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WHAT MEAN YE BY THIS SERVICE?—Exod. XII. 26.

A SERMON BY REV. WM. AITKIN,

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It was under circumstances of a very solemn and impressive character that the Old Testament rite of the Passover was instituted. The set time for the deliverance of the children of Israel from their grievous bondage in Egypt having arrived, the Lord had announced his purpose to go out about midnight into the midst of the land, and to slay all the first-born of the Egyptians, from Pharaoh downwards, together with the first-born of beasts. For the security of the Israelites in this appalling crisis they were directed to take a lamb, according to their families, a lamb without blemish, a male of the first year; to slay, and to roast it with fire, and to eat it with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs; and its blood sprinkled on the lintels and on the side-door-posts of the houses wherein it was eaten was to be to them for a token, and to shield them from the desolating inroads of the Destroyer as he sped on his work of vengeance through the gloom. So, accordingly, it happened in fact, and the liberation of the Israelites, enriched with the spoils of their Egyptian task-masters, forthwith followed. The Lord "brought them forth also with silver and gold, and there was not one feeble person among their tribes."

The rite which thus originated, when it had availed for the dread emergency with immediate reference to which it was appointed, was not thenceforward or soon to be consigned to forgetfulness. So far from this, on the chosen race it was enjoined that they should observe it as an ordinance to them and to their sons for ever. The night set apart for this purpose, as it annually recurred, was a "night to be much

observed unto the Lord for bringing them out of the land of Egypt," it was "that night of the Lord, to be observed by all the children of Israel in their generations."

The rite was one of a description evidently adapted to arrest the attention, and excite the curiosity, of such as should witness its celebration while yet unacquainted with its import. And hence, in the text, and the verses immediately connected with it, we find it assumed by Moses, in anticipation of the period when the Israelites should be settled in Canaan, that in its celebration there, it would engage the interest of their youthful offspring; and on this assumption, instruction is furnished as to the answer to be returned to their expected questioning concerning it. "It shall come to pass," he said, "when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as He hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass that when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say, it is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses."

Thus the grateful and devout remembrance of the great things done by Jehovah for His ancient people, in the commencement of their history as a nation, was to be perpetuated among them, from age to age. And, in this relation, the language of the illustrious Hebrew Chief, which has just been adduced, is suggestive of a scene which the dullest fancy may easily realize, and on which it would be pleasant to dwell. It leads us to conceive

of the tribes, the elect of heaven, as having crossed in safety that avenging sea which rolled its dark waves above Pharaoh and his host—of all their long and weary wanderings in the terrible wilderness as ended, of the promise first given to Abraham, and often afterwards renewed, as at last fulfilled in their having become the occupants of a goodly land, a land flowing with milk and honey.—of an occasion of paschal observance in that favored territory—and in a Jewish home—where a few families have gathered to its celebration, of some father or mother in Israel, relating to a group of young enquirers how graciously God had interposed on behalf of his people, when sore oppressed and afflicted in Egypt, how awful were the signs and wonders which there he had wrought, and how triumphantly he had brought them forth, giving to them Canaan as an heritage for ever—one generation thus “praising his works unto another, and declaring his mighty acts, that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.”

To come nearer to the principal object of the present discourse, we proceed to remark that, in that signal deliverance of the Israelites of which we have been speaking, we have an expressive type of the more glorious redemption of the gospel. This is plainly implied, together with the pre-figurative reference to the paschal oblation to that of Jesus, in those words of an Apostle in which Christ is described as our Passover,—that is the Lamb of our Passover sacrificed for us. It is such a deliverance from wrath through atoning sacrifice—that Gospel redemption—only infinitely, transcending every mere temporal deliverance—as was vouchsafed

on the memorable night in which the Egyptian first-born were slain, when the sprinkled blood averted from the Israelites the stroke of the destroyer, and they were called to rejoice in their emancipation from the intolerable yoke of bondage under which they had groaned so long.

In connection with the Gospel redemption, as in connection with its ancient type, a peculiar rite has been instituted. To the Gospel redemption, the Lord's Supper stands in a relation similar to that of the Passover under the Law to the deliverance in which that redemption was foreshadowed. Like the Passover, that rite is eminently fitted to call forth enquiry as to its significance: and we may well hold ourselves at liberty to suppose that the children of God's people under the better economy shall be induced to ask in regard to it, as Moses expected would be the case with the Israelitish children of old in regard to the Passover:—“What mean ye by this service?” If the religious training of the young has been properly conducted, and due care exercised to impress their minds with the paramount importance of the things which belong to religion, it is surely not unreasonable to suppose that it will be so indeed. And in the sequel of this discourse we shall endeavour in a number of particulars, to indicate the sort of response which such questioning, on the assumption of its being proposed with respect to the Christian Passover, should evoke. Is it not, however, lamentable to think that youthful questioning of this nature should not be more frequent than it is in fact, and furthermore that among those who profess to be God's people—the disciples and servants of his Son—there should be any, as it is much to be feared there are many, but ill-qualified to meet that questioning by a satisfactory account of the solemnity forming the subject of it? The reproach of

the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews is only too truly and too commonly applicable to the professing members of the Gospel church still,—“When for the time ye ought to be teachers ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God.”

Of the New Testament Passover—the Sacrament of the Supper—we may say generally, in the language of the Apostle of the Gentiles, that there is in it a *shewing* of the Lord's death—an annunciation—a holding forth—of the Lord's death and this, till he come. It is a symbolic preaching of Christ and him crucified, to be maintained by his followers and friends in every age, and discontinued only when He who was “once offered to bear the sins of many, to them that look for Him shall appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.”

But, more particularly, in the Sacrament of the Supper there is a shewing,

I. *Of the fact of the Lord's death.*

Coeval with the event which it was designed to commemorate, having been instituted on the night in which the event took place, and with special reference thereto, in its never-failing observance since the time of its institution, it attests the reality of that event to successive generations.

The event in question—the death of Jesus—was not the death of an ordinary mortal—neither was it the death of a mere creature of rank howsoever illustrious. In Jesus it was more than a prophet—such as those by whom, at sundry times and in divers manners, in the earlier ages God spoke unto the fathers—that was in the world. It was one “much better than the angels, having by inheritance a more excellent name than they.” It was the only begotten Son of God, the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, the “Second Subsistence of

Divine Infinitude” in human nature, Deity incarnate. This wonderful person suffered and died; and in His dying it was he in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily who died. His death was the Lord's death, and this it is which in our Sacramental rite is shown.

When therefore your children shall say unto you, “What mean ye by this service?” tell them how He who was “in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, made himself of no reputation, took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself and became obedient unto death”—tell them of the bread broken and the wine poured forth as the emblems of his broken body and his shed blood, and seek to inspire them with reverence of this great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh—God manifest in the human nature—and thus manifest, undergoing our nature's mortal doom.

II. *Of the manner of the Lord's death, as a death of cruel violence and bitter anguish.*

Of this the bread broken and the wine poured forth—symbols of his broken body and His shed blood—are significant. In dying, He died not as men do ordinarily die, according to the common course of nature. By wicked hands He was taken and crucified. Crowned with a mock diadem, whose thorns pierced His bleeding brow, He was “lifted up from the earth.” His hands and feet were torn by the nails affixing Him to the accursed tree. His side was rent by the soldier's spear. Adjudged to the cross, the horrible sentence was rendered more intolerable in its execution by every aggravating ingredient which the malignity of his implacable enemies could add to it. His suffering of body was terrible; but, great as it was, it could but faintly image forth the suffering whose

traces were less conspicuous, and which lacerated His soul. All conceptions, indeed, which we can form of intense and overwhelming suffering, must ever fall immeasurably short of that which, on the Hill of Crucifixion, He actually bore.

When therefore your children shall say unto you, "What mean you by this service?" tell them how "He who had in heaven the second name," having become in human form a sojourner on the earth, not only there had not where to lay His head—how not only He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief by experience of the common privations and afflictions incident to humanity below—how not only He endured in every shape, and with every accompaniment fitted most deeply to wound His heart, the contradiction of sinners against himself—how not only in the loneliness of the mountain garden and of the midnight hour,

When none was nigh
Save God and one good angel to assuage
The tempest's rage.

He knelt in mysterious agony, and His sweat was as it were drops of blood falling down to the ground—but furthermore, how at last He was condemned to die like the basest and most atrocious criminal, and how amid aggravations of the doom such as He alone could have sustained, and such as drew even from him the deploring cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" crucified in the place called Calvary, He bowed His head and gave up the ghost—tell them these things, and lead them to the frequent contemplation of Christ the Crucified, that the solemn and hallowed influences which radiate from His cross may penetrate and fill their souls, and that they may imbibe *His* spirit, who, tried as none but He was ever tried, could yet in the worst extremity, without a murmur, say, "Father, thy will be done."

III. *Of the character of the Lord's death as a voluntary, vicarious, and atoning sacrifice.*

It was on the night in which He was betrayed that this rite—the Sacrament of the Supper—was instituted; at a time when He distinctly understood that, according to the predeterminate counsel of heaven, the hour of His death was at hand. As He himself has expressly assured us, He had power to lay down His life, even as, having laid it down, He had power to resume it; and without His own concurrence and consent it could not have been taken from him. But the very appointment of the rite, under circumstances so affecting, emphatically demonstrated His readiness to suffer, and that it was by an act of unconstrained self-dedication that He was about to endure the cross. He devoted himself to it as the representative and substitute of sinners, that, by making expiation on their behalf, He might save them from their sins and bring them to glory. "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities." "This," He therefore said of the emblematical bread and wine, "this is my body which is broken for you—this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins." "He bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that He might redeem us to God by His blood." Hence the unexampled awfulness of His Passion. In suffering, dying, it was not merely the utmost that human malice, and the rage of the Powers of Darkness, in that their hour, could inflict, that He had to endure: on Him fell the terrors of the divine wrath—of wrath which but for its being thus averted, must have issued in the endless perdition of our fallen and apostate

race without exception—but by *His* subjection to which there has been obtained for sinners, salvation with eternal glory.—“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

When therefore your children shall say unto you, “What mean ye by this service?” tell them of Him that loved us, and loving us, undertook our cause, and gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God—tell them how, that we might not hopelessly perish in our sins, He put himself in our room and took upon Him the burthen of our guilt, and in our nature—assumed that He might so befriend us—sustained the curse of the violated law, dying, the just for the unjust, that we, redeemed from the curse, might be brought to God—tell them these things, and endeavour to make them feel how evil and bitter—how utterly to be loathed and detested—a thing sin is, as exhibited in his cross; how earnestly to be desired is the salvation which gives deliverance from sin: and how infinite is their indebtedness to Him who came to put away sin, and to rescue us from all baleful consequences of sin, by the sacrifice of Himself—herein actuated by a love which many waters could not quench—love stronger than death.

IV.—*Of the Lord's death in respect of the mode in which a personal interest in the blessings which flow from it is to be secured.*

The sacramental bread and wine—emblems of the Redeemer's broken body and shed blood—are to be eaten and drank: “Take, eat, this is my body broken for you—this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins, drink ye all of it”—

such were His own express injunctions; and the acts thus enjoined are to be conceived as significant of the faith which unites the Christian disciple to Jesus as his Saviour, and appropriates the benefits of His glorious sacrifice. Without this faith in Him who died for sinners, for us He shall have died in vain; but assurance of redemption through His blood is held out to every one that believeth. Long before the sacrament of the supper was instituted, the same truths as have just been announced, with respect to the indispensable necessity and certain efficacy of faith, were declared by Christ in language whose peculiar figurative character might be thought to imply a prospective reference to that institution. “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you; whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life.”

