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A SEMI-MONTHLY UNDENOMINATIONAL RELIGIOUS PERIODICAL.

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[for Continuation see page iii. of cover.]

THE EARTHLY HOME A SHADOW OF THE HEAVENLY.

BY THE REV. OCTAVIUS WINSLOW, D.D.

"My Father's house."—John xiv.

What hallowed attractions and sunny memories cluster around the paternal home! If there is one earthly spot dearer, sweeter, brighter than another, it is the home of our childhood. Around it, when years and oceans and continents have long and far severed us from its hearth, our fondest, warmest thoughts and recollections still cling. And we think, when sickness and loneliness and want steal upon us, could we but return to that home again, and again feel the warm embrace of a mother's love, and find ourselves beneath a father's sheltering roof, life would be a pleasant thing.

Transfer your thoughts, my reader, from the earthly to the heavenly,—take the purest, the fondest, the most poetic conception you can form of the one, and blend it with the other,—and still you have but the faintest analogy of heaven! And yet you have made some approximation to the idea. You have entwined around your heart the image and hope of heaven as your HOME. Earth has some foreshadowings of this truth. If "now are we the children of God," then ours is not a state of dreary orphanage—we are not fatherless and homeless. Christ reminded His disciples of this: "I will not leave you comfortless;"—margin, ORPHANS.

If, then, we are not fatherless, there is a sense in which we are not homeless—a sense in which the lower rooms, the outer courts, the vestibules of the heavenly Home are found on earth, in which we meet and hold communion with our heavenly Father. What is the sanctuary, filled with His glory—the closet, hallowed with His presence—the chamber of sickness soothed with His love—the hill-side, where at eventide we go to meditate, sanctified with His fellowship,—but our Father's Home, coming down out of heaven to dwell awhile with His children on earth? Where my Father is, there is my Father's house. It may be remarked of many of the ungodly, that

they go through a hell to hell; with equal truth it may be affirmed of the children of God, that they pass through a heaven to heaven. Our Father's house is a house of "many mansions," and EARTH is one of them. The universe is His abode, every sun and star His dwelling-place: why should we exclude Him from this our own planet, though the smallest, yet, in its history, the greatest, the grandest of all? "The whole family on earth and in heaven" claim Him as the one Father, and earth and heaven are but parts of the one Home. And, O! if earth, the vestibule, the portico of heaven, is so radiant with glory, what must be heaven itself!

"Since o'er Thy footstool, here below,
Such radiant gems are strewn,
O, what magnificence must glow,
My God, about Thy throne!
So brilliant here those drops of light—
There the full ocean rolls, how bright!

"If Night's blue curtain of the sky,
With thousand stars inwrought,
Hung like a royal canopy,
With glittering diamonds fraught,
Be, Lord, Thy temple's outer veil—
What splendour at the shrine must dwell!

"The dazzling sun, at noontide hour,
Forth from his flaming vase,
Flinging o'er earth the golden shower
Till vale and mountain blaze,
But shows, O Lord, one beam of Thee;
What, then, the day where Thou dost shine!

"Ah, how shall these dim eyes endure
That noon of living rays,
Or how my spirit, so impure,
Upon Thy glory gaze!
Anoint, O Lord, anoint my sight,
And robe me for that world of light."

While, therefore, we would not exclude earth as one of the mansions of the Father's abode, seeing it is the temporary dwelling-place of so great a portion of the family, we must still view it as but one of the lower rooms, hallowed and radiant, indeed, with the Father's presence, yet, by service and discipline, designed but to prepare us for the state-rooms above, the higher and nobler mansions to which ere long we shall

be summoned. Now, let us transfer our thoughts to the Father's house above, and endeavour to portray its spiritual architecture and its domestic privileges, not trespassing upon the region of the fanciful and ideal, but keeping soberly and strictly within the teaching of God's word.

The solemn hour of death once passed, the spirit, upborne by angels, finds itself at once ushered into the RECEPTION-ROOM of heaven, the first of the "many mansions." There we shall see Jesus, not seated, but standing as when He rose to receive His first martyr—to welcome us home, encircled by the general assembly and church of the first-born, the spirits of just men made perfect, and an innumerable company of angels waiting to greet our arrival. In advance, and more eager than all the rest of that blessed throng, will be the loved ones from whom we parted on the margin of the river across which they passed to the Celestial City. O, what a reception, what greetings, what joy-wishings then! "Welcome, husband! welcome, wife! Welcome, child! welcome, parent, brother, sister, pastor, friend!" will burst from ten thousand times ten thousand lips, louder than the voice of many waters. But the Saviour's welcome will be the crowning one of all! With what ineffable joy will He receive home the fruit of His long and weary travail!—the sheep that often wandered from His side, and had as often been restored, but now will wander no more!—the disciple that often wounded the bosom that sheltered him, had as often been forgiven, but now will wound it no more! O, who can imagine the infinite joy of that Saviour when the celestial convoy ushers into His presence the sinner He ransomed by His blood, called by His grace, kept by His power, and in spite of all, through all, and out of all, at last brought home to His Father's house?

The heavenly repast which succeeds the reception will introduce us into the BANQUET-HALL of heaven, another mansion of the Father's house. Of the repast or banquet we know but little. Our blessed Lord was studiously partial and reserved in His revelations of heaven. It would seem as if He would deepen our surprise and enhance our joy by the present concealment He carefully observed. And yet

He has told us sufficient, and revealed enough, to intensify our panting to be there. This much we know, that heaven is not a state, but a *place*; not boundless space, but a *locality*; not the dwelling of a host where we shall sojourn awhile as guests, but our FATHER'S HOUSE, where we shall be CHILDREN at HOME for ever. We are assured, too, that its nature, its employments and pleasures, will in all respects be genial to the condition, and will comport with the capacity, dignity, and immortality of our unclothed and glorified nature. The soul, divested of all that is material and gross, will be fitted to enter into all that is spiritual and pure. The banquet that our redeeming God will have prepared for us will be in consonance with the nature He had fitted for the banquet. And, O! what imagination can adequately conceive the costliness, the richness, the variety, the ever-augmenting material of that heavenly repast with which the glorified will regale themselves through eternity? How will the mind revel amid the ever-unfolding wonders of God's mind! How will the heart feast upon the ever-unfolding depths of Christ's heart! How will the soul dilate and repose in its ever-deepening, ever-growing happiness! Dim as our views of heaven are, surely it were enough to satisfy our most intense aspirations—the assurance that we shall be *perfectly holy*. Advance me to a condition of sinlessness—to a place where holiness sanctifies every heart, beams in every eye, breathes from every lip, sparkles in every action—of which every thought, and word, and look, and act, is its expression and embodiment,—and you have placed me at the richest banquet God can provide or my heart desire. "In Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Lord! number us among the blessed who shall eat bread in Thy kingdom, and who shall be called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb at Thine appearing and glory.

The Father's house has also its MUSIC-MANSION. Adoration and praise would seem to constitute the principal employment of the redeemed in heaven. The visions of glory which floated before the eye of John were all associated with music. To his sea-girt isle were wafted the strains

of the song sung by the hundred and forty and four thousand who stood on Mount Zion. In his lonely exile he heard the harpers harping with their harps. And of whom was that celestial choir composed?—"the redeemed from among men!" And who and what are the subjects of their song? Jesus and His redemption! "Thou art worthy, for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred and tongue, and people and nation." Blended with the song of Redemption will be the song of *Providence*. Retracing all the way thy God led thee through the wilderness, thou shalt gather material from each mercy and from each trial, from each joy and from each sorrow, for an eternal hymn of praise to His great and glorious name. You are learning these songs now in the house of your pilgrimage. As you cross the desert sands, or break your lone footsteps through the depth of the wilderness, or stand within the sacred shadow of the cross, God is preparing you for the music-mansion of glory. All His dealings with you in providence and in grace are but to train and attune the powers, affections, and sympathies of your soul to the sweet harmony of the spheres. Every sunbeam of mercy that gilds your path, and every cloud-vail of judgment that shades it, every heavy footstep of the giant storm, every gentle wavelet dimpling the calm surface of the soul, every soft zephyr that lulls it to repose, is designed by God to instruct and mature you for the music of the celestial state. A harp of gold strung by angels, and attuned by Christ's own hands, awaits you in the music mansion above; and soon you will sweep its chords to the high praises of the THIRTEEN JEHOVAH, and all heaven will ring with its melody.

