgiveness of your sins for the sake of your works, like the Jews, and not by faith in Jesus Christ, like a true Christian. This is not the case with you alone; but almost all are of opinion that God will forgive them their sins, merely because of their confessing, repenting, fasting, etc.: in short, on account of their performances, and not on account of the doing, and suffering, atoning, and dying of Christ, and the exercise of faith in Him. And because their weak and wretched performances, their repentance, confession, and penitence do not reach the mark, but always come too short, are too mean, too barren, and too imperfect—they never attain to true peace, because they found it upon their miserable doings. Such is the case with you, also.

"Be humble, therefore, and believe the word of God, which tells you,—

"(1.) That man attains by faith to righteousness—that is, the forgiveness of sins,—and not by the works of the law, or for the sake of such works.

"(2.) The righteousness of God comes by faith in Jesus Christ, unto and upon all them that believe in Him. By Him they must all be justified and delivered

from sin, punishment, hell, the devil, and inward distress, without merit, and solely of grace. God alone is righteous, and he whom He makes so. It is therefore not on account of your penitence in the church that your sins are forgiven you, but on account of the agonies and death which Christ suffered for you. However great your penitence may be, your sins will not be forgiven you on that account, but on account of Christ's severe suffering for you.

"By this I do not do away with your repentance, sorrow, confession, etc.; all this is necessary. I only say all this in order that you may believe in Christ, and through faith in Him obtain forgiveness of sins and peace of conscience: for so long as you trust and confide in your own miserable doings, you can never attain either the one or the other.

"Therefore, observe: Your sins are forgiven you—not on account of your doing and suffering, but solely on account of the doing and suffering of Jesus Christ. Mark this, and believe it!

"Your sins are forgiven and remitted for His sake, and through Him, who for your sake was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, dead, and buried, and for your sake rose again and ascended up to heaven.

"And observe further: For His sake you receive the Holy Spirit, are admitted into the universal Christian Church, and to the communion of saints, and obtain the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen. Is this your belief?"

Bachlin.—"Yes, I now believe! Thanks and praise be to God! A stone is now removed from my heart; I now see what I did not believe before, that I have trusted too much in my own doings, and too little to the doing and suffering of Jesus Christ. Hence I could never feel easy; I have been penitent, it is true; but I have never before believed. How blind we poor mortals are! I am already above fifty years old, and have never understood

this before. May God pardon me for it, and reward you a thousand times!"

With these words she took her departure, believing and seeing. She afterwards confessed that she had been compelled to weep the whole of the Sunday previous, because the morning sermon touched her in such a manner, as if it had been directed solely to her.

CHRIST'S SCHOLAR ADVISED.

ROMAINE.

Read and pray for more self-knowledge. God's Word and Spirit will teach you nothing about yourself but what will humble you to the dust, and keep you there. Read and pray for more knowledge of the person of Jesus: God-man; His salvation-work, infinitely and everlastingly perfect. He is yours, now He is received, and all He has—and all He is, as Jesus. Yours in title, and, so far as you believe, yours in possession.

Read and pray for more faith, that what you have a title to you may take possession of, and so make constant use of it. Your estate is great, immensely great. Use it and live upon it. As you do in temporals, so do in spirituals. Your money, your land, your air, your light, your meat and drink, and house and clothing,—these you use, but you have them not in you, only, being yours, they are used by you. So do with Christ. When the Spirit would glorify Jesus, He humbles you. When He would glorify His fulness, He makes you feel your emptiness. When he would bring you to rely on His strength, He convinces you of your weakness. When He would magnify the comforts of Jesus, He makes you sensible of your misery. When He would fix your heart on heaven, He makes you feel you deserve hell. When he would exalt His righteousness, you find you are a miserable sinner.

Let nothing keep you from Jesus. Whatever you need, whatever you feel wrong, may it bring you to the Saviour's

fulness! O that all things may help forward your acquaintance with Him! I except nothing, neither sin nor sorrow. I would carry all to Him, as one great lump of sin, and receive all good from Him, as the only storehouse of good for wretched sinners. In this communion I desire to grow; for this I desire to live. O that you and I may learn it more, and get nearer fellowship with our sweet Jesus, growing up into Him in all things!