When therefore your children shall say unto you, “What mean ye by this service?” tell them how, as no remedy, whatever its intrinsic excellence, whatever its perfect adaptation to effect a cure, can in aught avail for the removal of disease unless it be properly applied—unless the conditions according to which it puts forth its sanative virtue be observed—so it is in regard to that great remedy, that healing balm, which has been provided in the sacrifice of Jesus for the relief of perishing souls—tell them how sovereign and un-failing is its operation in every case, however unseemingly desperate, in which it is resorted to aright—though powerless otherwise—and try to win them as by nature, even as others, the subjects of grievous and deadly spiritual maladies, to confidence in that divine Physician who alone can save—to faith in Him whose “flesh is meat indeed,” and whose “blood is drink indeed,” so that whosoever eateth and drinketh thereof shall live for ever.

V. *Of the Lord's death as uniting the recipients of its benefits in a sacred fraternity, under common obligations of love and obedience to the divine Redeemer.*

“No distance,” it has been truly and devoutly, as well as poetically said,

“No distance breaks the tie of blood,
Brothers are brothers evermore;
Nor wrong nor wrath of deadliest mood
That magic may o'erpower.
So is it with true christian hearts;
Their mutual share in Jesus' blood,
An everlasting bond imparts
Of holiest brotherhood.”

It is to the members of a brotherhood so allied, and constituting a society, which though in the world is not of the world, that Jesus addresses his command with respect to partaking of the symbols of his Passion.—“This do in remembrance of me”—making assertion thus on his own part, and exacting acknowledgment on theirs, of the title acquired by his pains and agonies and death to their grateful devotedness—and this most appropriately by means of a service adapted throughout emphatically to remind them of *his* claims and *their* obligations.

When therefore your children shall say unto you, “What mean ye by this service?” tell them how in that service a distinction is drawn between the men of the world and the people of God, and how it is intended exclusively for those who are brethren in Christ—having Christ himself for their elder brother—tell them how for such it is a solemnly required, and cordially rendered testimony of their affectionate consecration to him, and one eminently fitted to confirm and strengthen those sacred ties which bind them to Him and to one another—and entreat them to seek, by a true faith in Jesus, and an unfeigned dedication of themselves to Him, the qualification necessary for admission into, and fellowship with, that society, the members of which are becoming matured

by the service of Christ on earth for the higher, holier, and everlasting communion of the skies.

VI. *Of the Lord's death in relation to his final advent.*”

In the words of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, “as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death,” and thus it is to be “shewn till he come.” Never since the rite was instituted, has there been wanting a faithful people to keep up its observance; and never will it cease to be duly observed to the end of the world. It is destined to connect, by a continuous celebration, two periods—how widely different in their distinguishing peculiarities—the night in which the Lord was betrayed, with that great day when he shall return in glory. A standing monument of the decease which he accomplished in Jerusalem, it is likewise a standing pledge that he will come again; and as when he does come, it will be as the Judge of all mankind, and to consummate the salvation of His people—so the ordinance is calculated to keep alive in them a sense of their awful responsibility, while animating them with good hope through grace, the hope that “when He, their life, shall appear, they also shall appear with him in glory.”

When therefore your children shall say unto you, “What mean ye by this service?” tell them how He who was “nailed for our advantage to the bitter cross,” now sitteth on the right hand of the Majesty on high, how at the times of the restitution of all things, when the mystery of God is finished, he shall be revealed from heaven with flaming fire; and how the men of all nations and tribes shall be gathered before him, that their eternal destinies may be irrevocably decided; tell them, how, while the impenitent and unbelieving shall be dismissed to the abodes of despair, his people, pronounced the blessed of His Fa-

ther, shall be caught up to meet Him in the air, and shall ascend with Him in triumph to the full fruition of celestial felicity—felicity unmingled, ineffable, everlasting—and beseech them, as they would not finally be numbered with the lost for ever, and as they would be associated with those who shall be presented faultless in the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, now to put their trust in Christ—the Crucified—the Exalted—and by patient continuance in well-doing, to seek the reversion of immortal blessedness.

In conclusion, it may be that those of you who are parents, in answer to interested inquiry, or unsolicited, in the discharge of Christian parental duty, have again and again brought the great truths of which we have been speaking before the minds of your children, and apparently with little or no effect. Do not on this account desist from soliciting their attention to these truths at every favorable opportunity. Seriously examine whether it be not something in your manner of dealing with your children, or in the example you set before them, that prevents the truths in question from exerting their proper influence; and cease not earnestly to urge them on their consideration. Invoke on their behalf the aid of that gracious Divine Spirit who takes of the things of Christ and shows them effectually to the soul. The Spirit's emblem is the rushing wind which bloweth where it listeth; and in such an hour as ye think not His enlightening and renewing influences may descend to crown your efforts with success.

It should moreover be the deep concern of all of you, as professedly the Lord's people, more fully to realize, in all the various relations you sustain, the obligation under which his people are laid to do all that they can for the furtherance

of His cause, and the promotion of His glory in the salvation of precious souls.

Next to that of being ourselves partakers of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, there can be no satisfaction surpassing that of being instrumental in bringing others into the same happy condition. And if this be true in general, especially must it be true in the case of parents with respect to their offspring—the cherished objects of their tenderest affection. Once more, therefore, let such be exhorted to care for the souls which God has entrusted to their charge, and to leave no effort untried in order that no wanderer lost from the domestic fold, they and their children may constitute at last a holy and blessed "family in heaven." "Now the God of Peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

LIFE ETERNAL.

How blessed and wonderful, brethren, are the gifts of God! Life in immortality; brightness in righteousness; truth in freedom; faith in confidence; self-restraint in holiness! And all these points we can now understand. What things, then, are prepared for them who wait for Him? The Creator, and Father of the ages—the All-holy One—knows the greatness and beauty. Let us, then, strive to be found in the number of those who wait for him, that we may share the promised gifts. But how will this be, beloved? If our mind be established by faith in God, if we seek out whatever is pleasing and acceptable to Him; if we accomplish what is agreeable to His most perfect will, and follow the truth.—*St. Clement of Rome.*

THE MODERN JEW.

What a marvel is the Jew—invested with so sublime a mystery and loveliness, the centre-point of the world's progress, the constant subject of history, legend, and poetry! Dwelling under all stars, drinking of all streams, the Jews in their differences possess the strongest identity, and can boast an immortality among the nations. The Jewish nation resembles the burning bush seen by their great prophet and leader, ever being undestroyed and ever unconsumed. It is the perpetual miracle which the Most High has placed amid the events of human life, the undying witness of the truth of the heavenly revelation, the everlasting monitor of the great consumation of all things to which the world moves on. In his lowest aspect the Jew is still invested with sad, profound significance as a member of the race of whom, as concerneth the flesh, came the Lord Jesus Christ. His history is linked with the most stupendous crime recorded in the annals of the past, and the most glorious events revealed in the prophecies of futurity. His authentic history stretches back far beyond the dim dawn of all legendary history. His worship at our present day, in the synagogues that rise in our crowded streets, represents still the rites and ceremonies performed on the encrimsoned Arabian sands, beneath the light of the pillar of fire, and the shadow of the pillar of the cloud.

Mr. Disraeli, in his writings, has claimed for the Jew the chief place in our modern genius and civilisation. Without entirely conceding this extraordinary claim, we must admit a foundation of astonishing and substantial excellence in the achievements of the modern Jew.

Let us look at him in the immemorial service of the synagogue. Females are not reckoned to belong to the congregation. They sit in the gallery simply as spectators, and a kind of lattice-work prevents them from viewing all the ceremonies distinctly. They are at liberty to join in the prayers, but their voices must not be heard. Sometimes they must gain their place through a narrow separate staircase, and can only view the proceedings through an aperture in the wall.

In the midst of the synagogue is an elevated reading-desk, perhaps thirty feet in circumference. In the service there is much chant, or recitative; their system of musical notation is simple but curious, and, they say, has been handed down traditionally from father to son. The rabbi does not preside in the congregation, but but deputes this to an officer called the "kazan," generally selected for the excellence of his voice. The most striking part of the synagogue is called the "veil," of the "holy of holies," fronting which is the reading-desk.

In the ark are deposited the scrolls of the law, which are wrapped in rich velvet, and covered with gold, silver, and precious stones. Each roller attached to each end of the scroll, has a crown of pure silver or gold. The law is divided into fifty-two chapters, one of which is read every Jewish Sabbath. The Pentateuch is brought from its depository to the desk, and the bearing of it forth is a high privilege, which is previously put up to a kind of auction. The person who has bid the highest, probably states that he has purchased the honour for some friend present, and mentions his name. This favoured individual silently wraps his fringed garment almost over him, and then solemnly walks before the chief reader of the holy of holies.—The people chant a prayer as he draws the Pentateuch from its depository, and lays it on the reader's shoulder. The privilege of thus withdrawing the roll, on a marriage or great ceremony, has been purchased for as much as fifty guineas. When the reader has reached the desk, he takes off the ornamented cover of the sacred volume, and a ruler, through a clerk, calls up a member of the congregation to have a portion of the Word read aloud to him. The individual called up severally lays the fringes of his garment on a part of the Pentateuch, kisses them three times, and utters a short prayer. A chapter is chanted, and the individual again performs his acts of reverence. The Pentateuch is then rolled up, and the reader implores a blessing on the father and mother, wife and children, relations and friends of the individual. These blessings are sometimes fifty in number, and sums from sixpence to a guinea are paid for each. Six persons are called up every Sabbath, and thus the

whole congregation in course of time is passed through.

When the twenty-ninth chapter of Deuteronomy is read—the curses of disobedience—a curious ceremony takes place.—A poor man, a servant of the synagogue, is actually paid to have that chapter read to him, which is done in a most mournful and almost inaudible tone.

The Jews hold the Book of the Law in the utmost admiration and love. They lavish the resources of wealth and art upon the adornment of the volume. We have read an account of a particular copy of the Pentateuch, which for decorative value is probably unsurpassed in the world. It is written on prepared vellum, sewn on rollers of solid gold of the old standard. At the tops of the rollers two pivots receive what are called the bells, of fine gold; the sockets that fix the pivots represent the two tables. Jewellery is lavishly employed in the decoration of the Bible and its appendages: brilliants, diamonds, emeralds, rubies. Twelve precious stones of immense value represent the twelve tribes of Israel. Above a coronet is a mitre supported by angels, with the chased inscription, in Hebrew characters, "Holiness to the Lord." The whole is kept in Morocco, in a large oak chest, deposited in the Bank of England. It is necessary that each copy of the Pentateuch should be written by a scribe or married man, a person of learning and dignity. Only a few lines a day must be written on the first five days of the week. No word must be divided. The ink is made in a peculiar manner, and the ingredients must not be defiled by other hands. Certain prayers are said during the time.—Rabbis come to examine it, that it may contain no mistakes. It frequently takes two years in the preparation. Its completion is a solemn and joyful occasion.