↑ "Arise, my soul, arise,
Unfold thy heaven-born wings;
Thy home is in the skies,
Where lofty Gabriel sings;
And loud, through all the spacious plain,
Is heard—'The Lamb, the Lamb was slain!'"

"O, may my bosom glow
With melody like this!

O, may my spirit bow
When musing on their bliss!
Ah! didst Thou die, dear Lamb, for me?
He blest—He groan'd—He died for thee.

"O, teach me that new song
Which occupies their time;

And say, will it be long
Ere I shall reach that clime?
I'll wait till Thou shalt call me home;
Yet come, Lord Jesus, quickly come."

"Is there a harp for me?
(O, gently hide my fears!)
Is there a throne for me
Beyond the rolling spheres,
Where joys unchanging, ceaseless flow,
And sin or death shall no one know?"

The THIRTEEN-ROOM of heaven is not one of the least appropriate and gorgeous mansions of the Father's house. The saints of God are a kingdom of priests—a royal priesthood—the heirs of a kingdom: and no character in their glorified state will be more visible and distinct than their *regal* one. The expectation of an earthly kingdom, the dream of the early Christians, our Lord dispelled by announcing that His kingdom was "not of this world." But while He thus sought to inculcate more spiritual views of the nature of His Church, He at the same time broadly declared the fact of their present royalty and of their future reign. "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the *throne* of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve *thrones*, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. xix. 28). The apocalyptic vision of the seer confirmed this statement. "And I saw *thrones*, and they sat upon them; . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ" (Rev. xx. 4). Our glorified Lord again referred to the enthronement of the saints in His cheering words addressed to the Christian combatant: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my *throne*, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His *throne*." "Be thou faithful unto death, and thou shalt receive a *crown* of life." Such, believer, are your royal and resplendent expectations. A public and glorious enthronement and coronation awaits you. A royal priest; you will ere long be made like Christ, a "priest upon His *throne*." You will be ushered into the *throne-room* of glory; saints and angels will escort you to your seat; and, amidst the hallelujah chorus of countless myriads, Christ will crown you a *king* and a *priest* unto God, and you shall reign with Jesus for ever and ever. O, whatever obscurity may now veil your relation as belonging to the seed-

royal, let your demeanour be such as to stamp you with the character once ascribed to Gideon's brethren, of whom it was said that "each one resembled the children of a king!"

We are trespassing not upon the region of imagination when, in depicting the spiritual architecture and appointments of the Father's house, we refer to the PICTURE-GALLERY as constituting one of its most appropriate and attractive mansions. It is not materializing heaven to transfer to its spiritual descriptions the expressive imagery of the material. In so doing we but imitate the Holy Ghost, who, in all His spiritual delineations of glory, hesitates not to dip His divine pencil in the bright, gorgeous colours with which God has tinted and enamelled this beautiful world. Painting, as a historic art, is universally and practically acknowledged. As the handmaid to history, her aid and achievements have won the gratitude and admiration of ages. Transfer the illustration to heaven. Upon the walls of that magnificent gallery, depicted in colours of living light, will be seen all the marvellous events of God's moral and providential government in the history of the universe, separately, visibly, and eternally traced. Nor this only. What will be our astonishment and marvel, when we gaze upon the walls of that gallery, to behold our individual history, from our entrance into this world of woe to our entrance into the world of glory—each event, each epoch, each step delineated with a life-like truthfulness, a depth of tint and a transparency of colour which shall reveal all the past with startling vividness, overpowering the mind with wonder, and expanding the heart with praise! Incidents which we had failed to note, events which we had totally forgotten, providences which we had blindly seen, and circumstances which we had strangely misunderstood, will then form a series of pictures, presenting a complete and perfect history of our individual life, illustrating the infinite wisdom, goodness, faithfulness, and love of our Father throughout the whole. It is recorded of Queen Elizabeth, that, ignorant of the laws of painting, she commanded her portrait to be taken without a shadow upon the canvas. With an ignorance of the laws of moral painting

equally as profound, and infinitely more serious, how often would we have obliterated from our history those sombre pencillings of life's picture—the dark background and blended shadows—which the Divine Artist know to be essential to the fidelity, harmony, and perfection of the whole! We would have life without its moral discipline. We would efface from the portrait all the shadings of sorrow and sickness, suffering, poverty, and bereavement—leaving nothing but the bright and sunny hues of unmingled, unclouded happiness! But when we wander through the interminable picture-gallery of our Father's house, and gaze upon the carvings, the paintings, and frescoes of our whole life, each epoch, event, and incident—the lights and shadows beautifully and exquisitely blended—looking down upon us with startling fidelity from its Jasper walls,—we shall then see the infinite rectitude of our heavenly Father in all His present dealings with us, both of sorrow and of joy. With what vividness shall we then see the necessity, as much for the cold, dark pencillings, as for the warm, roseate tints of the picture; and for both the lights and shadows, the joys and sorrows of life, we shall laud and adore His great and glorious name!

Among the many mansions, there will not be wanting one which will especially recognize heaven as a place of study. What a LIBRARY of knowledge, therefore, awaits us in our Father's house! Heaven is a place of thought, of expanded intellect, of matured and ever-enlarging and enriching mind. Our minds are but in the infancy of their being; and the themes of reflection and subjects of research which they grasp are necessarily graduated to our present infantine and limited powers. What an infinite sea of knowledge, upon whose shores we now but stand, is reserved for our higher life in glory! The Library of Heaven! How vast! how rich! What volumes for study will be the histories of the universe—of our world—of men—of redemption—of our individual life! What exalted and sublime themes of thought—the being and character of God—the love, grace, and glory of Christ—the work, power, and gentleness of the Holy Ghost! In a word, what volumes for our study and

research will be the Book of Providence and the Book of Grace! And will the Holy Spirit have no place in that library? Verily, I believe that it will. I do not think that in the archives of heaven the Sacred Scroll of God's Revealed Truth will be missing. That most marvellous of all wonderful books, the BIBLE—the patent, and source, and foundation of all that was accurate in history, true in philosophy, profound in science, rich in poetry, sound in ethics, and real in religion,—will then unclasp its lids and unfold its leaves; and in a light that will explain every truth, elucidate every mystery, harmonize every discrepancy, we shall read the Bible as we never studied its wondrous contents before. Not a truth will be lost. It is recorded of a late historian, that, had every copy of "Paradise Lost" been destroyed, such was the marvellous tenacity of his memory, he would have been able to have reproduced every sentence of that poem. Is it too much to affirm, that, so engraved, engrafted, and inscribed the precious Word of God in the souls of the regenerate, when every material copy of the Bible shall, with all that is merely human, have passed away, each truth of that Divine revelation shall be reproduced, read, studied, and preserved for ever in the Library of our Father's House?

The subject which this paper has but imperfectly discussed is most consolatory and sanctifying. Is it not a soothing reflection, that all those who depart this life in the faith of Christ we shall find again in the House of the one family? When we meet their last look of love, and caught their last words of blessing, and then laid their dust to rest until the trumpet of the archangel sound, we were ready to ask, "Shall we see them again?" O, yes, the Gospel of Christ illumines the believer's grave with a living hope. On our arrival in the Father's house, we shall find them all again,—not one absent who on earth possessed "the first-fruits of the Spirit."

And then how promotive of piety in the earthly home should be these thoughts of the heavenly home! How we should aim to model and to mould our earthly homes after the heavenly! There righteousness dwells, holiness sanctifies, love reigns, perfect confidence and sympathy, and concord exist. Why should not the earthly homes

of the righteous be types of this? The domestic constitution is a most marvellous and benevolent appointment of God, and is designed, among other ends, to unite, strengthen, and sanctify the different relations of life, and thus secure and promote the mutual happiness and well-being of each and all. Thus God would make the FAMILY relation a type of His Church on earth and in heaven. But, alas! how has sin perverted this! What places of misery are some homes on earth, even where religion is supposed to have found a temple and a shrine! Discord, where there should be harmony; suspicion, where there should be confidence; jealousy, where there should be delight; coldness, distance, and alienation, where there should be the warmest, closest, and most endearing intercourse; harsh, abrupt expressions, where there should be nought but pleasant words; indifference and neglect, where there should be the profoundest interest and sympathy: in a word, hatred, where there should be LOVE. Let us remember this is an individual matter; for our homes are just what the individual members of the family make them. One unhappy temper, one unbending will, one unloving, unsympathizing heart, may bedevil and embitter the sunniest, sweetest home on earth. O, cultivate the affections, the sympathies, and the intercourse you hope to perpetuate in heaven? By mutual forbearance, gentleness, confidence, and love—by offices of kindness, delicate attention, and graceful demeanour, seek to transfer as much of the purity, love, and sunshine of your FATHER'S HOUSE above as you can to your FATHER'S house below. And then, when you ascend from the earthly to the heavenly, it will be but the transfer of home affection, intercourse, and happiness, cherished, cultivated, and sanctified here, to a higher and nobler sphere—holy as God, enduring as eternity.