On our learning this lesson depends our comfortable walk heavenwards. Every moment we must live upon Christ's fulness, and be every moment receiving out of it grace for grace. A beggar in myself, but rich with unsearchable eternal riches in Jesus. Ignorant still in myself, but led and taught by His unerring wisdom. A sinner still, but believing in His blood and righteousness. Weak and helpless still, but kept by His Almighty love. Nothing but sorrows in myself,—nothing but joy in Him. Oh! this is a blessed life. No tongue can tell what a heaven it is, thus to live by faith on the Son of God. Thanks be to Him that I know a little of it, and I cannot but heartily pray that you may know more of it than you ever did. Blessings for ever on the Lamb!

A TOUCHING INCIDENT.—A little girl about nine years of age who was being conducted to the Lunatic Asylum at Amherstburgh, was left for one night in charge of the gaoler of this town (Sandwich). Upon sitting down to the table she inquired if permission would be given her to ask a blessing. The lady in charge of her at the gaol replied that she might ask the blessing. "May I not say my prayers at night and in the morning?" rejoined the little unfortunate, "for mother told me to do so." This strikingly shows the deep impression of a mother's teachings, retaining their hold even after reason has lost her throne. Mothers! think of this.

Children's Treasury.

LITTLE LUCY,

AND THE SONG SHE SANG.

I.

A little child, six summers old,
So thoughtful and so fair,
There seemed about her pleasant ways
A more than childish air,
Was sitting on a summer eve
Beneath a spreading tree,
Intent upon an ancient book,
Which lay upon her knee.

She turned each page with careful hand,
And strained her sight to see,
Until the drowsy shadows slept
Upon the grassy lea ;
Then closed the book, and upward looked,
And straight began to sing
A simple verse of hopeful love—
This very childish thing :
" While here below, how sweet to know
His wondrous love and story,
And then through grace to see His face,
And live with Him in glory ! "

II.

That little child, one dreary night
Of winter-wind and storm,
Was tossing on a weary couch
Her weak and wasted form ;
And in her pain, and in its pause,
But clasped her hands in prayer—
(Strange that we had no thoughts of heaven
While hers were only there—)

Until she said, " O, mother dear,
How sad you seem to be !
Have you forgotten that He said,
' Let children come to me ? '
Dear mother, bring the blessed Book,
Come, mother, let us sing."
And then again, with faltering tongue,
She sang that childish thing .
" While here below, how sweet to know
His wondrous love and story,
And then, through grace, to see His face,
And live with Him in glory ! "

III.

Underneath a spreading tree,
A narrow mound is seen,
Which first was covered by the snow,
Then blossomed into green ;
Here first I heard the childish voice,
That sings on earth no more ;
In heaven it hath a richer tone,
And sweeter than before :
For those who know His love below—
So runs the wondrous story—
In heaven, through grace, shall see His face
And dwell with Him in glory !

THE GOOD RED HAND.

While residing in Ireland, Charlotte Elizabeth was brought to the knowledge of Christ ; and as His love was shed abroad in her heart abundantly, she sought the salvation of others. The deplorable condition of some poor street children excited her sympathies, and set her to work. Among those she endeavoured to instruct was " Poor Jack," a dumb boy of some eight or ten years of age ; a puny little fellow of heavy aspect, and wholly destitute of the life and animation that generally characterize the class who are obliged to use looks and gestures as a substitute for words. Here was a difficult case ; but the more insurmountable the obstacle appeared to be, the more earnestly did Christian love give itself to its noble work.

By a sudden brush, the boy's mind broke its prison, and looked around on every object as though never before beheld. All seemed to appear in so new a light to him ; curiosity, in which he had been very strangely deficient, became an eagerly active principle, and nothing that was portable did he fail to bring to his teacher, with an inquiring shake of the head, and the word " What ? " spelled on the fingers. By a gradual and interesting process he was led into the recognition of a supreme Being, and into the reception of the gospel. As his mental faculties developed, he became animated and happy, and would come to his teacher each morning with a budget of new thoughts. Some of these were expressed in a way at once original and beautiful : such as the idea of the lightning, that it was produced by a sudden opening and shutting of God's eye ; and the rainbow, that it was the reflection of God's smile.