The finest Jewish synagogues is at Amsterdam; that at Leghorn comes next.—A synagogue of five hundred seats averages six guineas a seat, or three thousand guineas annually. These seats are also heavily rated for religious and charitable purposes; especially for supplying the poorer Jews with unleavened bread during the Passover. Sums are also raised for burying the poor and for keeping the sanctuary in order. There are also boxes,

on which are written, "For Jerusalem," "For Safet," &c. All foreign Jews residing in Palestine, except a few wealthy individuals, are maintained by contributions sent from Europe. Any individual, however, whether wealthy or poor, after the residence of a year, may claim his share. It must be stated, for the credit of the Jews, that they raise enormous sums for charitable purposes. Some years ago the treasury box of the great synagogue in London, was nearly or quite exhausted. The fact was stated, and the following Sabbath a gentleman put in a thousand guineas, his wife five hundred guineas, and in an hour and a half twenty-eight thousand pounds were collected. When a Jew, poor or rich, is dying, two nurses attend him and say prayers, the expense of which is defrayed by the treasury.

The number of Jews in the United Kingdom may be estimated at sixty thousand. Ten large synagogues are to be found in London, and there are various others in the provinces. Glasgow, Manchester, and Liverpool each possess two.—All these synagogues, to a certain extent, are under the authority of the great synagogue, Duke's Palace, London. Each provincial synagogue has the privilege of voting when a chief rabbi has to be elected. The chief rabbi is consulted on the more important matters of a provincial synagogue, and has the power of deposing any country reader or lecturer who has shown himself unworthy of his office.

Birmingham was the first place in the country which attracted the attention of the Jews, and where they built the first provincial synagogue. The Birmingham manufactures in hardware and jewellery, where a Jew might easily begin business as a hawker or shopkeeper, were the allurements. At Birmingham Lord George Gordon became a devout Jew; though an old man, he was circumcised, and was always most regular in all Jewish observances. Manchester attracted many rich Jews, probably because Rothschild commenced his career there. His father, Meyer Anselm Rothschild, of Frankfort, sent his third son, Nathan, to Manchester, with twenty thousand pounds, to open an English connection. The twenty thousand soon became sixty thousand, and by-and-by the magni-

tude of his operations led him to remove to London.

Of late years the much debated question of emancipation has been conceded to the Jews. The devout Jew was not anxious for this. It is his wish that his people should remain a peculiar people, and this increased amalgamation with the Gentiles tended to do away with Hebrew peculiarities. The true Jews shrank from an amalgamation that might lead to apostacy. In Germany, since old peculiarities have been discarded, the Jew has become less a Jew, and there have been innumerable secessions from the Jewish faith. The rabbis have been greatly distressed by this. One of them thus expressed himself to a traveller in Austria: "Were the Messiah to come to-morrow, my congregation would kill him." "Why?" "Why! did you say; because he would insist on them keeping the law of Moses."

The first French revolution was an era of liberty to the Jews. The States General admitted all Jews, on taking the civic oath, to the full rights of citizenship. Jews have since raised themselves even to the Cabinet in France. When Napoleon was in Egypt he conceived the idea of restoring the Jews to their own land. In 1806 he summoned a great Sanhedrim of the Jews in Paris, and demanded how far they, as a people, held themselves bound, by the laws of the people among whom they resided. The Sanhedrim replied that France would be their adopted country, that French laws their laws, the will of the French prince their constant rule in life. Some of the rabbis even went so far as to apply to the Emperor texts relating to the Messiah, which greatly offended the Jews in England. The English quite undeceived them as to the notion of the Messiahship of Napoleon.

In England the Jews are chiefly known as a money-getting people. Elsewhere they are more honourably known for their high character, their extensive learning, their benevolence, and uprightness. The Hebrew community of Prague is perhaps the most conspicuous; many of their most celebrated men are interred in the cemetery there. The Jews in Poland amount to at least three millions, and are most numerous in Warsaw and Cracow.

In central Europe the power of the rabbis

is most visible. The rabbi, arrayed in pontificals, sits at the end of a long table in an inner room, encircled by a numerous assemblage, and his house is a place of assembly for the whole congregation.— Sometimes he takes his seat in the open market-place, that he may be accessible to all, reminding us of oriental kings and judges, and possessing much of their dignity and their power.

The Jewish Church has at times, like the Christian Churches, been torn by internal dissensions. The year 1755 was one of much unhappiness and dissension among the Jewish congregations in England. In that year the chief rabbi dismissed the shoetim of the day. These shoetims are officials appointed to slaughter animals, according to the prescribed rules of the Talmud, and to examine the lungs, to see whether they are free from disease. These persons must therefore possess both a fair knowledge of the Jewish law and also of anatomy. The shoetim were dismissed on the suspicion of clandestinely destroying distempered pellicles of the animals' lungs, and thus causing the congregation to eat forbidden meat. The decision seems to have caused much dissatisfaction. Nothing was done in the lifetime of the chief rabbi, but after their death the decision was repealed. The synagogues now broke up into a variety of small circles among themselves, excommunicating each other, and declaring that the food each ate was unlawful. The higher classes among the Jews were greatly disgusted by this display of puerility on the part of the Talmudists. Various defections from the Jewish ranks took place at this time; among these was the defection of the original Benjamin Disraeli, the namesake and grandfather of the celebrated and accomplished leader of the Conservative Opposition in the House of Commons.

But the greatest dissensions of all are those which exist between the Karaite Jews and their brethren. The Karaites are comparatively few in number, but they are by far the most virtuous and intelligent of the Jews. For upwards of five hundred years a colony of them has been settled in the Crimea. The difference between them and the Rabbinist Jews is this—they reject tradition, and rigidly appeal to the

text of Scripture. The name Karaites signifies Scripturists—an honorable appellation, which, nevertheless, excites the horror of the Rabbinites or Pharisees.—When they discover these “sons of the text,” they will hiss them out of their quarter with contempt. The Karaites are free from many Jewish superstitions, as the transmigration of souls, and the power of talisman. Their character for probity and quietness stands high in the south of Russia, where they are chiefly known. In the observance of the Sabbath day they are very strict. The Karaites read the Talmud, but they refuse to assign it any binding authority. The Talmudist searches Scripture to bring out some recondite or mysterious sense: but the Karaites rigidly maintains that Scripture is its own interpreter, and must be determined by the general sense of Scripture.

Some of the Jewish opinions and customs are highly curious. Before a Jew is thirteen years old, his parents are responsible for his sins; after that age, he is himself accountable. This age is an important epoch, and great preparations are made for it. The youth that day attends the service of the synagogue, blessed by his parents and accompanied by the rabbi.—His father is that day ready to give a large sum that his son may have the honor of going up to the desk, and read aloud a portion of the Prophets. The Jewish maiden is of age when she has attained twelve years and a day. Eighteen is considered the proper age for marriage. The betrothing frequently takes place six months or a year previously, and is a public event in the families, conducted with feasting and rejoicing. On the day of the marriage, all are in gayest attire. The bride and bridegroom sit under a velvet canopy, the bride supported by two women, the bridegroom by two men.—Each drinks from a glass of wine presented by the priest, who utters certain words, and then the bridegroom puts the ring on the bride's finger. The marriage contract is read, a prayer is offered, then they again drink of the wine. The empty glass is then laid on the ground, the bridegroom stamps on it, and breaks it, as an emblem of the frailty of human life. A shout is raised, “*Mazol tuve*” (may it issue happily) and the ceremony is complete. Every

person present makes an offering of plate or money, for the good of the young couple.

The Jew considers that, of all pious acts, to pray for a dying man, and accompany him to the grave, is the purest and most unselfish. When a patient is dying, the whole Jewish neighbourhood is generally made acquainted with the fact. The symptoms are watched; and after death the corpse continues on the bed for one hour. The Jews consider it an honor to stay during that time in the room, and while the removal of the body takes place. The death is made known in the synagogue: the way of doing so is remarkable. A Jew takes a copper money-box, in the shape of a half-gallon cask, and secured by lock and key, and goes among the people. The orifice will admit a penny, and a peculiar sound made when shaken intimates that some one is dead. The Jews flock around, make enquiries, and put in their contributions. To be deprived of this announcement is considered the highest disgrace. Suppose two Jews are quarrelling, and that one threateningly says, “Don't unlock my lips, or I will disgrace you,” and that the other dares him to do his worst. The vindictive Jew, if he can name no nearer relative, will even say, “Why, your great grandfather died, and the box did not go for him.” The Jews have no walking funerals, either for rich or poor. Females do not attend the corpse to the grave, but their grief is very poignant. They sit on the ground, and a hard-boiled egg is cut in pieces among them.—In this posture they continue for seven days, receiving condolences and presents.

In 1808 the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews was founded, and has been crowned with important, though limited results. The circumstances of its foundation are sufficiently remarkable. Lewis Way, a rich Englishman, was one day riding with some friends through the rich Devonshire scenery.—Passing a country house, he remarked the extraordinary growth and beauty of the trees with which it was surrounded. He was told an extraordinary history concerning them; that a lady in her will had forbidden the trees of this country seat to be touched until the Jews should once more have become the possessors of Jerusalem.

Mr. Way was greatly struck by this account, and examined the Scriptures deeply, to see what reason there might be for expecting the speedy restoration of the Jews. He travelled over a large part of Europe for the purpose of investigating their state. He devoted his means and energies to their cause, and aroused his friends in their favour. In 1813 the foundation of the beautiful Episcopal Jews' Chapel was laid by the Duke of Kent, the father of Queen Victoria, in the presence of many thousands. Our gracious Queen herself was the sovereign who signed the mandate for the appointment of a Jewish Christian Bishop of Jerusalem. This was Dr. Alexander, who was once the minister of a Jewish synagogue. The Church of Scotland has since also embraced the Jews within their missionary pale. There are at present about forty clergymen of the Church of England who have been gathered from the Jewish synagogues.

Referring to the report of the society for the present year, 1863, we perceive that the income is upwards of thirty thousand pounds. The number of those baptised at the Episcopal Chapel is nearly a thousand: several missionary students are employed; wherever Jews are to be found throughout the world the agents of the society are at work. In Abyssinia forty-one persons had been baptised during the year. At the present time more than ever, a remarkable desire exists among the Jews to become acquainted with the contents of the New Testament. The society has greatly increased the facility of procuring copies. One of the persons who addressed the annual meeting was Dr. Mesner, formerly a rabbi. He spoke with eloquent enthusiasm on behalf of the Hebrews:—

“As a nation, as a people, as a tribe of the family of nations, where do you find a history to compare with the history of Israel? Where do you find a history that has such glorious events in it? Whether you look at the Jew as the true monarch of Judea, whether you look at him as the captive of Babylon, as the outcast wanderer in Spain, or as the busy merchant of London, everywhere his existence is surrounded with a halo that no other people possess. Viewed as a nation, where is there a nation as old as this? With its cradle standing in a remote antiquity, it forms, as it were, a bridge of communication between the days long gone by and the days that

now are. Far mightier, far greater nations have existed, and have been swept off the face of the earth. Egypt, and Babylon, and Assyria, and Greece, and Rome, have, in their turn, flourished and crumbled away. The tide of time has floated them out of the list of nations. But Israel yet exists, cast about on the billows of misfortune, carried down among quicksands and currents, yet still existing, not as a compact body, but scattered abroad.—Yes, amidst all the nations of the earth, it is a nation still—a nation animated by one hope, by one inspiration. The sun of Nubia has burned his face, but it has not consumed his national feeling. The frost of the ice-bound regions has chilled some of his ardent, oriental blood, but has not frozen up the well-springs of his home—his national home.—And yet the day will come when the whole will be gathered together into one land, and when one shepherd shall rule over them.”