Let us cherish domestic thoughts and anticipations of heaven. This will make us long to be there. How confirmatory of this the dying testimony of some! Listen to their glowing language. "Almost well, and nearly at home," said the dying Baxter, when asked by a friend how he was. A martyr, when approaching the stake, being questioned as to how he felt, answered, "Never better; for now I know

that I am almost at home." Then, looking over the meadows between him and the place where he was to be immediately burned, he said, "Only two more stiles to get over, and I am at my Father's house." "Dying," said the Rev. S. Medley, "is sweet work, sweet work; home! home!" Another on his deathbed said, "I am going home as fast as I can; and I bless God that I have a good home to go to." What sweet and powerful attraction has it to quicken our pulse and to speed us onward to its blessed abode! Heaven is to some richer in love than earth. With many there are no relatives so close, no friends so dear, no hearts so loving, no minds so congenial, as those in heaven. And still it grows richer! Earth's ties are loosening, life's relations are lessening, sacred friendships are narrowing, the purple clouds of our pilgrimage are disappearing, and soon we ourselves will be the last shadow that shall melt into eternity! But those holy ties, these hallowed relations, these sacred friendships, these heaven-enkindled loves, will all be found again in our FATHER'S HOUSE.

PLAIN SPEAKING.

I do not know you. But I know that millions are not in the right way as to their souls. Perhaps you are such a person.

The wrong way, leads to everlasting misery. If you are in the wrong way, this is what you are going too. If you go on as you are, you are lost.

Think. Think seriously and honestly.—How are you living? What are you doing? What does your way seem to you, when you look well at it? Is it the right way, or the wrong? the way of life, or the way of death? Let conscience speak.

There is One who pities all who are in the wrong way cures for them, and calls them.—He does so to you. At this moment he pities you. By this paper he calls you. His name is Jesus.

He died for sinners, for those who were out of the right way. Nothing but his dying for them could bring them back. He died for sinners, and he is still full of compassion and love. He knows all that you are doing, and sees how you are living; he has known it all along; yet he pities you, and is willing to save you.

He calls you to come to him. He will not turn you away because you have gone

astray so long. He will receive you kindly, and forgive you, and set you in the way of life. I know not who you are; but this I say boldly, that he will be your Saviour, reader, if you will come to him.

Ah! come to him. Come now. Sin is ruinous, time is short, eternity draws on. It is a fearful thing to be in the wrong way.—There is no repentance in the grave, no turning when once the end is reached. God is gracious and long-suffering, and Jesus is mighty to save. As you love your own soul, as you desire to be saved, as you would escape an end more dreadful than words can describe, come, come to Jesus! He is the only way, the only Saviour.

I pray that God may give his Holy Spirit to you who read. While you read, do you the same. Lift up your heart to God, and say, "O God, I am a sinner. Blot out all my sins in my Saviour's blood. Give me thy Holy Spirit. Make my heart new, and turn me unto thee. Forgive me, bless me, and save me, for Jesus Christ's sake!" God has promised to give his Holy Spirit to those that ask him.—*Ryle.*

HINTS FOR A CHRISTIAN FAMILY.

1. We may be quite sure that our will is likely to be crossed in a day; so prepare for it.

2. Everybody in the house has an evil nature as well as ourselves, and therefore we are not to expect too much.

3. To learn the different temper of each individual.

4. To look upon each member of the family as one for whose soul we are bound to watch, as those that must give account.

5. When any good happens to any one, to rejoice at it.

6. When inclined to give an angry answer, to lift up the heart in prayer.

7. If from sickness, pain, or infirmity, we feel irritable, to keep a very strict watch over ourselves.

8. To observe when others are so suffering, and drop a word of kindness and sympathy suited to them.

9. To watch for LITTLE opportunities of pleasing, and to put little annoyances out of the way.

10. To take a cheerful view of everything, and encourage hope.

11. To speak kindly to the servants, and praise them for little things when you can.

12. In all little pleasures which may occur, to put SELF last.

13. To try for "the soft answer that turneth away wrath."—*Our Own Fireside.*

FAILINGS OF THE GOOD.

HOW ABUSED BY THE GUILTY.

[From 'Life-Lessons in the School of Christian Duty,' a forthcoming work by a minister of the Presbyterian Church.]

'Guilt and sin love to quote the failings of a good man, a thousand times more than even the elegant eulogies of vice from the lips of a bad one, because more powerful and effective. They never exult as they do when they see that good man stumble. His fall is the fall of that majestic statute of holy example that has looked upon them with a withering frown, and when it lies prostrate like the fallen Dagon on the threshold of his own temple, mutilated and broken, they regard this misfortune to virtue as a triumph to themselves. That example has been to them what the Prophet Micaiah was to Ahab, and if their lips were bridled, their hearts said as plainly as that wicked king, 'I hate him, for he prophesieth not good of me but evil.'—Example is indeed a prophet. It may even make the devil stand abashed and feel 'how awful goodness is.' Men who are not satisfied with themselves, who feel that they are doing wrong, seek an excuse for themselves in the weakness of another. If a good man errs, they deem themselves privileged. They will wrap themselves up in a cloak of his failings, and so lay the flattering unction to their souls. They could not contend on the 'principles of a perverted morality, with any verbal apology for their sin, however well expressed; they want an example they can quote.—Frequently they are only too successful in their search. Good men are often weak, and blindly cling to an error that thus becomes a stumbling block to others.

In the early history of the temperance cause a man who had been addicted to intemperance rose in a temperance meeting, and related his experience in regard to the influence of temperate drinkers of respectable standing upon the habits of the drunkard.

'Many a time,' said he, 'have I gone to Captain Johnson's tavern and waited for half an hour or an hour for some respectable man to come in and go to the bar and call for liquor. After a while, deacon Barnes would come and call for

some spirit and water. Then I could go up to the bar and do as he did.' Deacon Barnes hearing of this asked him if it was so. 'It is,' said the man. 'Well,' said the Deacon 'you shall hang on me no longer. I joined the Temperance Society yesterday.' 'Did you?' 'Yes!' 'Well then I will join to-day, for I can do without liquor as long as deacon Barnes can.'

How vain to cherish the hope of being able to abolish the arguments of the Sabbath breaker, the theatre goer, of the intemperate man, of the votary of fashion, while they are fortified by the example of those who esteem themselves good men, and in some cases possibly are! Well may we ask is it not a divine wonder, a miracle in attestation of the truth of Christianity, that it has manifested itself in the world for eighteen centuries and made progress when domestic traitors have so often stabbed at its vitals with poisoned daggers, when they have kissed, with profession, a cause they betrayed by example?

But what if many do sin; what if the majority do cast off the fear of God; what if it is fashionable to travel the broad road; will you therefore be the suicide of your soul? Will fashion take away the sting of the undying worm? Will fashion put out the flames of the quenchless fire? What if many would laugh at you for being odd; is their ridicule worse than God's frown? Is your own conscience such a torpid thing that sin may trample on it by mere force of numbers? Are your convictions to be voted down by majorities? Have you entolled yourself in that democracy of darkness, where numbers are instead of God.

There are good men who err and set a bad example; there are great men whose intellectual eminence flings a flood of splendor over the ruinous vices or the contemptuous follies in which they indulge; there are men whose names we would utter with a certain degree of reverence against whose example we would put you on your guard; for the splendor of genius cannot atone for its errors, and, if it did good sense should warn you of the presumption of supposing that because you have the errors you have also the genius. Great men, and even good men, have been characterized by gross weakness. They have shown themselves unsafe guides. The

frailty of Solomon is as memorable as his wisdom; and the same pages that record Peter's devoted attachment, tell us how he denied his Lord. None of us has any right to adopt a human standard. There is an emphatic meaning in that declaration of the apostle, that they who 'measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves among themselves, are not wise.' On the principle that another's example may sanction your course, there is nothing left which you may not do. You may quote examples for everything. If you wish to visit the theatre, some renegade Christian can show you the way; if you wish to share the whirl of nonsense and vanity, there are some Demas-professors in the world to keep you in countenance; if you wish to travel on the Sabbath, you may possibly find a seat by the side of one whose duty it has been at some time to enforce the commandments; if the love of the world attracts you more than the place of prayer, there are certainly those who can sympathise with you in your tastes. There is scarcely anything you can wish to do but you can find a pretext or apology for it in the disgraceful failings of such as are presumed to be good men; but shun the principle. There is only one example for you and that is the Master's. The multitude can furnish no substitute. A multiplicity of criminals cannot sanctify crime; a host of evil examples cannot change the nature of sin. Bear this in mind when you are tempted to go with a multitude to do evil. The curse will not be the less because they share it. You sin and you must bear it. If you could sin by proxy, you cannot be judged by proxy. You will stand at the bar of God to answer for yourself. Keep then one thing your own; part with all else if you please, but be the owner of an independent conscience. Let not your destiny lie at the pleasure of your neighbour or the risk of his example. You are not called on to gratify him to such an extent as to become an outcast from God to keep him company.