The most remarkable of these conceptions was, perhaps, the following : He said that when he had lain a good while in the grave, God would call aloud

"Jack?" and he would start and say, "Yes, me Jack." Then he would rise and see multitudes standing together, and God sitting on a cloud with a large book in his hand—he called it "Bible book,"—and would beckon him to stand before Him, while He opened the book, and looked at the top of the page till He came to the name of John B——.

In that page, he said, God had written all his "bads"—every sin he had ever done; and the page was full. So God would look, and strive to read it, and hold it to the sun for light, but it was all, "No, no, nothing, none;" for when he had first given his heart to Jesus Christ, he had taken the book out of God's hand, and found that page, and pulling from His hand something which filled up the hole made by the nail, had allowed the wound to bleed, and passed his hand down the page, so that God could see none of Jack's bads, only Jesus Christ's blood. Nothing being thus found against him, God would shut

the book, and then he would remain standing, before Him till the Lord Jesus came, and said to God, "My Jack," would put His arms round him, and bid him stand with the angels till the rest were judged.

And is it not written, "The iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found?" And again, "I, even I, am he who blot out thy transgressions!" How could the plan of a sinner's salvation be set forth more clearly than in this thought of poor Jack's?

During his last illness he frequently recurred to this idea, and would say to his friends with a look of infinite satisfaction, "Good red hand!" His view of Christ's all-sufficiency was realizing, and it was quite evident that the gospel was his sole and solid support. Truly "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength."

Christian Miscellany.

HOW AN OLD DEIST WAS CONVERTED.

Some time ago, it was the lot of a Christian minister to preach in a beautiful little chapel not far distant from one of the largest cities in the world. There were so few persons present that every thing particular would of course attract the minister's eye. As he looked round upon the empty pews, thinking of the painful circumstances of the small flock, he saw an elderly man enter, on whose face deep thoughtfulness seemed imprinted. The old man knelt down solemnly. Into every part of the service he entered with evident fervour. He heard the sermon as if it had been a message from God to him. It was evident that he could say, "I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth."

All present were attentive, but there was a particularity about him which could not escape notice. The service over, the minister asked of his host who the old man was, and if he could tell him anything of his history. In reply, the following narrative was given to him.

Only a few years previously, that old man bitterly hated and despised Christianity. He was an avowed deist; and his time, money, and worldly influence were employed in the cause he had espoused. Being a man of considerable powers, he was a sort of champion, a leader among his companions, and had thus obtained an unenviable dignity. He rarely read the Bible, and never but with a view to cavil. It was a settled point with him that the Scriptures were not divine: and therefore he

treated them with contempt. His favourite authors were those who opposed revelation: with the arguments of others he did not trouble himself. Of course he never attended any place of worship.

He was married, and had one child, a girl, whom he desired to train in his own principles, and carefully kept from all religious influence. He was very fond of this child, and allowed her to have considerable influence over him. Her wishes were generally consulted. He could not easily deny her. She got an idea that she should like to go with some of her companions to the Sabbath-school, and mentioned it to her father. He objected, but she was firm, and succeeded in gaining a reluctant consent. To the Sabbath-school she went, nor was any one more regular in attendance than she. Weeks rolled on, and months, and things remained as usual, the child learning religion in a Wesleyan Sabbath-school--the father an infidel. Providence now interfered: the wife, the mother, sickened and died. He wept, his heart bled, (for, though a deist, he had loved his wife most tenderly,) and he knew of no balm to heal his spirit.

On the following Sabbath after the funeral of the mother, the child was at the school, and her teacher kindly strove to impart to her such instructions and consolations as the mournful circumstances demanded. She bent her steps homewards, thinking of her mother, and greatly concerned about her eternal condition. Her little heart beat with intense anxiety as the thought passed through her mind, "I wonder if my mother is in heaven."