The wonderful words of prophecy are now being accomplished: “The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim.” Hos. iii. 4. Thus will it be while “the veil is on their hearts.” But one day that veil shall be taken away. Jew and Gentile shall hereafter be gathered together—one fold under one Shepherd. “If,” says the Apostle, “the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?” Who does not long for the accomplishment of those inspired words of prophecy? “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.... In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.—*Quiver.*”

A sincere heart weeps and laments bitterly over those secret and inward corruptions, which others will scarcely acknowledge to be sins.

BIBLE-CLASS INSTRUCTION.

"I'M, TOO LITTLE."

The editor of an English journal thus answers the important inquiry of a correspondent, as to the best method of instructing a large Bible-class of Sunday-school teachers and adult scholars:—

By feeding them with food convenient for them. The instructions should be of a devout and spiritual character, and be carried on with system. You must seek so to teach them that they may be enabled to teach others. We offer you the advice that is given to pastors:

1. Understand the chapter. If you are able, always refer to the original, and take care to read the context. Avoid a display of learning. Criticize in your own room; teach in the class-room.

2. In choosing your subjects take heed to dwell on man's ruin, his redemption, and his renewal by the Holy Spirit. Keep in view three things, viz.: doctrine, experience, and practice. Teach evangelical truths so as to lead to their practice; and take due care that practical truths spring from evangelical doctrines.

3. Exalt the Saviour, abase the sinner, and honour the Holy Ghost. Remember your master. Seek his glory, not your own.

4. Speak in short sentences. Avoid parentheses. Use plain words. Have your subject well up, in head and heart. When speaking, do not keep your eyes on the book; express yourself in natural tones, with gravity, solemnity, gentle authority, and above all with loving earnestness and affectionate tenderness.

5. Remember that you teach *not only to explain the Bible, but to save souls*. Apply the subject pointedly to the hearts and consciences of pupils. Rebuke boldly, warn lovingly, and encourage heartily.

6. Address yourself to the different classes before you—the undecided, the penitent, and the pious. Put questions solemnly, and *give ardent and touching exhortations*.

7. Teach as in the sight of God. Remember you must soon meet your scholars at the judgment seat. Your reward does not depend upon your *success*, but upon your *labour*.

8. Pray much in your chamber. Go from your knees to your class, and after teaching pray with special reference to what you have taught.

9. A teacher must exercise piety, patience and self-denial. He must work and wait.

10. Teach by your life. Walk closely with God, and let the salvation of souls be near your heart. Time is short, life is uncertain, eternity is near. The blessing of the Most High awaits the faithful.

Practice these ten rules and you will never want pupils to teach, nor souls to bless you.

Those words reached the ears of Mrs. Wilson as she came into the parlor one day. She found her three children seated on the sofa—Anna, the eldest, trying to amuse her younger brother and sister.

She had been telling them a story in her own wise way, of some good little girl who was a great help to her mother, and was showing the example of this excellent child for the benefit of Ella, when their mother came in.

Two little for what, Ella? asked Mrs. Wilson.

I was telling her, said Anna, the story of Katie Lee, and when I said she must be good, and do as Katie Lee did, she told me she was too little.

Little girls of four years *are* rather small, said Mrs. Wilson, but my Ella isn't too little to be good, I hope.

But Katie was older than I, I'm sure, said Ella; I can't do such things as she can.

What things? asked mamma.

Why, bringing in the milk-pitcher; I'm afraid I'd spill the milk, and then Susan would say: Oh, you are a plague!

Mrs. Wilson smiled, for little Ella was called a plague very often.

If you couldn't bring the milk-pitcher, darling, you could be useful other ways, she said.

Oh, no, I can't—I'm too little, persisted Ella.

Mrs. Wilson sat down and took the child upon her lap.

Now listen to me; you can pick up my ball when it rolls on the carpet, and get papa's slippers, and fetch me a book, or my work-basket, can't you?

Yes, I can do those, said Ella.

Well, then, are you too little to be useful?

Why, is *that* being useful? I thought it meant real great things, said Ella, opening her eyes in astonishment.

It means that older girls are to do great things, and little girls are to do little things, said her mother. You are a little girl now, and so your heavenly Father only wishes you to do little things, but then my darling must try to do them willingly and pleasantly. You should *always* be ready to do what mamma asks at once, and not say, I'm tired, or I don't want to, I can't because, though you are only four years old, you are not *too little to be sometimes useful*.

THE GOOD NEWS.

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EARLY RELIGIOUS TRAINING.

OR

An examination of the doctrine held by some, that "religious education should not be commenced in childhood, from the fear of prejudicing the young mind; but should be deferred till maturer years, when the minds of the pupils are in circumstances to form a juster idea of the nature and attributes of God."

The doctrine here stated is a duplicate assertion, the latter part of which depends upon the former, and stands or falls along with it. "Religious education," it is said, "should not be commenced in childhood," and the argument in support of it is "from the fear of prejudicing the young mind." The language here used implies that children are capable of learning religion; but along with this capacity, it holds up a danger connected with it, that they are liable to be prejudiced, or biassed in favor of that which they first learn, however erroneous it may be. This must be admitted, for the power of prejudice is great both with the child, and with the adult, and the mind of the child is ready to receive all that it hears for truth. No one needs to be told that it is one of the principal traits of young children to be ever ready to give others credit for speaking the truth, although it may be only its counterfeit. It is an instinct of their nature to be very confiding, and like melted wax, they are prepared to receive any impression, and to be moulded by any influence, especially that of a parent or teacher. The teaching of a parent has all the force of authority. The child looks up to him as one incapable of error, and what he teaches it believes without a scruple. But, although opinions are thus easily implanted in the youthful mind, it is not so easy to eradicate them. It is not difficult to make children believe anything plausible, but is a hard task to make them disbelieve what they have been years in acquiring, especially if that is fenced round by the sacred associations and instructions of home. It is because of this that the generality of people with respect to their creed are what they were born. They can give no better reason for believing as they do, than this,—their parents believed

such, and so, and taught them to do the same. They dress their minds as their persons after the established fashion. It is from a consideration of these things that it is contended by many, "religion, instead of being taught in childhood should be deferred till maturer years, when the minds of the pupils are in circumstances to form juster ideas of the nature and attributes of God."

This is not an infidel argument. It is here taken for granted that religion is of such importance as not to be entirely neglected by man. This, then, it is useless to waste words in establishing. The argument itself rests upon this general principle of human nature, that the faculties develop, and the apprehension becomes clearer and stronger with increasing years. It is certainly true that in maturer life man is more capable of discerning right from wrong, of judging for himself, and of understanding to a greater extent the existence, nature, attributes, and perfections of God. Many swayed by such considerations let the religious education of their children lie over entirely. But before assenting to their opinions it is only fair and reasonable that we should hear the other side of the question.

The mind of the child, as already granted, is not altogether incapable of receiving religious instruction. Yea more, it is not only capable but it is a most fit and proper subject for religious training. Surely that heart which can beat with love to a parent can glow with love to its God. And as for the man knowing more of the deep things of God than the child, the difference between them is very small, for the child can comprehend nearly as much of infinite things as the man. The minds of both are finite, and the finite can go but a little way into the infinite. And if the Bible has mysteries for the angels to look into, and strong meat for men, it has also milk for the nourishment of babes. And the things necessary to salvation are not the profound doctrines of religion. They are those truths which lie on the very surface, which are so plain that even a lisping babe can understand them, and the way-faring man though a fool, may not err therein. All the systems of philosophy taught by the ancients

were suited only for the learned, but Christianity for the illiterate as well. And its adaptation to children is of itself a strong argument in favor of its being early instilled into their hearts. And if they are to know it, they must be taught it. It is the vain nature of man to be unwilling to be obliged to others; yet this pride of his must be humbled in childhood, for what opinions he gets then are chiefly derived. These first opinions, from the very fact of their being the first, take hold upon his mind, which thus becomes unavoidably biassed towards them. This is human nature, and we cannot gainsay it. But because what is taught to children takes a firm hold we are not on that account to desist from teaching them. Every one will readily admit that it is the duty of the present generation to instruct the rising race. Parents, whatever be their views of religion, act upon this principle with their children in secular learning. They do not leave them alone till they are capable of judging whether this, that, or the other science is right or wrong, beneficial or injurious. They are aware that this would be a useless waste of time. They therefore take it upon them to judge for their children, which is doing no more than their duty. The inferior animals have instincts, which lead them to provide for their young, and man has got reason which ought to teach him to provide for his offspring, both as regards their spiritual, mental, and bodily wants. But some one may here argue, that an error committed in any of the branches of science, even although the mind should become bigoted towards that error, is of trivial importance compared with erroneous notions of religion, which is the most momentous subject that can engage the attention of man, and where an error might prove fatal. This must be admitted; but it may also be argued in reply, that if the mismanagement of the one, is not to be compared with the mismanagement of the other, neither is the neglect of the one, to be compared with the neglect of the other. And since he who would neglect the former would be condemned by reason, as an unnatural and unfeeling parent, much more so he who would neglect the latter. There is no way of getting round the

truth. It is the duty of parents to teach their children religion, up to the best of their knowledge. It is no excuse for them to put in the plea that they feel their knowledge to be sadly deficient, and they have also doubts of its soundness. Parents *should be qualified to teach their children correct ideas of religion*, and if they are not, it is their duty as soon as possible to become qualified for it, so that it may be said of them, in the language of approval, as of one of old, "They have done what they could."

Let those who would oppose this view of the subject, remember further that children are mortal, and that the vast proportion of the human race are cut down in the blow of life, and the golden opportunity for these, by being put off, would be for ever put past; and this of itself, forms a very strong argument against the neglect of the religious instruction of children. The doctrine we are opposing, amongst its other plausible features, ends in a good intention, but the adage tells us, that, "the road to perdition is paved with such." This, then, is no argument in its favour, for "far off water will not quench near fire."—But supposing, as the former doctrine does, that the child escapes the thousand ills flesh is heir to, and which beset its path, and that it reaches the years of ample discretion, is it then in a fitter state for being taught religion? It cannot be prejudiced towards any religious opinion, for we are going upon the supposition that as yet it has none. Nevertheless it will be prejudiced, and that too, directly against religion. For we must be allowed to suppose, that prejudice will be as strong in favor of that which the child has been accustomed to, as it would have been in favor of some false doctrine. And its past life not having been engaged with religion, has been taken up with something else. If the good seed has not been sown, we may presume that the tares will have become luxuriant in their hearts. The very neglect, too, of the subject of religion will have created an unconcern for it. For it is during the first stage of man's existence that a tone is given to the mind, and a bent to life. As a general rule it holds good, "as the child is, so is the man." If the chief enquiries then of the

child have heretofore been: "What shall I eat?" "What shall I drink?" "And wherewithal shall I be clothed?" it will be found, when arrived at mature years, that it is no easy matter to interest it in the concerns of the soul. Earth will then have obtained so firm a hold of the mind, that heaven will have no attraction for it. And this is what is found to be the case—it is more difficult to make a grown up person religiously inclined than it is to make a child; it is hard to trip up old practices. It is generally easier to prevent than to cure.