God knows how much rather I would be the obscure tenant of a lath-and-plaster cottage, with a lively sense of my interest in a Redeemer, than the most admired object of public notice without it.—*Cowper.*

THE EARTHLY AND THE HEAVENLY.

It is quite right for a believer to use the things of this world, and to rejoice in them. None has such a right as the believer has to rejoice and be happy. He has a right to use the bodily comforts of this world—to eat his meat 'with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God.' He has a right to all the joys of home and kindred and friendship. It is highly proper that he should enjoy these things. He has a right to all the pure pleasures of mind, of intellect, and imagination; for God has given him all things richly to enjoy. Still he should 'rejoice as though he rejoiced not, and use this world as not abusing it;' for 'the time is short.' In a little while you will be at your Father's table above, drinking the wine new with Christ. You will meet all your brothers and sisters in Christ; you will have pure joy in God through ceaseless ages. Do not be much taken with joys that are here.

I have noticed children when they were going out to a feast, they would eat but sparingly, that they might have a keener appetite for the coming dainties; so, dear friends, you are going to a feast above—do not dull your appetite with earthly joys; sit loosely to them all; look upon them all as fading. As you walk through a flower garden, you never think of lying down, to make your home among its roses; so pass through the garden of this world's best joys. Smell the flowers in passing, but do not tarry. Jesus calls you to his banqueting-house; there you will feed upon the lilies on the mountains of spices. O! it ill becomes a child of God to be fond of an earthly banquet, when you are looking to sitting down so soon with Jesus; it ill becomes you to be much taken up with dress and show, when you are so soon to see the face that was crowned with thorns. Brethren, if you are ever so much taken up with any enjoyment, that it takes away your love for prayer, or for your Bible, or that it would frighten you to hear the cry, "The Bridegroom cometh," and you would say, "Is he come already?" then you are abusing this world. O! sit loose to this world's joy. "The time is short."—*McCaig.*

DO SAINTS IN GLORY KNOW EACH OTHER?

[The following letter was written nearly a hundred years ago by TOP-LADY, in answer to an anonymous correspondent, who wrote to ask his opinion on the above question.]

In reply to the question stated, I am most deeply and clearly convinced that the saints in glory know each other, and more particularly those with whom they took sweet counsel on earth, and with whom they walked to the house of God as friends. Our Lord Himself, I apprehend, gives us to understand as much, when He tells us that the elect shall be, in the future state, "equal unto the angels" (Luke xx. 33). Now it seems impossible that the unfallen angels, who have lived together in heaven for at least 6000 years, should not be perfectly acquainted with each other. And the same privilege is requisite in order to our being, in every respect, on an equality with them. The departed soul of the rich man knew Lazarus, when he beheld him afar off; and likewise at sight knew Abraham, whom he could never have seen in the present life. Much more do Abraham, and Lazarus, and all the glorified family above, rejoice in that communion of saints which obtains in their Father's house.

St. Paul, speaking of the spiritual children whom God had given him among the Thessalonians, says that they would be his "glory and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus." But how could this be, and how could they mutually congratulate each other on the grace bestowed on them below, if all personal acquaintance was to cease? Surely there are no strangers in that land of light and love. The three apostles, who attended our blessed Lord on the Mount of Transfiguration, knew Moses and Elijah when they appeared in glory.

To add no more: that remarkable text, I think, fully establishes the point, where our adorable Saviour bids us make to ourselves friends by the mammon of unrighteousness, that when we fall they may receive us into the everlasting habitations. As if He had said, "While you are on earth take care to conciliate the affections of my indigent disciples, by bestowing on them a proper portion of the wealth which God has lent you, and which is too often perverted to purposes of unrighteousness by them that know not me. So when your

bodies die, and your souls ascend to heaven, the souls of those poor afflicted saints whom your bounty relieved below, and who were got to glory before you, shall be among the first exulting spirits who shall meet you on your arrival above, and congratulate you on your safe and triumphant entrance into the world of joy." But they could not do this unless they knew us and we them.

May the precious blood and righteousness of our Incarnate God, and the faithful leadings of his eternal Spirit, bring you and me to that general assembly and Church of the Firstborn!—where we shall both see Him as He is, and likewise know each other even as we shall then be known. With this prayer, and in this hope, I beg leave to subscribe myself, whosoever you may be, your affectionate well-wisher in Christ.

THE BEST PRIEST.

Some years ago, a young Roman Catholic girl, Margaret F——, was crossing the ocean from Ireland to this country. One night when the ship in which she sailed was far out at sea, there was a violent storm. As the wind rose, and the vessel tossed like a mere bubble upon the waves, the passengers turned pale with alarm. Even the captain's face showed that he felt they were in peril.—Margaret shared the general fear; not that she dreaded death itself so much, but there was no priest on board, and the thought that there was no one there through whom in that last hour she could receive the pardon her soul needed, was agony.

Months afterwards, with tears she described that night to the lady with whom she resided. "What could I do? I was alone; nobody to talk to me, nobody to do anything for me. Oh, if I could only have had a priest there, I should have been willing the ship should go down the next hour; but there wasn't any, and I couldn't do anything for myself, only cry. Then it seemed as if a voice came to me and said, '*Maybe Jesus Christ will be your priest.*' I was afraid, but I had no one else to go to. It seemed as if it couldn't be wrong so I tried. I asked him to forgive my sins himself, and he did. I never was so happy in my life before, so full of peace as I was there, thinking the ship might go down every minute. I didn't care whether it sunk or sailed then, for I knew Christ had forgiven me, and he was the best priest in the world."—*American Messenger*.

THE LOST SON.

I was standing by the side of my mother, under the spacious porch of Dr. Beatty's church, Union Street, Glasgow, awaiting the hour for afternoon service. A holy calm hung over the city; no discordant noise broke the solemn stillness of the day of rest and worship; scarcely a whisper was heard in the assembly of waiting worshippers who crowded the broad pavement on which I stood. All seemed profoundly impressed with the solemn and sacred character of the day, the place, and the occasion which had called them together. It was, in short, a Sabbath in the land of Knox and Chalmers. I had been in this position probably ten or fifteen minutes, when I observed two young men turn a corner and walk towards the church. They were dressed in their working clothes, unshaven and dirty, and slightly intoxicated. As they passed the church door they assumed a swaggering, irreverent gait, laughed, and finally commenced singing a profane song. Some of the bystanders expressed their horror at the occurrence, others wondered what had become of the police; but my mother turned to me, and said, "Follow these two men, and invite them to a seat in our pew."

I soon overtook them and delivered my mother's message. One laughed scornfully and began to swear; the other paused and pondered, and was evidently struck with the nature of the invitation. His companion again swore, and was about to drag him away. But he still paused. I repeated the invitation, and in a few seconds he looked in my face and said, "When I was a boy like you, I went to church every Sunday. I have not been inside of a church for three years. *I don't feel right.* I believe I will go with you." I seized his hand and led him back to the house of God, in spite of the remonstrances and oaths of his companion. The doors were now open, and the church was filling rapidly; we entered, and I conducted him to the pew where my mother was already seated. A most excellent sermon was preached from Eccles. xi. 1: "Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days." The young man was attentive, but seemed abashed and downcast.

At the conclusion of the service he hastened out of the church, but he was closely followed, and soon overtaken by my mother, who kindly said to him, "Have you a Bible, young man?" "No, ma'am; but I can get one," was his reply. "Well, take my son's Bible until you procure one of your own. Read it attentively during the week, and come to meeting next Lord's day. I will be always happy to accommodate you with a seat."