In the evening of that day, as she sat by her father, down whose cheeks the big tears often rolled, she looked up in his face, putting her soft little hand in his, and gently said, "Father!"

He awoke as from a reverie, startled by the voice of his child, and by a sullen look seemed to say, "How cruel to disturb my silent grief! Let me

alone; it is better for me to die than to live." But he did not utter a word. "Father!" again said the child, "father, do you think my mother is in heaven?"

O, what words were these, what piercing words! He eyed the flowing locks, the rosy countenance, the tearful eye of her who spake; it was his child, his only child, whom he loved as his own soul; but reply he made none. Again she demanded, "Father, do you think my mother is in heaven?"

He now replied evasively, and strove to divert attention from that to another subject. They retired in thoughtful mood: the child slept, but not so the father. For as he laid him down, strange feelings came over him, and new thoughts filled his bosom. Fain would he have buried his griefs and reflections in slumber, but that was denied.

Of one thing chiefly did he think that night--the query of his child. It was constantly sounding in his ears. He strove to forget it, but in vain. It had reached his soul, he was deeply wounded. He began to yield to conviction. "The Bible may be true," he said: "there may be a heaven, for which I am unprepared; and a hell to which I am hastening." He rose to pray; his infidel heart was broken, and he offered it to God.

In the morning he was an altered man; he took up the long-neglected Bible, and began in earnest to seek for mercy. He gave up all evil company, destroyed his vile books, and, being truly penitent, soon obtained a knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins. Now he came every Sabbath to the house of God with his dear little girl, whom he regarded as the instrument of leading him to the Saviour; and having given himself to God, gave himself also to the church by the will of God. From the period when his membership commenced to this day, he had been a most exemplary Christian.

What became of this interesting old

man, and his not less interesting child, the minister never heard; and whether either is living he knows not; but the incident beautifully illustrates the blessed truth, "that God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."—*Zion's Herald*.

DISCONTENT—ITS SOURCE.

We are inclined to refer much of the discontent which abounds in the world to the influence of an unsanctified conscience. As repeated neglects of duty pass under the notice of the mind, there is a wretchedness ever renewed, though possibly without the individual being at all aware of the source from which it springs. In this respect it resembles the constant uneasiness produced by the derangement of the digestive organs, or the irritation caused by a diseased nervous system. The reproaches of conscience, though individually transient, do yet, by their recurrence, excite a powerful influence. They resemble those noxious ephemera which make up in number what they want in strength; and while the individuals perish, the genus survives. By their constant renewal they disturb the flow of association in the mind, and dispose it to anxiety and fretfulness. An accusing conscience must thus ever be rendering the possessor restless and unhappy. We refer to this cause much of what we call temper,—both of peevish and violent temper. True, the individual may not know the quarter from which the restlessness he feels proceeds, and he may be inclined to trace it to any other source rather than the true one. He thinks that it arises from his condition, and hence his constant endeavours to better his position, to free himself from certain external inconveniences, and to attain certain temporal privileges; or he refers it to the ill usage which he receives from mankind in general, or certain individuals who have thwarted, or envied, or insulted

him, and hence his irritability or the boisterousness of his temper. He may not be aware of it—nay, he might scout the idea if propounded to him; but, nevertheless, it is certain that the spring of his misery is to be found in a conscience awakened without being pacified.—*M'Cash*.

DO WE KNOW HOW TO PRAY?

The late Dr. Hamilton of Leeds, while solemnly enforcing on the church its duty in reference to the conversion of the world, asks the following significant questions:—"And has not the church almost to learn the power of prayer? What conception have we of *believing* prayer, which opens heaven? What of *persevering* prayer, which causes us to stand continually upon the watch-tower in the day-time, and which sets us in our ward whole nights? What of *importunate* prayer, which storms heaven with its 'violence and force'? What of *united* prayer, 'gathering us together to ask help of the Lord'? What of *consistent* prayer, which regards no iniquity in our hearts? What of *practical* prayer, which fulfils itself? Let but such prayer be understood, let our spirit but 'break with such longing,' and the expectations of our bosoms shall not be delayed. 'And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.'"