But why reason so long with a doctrine which is impracticable, and consequently absurd? In a Christian land, and especially in a Christian family, it is an impossibility altogether to defer the religious education of children, till mature years. The child is ever acquiring ideas. It is ever receiving impressions from everything it hears and sees; and like Topsy, in Uncle Tom's Cabin, "if it does not get a meaning it will make one."—Since these ideas and impressions, which it would necessarily acquire, would have a greater chance to be wrong, if the child were left to itself, than when assisted, is it not the duty of every parent to teach his children what he believes to be right, rather than leave it to its own unaided and probably incorrect opinions? Experience tells us, that religious training should commence with the earliest indications of intelligence. Who has not seen the bright eye of childhood beam with interest, at the recital of the story of the cross? Yes, away far down, even in the heart of a child, religion can not only grow, but produce the richest fruits. To keep children in the dark concerning religion would be to shut up one of their principal avenues of enjoyment. When the child is told that there is a God who made the earth and adorned it with beauty, who hung up the bright stars in air, who plumed the gaudy songsters of the grove, and painted all the flowers of the field, does not its little heart thrill with emotion, and everything appear to it through a brighter medium than before? The biography of the saints is also in favor of this view of the subject. The most of those, who have been distinguished for piety

in afterlife, have enjoyed the inestimable advantage of an early religious education and a pious upbringing. Their piety in most cases can be traced back to a godly mother. And the power of a mother, over her child, God only knows. She has an influence over it for good or for evil, which no other person has or can have. The truths of religion sowed and watered by her care, may be drowned for a season, amid the frivolities and dissipations of youth, but they are still there, and even after wickedness has seemingly crowded them out of the heart, they may arise as a barrier between her son and destruction. And on the other hand, how often do we see the child, who has had no religious instruction, become the profligate, the scoffer and the scorner. Nothing gives a parent more pleasure than to see his children happy, and then heaven would be two heavens to him. Those who wish, then, to render either themselves or their children happy, will do more towards this end by giving them an early religious instruction, than by amassing vast fortunes for them to inherit. The one may slide through their fingers, while they grasp it, but the other is an imperishable boon of which they cannot be deprived. The one may place them beside princes, but the other will one day give them a seat amongst seraphims. The one may lead them to this world's honor, but the other will conduct them safe to the evergreen shore, where "there is fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore." And if the object of all education be, to call forth into lively exercise the higher principles of our nature, what can better do this than religious instruction? Take away the influence which religion exerts for good, over the child, and the youth, and, alas! then for their morality. And what saith Scripture upon the subject? There we find the early training of children in the ways of the Lord, enforced both by precept, and example. The Hebrews were expressly commanded to instruct their children in the fear of the Lord; and the words of Jehovah are, "They that seek me early shall find me." It is not they *may* find me, but they *shall* find me, for there is no doubt in the matter. What God himself had chosen, then, will man have the presumption to

despise? With what the Great Teacher himself rebuked those who rejected the hosannahs of the children in the temple, we would answer those who still refuse to bring up their children for God: "Have ye never read, that out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, God perfects praise?" Again, the words of Jesus are, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." Let parents then not be guilty of keeping them away, but let them endeavour to train up their children "in the way they should go," for the encouragement held out is, "when they are old they will not depart therefrom." The command to each parent, concerning each of his family, is, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages."

X. Y. Z.

NATURE'S UNIFORMITY NOT UNINTERRUPTED.

Rev. Dr. Hitchcock, the well known geologist of Amherst College, has published, in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*,* an article of the first importance on one of the leading topics of dispute in our day. It is entitled "The Law of Nature's constancy subordinate to the Higher Law of Change," and it is aimed at that growing tendency among scientific men, not restrained by Christian faith, to regard nature as an independent perfect whole, a Cosmos, uniform, constant and unalterable in its movements, possessing in itself the sources of its own existences and developments. The sentence which Dr. H. quotes from Professor Powell of England, expresses the views of this class of thinkers: "The enlarged critical inductive study of the natural world cannot but tend powerfully to evince the inconceivableness of imagined interruptions of natural order or supposed suspensions of the laws of matter, and of that vast series of dependent causation which constitutes the legitimate field for the investigations of science, whose constancy is the sole warrant for its generalizations, while it forms the substantial basis for the grand conclusions of natural theology." According to these philosophers, there is no possible place for

miracles, natural theology itself being based upon principles which render them inadmissible.

Directly in the teeth of these assertions, Dr. Hitchcock proceeds to evolve the indications presented in nature of a law leading to change and to catastrophes, from which only supernatural and miraculous power can bring deliverance. "The law of miracles" he defines as "a force occasionally manifesting itself to counteract, intensify, or diminish the power of natural law. This law also" he says, "is invariable; that is, in the same circumstances, the same miracle will occur. But in its action, it contravenes natural law. Moreover, though a law, we cannot understand its nature."

Among the forces of nature tending to interfere with its uniformity, and to bring ruin upon the existing order of things, is the *subtle resisting medium* believed to be diffused through space, and already observed to be acting upon certain of the periodical comets, shortening their time of revolution, and threatening to land them finally upon the sun. Admitting the existence of such a medium, and the ultimate ruin of the solar, if not of the whole sidereal, system is unavoidable, unless a supernatural interference takes place. We have evidence that the earth and the great bodies of the Cosmos have passed and are passing through a series of chemical changes. From various degrees of fluidity, perhaps even from a gaseous condition, some have become solid, some are still undergoing transformation. Is the solid state the last? The continual working of these chemical changes may lead to the overthrow of the whole system on which these unbelieving philosophers raise their structure of uniformity.

But the grand examples of a law of change, which overrides this pretended uniformity, are found in the revelations made by geology in the domain of organic life. Each of the great geological formations has been characterized by peculiar groups of animals and plants, found neither in the rocks below nor above. Dr. Hitchcock is satisfied that the earlier geological formations are separated from each other by destructive catastrophes, which almost entirely swept away the orders of existence inhabiting the earth's surface at the time.

* See article in "Good News," page 558.

The old faunas (groups of animals) and floras (groups of plants) suddenly disappeared, and those which succeeded must have been new. The alluvial period does not present proofs of such extensive upheavals and dislocations; the surface has been kept comparatively quiet ever since the Cretaceous period. Hence, various groups as it were run into each other during the different divisions of this epoch. But this is not true of the earlier periods. At the close of these formations, the uniformity of nature's operations was suddenly and universally interrupted; and the commencement of each of these new eras was marked by the introduction of new orders of beings and new species. Even without those great cosmical interruptions, the introduction of entirely new orders and species cannot be traced to the uniform operation of natural law. There is a chasm between man for instance, and all other orders of beings on earth, which no natural law could overpass. But the best geologists do not doubt that these great interruptions took place, and they recognize the consequent distinct "life periods" as they are called, which have succeeded each other on the surface of the globe. Says Agassiz: "One result stands now unquestioned: the existence during each great geological era of an assemblage of animals and plants differing essentially for each period. And by period, I mean those minor subdivisions in the successive sets of beds of rocks which constitute the stratified crust of our globe, the number of which is daily increasing, as our investigations become more extensive and more precise." It is agreed by those whom Dr. Hitchcock regards as the best authorities on the subject, that the systems of plants and animals on our globe have been obliterated and replaced by others of distinct origin as often as *twenty-five times*.

We pause here in our presentation of the views of the very able author. The bearing of his views upon certain fashionable doctrines of scientific unbelievers and opponents of Scripture truth is manifest. If the uniformity of nature's laws has been broken in upon as often as *twenty-five times* in the history of the earth, that uniformity must cease to be accepted as an unalterable dogma. The fortress that always frowned at the entrance of the

argument on miracles is dismantled and razed. If the position for which such high scientific authority is quoted by our author against Sir Charles Lyell, in regard to great geological and universal catastrophes in the earlier history of the earth's crust, be correct, then there is an end to the applicability of the fashionable hypothesis of development as explanatory of the appearance of different species on the earth. If the life-periods are distinct, separated from each other by catastrophes utterly destructive in their character, supernatural, creative, miraculous power is alone adequate to their production. We may conclude with Agassiz that "all these beings do not exist in consequence of the continued agency of physical causes, but have made their successive appearance upon the earth *by the immediate intervention of the Creator.*" If the earth has witnessed such frequent and vast exhibitions of creative power interposed for the renewal of its living inhabitants, we may be prepared for the bold conclusion of our author, that change is the higher and uniformity the subordinate law of the divine operations, and that it is highly probable that the subordinate law should give way on occasions so important as the revelation of the Divine will to intelligent creatures; in other words, that no presumption against miracles as evidences of revealed religion, can be drawn from the uniformity of nature's laws, but that the antecedent probabilities are in fact quite in the opposite direction in view of the *nodus vindice dignus*.—*Banner of the Covenant.*

THE WORD OF LIFE.

"We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus
unto good works"

We know there once was One on earth
Who penetrated all He saw,
To whom the lily had its worth,
And Nature bared her inmost law.
And when the mountain-side He trod,
The universe before Him shone,
Translucent in the smile of God,
Like young leaves in the morning sun.
Glory which Greece had never won,
To consecrate her Parthenon.

Nature her fine transmuting powers
 Laid open to His piercing ken;
 The life of insects and of flowers;
 The lives, and hearts, and minds of men;
 Depths of the geologic past,
 The mission of the youngest star;—
 No mind had ever grasp so vast,
 No science ever dived so far.
 All that our boldest guess sees dim
 Lay clearly visible to Him.

Had He but uttered forth in song
 The visions of His waking sight,
 The thoughts that o'er His soul would
 throng,

Alone upon the hills at night;
 What poet's loftiest ecstasies
 Had stirred men with such rapturous awe
 As would those living words of His,
 Calm utterance of what He saw!
 All earth had on those accents hung,
 All ages with their echoes rung.

But he came not alone to speak,
 He came to live, He came to die;
 Living, a long lost race to seek;
 Dying, to raise the fallen high.
 He came, Himself the living Word,
 The Godhead in His person shone;
 But few and poor were those who heard,
 And wrote His words when He was gone;
 Words children to their hearts can clasp,
 Yet angels cannot wholly grasp.

But where those simple words were flung,
 Like raindrops on the parched green,
 A living race of poets sprung,
 Who dwelt among the things unseen;
 Who loved the fallen, sought the lost,
 Yet saw beneath time's masks & shrouds,
 Whose life was one pure holocaust,
 Death but a breaking in the clouds:
 His volume as the world was broad,
 His Poem was the Church of God.

The Three Wakings.

God regards not so much the matter as
 the manner of our prayer. God loves
 adverbs better than nouns; and not praying
 only, but praying well; not doing good,
 but doing it well.

THE FLAW IN THE LINK.

BY REV. THEO. L. CUTLER.

The wedding was a pleasant one, and
 full of promise. The bride was as clearly
 formed for "attractive grace" as Milton's
 Eve. Her bright face glowed with the
 white and red which "nature's own sweet
 and cunning hand laid on." The man at
 her side was every inch a man:—and his
 face flushed with honest pride when her
 softly spoken "Yes, I do," fell upon his
 ear. The link that day welded before
 God with prayer, seemed so bright and
 firm, and strong that no eye could detect
 a flaw.