He put the Bible in his pocket and hurried away. At family worship that evening my mother prayed fervently for the conversion of that young man.

Next Sunday came, and the next, but the stranger did not appear. My mother frequently spoke of him, and appeared grieved at his absence. He had doubtless been the subject of her closest devotions. On the third Sabbath morning, while the congregation were singing the first psalm, the young man again entered our pew. He was now dressed genteelly, and appeared thin and pale, as if from recent sickness. My mother looked at him with great earnestness, and a gleam of satisfaction and thankfulness overspread her pale intellectual features. Immediately after the benediction, the stranger laid down my Bible, and left the house without giving my mother an opportunity she much desired, of conversing with him. On one of the blank leaves of the Bible we found some writing in pencil, signed "W. C." The writer stated that he had been confined to his room by sickness for the previous two weeks. He declared his inability to express his gratitude to my mother, for the interest she had manifested in his spiritual welfare: he asked to be remembered in her prayers, and concluded by stating that he was an Englishman, and would return to his native land in about ten days.

Years rolled on; my mother passed to her heavenly rest; I grew up to manhood, and the stranger was forgotten.

In the autumn of 18— the ship St. George, of which I was the medical officer, anchored in Table Bay. Between us and Penguin Island I observed a man-of-war which I had seen before and knew well; it was her Majesty's brig Chanticleer, of ten guns, Commander Forbes, on a sur-

veying expedition. The surgeon of the brig, Dr. G——, had been my preceptor, and I resolved to pay him a visit. After dining with the gun-room officers, he proposed that on the following day, which was the Sabbath, we should attend meeting in Capetown. "It will remind us," he said, "of old times, when we used to go arm in arm to church in Union Street."

Next day, in company with my friend, I attended morning service at the Wesleyan Chapel. At the conclusion of worship, a gentleman seated behind me asked to look at my Bible. In a few minutes he returned it, and I walked into the street. I was mounting the steps in front of the hotel where I was to dine, when the same gentleman laid his hand on my shoulder and begged to have a few minutes' conversation. We were shown into a private apartment. As soon as we were seated, he examined my countenance with great attention, and then began to sob; tears rolled down his cheeks; he was evidently labouring under intense emotion. He appeared to be about thirty-five years of age, was tall and slender, and neatly dressed, but apparently in bad health. He asked me several questions—my name, age, occupation, and birthplace. He then inquired if I had not, when a boy, many years ago, invited a drunken Sabbath-breaker to a seat in Dr. Beatty's church. I was astonished—the subject of my mother's anxiety and prayers was before me. Mutual explanations and congratulations followed, after which Mr. C. gave me a short history of his life, from the time he left Scotland to the day on which we met so unexpectedly in a foreign land.

He was born in the town of Leeds, in the east riding of Yorkshire, of highly respectable and religious parents, who gave him a good education, and trained him up in the way of righteousness. When about fifteen his father died, and his mother's straitened circumstances obliged her to take him from school, and put him to learn a trade, where he imbibed all manner of evil, became incorrigibly vicious, and broke his mother's heart. Freed now from all parental restraint, he left his employers and travelled to Scotland. In the city of Glasgow he had lived and sinned for two years, when he was arrested in his career through my mother's instrumentality. He

confessed that, on leaving the church, on the first Sabbath, he was seized with pangs of unutterable remorse. The sight of a mother and her son worshipping God together, recalled the happy days of his own boyhood, when he went to church and Sunday-school, and when he also had a mother—a mother whose latter days he had imbibed, and whose gray hairs he had brought with sorrow to the grave. His mental suffering threw him on a bed of sickness, from which he arose a changed man. He returned to England, cast himself at the feet of his maternal uncle, and asked and obtained forgiveness. His conviction of sin—his battlings with temptation—his repentance—his victory over the world—the growth of his faith in the great atonement—and finally, his peace in believing, formed a deeply interesting and instructive narrative. With his uncle's consent he studied for the ministry; and on being ordained, he entered the missionary field, and had been labouring for several years in Southern Africa.

"The moment I saw your Bible this morning," he said, "I recognised it, and the examination of the writing, which is still legible on the blank leaf, assured me that I was not mistaken. You now see from what I was rescued by the unfathomable love and boundless grace of God, through your own and your mother's instrumentality. I was dragged from the very brink of infamy and destruction, and saved as a brand from the burning. You remember Dr. Beatty's text on the day of my salvation: 'Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days.' The proud, hardened, scoffing sinner is found, after thirteen years, a humble minister of salvation to the benighted heathen; and your sainted mother is doubtless enjoying the reward of those who turn many to righteousness—shining as the stars for ever and ever."

There is no tongue that can express, or heart that can conceive the horrid sins and miseries that pride hath ushered in among the children of men. All sin will go down with a proud heart. Great sins are no sins with such a soul; he makes nothing of iniquities at which the very heathen would blush.—*Brooks.*

"CONSIDER THE LILIES."

(See Matt. vi. 28-30.)

Look upon the lilies, and learn to trust God for raiment, It is a part of our care, what we shall put on—for decency, to cover us—for defence, to keep us warm.—Now to ease us of this care, let us consider the lilies of the field.

Consider how *frail* they are. They are the grass of the field. Lilies, though distinguished by their colours, are still but grass. Thus all flesh is grass, though some in the endowments of body and mind are as lilies, much admired, still they are grass; the grass of the field in nature and constitution; they stand upon the same level with others. Man's days, at best, are as grass, as the flower of the grass, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven. The grave is the oven into which we shall be cast, which intimates a reason why we should not take thought for the morrow, what we shall put on, because, perhaps, by to-morrow, we may have occasion for our grave-clothes.

Consider how *free from care* the lilies are. They *toil* not as men do, to *earn* clothing, neither do they *spin* as women do, to *make* clothing. It does not therefore follow that we must neglect, or do carelessly, the proper business of this life. It is the praise of the virtuous woman, that she lays her hand to the spindle, makes fine linen, and sells it. Idleness tempts God, instead of trusting him; but He that provides for the inferior creatures without their labour, will much more provide for us, by blessing our labour, which he has made our duty. And if we should, through sickness, be unable to toil and spin, God can furnish us with what is necessary.

Consider how *fair*, how *fine* the lilies are; how they grow, and what they grow from. The root of the lily or tulip, as other bulbous roots, is, in the winter, lost and buried under ground, yet, when spring returns, it appears, and starts up in a little time; hence, it is promised to God's Israel, that they shall *grow as the lily*. Consider what they grow to. Out of that obscurity in a few weeks they come to be so very gay, that even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. The array of Solomon was very splendid

and magnificent; he that had the peculiar treasure of kings and provinces, and so studiously affected pomp and galantry, doubtless had the richest clothing, and the best made up, that could be got; especially when he appeared in his glory on high days. And yet, let him dress himself as fine as he could, he comes far short of the beauty of the lilies, and a bed of tulips outshines him.

Let us, therefore, be more ambitious of the *wisdom* of Solomon, in which he was undone by none; wisdom to do our duty in our places, rather than the *glory* of Solomon, in which he was undone by the lilies. Knowledge and grace are the perfection of man, not beauty, much less fine clothes. All the excellences of the creature flow from God, the Fountain and Spring of them. It was He that gave the horse his strength, and the lily its beauty; every creature is in itself, as well as to us, what He makes it to be.—Henry.

A TEST OF CHARACTER.

The use of money has come in modern society to be a test of character. As men use money, they use everything, and everybody. If they are honest and equitable in that, they will be honest and equitable in other things. If not, not. The intense and universal pursuit of society, it follows that men will manifest in it what manner of spirit they are of. The eagerness with which they pursue "the main chance" absorbs all other feelings and desires. Even the internal laws and ordinances of God; which have been established as a bulwark against the mad assaults of human passions, are no barrier to the master-passion. It may be that the test comes in a matter of mills, or of millions; but whenever it comes, and however large or small the transaction is, how few comparatively out of the immense multitude engaged in business can lay their hand on their heart and say, "I have not overreached or taken advantage, or put a cent into my pocket that was not honestly and clearly my own?" How few have so scrupulous a sense of honor and honesty, that they would no more overreach the government than their own brother! For besides the amazing ambition to get rich, another feeling comes into

play. To gain the better of a man in a bargain is accounted smartness. The fillip of a great intellectual keenness is added to the love of money. There is something peculiarly fascinating in being quicker, earlier, brighter, faster than your neighbor. It is not that you care so much about the "filthy lucre"—O no, but you are resolved not to be beaten in a trial of wits. Thus it is that false intellectual pride often joins with the dominant passion of riches to trample the golden rules of honesty and fair dealing under foot. But in spite of all solicitations, how beautiful beyond compare is unswerving uprightness.