FIRST A CORNER AND THEN ALL.

When a sin is let in as a suppliant, it remains in as a tyrant. The Arabs have a fable of a miller who one day was startled by a camel's nose thrust in the window of the room where he was sleeping. "It is very cold outside," said the camel, "I only want to get my nose in." The nose was let in,—then the neck,—and finally the whole body. Presently the miller began to be extremely inconvenienced at the ungainly

companion he had obtained in a room certainly not large enough for both. "If you are inconvenienced, you may leave," said the camel; "as for myself, I shall stay where I am." There are many such camels knocking at the human heart. Take for instance compliance with a single worldly custom,—dancing. First the custom creeps humbly to the door of the heart, and says, "Let me in,—what am I but putting one foot before another,—certainly *you* do not object to music, and *I* would not for the world have a full band." So in comes the nose of the camel; and it is not long before the entire body follows. The Christian then finds his heart occupied in full figure by the very vice which a little while before peeped in so meekly. "Being up," it says to him, "all night at a ball, with the eyes dazzled by lights, and the ears stunned with a full band, interferes you say with your private devotions. So it does. But your private devotions will have to go, for I will not."—*Episcopal Recorder*.

NOT TIME ENOUGH.

Not time enough. So the gilt edges of the closed Bible remain untarnished, and it leaves its own profile of dust on the table. Not time enough to study its teachings. But there is time enough for other things.

Time enough to coil around the soul the web of wealth, which, when completed, forms its shroud!

Time enough to simmer away afternoon after afternoon in the maudlin sympathy of romantic sentimentalism, until the heart, in its voluptuous impotence, becomes incapable of real love to God or man!

Time enough to pursue lusts, until the chace is turned and lust pursues you.

Time enough to lay plot upon plot, and scheme upon scheme, for the gratification of ambition or vanity!

Time enough to be sick, though then, when the heart is troubled, and the

body faint, and the head sluggish, there is indeed not time enough to repent!

TIME ENOUGH TO DIE!

A MAHOMETAN'S THOUGHT RESPECTING DISCIPLINE.

A few weeks ago, a very intelligent and interesting young Persian, a graduate of the King's College at Teheran, was sent by the government to Oroomiah to visit our seminaries,—as we suppose, to obtain hints for making improvements in the royal university. After hearing the classes in the female seminary recite their lessons, with great apparent interest and gratification, and admiring particularly the order of the school, he inquired, "What is your system of penalty for misdemeanours?" To which Miss Fisk answered: "We carefully observe every misdemeanour, and record it in a book, and at stated periods call the offenders to account." "That is right," promptly replied the young Persian; "that recording our offences, to call us to account for them by and by, is just the method which God pursues."

Do all nominal Christians cherish as vivid a recognition of the fact, that their offences are all recorded in God's book of remembrance, as was thus evinced by this intelligent, thoughtful, young Persian Mahometan?—*J. Perkins.—Oroomiah, March 20, 1854.*

UNEXPECTED USEFULNESS OF AN INFIDEL.

Perhaps very few ministers have ever held much conference with infidels without being taunted with the inconsistency of Christians, and their want of zeal in extending what they profess to believe to be truth. Probably, however, such conversations have seldom had the effect which was produced in the following instance:—

It is well known that the late Rev. Dr. Philip, of the Cape of Good Hope, was for about thirty years the able and