A few weeks after, when the bridal tour
 was over, we saw them at Church side by
 side. A good beginning, thought we.—
 It was the Sabbath for celebrating the
 Lord's Supper. When the time came for
 distributing the bread and wine, the non-
 professors either changed their seats or left
 the church; not all, but many of them.—
 The young bridegroom rose reluctantly,
 halted a moment, then took his hat and
 went over to a side pew, and sat by him-
 self. The bride was left to commemorate
 the love of her Saviour *alone*. It was
 their first separation, and in a moment a
 "great gulf," seemed to open between
 them? Ah, thought we to ourself, there
 is a flaw in that wedding link already:
 there are one toward each other, but
 toward God they are *two*! How can two
 walk together toward eternity when they
 are going in opposite directions? Which
 of them will draw the strongest? If God
 gives them a household to rear up, which
 will the children follow soonest, the pray-
 ing mother or the irreligious father? Will
 it not be a house divided against itself?

Looking around the church we saw
 other separations just as wide and melan-
 choly as this one. Husbands and wives
 were there that day that during the pre-
 vious week had dwelt loving together.—
 They had sat at the same table at home;
 they had wept and rejoiced together in the
 sorrow and the joys of one common fire-
 side. But at the table of their Divine
 Lord and Redeemer *they parted*. To

human eyes, but a narrow church aisle divided them; yet in God's sight they were spiritually as wide asunder as the poles.— Looking at this scene of separation, the question came up to our mind, "In the great day when Christ the Judge shall separate souls, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, will the wedding tie hold then! Or will there be found a fatal flaw in the link that will leave husband and wife to break asunder with a parting that shall never again be followed by a meeting."

To many a loving wife who will read these lines, this is a sore and tender subject. What shall I do to save my husband's soul? has been the burthen of her own soul for more than one anxious year. We would reply to such as she, you can *pray* for him. But to make your prayer of any avail, be careful not to contradict it by your life. Do not ask God to direct him to the Saviour, and then yourself stand in his way. You can do more than pray for him; you can *draw him*. By driving, you cannot move him one inch heavenward. You cannot force him to the church, to a prayer-meeting, to his Bible, or to the Saviour. But if, in the name of Jesus, you fasten the silken hawsers of affection to him, and apply the persuasions of earnest lips, still more of a holy, sweet-tempered, noble life, you may be delightfully surprised to see how he will "go after you." As the huge man-of-war on its way down through the Narrows seems to say to the little steam-tug, "*Draw me* and I will go along with you," so has many a resolute will and carnal heart been won along steadily toward Christ by the gentle power of a sweet prayerful woman's life. The positive efforts that you make for your husband's conversion must be made wisely. There is a sort of holy tact in this business. Watch your opportunities. Do not approach him with it when he is out of temper. Do not *worry* him with teasing talk, or with taunts; do not assume the tone of pity; it will only irritate.— Watch your chances, and aim to co-operate with the Spirit of God when you see the heart moved by the truth, or moved by affliction, or by any event of Providence; then *work with the Holy Spirit*.

One good illustration is often worth a hundred counsels. And an actual incident we have somewhere met with fits our case exactly. During a period of general religious interest in the city of B—, a wife of devoted piety persuaded her husband to go with her one evening to her church. He tried to think himself an infidel, and made sport of religion on every opportunity. "I will never go again," said he, angrily, to her. "I was provoked," and insulted; that sermon against infidelity was aimed at me." She saw that the shots were striking, and said nothing. But prayer was made for him without ceasing by herself and a few friends.

One evening, the wife kindly said to him, "Dear, will you grant me one little request?—go with me to-night to meeting." "I will go to the door, and no further." "With true womanly tact she says, "Very well, that will do." He goes with her, parts from her at the door, stays out in the cold, while she goes in and breaks into fervent prayer for him as soon as she reaches her seat. She is trying not only the strength of her marriage link, but of that mightier link that binds her faith to the God of Promise.

Presently the door slowly opens; a man walks straight to her seat, and sits down beside her! He listens, goes home quietly; she meanwhile talking more with God than her husband. The next evening, after tea, as they sit chatting by the fire, he rises, and with some emotion says,— "Wife, is't most time to go to church?" She springs from her chair; it is entirely too early, but she will not risk delay; and hurrying on her hat and cloak, they are off. A happy evening was that to her yearning, loving heart! For his stubborn soul melts down under the truth like wax in the flame; his infidelity is conquered where it only can be vanquished—at the cross of Christ!

From that evening he is a new man. His home is a new place. There is an altar at his fire side; behold he prayeth! And ever after, through their happy lives, there was *no flaw in the link* that bound them to their daily walk toward heaven.— "What knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband?"

IN UNDERSTANDING BE YE MEN.

In this age, what we want to represent Christianity is not whining men, nor men of sanctimonious speech, but men of strength. In the halls of learning we want them—in the fields of science, on the political arena, in the walks of commerce, amid the din of the factory and the quiet of the counting-room—everywhere we want men of strength—men who will not be moved by sophistry, nor frightened by a sneer; men whose power raises them as much above contempt as their goodness places them beyond suspicion; men like the old Puritans, with all their firmness and zeal, with more than their intelligence, with a strong faith in Christianity, and a wiser and more liberal application of its principles. These are the men we want to promote the triumph of the gospel. The tendency of the age is to divorce religion from the ordinary occupations of life; and what we need to counteract this tendency is not so much verbal expositions of the doctrines and ethics of religion as a living embodiment of its principles—a life which will exhibit religion in action in our various secular relations and pursuits. Such a life Christian young men have an opportunity of living, and are under obligation to live. In your profession or your business you may render religion the most important service by doing well the duties of your secular calling, while at the same time you maintain your Christian integrity: thus shewing to the world that religion does not incapacitate, but rather qualifies, for the business of life, and that worldly work may be performed in a Christian spirit, subordinated to Christian ends, and elevated into a kind of Christian worship. Not otherwise can you correct the false impression—which the conduct of professors has done something to justify—that religion is unmanly, that he who gives heed to it is fit for nothing else, that it is all well enough for old women and sentimental young ladies in whom the organ of veneration is largely developed; but as for men, why they are only spoonies and milksops, mere Miss Nancy's, who trouble their heads about such matters. It is easy to say in reply to this impression, that religion ought not to be judged by the conduct of professors. It is easy to appeal to first prin-

ciples, and to maintain that there is nothing to make a man unmanly in recognizing the claims of his Maker, in attending to the interests of his immortal soul, in subjecting his being to the powers of the world to come, and preparing for its enjoyment. It is easy to show what strange notions of manliness they must have who think that to be manly is to live as if there were no God, no heaven, no hell, no eternity, no soul—to live as if men differed not from brutes. It is easy to say all this, and to say it perhaps with some effect; but withal it will not be half so effectual as the manly religious life; and, moreover, without such lives the assertion will be powerless. Say what we will as to the manliness of religion, if religious men are what are called noodles, others will not fail to conclude that religion makes them so, and in some way or other to connect noodledom with religion. However pious you may be, you will have little influence over an unbelieving world, with which you cannot grapple in argument, or to which you are inferior in force of character. They may be constrained to acknowledge that you are saints, but you will lose the vantage-ground thus given, if at the same time they can pronounce you simpletons. O my friends, be men, if you would be champions in the Lord's host. Be men, if you would contend successfully for the faith. Be men, if you would win the world to truth. And why should you *not* be men in the very truest and highest sense? Why should you be less manly because of your religion? You need not be less strong to do, or brave to endure, because you have nothing to fear for the future. You need not be less prompt and energetic in your dealings with men because of your reconciliation to God. You need not be less fit for the work of this world because all is well for the next. You need not have a thicker head or a less active hand because you have a devout and generous heart. On the contrary, you know that because you are actuated by higher motives, because your moral nature is subject to more powerful influences, because you serve a better Master, and are animated by the prospect of a nobler reward, you ought to surpass all others in diligence and zeal. In so far as attention and perseverance and industry can make you so, you ought to be better tradesmen

than the irreligious—better lawyers, better clerks, better shopmen, better carpenters and masons, better sailors and soldiers, better porters and labourers, yea, better sweeps and shoeblacks—if such be your occupation—than irreligious men who are naturally your equals. It accords with the influence of religion, and tends to commend it to others, that you should seek to surpass all others in your several occupations. You may excel others in intelligence and strength without foregoing ought of your integrity. You may cultivate every manly quality, while you maintain a conscience void of offence before God and before man. There was one who seldom met with his equal in dialectic warfare—who was ready to champion the gospel against all assailants—who, on behalf of the faith, wrestled with the world in its own arenas, on Mars' Hill, in the synagogues that were scattered throughout Asia Minor, in the market places of great cities, and in the schools of the learned, wherever men were found who impugned the claims of the gospel, everywhere triumphing over his opponents, who either ceded him the victory, or in some less honest way bore testimony to their own defeat; and yet few men ever breathed less of the spirit of the world, or more sternly rebuked its sins. And when his life is studied, it is impossible to wish for any better illustration of the practicability of his own precept—a precept which, as I do not wish to see infidelity boasting its superior intelligence, and claiming the victory in controversial warfare, while Christianity is put to the blush in the person of its adherents, I would urge on your observance now, assured that as young men, and Christian young men, your heroism on behalf of the truth which you love will induce you to respond to the appeal, *Howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be ye men.* — Landels' *True Manhood.*

THOUGHTS FOR SPARE MOMENTS

AN EMBLEM OF CHARITY.

The Egyptian hieroglyphic of charity is very striking—a naked child, with a heart in his hand, giving honey to a bee without wings.

1. A child, humble and meek, (Matt. xviii. 3.)
2. With a heart in his hand, because the heart and the hand of a charitable man must go together—he must be a cheerful giver.
3. Giving honey to a bee—not a drone.
4. To a bee without wings—help such as would work, but cannot.

LOOK WELL TO THE END.

Look to the *end* of worldly ambition, and what is it? Take the four greatest rulers, perhaps, that ever sat upon a throne.

Alexander, when he had subdued the chief nations of the known world, wept because there was no other world to conquer, wantonly set fire to a city, and afterwards died in a scene of debauch.

Hannibal, who filled three bushels with the gold rings taken from the slaughtered knights, died at last by his own hand, unwapt and unknown, in a foreignland.

Cæsar, having conquered 800 cities, and dyed his garments with the blood of one million of his foes, was stabbed by his friends, in the very place which had been the scene of his greatest triumph.

Napoleon, after being the scourge of Europe, and the desolator of his country, died in banishment.

GREAT EVENTS ARISE FROM LITTLE CAUSES.

A tract brought in a pedlar's pack to the door of Richard Baxter's father was blessed to the good of the son.

The "Saint's Rest," written by Richard Baxter, was instrumental in bringing Doddridge to rejoice in Christ as his Saviour.

The "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul," written by Doddridge, led to Wilberforce's reception of the Gospel.

Wilberforce's "Practical View" was blessed to the spiritual welfare of Legh Richmond.