A LIE OF HONOUR.—THE STORY OF A LAWYER.

On entering college, I promised my mother, whom I loved as I have never loved another mortal, that while there I would not taste of intoxicating liquor, nor play at cards, or other games of hazard, nor borrow money. And I never did, and never have since. I have lived well nigh sixty years, yet have never learned to tell a king from a knave among cards, nor Hock from Burgundy among wines, nor have I ever asked for the loan of a single dollar. Thanks to my mother! loving, careful, anxious for me, but not over-careful nor over anxious. How could she be, when I was so weak, and ignorant of my weakness, feeling myself strong because my strength was untried, and such a life as human life is, such temptations as beset the young before me,

She did not ask me to promise not to swear. She would not wrong me by the thought that I could swear, and she was right. I could not. How can any one so insult the Holy, the All-Excellent, our Father and best friend? Nor did she ask me not to lie. She thought I could not lie. Had she thought otherwise, my promise would have been of little value to her. And I also thought I could not. I despised lying as a weakness, cowardice, meanness, the concentration of baseness. I felt strong enough, manly enough, to accomplish my end without it. I had no fear of facing my own acts. Why should I shrink before my fellows for anything I had done? Lie to them to conceal myself or my acts? Nay, I would not have faults to be concealed. My own character, my own life was more to me than the esteem of others. I would do nothing fit to have hidden, or which I might wish

to hide. I thought I could not lie, and I could not for myself.

During my second college year, there was a great deal of card playing among the students. The Faculty tried to prevent it, but found it difficult. Though I never played, my cham did, and sometimes others played with him in our room when I was present.—I not unfrequently saw the students at cards. One of the professors questioned me upon the subject. "Have you ever seen any card playing among the students?" "No, sir," I answered firmly, determined not to expose my fellows. "A lie of honor!" I said to myself. What coupling of contradictions! As well talk of "honest theft!" "innocent sin!"

"You are ignorant of any card-playing in the college building, Brown?"

"Yes, sir."

"We can believe you, Brown."

I was ready to sink. Nothing else could have smitten, stung me but that. Such confidence, and I so unworthy of it. Still I held back the truth.

But I left the professor's room another person than I entered it, guilty, humbled, wretched. That one false word had spoiled everything for me. All my past manliness was shadowed by it. My ease of mind had left me, my self-respect was gone. I felt uncertain—unsafe. I stood upon a lie, trembling, tottering. How soon might I not fail. I was right in feeling unsafe. It is always unsafe to lie. My feet were sliding beneath me. One of the students had lost a quarter's allowance in play, and applied to his father for a fresh remittance, starting his loss. His father had made complaint to the college Faculty, and there was an investigation of the facts. The money had been staked and lost in my room. I was present.

"Was Brown there?" asked the professor.

"He was."

The professor's eyes rested on me. Where was my honor *then*? my manliness? and where the trust reposed in me? Did any say, "we can believe you, Brown, after that? Did any excuse my lie? any talk of my honor then?—Not one. They said, "We didn't think it of you, Brown?" "I didn't suppose Brown would lie for his right hand."

It was enough to kill me. But there was no help. I had to bear my sin and shame as best I might, and try to outlive it. No one trusted me as before. No one could, for who knew whether my integrity might not again fail? I could not trust myself until I had obtained strength as well as pardon from God, nor even then, until I had many times been tried and tempted, and found his strength sufficient for me.

ENOCH'S PROPHECY.

BY REV. W. M'KENZIE, RAMSAY, C.W.

You have seen a solitary star appear on some dark and stormy night, as the forest wailed beneath the blast, and the clouds were driven, scattered across the sky, as it shoots across the rift it shines, in the surrounding darkness, all the more brightly for a few moments before the broken clouds close over it again. Such was Enoch, the man who "walked with God three hundred years," standing out in his serene, consistent godliness, all the more distinctly because of the dark degeneracy which had set in on the earth. In Enoch's day men had begun to multiply on the face of the earth. From the intercourse of the sons of God with the daughters of men, a mighty, oppressive, and wicked race, began to vex and pollute the earth. The course of degeneracy is always easy. And when men once began to cast off the fear of God, and to corrupt their way with each new step, they trod the downward path with an ever-increasing speed. The whole earth was filled with violence and oppression, and was fast verging to an absolutely universal corruption and ungodliness. Such is the picture which the short but significant annals of that ancient time present.

The few who still loved and served God stood aghast at the tide of sin and ungodliness which had set in with such portentous strength, threatening to submerge the last remnants of the knowledge and fear of the Most High. Burdened with grief and vexed with doubt and fear, unable to see why God should allow, without a sign of judgment, His own authority and great name to be despised, they may have said in perplexed discouragement, "How doth God know? and is there knowledge with the Most High? Behold, these are the ungodly who prosper in the world." But "as a father pitieth his children, so the

Lord pitieth them that fear Him;" and, to relieve their gloom and despondency, He vouchsafed a glimpse into the far future, enough to show that He was a God of judgment—enough to re-assure their failing hearts with the knowledge that, at the proper time, all the unrighteous and ungodly should be brought to a full and final reckoning. To Enoch, one of the few faithful among the multitude of the faithless, the word of God was sent. Amid the din of blasphemy, and the cries of the oppressed, in the very hour of its seeming triumph, a warning voice fell on the ear of the ungodly world: "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

This promise still stands over for fulfilment, and "the Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness." God has neither forgotten it nor fallen from His purpose. That day *will* come, the day of righteous recompense, when all the children of men shall come near before Him to be judged. What a prospect for transgressors! We may imagine the trembling murderer overwhelmed with dismay as his crime confronts him at that great judgment-seat; or the adulterer, sinking under a load of shame and fear as his deeds of darkness stand all revealed in that holy light; or the thief and the liar, stripped of all their cunning disguises, and compelled to look on their frauds and falsehoods, so utterly vile and loathsome before the face of eternal truth; or the covetous man, who shall stand there in his native and naked deformity as a miserable worshipper of the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. But, however terrible that day of recompense

shall be to such transgressors, one sin shall stand out far before and above all others, and, as revealed in that true and perfect light, shall pierce the soul with a keener sense of deserved condemnation; that *pne sin*, which, as the words of Enoch show, ruled supreme amid the violence and corruption of the old world, and which, *even now*, shows itself in ten thousand varying forms in our own Christian land—**UNGODLINESS**; ungodliness, which, in the general, appears in the form of *disregard or forgetfulness of God*; sin by defect or shortcoming—a want of conformity in heart and life to God's law respecting our duty to Him. How lightly do many think of ungodliness! how small is their estimate of its guilt! and yet no other single word can express a guilt deeper and more condemning than *ungodliness*. At the last, *ungodliness* shall stand out as the one great master-sin of the souls which God hath made, to the despairing terror of every one who failed to love and serve the Most High. For, "Behold the Lord cometh to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are *ungodly* among them of all their *ungodly* deeds which they have *ungodly* committed, and of all their hard speeches which *ungodly* sinners have spoken against Him." How does it stand *now* with you? Of what spirit are you of? **GODLY OR UNGODLY?**

ADAM AND EVE MARCHED OUT OF PARADISE.