devoted superintendent of the London Missionary Society's stations in South Africa; and that he was eminently successful in advancing the civil and religious interests in that part of the world. On the occasion of his last visit to Europe, some years before his death in 1851, he preached a sermon by the side of a wood, in the parish of Culsamond, an^d county of Aberdeen, from which last-named city he removed to Africa. In the course of his sermon, he stated that one circumstance which powerfully acted on his mind, as an inducement to go to the heathen, was a conversation that he had with an infidel; it is supposed in Aberdeen. The doctor and the gentleman referred to had argued, at great length, the claims of Christianity; when, as might have been expected, the former had the best of the argument. His opponent felt it to be so; and for a few moments was silent. He then resumed, and suddenly said, "Well, Mr. Philip, do you really believe what you preach and teach?" "Most certainly I do," was of course the reply. "Well, then," responded the infidel, "ought you not to be ashamed of yourself? You live in comparative ease and comfort, addressing only a few of your fellow-men; while, on your theory, untold millions are perishing in ignorance of their condition, and of the way of escape. Why, sir, did I believe as you profess to do, and did I act as you act, I should feel ashamed. You profess to believe that the world is lost and going to final perdition, and that you have a remedy that can save it; that it is covered with darkness and ignorance of the way of life, and its vast population perishing, generation after generation! Why do you not go forth, and plead with your perishing fellow-men, with all the earnestness which such a case demands? Why do you not go among the nations that are sitting in darkness, that know not the God of your Bible, and afford them at least a chance of obtaining salvation? If *your* creed were *mine*, I could have

no rest till I had warned them of their condition, and entreated them to flee from the wrath to come."

In relating this anecdote, Dr. Wardlaw, in preaching the funeral sermon for his intimate and beloved friend, might well add: "You will not wonder that such a rebuke from the lips of an infidel, and having in it so much of sound reason and right feeling, should have taken fast hold of his mind, and contributed to establish it in its previous convictions, and to give increased intensity to its previous predilections."

DO YOU DISTRIBUTE GOOD BOOKS?

1. Would you not consider that "a good day" in which you had exhorted six or more persons to seek pardon from God through the righteousness of Christ?

2. But want of opportunity, of tact, or of zeal, may prevent this personal appeal. What then,—shall nothing be done by you to save your fellow-sinners!

3. Why not adopt a system by which hereafter you may be able to say: "What occurred on the 4th of last January, or the 10th of April, or the 31st of December, (or on any other day of the year) I do not remember: I may have been sick or well, have made or lost; but this one thing I know, that on that day I did that which, by God's blessing, may save an immortal soul. "How so?" inquires a listening friend. "Because," you respond, "as I distribute one or more tracts, or religious books, every day of the year, I must have done so on the date specified." Reader! take the resolution to let no day pass without its witness for the Day of Judgment! S. A. A.

Heaven sends us ten thousand truths; but because our doors and windows are shut to them, they sit and sing awhile upon the roof, and then fly away.

THE MODE OF DEATH, A DISCIPLINE.

The wisdom of God may be seen in the variety of forms under which death comes upon us. The sudden death has one class of lessons to teach; the lingering, long fore-warned death another. Cholera and casualty come with startling power, shaking the very ground beneath us with their fearful tread,—so like the trump of God, it would seem that none can be insensible to His dread presence. They read us thrilling lessons upon the frailty of our earthly frame, raising up before us that finely attenuated thread of human life, and suddenly snapping it in twain before our very eyes, as if to say, "See how near thou mayest be thyself to the eternal world!" "See how frail the tenure by which thou holdest all earthly good!" "See how pressing the call to-day to flee from the wrath to come!"

These sudden forms of death enforce the mandate and its reason, "Watch, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

On the other hand, the lingering forms of death have their special use, both to the healthy and to the sick. Take consumption as a type of this class. Note how slowly our earthly house of this tabernacle is taken down. One after another the joints are loosened, the fastenings relaxed; the ornamental work is displaced, the foundations are undermined;—a long process precedes the final fall.

This process is often a most beautiful illustration of moral good evolved from physical evil. Gradually your mind is withdrawn from the earthly, and attracted toward the heavenly. Each day swells the list of external things in which you cease to take an interest; each day heightens the interest of the world to which you are going. It is as if your stand-point for observing both earth and heaven were gradually rising from earth toward heaven. Earth recedes, heaven approaches. The objects

of earth grow more dim; those of heaven more bright. You are amazed to observe how changed your estimate of their respective value. You wonder how you could ever have estimated the earthly so high and the heavenly so low. It seems so manifest to you that eternity out-measures time, you wonder that this great fact, always known, has been so feebly realised.