Legh Richmond's "Dairyman's Daughter" is said to have been the means, by the Holy Spirit's influences, of creating in the mind of the Emperor Alexander that reverence for Divine things which marked the latter day's of the Emperor's life; and thousands of men in humbler stations have rejoiced in God their Saviour in consequence of the perusal of the "Dairyman's Daughter." Who is able to compute the amount of spiritual good conferred upon the world by the writings and the teachings of Baxter, Doddridge, Wilberforce, and Legh Richmond?—and this vast aggregate of good may be traced to one little tract accompanied by the Divine blessing.

Sabbath School Lessons.

November 29, 1863.

JESUS IN THE HOUSE OF MARTHA AND MARY.

1st. *True Christians are different in temperament and character.* Christianity does not change the temperament, it only modifies and elevates it. Like the wild plant transplanted into a garden; or as a wild olive engrafted into a good tree remain still the same species, though much improved and rendered more fruitful. The character of Martha and Mary illustrate this. Martha was, naturally active, stirring and impulsive; feeling strongly, and speaking out all she felt. Mary was always of a contemplative turn of mind, feeling deeply and saying less than she felt. Inasmuch as grace reigned in their hearts, they showed the effect of grace at different times, and in different ways. Grace intensified their different dispositions, and made them more like themselves.

Stier conjectures that one object is to supply a serviceable caution against the idea that active working charity, like that of the good Samaritan, was the only way to serve Christ, and to show that sitting still and hearing is just as useful in its season as relieving distressed people. He says, "Is not the inmost fundamental thought of the words directed to busy Martha, a warning against the tendency to an unquiet, bustling character? 'Do,' was the word of the Lord in the parable of the good Samaritan; but now He says, 'rest.'—'Do not forget the hearing in thy much doing.'"

2nd. *What a snare to our souls the cares of this world may be, if allowed to take up too much attention,* ver. 40. Martha's desire to evince her hospitality to Christ was commendable enough in certain limits; but her excessive zeal for temporal provision made her, for the time, forget the things of her soul. She was *cumbered about much serving.* Was *cumbered*—the Greek word, so translated, mean, literally,—was drawn about—distracted.

Martha was angry at her sister, and desired that the Lord should agree with her. She

broke out into open complaint—"Lord," said she, "dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone, bid her therefore that she help me? In so saying, this holy woman sadly forgot what she was, and to whom she was speaking. She brought down on herself a solemn rebuke, and was led to learn a lesson which probably made a lasting impression.

3rd. *Christ's rebuke to Martha,* ver. 41. Like a skilful physician he detects the disease, and faithfully applies the appropriate remedy. Christ reproves her for the intenseness of her care, "Thou art careful, and troubled," and for the extensiveness of it, "about many things."

4th. *What high commendation our Lord Jesus Christ pronounced on Mary's choice:*

[*That good part.*] This is a general expression, and meant to be interpreted with a reference to the conduct of Mary at the time when her sister interposed. She was choosing soul-benefit. She was seeking more grace.—She was striving after nearer and closer communion with God and His Christ. This was the portion which she preferred to everything else, and to which she was willing for a time to postpone all earthly care. Those who seek such a portion shall never be disappointed.—Their treasure shall never be taken from them.

In leaving this passage, we should be careful not to fall into the error of thinking slightly of Martha's grace, or speaking, as some do occasionally, as if the good woman had no grace at all. This is a grave error. In the day of affliction Martha's grace shone clearly and brightly. There is hardly any confession in all the four Gospels, of our Lord's office, which will compare with that which she made in the eleventh chapter of John.

LESSONS TO LEARN.—

1. Think of the poverty of Jesus. He had no house of his own. Matt. vii. 20. He was bearing the curse due to sin—destitution is part of that curse. 2 Cor. viii. 9; Gal. iii. 12.

2. Both Martha and Mary loved Jesus.—Each expressed her love in her own way. 'Martha received him into her own house—ministered unto him of her substance.' Mary listened to 'the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth.' Wherever there is love

to the Lord Jesus such manifestations will spontaneously appear. Matt. xxv. 35; Psa. lxxii. 15; Psa. xix. 10; cxix. 103; Jer. xv. 16.

3. Martha was careful and cumbered about many things.' Too much attention to worldly things is sinful, when we allow such anxiety to deprive us of spiritual benefits. Matt. xiii. 22; 2 Tim. ii. 4; 1 Cor. ix. 27.

5. Mary was an earnest disciple of Jesus. She sat at his feet and heard his word.—Inferiors should consider it a privilege and a duty to learn of superiors. They who sit at the feet of Jesus now shall sit on his throne hereafter. Acts xxii. 3; John iii. 2; Prov. viii. 24.

6. Jesus notices the temper and conduct of his people, as he did in the case before us, and approves or reproves as he sees needful. Let us demean ourselves in all things, so as to receive at last the commendation Mary received. Zeph. i. 12; Rev. iii. 19; Matt. xxv. 21, 34.

7. Mary, being much taken up with Christ, was meek and mild like him. She made no reply to Martha's complaint. The Lord made answer for her, however. 1 Cor. xiii. 7; Matt. x. 16.

8. 'The one thing needful' is being taken up with Christ—being enamoured of him.—Many other things are important and necessary, but this is essential and indispensable. 1 John v. 12; John iii. 36.—Indeed, union to Christ necessarily includes every other needful blessing. Matt. vi. 33.

9. Let it be well observed that temporal blessings perish with the usings, but spiritual blessings are enduring. 2 Cor. iv. 18; Matt. vi. 19, 20; Prov. viii. 18.

December. 6th 1863.

ISRAEL'S PROMISE.

Josh. 24, 14-33.

In this lesson Joshua argues with the children of Israel on the evils of idolatry, and on the necessity of serving the true God alone. And if they would not, still he gives them to understand that he and his family had made up their minds.

The people very readily promise all that he recommends; but knowing their fickleness and proneness to idolatry, he stops them short as it were, and puts them on reflection: "Ye cannot serve the Lord"—Ye, who have served the gods of all the heathen round about you—ye who are so fickle in your disposition, and so unsanctified in heart—ye who have still idols secreted among you—ye serve the Lord! No: you must first put away your idols: for he is a holy God and a jealous God; or rather he will not bear with your transgressions or your sins. Joshua did not mean to deter the people, but only to show that the service of a holy God is incompatible with a heart disposed to sin.

Ye are witnesses, &c. You have been sufficiently apprized of the difficulties in your way, of God's holiness, of your own weakness and inconsistency; the need you have of divine help and the awful consequences of apostasy; and now ye deliberately make your choice: remember then that ye are witnesses against yourselves; witnesses that you have not been deceived.

It hath heard. How could the stone be said to hear? This is a highly figurative expression to mean that as long as that stone should last it would be a witness that this transaction had taken place. Every time the Israelites saw it, therefore, it would remind them of their engagements.

Obs. 1. It is a good thing to be strenuous in our expressions of determination to serve God, but it is better to *do* than to *say*.

Obs. 2. God is a holy God and requires a holy and entire service—all the heart. God will not give his glory to another. Let us not try to serve God and mammon.

Obs. 3. He who turns away from God may be sure that God will turn away from him. He who loves God and cleaves to him will never be forsaken.

Obs. 4. Determinations are easy—to keep them is the difficulty; but God will enable any one to keep his good determination, if he humbly and sincerely asks his grace.

WHAT ARE YOU MAKING YOURSELF!

"Live for ever!" is the trade mark of life, the great seal of eternity. Earth is only a workshop; time, the clock of labour. All of us mortals—good or bad, great or little—are giving the shoulder to work. Ever at work, as the breath comes, and the breath goes; as the months wheel round and the years march away. Doing—what? Why, *making self*. Yes, my reader, this is the sublime vocation of us all. God has made man to make himself; gifted him with powers which, if consecrated to the giver, make the possessor a great man.

Now, you need not put your chin on your chest, shrug your shoulders, and smile a grim "impossible." I am not dreaming, nor talking nonsense, nor penning absurdities. Nothing but the truth. You may, you ought, to step above the human animals around you. Let men, if they will, glory in courting a fickle palate. Men was not made to be a worshiper of good cheer, or a devotee of dainties. Let men, if they will, be every day slaves to what they carry on their backs, or shake in their purses. Poor things! they may feel, "Who is like me?" in butterfly garb and peacock splendor; but man was not made to make himself a bondsman to caterpillar spinings and grub cocoons. You must see further than a dish, and look higher than a hat-peg, if you wish to stand a true man in the presence of God. God has made you awfully strong over your noble powers. With all your brains, you may make yourself a fool; with all your feelings, a tyrant; with all your sense of right, a heartless rogue. You may make gain your god, till bank notes cloak every better feeling, and you gloat in miserly loneliness over yellow dust. You may crust over your heart with hatred to all, petrify every brotherly feeling till friends are nuisances, and life a dray of misery; till, perchance, you die in a madhouse, or meet eternity a suicide. And then, "Who made you?"

"Not so," you say; "I can hold up my head in scorn of such meanness and depravity."

Stay! Put that head of yours down again till you answer the question, "Am I in the way such 'poor things, have trod?' Every end has a path leading to it. Many a pleasant lane have I travelled, little thinking that the end was a ditch or a quagmire. Little things are near relatives to greater ones. Little sins are grandfathers to great crimes. An angry taunt is the first mile-stone on a road the end of which is murder. An underhand trick is a by-path to fraud, imposition, and roguery. A spark of conceit is the germ of silly pride and disgusting foppery. A sly glance at tempting evil is often a seed of reckless impurity. Sculptors chisel their masterpieces stroke by stroke; and the words of men make themselves so by degrees.

Not very many years ago there lived a boy, simple, confiding, and loving, as all other "little dears" are; but ere the dimples of his face were gone, while mother still doled out his daily dose of white sugar, he began to manifest a cruel disposition. Many a poor fly, promenading the window panes, lost his liberty, his wings, and his life. Spiders would suffer amputation of limb and leg; cockroaches would expire on a cotton "bowstring;" beetles and butterflies would without mercy be butchered; ants would have a warm bath in the seething copper; and worms would expire in half dozens on the hook. What did this boy make himself? Why, if, a few years since, you had visited the old city of N., you might have seen hanging in the gaze of excited thousands a murderer. Our cruel boy was father to the savage cut-throat. He died, as he made himself, hard as the granite walls of the building that threw a shadow over his swinging carcass. It is a long distance in depravity, between beheading a fly and spilling a man's blood; but the one schooled the boy a savage, and the other ended his education by making the man an assassin. No rare instance this. Many a criminal has started for the gallows in a pinafore, and many a convict began his "penal servitude" ere he doffed his jacket.

Reader, how is it with you? What are you making yourself?

THE BLOOD-STAINED LEAF OF LUCKNOW.