No wonder that their steps are tardy, and that they linger and look back, for had they not been sent forth, Adam and his wife would never have been seen leaving the eastern gate of Eden. And had it been for aught else than their own misconduct, they would not have bewailed their fate as they now do. The bird in its cage can sing, for although deprived of its liberty, which is happiness, this has not

come to it through its own misdeeds. But Adam and Eve have not this thought to console them, as they take the last look of Paradise receding from their view. For well they know, that in an evil hour they forgot God, listened to the tempter, and took of the forbidden fruit. Well may they brush from their eyes the big tears that fall like rain drops from the house eaves, as they bury their faces in their hands in shame. Eve knows that it was she who led the way in sin, and she also feels it. She grasps with tightness at her swelling heart lest it should burst its bounds in its throbbings, and melt away in grief. Every heart knows its own bitterness best: but who of all Eve's daughters have ever felt as she did, when she reflected that one wrong act in her had entailed sorrow not only on herself, but on her kindred in all coming time. To behold her in her trouble only makes Adam worse. He tries to console her, but what consolation can one sinner give to another unless it come from God. He is the only source whence relief can come. His name is the Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and of great kindness, and He never withholds comfort from the truly penitent. Though our sins may have been as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. From the very first he has acted thus; for no sooner had our first parents fallen than He gave them the merciful assurance that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent. Adam and Eve might weep as they left Eden, and saw it sentinelled with swords of fire, but they had also cause to thank God that their case was not worse. The fiery cherubim stood behind them, and whoever looks back upon his actions may also see God's glittering sword of justice unsheathed to smite, even as they beheld it at the gates of Paradise. That

sword is still brandished against sin, but the God that wields it is still a God who loves the sinner. He who pitied our first parents in their shame, and clad them in coats of skin, has a robe for sinners still which can cover the nakedness of the vilest, even the robe of a Redeemer's righteousness, and it was to purchase such a robe for all, that the woman's seed appeared. Ever since Adam went astray, our whole race has been in a state of banishment from God. Paradise was man's intended residence, and out of that he is not and can never be at home, but only a wanderer and a refugee. The former paradise he shall never again see. The music of its groves shall never more greet his ears. But there is a paradise in store, to which he may aspire to get home at last, where songs of redemption are ever chanted—music sweeter far than that which echoed in the sinless garden of old.

*There is a happy home, beyond this world of care;

A home above, where all is love,
And the good shall all meet there."

X. Y. Z.

TO-MORROW.

Man, thou troubled, fickle thing,
What makes thee to the future cling,
And double every sorrow?
Why wouldst thou present ills augment,
And bitterly thyself torment,
By thinking on to-morrow.

To-morrow's sun may never shine,
And though it does may not be thine,
For thou art but a shadow;
Thy present day may be thy last,
Then all thy hopes and fears are past,
And thou laid in the meadow.

Let present blessings be enjoyed,
By future ills be not annoyed,
But ever live contented;
The God who hears the ravens' cry
Will thy exhausted stores supply,
And never see them emptied.

J. McCARTER.

BURKIN'S CORNERS.

CROAKERS REBUKED.

As the farmer, of all men, seems nearest to God in his works, he should be the most faithful and the most confiding. But it has been said, though it may be slanderously—that of all men they are the greatest croakers, and have the least hope and faith of any class.

With them it is 'too wet or too dry—there is too much or too little produced. If too little, it does not pay, at prices ever so high; if too much, the crops will not reward the harvesting. There are worms and bugs, and mill-dews, and diseases to cattle and vines, named and unknown, that are present and anticipated.

There is a story of an eccentric lawyer, Burgess, who was famous in the village for his sceptical notions and his wit. He was once listening to a group of farmers—pious men—lingering about the church door, as is the custom in the country, to talk of the bad weather, the fly, the rot, the drouth, the wet, when one turned to Burgess and asked him,

"How comes on your garden?"

"I never plant anything," replied Burgess.

"Why so?"

"I am afraid to put even a potatoe into the ground."

"It's no wonder," groaned one of the most eminently pious persons present: it's no wonder, for a man who wholly disbelieves in religion cannot expect to have his labours blessed."

"I am not afraid of failing in any of my reward for my work," replied Burgess, rather meekly.

"What then?"

"I am afraid that agricultural labor will make me profane. If I planted a single potatoe, what would be the result? Why, I should get up in the morning and growl—its going to rain, and it will ruin my potatoes; then in dry weather I should say—'the drouth will kill them; then I should be unhappy because the rot might destroy my potatoes. In fact, gentlemen," concluded Burgess, in a solemn manner, "I should be afraid to do anything that would induce me constantly to distrust in Providence."

THE PROCRASTINATOR.

Disbelieve you cannot; brave it out you dare not; then must you hope, at some more convenient season, to reform. So hoped the five virgins who slumbered and slept without oil in their lamps; and you know how they fared. Neither have you forgotten how the merchant, and the farmer, and the sons of pleasure, who refused the invitation to the marriage feast of the king's son, were consumed with fire from heaven. What is your life, that you should trust in it? is it not even a vapour that speedily passeth away? What security have you that heaven will warn you beforehand, or that heaven will help you to repentance whenever you please?

Will the resolution of your mind gather strength as your other faculties of body and mind decay? Will sin grow weaker by being a while longer indulged, or God grow more friendly by being a while longer spurned, or the gospel more persuasive by being a while longer set at naught? I adjure you, beware of this thief of time,—**PROCRASTINATION.** This day is as convenient as to-morrow; this day is yours, to-morrow is not; this day is a day of mercy, to-morrow may be a day of doom.

But the work is not the work of a moment that it should be put off like the making of a will, or the writing of a farewell epistle. It is the work of a life-time, and too great a work for a lifetime. And if St. Paul, after such ceaseless labours and unwearied contentions with his nature, had still his anxieties, and speaks of the righteous as being hardly or with difficulty saved, how do you dare to defer it from time to time as a thing that can at any season, and in any space be performed?

And, O heavens! is God thus to be treated by his creatures—are they to insist, for their own convenience, and put off the honour of his friendship from time to time, preferring this indulgence, that engagement, and trifling downright with his proffered invitations! And being thus put off, will the King of the Universe endure it patiently? Yes, he endures it patiently—that is, he leaves you to yourselves, and does not cut you off with prompt and speedy vengeance. But he leaves you to yourselves; and every refusal hardens you

a little more, and every resistance closes up another avenue of grace, and every postponement places farther off the power of acceptance; and though God changeth not his mercy, we change our capacity of mercy, cooling more and more, till old age, with its lethargy and fixed habits, steals on apace, and feeble-mindedness, and sickness which brings the routine of sick bed attendance; but little or no repentance, no opportunity for new obedience, no space for trying the spirit we are of—and death to such a penitent becomes a leap in the dark; but, as such penitents are rare or never, death to such procrastinators rivets up the closing avenues of grace, and presents him to the judgment seat, fixed, finished, and incurable.—*Edward Irving.*

PERSONAL POWER OF THE BIBLE.

This collection of books has been to the world what no other book has ever been to a nation. States have been founded on its principles. Kings rule by a compact based on it. Men hold the Bible in their hands when they prepare to give solemn evidence affecting life, death, or property; the sick man is almost afraid to die unless the Book be within reach of his hands; the battle-ship goes into action with one on board whose office is to expound it; its prayers, its psalms are the language we use when we speak to God; eighteen centuries have found no holier, no diviner language. If ever there has been a prayer or a hymn enshrined in the heart of a nation, you are sure to find its basis in the Bible. There is no new religious idea given to the world, but it is merely the development of something given in the Bible. The very translation of it has fixed language and settled the idioms of speech. Germany and England speak as they speak because the Bible was translated. It has made the most illiterate peasant more familiar with the history, customs, and geography of ancient Palestine, than with the localities of his own country. Men who know nothing of the Grampians, of Snowdon, or Skiddaw, are at home in Zion, the lake of Gennesareth, or among the hills of

Carmel. People who know little about London, know by heart the places in Jerusalem, where those blessed feet trod which were nailed to the Cross. Men who know nothing of the architecture of a Christian cathedral can yet tell you all about the pattern of the Holy Temple. Even this shows us the influence of the Bible. The orator holds a thousand men for half-an-hour breathless—a thousand men as one, listening to his single word. But this word of God has held a thousand nations for thrice a thousand years spell bound; held them by an abiding power, even the universality of its truth.—*Rev. F. W. Robertson.*

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

Imagination covers her wing, unable to fetch the compass of the ideal scene. The great white throne descending out of heaven—guarded and begirt with the principalities and powers thereof—the awful presence at whose sight the heavens and the earth flee away, and no place for them is found—the shaking of the mother elements of nature, and the commotion of the hoary deep to render up there long dissolved dead—the rushing together of quickened men upon all the winds of heaven down to the centre, where the Judge sitteth on his blazing throne. To give form, and figure, and utterance to the mere circumstantial pomp of such a scene, no imagination availeth. Nor doth the understanding labour less.

The Archangel, with the trump of God, riding sublime in the midst of heaven, and sending through the widest dominions of death and the grave that sharp summons which divideth the solid earth, and rings through the caverns of the hollow deep, piercing the dull cold ear of death and the grave with the knell of their departed reign; the death of Death, the sprouting of the grave with vitality, the reign of life, the second birth of living things, the reunion of body and soul—the one from unconscious sleep, the other from apprehensive and unquiet abodes—the congregation of all generations over whom the stream of time hath swept. This outstretches my understanding, no less than

the material imagery confuses my imagination.