Closely connected with this is another class of influences,—those of *pain*. Long-protracted suffering wears out the nervous energy. Instinctively the soul cries out for some relief. We cannot fail to notice how naturally this feeling abates the dread of death, especially if the mind can by any means regard it as a release from not only present but all future suffering. In fact, we see multitudes of ungodly men under this very influence becoming willing to die. Then, counting this willingness to die an evidence of being prepared for heaven, the measure of their delusion is filled up, and with a lie in their right hand, they go down to darkness. This is a perversion of those legitimate influences under which pain and sickness lessen the dread of death, and through grace promote a real preparation for it. It is only one of a thousand illustrations of the principle that a bad heart perverts to its ruin what a good heart uses to its highest good.

Protracted sickness is prolonged discipline to the healthy. You stand around the couch of the declining one, week after week, and each hour God is saying to you, "Look into this mirror, and see your future self. There lies one of like frame and destiny with yourself, descending along the way you may travel so soon, to the other world. The sight of such an object ought to dissolve the illusion of present scenes, which seem to promise you an immortal home on earth."

Between the sudden and long-protracted death lie countless gradations. All these have their modifications of the influences to which we have alluded in

wide variety. Divine wisdom adapts them to the ends of divine love and mercy. It is specially to our purpose to remark, that God's aim and end in these varied dispensations is to sanctify and save. He looks towards abating the attractions of earth, and heightening the attractions of heaven. It is His purpose not to make us *willing*, but to make us *fit* to die.

STRAY GLEANINGS.

Professors live too much outwardly. Religion is carried often into the strong animal passions, not to subdue, but to feed them. Hence the poor anger and violence of a corrupted nature are frequently mistaken for zeal, for life, and for power. But noise, and bustle, and tumult, and hurry; the agitations of temper, and strong concerns for influence, or authority, or direction among men; the parade of religion, or the superiority of a party,—may all be carried on with a very small degree of real grace, and perhaps with none at all. Diotrephes loved to have the pre-eminence; but this could not suppress his inward bitterness, nor increase the signs of his Christian calling.—(3 John 9). If we do not live for God in our religion, we must live outwardly, and so shall endeavour to make a fair show in the flesh; but if we have His presence indeed, the truest part of our life will be hidden, and we shall much and gladly retire to enjoy it. The most certain sign of our real growth will be the sinking into ourselves as vileness and nothing,—the being thought meanly of with contempt, if not pleasure,—and the rising up of our soul towards God with secret delight, ardour, affection, and constancy. All this may be done before Him who seeth in secret far better than in the corners of the streets or places of public resort. We shall aim, through grace, to be gracious rather than to appear so.—*Serib.*

The print of Christ's feet are upon the lines that run out from time into eternity. He has passed the interspace between the two worlds, and the ground is safe and firm. We shall live because He lives, and He is within calling distance of us: it is but a cloud that parts Him out of our sight.

Faith is the means of attaining to the Spirit, and the Spirit is the spring of our power and possibility of working. Faith, in this view, and embraced for this end, will stand its ground against all opposition. There can be no pretence for decrying it as an enemy to good works.—*Adam's Private Thoughts.*

Right believing is powerful praying; the knees, eyes, and tongue bear the least share in prayer; the whole of the work lies upon the soul, and particularly upon faith in the soul, which is indeed the life and soul of prayer. Faith can pray without words; but the most elegant words, the praise of angels, is not worthy to be called prayer without faith.—*Shaw.*

An unsound and unrenewed heart may abstain from one sin, because it is contrary to, and inconsistent with, another sin. It is with the sins of our nature as it is with the diseases of our bodies. Though all diseases are contrary to health, yet some diseases, as the fever and palsy, are contrary to each other. So are prodigality and covetousness, hypocrisy and profaneness. These oppose each other, not for mutual destruction, as sin and grace do, but for superiority, each contending for the throne, and sometimes taking it by turns. It is with such persons as with the possessed man, Matt. xvi. 15, whom the spirit cast sometimes into the fire, sometimes into the water. Or if one subdued the other, yet the heart is also subdued to the vassalage of that lust which is uppermost in the soul.—*Flavel.*