In the station of —, in the upper provinces of India, I was one morning visiting the hospital as usual. As I entered the general hospital, I was told by one of the men, that a young man of the — regiment was anxious to speak to me. In the inner ward I found, lying on the chorepoy in a corner, a new face, and, walking up to him, said, "I am told you wish to see me; I do not recollect having seen you before." "No," said he, "I have never seen you before, yet you seem no stranger, for I have often heard speak of you."— I asked him if he was ill or wounded. "I am ill," he replied. He went on to say, that he had just come down from Cawnpore, after having been present at the relief of Lucknow. "Perhaps you would like me to tell you my history," he added. "It may be you remember, a long time since, some of our men going into the hospital opposite, as you sat reading to one of the Highlanders.— There were some half-dozen or more of them; they came to see a sick comrade. You went up presently to them, and told them how grateful you and all your country people were to the noble soldiers for so readily coming to protect you all, and how deeply you sympathised with them in the noble cause in which they were now going to take a share. Then you talked to them of the danger which would attend them. You reminded them that life is a battle-field to all, and asked them if they were soldiers of Christ, and if they had thought of the probability of their falling in battle. I have heard all about that long talk you had with the men. Then you gave your Bible to one, and asked him to read a passage. He chose the 23rd Psalm, and you prayed. They asked you for a book or a tract, to remind them of what had been said, and you gave them all you had in your bag. But for one man there was none. They were to start that afternoon, so that you had not time to get one. But you went to the apothecary, and got pen and paper from him. When you came back, you gave this paper to him, telling him you should look for him in heaven."— The poor fellow pulled out, from the breast of his shirt, half a sheet of note-paper, on which I recognised my own handwriting, though scarcely legible from wear. On it were written the 1st, 7th, 10th, 14th, 15th, and 17th, verses of the 5th chapter of 2nd Corinthians, and the whole of that hymn beginning—

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds."

"That man," he continued, "and I were in the same company, but he was a day ahead of me.— We met in Cawnpore, then marched on with the rest to Lucknow. Whenever we halted, the first thing he did was to take out his paper, and read it aloud to those who cared to hear; then he

prayed with us. As we marched, he spoke much of his old father and mother, and only brother, and wished he could see them once more. But he was very, very happy, and ready to 'go home,' if God saw fit. I am an orphan. I lost my parents when a child, and was brought up at school. I never had one to love me, and life was indeed a weary burden; yet, beyond, all was darker still, for I knew nothing of a Saviour. But his reading and words came to my heart; he was so kind to me, and always called me 'brother.' I never loved till I knew him. He had found Jesus, and led me to love Him too. I cannot find words to say how I joyed, when at last I felt I had a Friend above, Oh! I never shall forget my joy when I first understood and believed. We had no book only the paper. We knew it off by heart, and I don't know which of us loved it best. As we neared Lucknow, he dwelt much on eternity, and said to me, 'It is very solemn to be walking into death. I shall never leave this ill-fated city.— We had many fights, standing always side by side. At last, in a dreadful fight in one of the gardens a ball struck him in the chest. Words cannot say my grief when he fell,—the only one I had to love me. I knelt by him, till the garden was left in our hands, and then bore him to the doctors.— But I was too late,—life was almost gone. 'Dear brother,' he said to me, 'I am only going home first. We have loved to talk of home together; don't be sorry for me, for I am so happy,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds!" Read me the words she wrote.' I pulled them out from his bosom, all stained with his blood as you see, and repeated them. 'Yes,' he said, 'the love of Christ has constrained us. I am almost home. I'll be there to welcome you and her.— Good-bye, dear —.' And he was gone, but I was left. Oh, it was so very bitter! I knelt by him, and prayed that I might soon follow him.— Then I took his paper, and put it in my bosom where it has been since. I and some of our men buried him in the garden. I have gone through much fighting since, and came down here on duty with a detachment yesterday. They think me only worn with exposure, and tell me I shall soon be well; but I shall never see the sky again. I would like to lie by his side, but it cannot be." "I could not speak," says the narrator, "but only pressed his hand, poor fellow. At length he broke the silence." "So you'll forgive me making so bold in speaking to you. He often spoke of you, and blessed you for leading him to Jesus. And he it was who led me to Jesus. We shall soon be together again, and won't we welcome you when you come!" We read and prayed together. He was quite calm when I rose from my knees. He was too weak to raise his head from the pillow, but was quite peaceful and happy. Two days after he died in the joyful hope of a blessed immortality.—*The Christian Treasury.*

A. DOCTRINE HELD IN HEAVEN.

Perhaps there is nothing more humbling to the human intellect than the chaos of commentaries it has produced on the Revelation of St. John. Hardly two writers of the many thousands that have launched their tiny barques on this sea of Divine wonders agree in relation to the discoveries they have made. For a specimen of most marvellous confusion, the apocalyptic library stands alone in the region of theological literature. And yet the specific object of the book, the grand lesson it was intended to teach the Church during the whole economy of grace, is as clear as anything else in the entire Word of God. Whatever may be meant by its symbols, its seals, vials, trumpets, thunders; its imposing visions and terrific scenes; no devout and intelligent reader can peruse it without seeing that it is a bright light held over the ages, assuring us that victory, complete and eternal, awaits the truth of heaven. Over all the tumults, hurricanes, earthquakes, tempests, thunders, and mad commotions, we look with calm faith, and behold the serene issue in the peaceful and holy kingdom of the victor King of kings. Over the dark sea of tumultuous human passion, frenzied and furious, breaking against the very citadel of heaven, we descry in the distance a haven of unequalled beauty, and delicious repose. It is exquisitely soothing to take this steady light in our hand and gaze upon the end of the unparalleled conflict. When our hearts beat fast as the foul beasts rise before us, shewing their monster forms, and hurling nation against nation in wild violence, it is unutterably refreshing to hear an exulting song bursting forth close by the very throne of God, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth."

All is well, then. There is no cause for fear. One is found worthy to be intrusted with the management of the universe—to deal with the complicated affairs of time—to vindicate the government of God—to reduce the terrific confusion to order and beauty—and to bring in the peerless day of glory, whose sun shall never go down. Hallelujah! We join the celestial choir—"Thou art worthy!"

But what do these worshippers say? The burden of their song, whilst addressing the Lamb, is, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." That is, beyond all question, their language—that is

the doctrine held in heaven. May we not, therefore, take, from the grand book of the Apocalypse, a mighty argument in support of the central doctrine of the evangelical faith? It will be admitted that whatever opinions sects of professed Christians and schools of theology may hold on earth, it is utterly impossible that erroneous doctrines can be held and uttered before the throne of God in heaven. It will also be admitted that the dwellers in that pure world are in a position to know the exact truth on the momentous matter which they turn into song. You cannot for one moment suppose that if the doctrine of redemption by the blood of the Lamb be false, they could dwell in heaven for an hour without discovering the mistake.—They have left imperfection behind them, have thrown off all the infirmities, mental or moral, which may have led them whilst here, to attach undue importance to any peculiarity of creed, simply because it was held by the particular brotherhood with which they were connected, and they have for ever left the regions of ecclesiastical polemics to enjoy the full blessedness of perfect holiness and truth. What they say, therefore, must be accepted in its full and proper sense as beyond all controversy.

It is most instructive to mark the constituent parts of this doctrine—"Thou wast slain." Here is the great historical fact of the world. It is true, independently of the Bible, that Jesus of Nazareth, an extraordinary man, whose wonderful works, and not less wonderful teachings, filled the land of Israel and its neighbouring countries with amazement, was put to death in the reign of Tiberias Caesar, in the province of Judea, when Pontius Pilate was governor. Of this fact there can be no doubt. It forms part of the history of the Romans, and took place when Rome was mistress of the world.

"And hast redeemed us." Here is the profession of the entire nominal Church, without the slightest exception. The Greek, Latin, and Protestant Churches, and every sect of every name, however heetical, hold and teach that Jesus Christ is the Redeemer. In words, this is the universal doctrine of all nominal Christians.

"By thy Blood." This is the grateful utterance of the real Church in heaven—of all who are admitted there into the presence of God and the Lamb.

To put these thoughts clearly before the reader, let him suppose three great concentric circles. A very wide outer circle—the world; a middle circle—the professing Church; an inner circle—the eternally saved—the redeemed spouse of Christ. It is within this inner circle, if anywhere, that we may expect

the greatest and most remarkable fruits of the death of Christ. It is not enough that Jesus was put to death in our world. We are not saved by that fact. It is not enough that we call Him Redeemer. We are not saved by doing that. Some call Him Redeemer, who not only stop short of the full doctrine expressed in the new song, but deny that men are redeemed by the blood of Christ. They say we are saved by copying His example, or by obeying His precepts, but that the doctrines of substitution and atonement are not necessary, and, therefore, not true. The example of Christ is most precious, and his precepts are beyond all value; but it is manifest that this doctrine falls very far short of that which is held in heaven, and, if so, we are compelled to pronounce it fatally deficient. Those who hold it are in the middle circle, and call Christ their Redeemer, but how can they pass to the inner circle, seeing that the qualification for admission to that glorious and happy position is redemption *by blood*? Let us not be called uncharitable, for it is absolutely certain that neither our charity nor want of it can have anything to do with the settled and unalterable arrangements of God respecting human redemption. Let us not then separate the constituent elements of the doctrine held in heaven, but take it in its entirety with all its wondrous depth of wisdom and love, and turn it into a fervent song of praise to Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood; and to Him be glory, now and for ever. Amen!

L. LEASK, D. D.

British Herald.]

STREAMS IN PALESTINE.

JOB vi. 15, "My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, and as the stream of brooks they pass away."

The phenomena of streams in this country aptly illustrate the character of Job's false friends. In winter, when there is no need of them, they are full and strong, and loud in their bustling professions and promises; but in the heat of summer, when they are wanted, they disappoint your hopes. You think your fields will be irrigated, and your flocks refreshed by them, when, lo! they deal deceitfully, and pass away. Nearly all the streams of this country, "what time they wax warm," thus vanish, go to nothing, and perish. Such were Job's friends. There is another illustration equally pertinent.—You meet a clear, sparkling brook, and so long as you follow it among the cool mountains, it holds cheerful converse with you, by its merry gambols over the rocks; but as soon as you reach the plain, "where it is

hot," it begins to dwindle, grow sad and discouraged, and finally fails altogether.—Those which suggested the comparison of Job probably flowed down from the highlands of Gilead and Bashan, and came to nothing in the neighbouring desert; for it is added, that the "troops of Tema looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them. They were confounded because they had hoped." It was on those high mountains only that Job could become familiar with the winter phenomena, when the streams are "blackish by reason of the ice;" for not only are Lebanon and Hermon covered with snow in the winter, and the brooks then frozen, but the same is true also of the higher parts of the Hermon, and of the mountains to the south of it, where Job is supposed to have resided.—Dr. Thompson, "*Land and the Book.*"

PEOPLE AND PREACHER.

Mr. Fox once said that eloquence is far more in the *audience* than in the *speaker*.—Unless *they* are so disposed as to kindle at the fire *he* strikes, the sparks may come, but not the flame. In a late very interesting volume by Dr. Buchsel, one of the most effective and faithful of modern German preachers, he applies the same thought to the pulpit though in a modified form. He tells us that unless the *people* be trained to solemn thought, the *preacher's* earnestness, humanly speaking, will have comparatively little effect. And there is a great truth in this, worthy of application to all our hearts. A minister's failure is often as much in his people as in himself. A spirit of criticism turns the gospel aside, not only from the critic's own heart but from those to whom the criticism is uttered. A slumbering habit makes the ablest preaching appear dull. The mist may be about ourselves, and not about the sun; and our opinion is often caused by our own want of attention, rather than the preacher's want of ability. Hence a sermon which may on one occasion appear dull, on another may fall on a congregation with startling power. Unless men are aroused to the reality of public worship, the preacher will fail. And in this view there is a distinct duty belonging to him and them: to him, to arouse them to this reality by his solemnity, simplicity, and that unction which is brought by prayer—to them, to pray to God in their own hearts to give them grace to hear his word aright.