And when I bring the picture to my heart, its feelings are overwhelmed; when I fancy this quick and conscious frame one instant reawakened, the next re-invested, the next summoned before the face of the Almighty Judge—now begotten, now sifted through every secret corner, my poor soul possessed with the memory of its misdeeds, submitted to the scorching eye of my Maker, my fate depending upon His lips, my everlasting, changeless fate; I shriek and shiver with mortal apprehension, and when I fancy the myriads of men all standing thus explored and known, I seem to hear their shiverings like the aspen leaves in the still evening of autumn. Pale fear possesseth every countenance, and blank conviction every quaking heart. They stand like men upon the perilous edge of battle, withheld from speech and pinched for breath through excess of struggling emotions—Shame, remorse, mortal apprehension, and trembling hope.—*E. Irving.*

Reader, you are on the way to the judgment seat. You are nearing it every hour. Are you prepared to meet God, or are you not?

MEMORY IN HEAVEN.

This present life is sometimes alluded to in depreciating terms, as if men undervalued it. Seen by itself, it may be in a measure liable to this; but seen in its relations to the next life its most trivial features become important. Viewed as the soul's preparation for eternity, and in the light of the fact that all life's experiences, the small and the great equally, contribute to that discipline, then it appears that there are really no such things as trifles. And when the soul looks back upon the scene of its preparatory career, it will perceive how even the forms of nature, mountains, and woods, and waters, and suns, and stars, flowers, trees, and streams, and faces of friends, the homestead roof, and the brook where childhood loved to play, with all the sights and scenes that roused the imagination, improved the memory and inspired higher thoughts in maturer life, how all had something to do in educating it for its final destiny. With this it will see God's providences and God's revelations linking in, while joy and grief, affliction and blessing will be found to have been each a teacher and each a friend.

THE FIVE CLERKS.

In one of our inland towns were, a few years since, five boys, apprentices in as many different stores. By a similarity of disposition, education and age, they became very intimate, and in a revival that occurred in that village, all became Christians.

They at once identified themselves as such before the world, and went out to labor in the vineyard of their Master. In Sabbath and mission schools they were faithful, zealous, earnest workers; their voices were heard in prayer and praise in the weekly church meetings; the oncast, the sorrowing, the despondent were cheered with words of hope and courage, their respective pastors looked to them, even in their youthfulness, for active co-operation in every word and work, and did not look in vain.

Although entirely dependant on their own industry for support, and, in some instances, aiding dependent brothers and sisters, with the meagre salary of clerks under age, yet from a sense of duty they made a mutual pledge to each other, to give one-tenth of their income to the Lord.

Nobly has that pledge been fulfilled, and God has testified in their experience that he will honor those who honor Him. Without money or influential friends, each has attained an enviable position in business circles and in society.

One is a highly esteemed merchant in one of our cities, whose heart is ever devising liberal things, responding to every call made in behalf of the poor and needy. As he once remarked to the writer—"I can't help giving, there is so much pleasure in it."

Another is an active, energetic business man in Cleveland, Ohio, but even more active in the church and Sabbath school, disbursing freely of his own substance, and the trusted almoner of others, bounty.

The third is the cashier of a bank in Wisconsin, of whom a well-known Western missionary writes thus: "Noble soul, that he is! Your town has sent out none more noble. I think that for Christ, daily, his example tells as much as any that I know."

The fourth is a partner in a Banking-House of one of the most responsible firms in Wall street. Upon few men do such heavy business responsibilities rest. Honored, trusted, loved by his partners, and held in respect and confidence by the Wall street fraternity, he has attained a position that few could reach after years of most laborious effort. In the church and Sabbath school he is also a business man, of rare probity, shrinking from no duty, though it lead through fire and flame,

conscientious to the last degree, and ever "delighted in business, serving the Lord."

The enviable position these once poor and penniless boys, now sustain, shows the truth of the eternal word, "There is that which scattereth and yet increaseth," and proves that godliness is profitable even in this life. Their benefactions are not limited by their pledge, but in many cases, perhaps in each, exceed that amount.

Great power for the church and for Christ lies in the hand of business, Christian men, and it is a beautiful sight to witness an extended business carried on in the fear of the Lord, making Him—with reverence we speak it—a partner, and a partaker of the profits.—We know of firms that open on their Ledger a regular account to the credit of Benevolence, and as conscientiously pay this debt as any others. Such men are an honor to the church and world. "Go and do thou likewise."

THE SAVIOUR'S KNOWLEDGE.

"We are sure that thou knowest all things."—John xvi. 30.

Thou knowest, Lord, the weariness and sorrow
Of the sad heart that comes to thee for rest;
Cares of to-day, and burdens of to-morrow,
Blessings implored, and sins to be confessed.
I come before thee at thy gracious word,
And lay them at thy feet; thou knowest Lord.

Thou knowest all the past; how long and blindly
On the dark mountains the lost sheep had strayed;
How the good shepherd followed, and how kindly
He bore it home, upon his shoulders laid,
And healed the bleeding wounds, and soothed the
pain,
And brought back life and hope and strength again.

Thou knowest all the present: each temptation,
Each toilsome duty, each foreboding fear;
All to myself assigned of tribulation,
Or to beloved ones, than self more dear;
All pensive memories, as I journey on,
Longings for vanished smiles and voices gone.

Thou knowest all the future: gleams of gladness,
By stormy clouds too quickly overcast,
Hours of sweet fellowship and parting sadness,
And the dark river to be crossed at last.
O! what could hope and confidence afford
To tread that path, but this, thou knowest Lord?

Thou knowest, not alone as God, all knowing;
As man, our mortal weakness thou hast proved;
On earth with purest sympathies o'erflowing,
O Saviour, thou hast wept and thou hast loved!
And love and sorrow still to thee may come,
And find a hiding-place, a rest, a home.

Therefore I come, thy gentle call obeying,
And lay my sins and sorrows at thy feet,
On everlasting strength my weakness staying,
Clothed in thy robe of righteousness complete;
Then rising and refreshed I leave thy throne,
And follow on to know as I am known.

—Dr. Kennedy's *Hymnologia Christiana*.

GOD IN LITTLE THINGS.

There are many habits of almost universal prevalence among professing and real Christians which sadly mar the beauty and symmetry of their Christian character; and of these perhaps none is more common than that of failing to recognize God in the little occurrences of every day life. This fault is seen in those who not only bear the name of Christians, but who are so evidently sincere that we cannot well question the reality of their real piety. It is seen in those who offer with their lips, and doubtless with their hearts, the prayer, "Thy will be done," and who bow humbly and submissively to that will when its power is felt in severe trials and bereavements. But let these same persons go forth with well laid plans to the duties of the day, and let some little untoward circumstance disconcert these plans, and then their weakness becomes apparent. The waywardness of a child, the carelessness of a servant, almost any little vexation, is suffered to make them irritable, and to cloud the whole day for them, and for all about them. If we inquire for the reason of this inconsistency, is it not evident that they are unmindful of the fact that God directs and allows even those trials that come to us through human instrumentalities, and forgetful that his strength is just as necessary to enable us to bear these as greater trials! If we ask for a remedy, may we not find it in the cultivation of a spirit of entire reliance on God for everything? We have felt that he must help us to do and bear great things, but, practically, we have regarded our own strength sufficient for the less.—"Without me ye can do nothing."

TWO VERY MYSTERIOUS PROVIDENCES.

Men who do eminent service to the world are sometimes rescued from great perils in early life, and observers recognize in the escape a kind Providence preserving them for future purposes. The same Providence spares wicked men to do great evil, and it is not so easy in such cases to recognize either the wisdom or the goodness of G. d. Dr. Everts, of Chicago, in a

recent sermon alluded to two such mysterious providences:

The spot in our lake can be pointed out to you where a young lieutenant of the United States army was once well nigh drowned. He went down, as it was supposed, for the last time, when assistance reached him. He was rescued, and after much difficulty restored to consciousness. The young lieutenant is now the President of the insurgent "Confederacy"—Jefferson Davis.

About the same there was another United States officer stationed here, whose treatment of his soldiers was so tyrannical that they resolved to put an end to him. One of their number levelled a pistol at him. The cap snapped: The sleeping officer awoke, and lived to betray the United States forces under his command in Texas to the enemy. His name is David E. Twiggs.

Behind this "frowning providence," however, God "hides" the "smiling face" which he has in reserve for a nation reunited, and redeemed of that infamous institution which prompted Davis to rebellion, Twiggs to treachery, and gave both of them the "plantation manners" which almost cost the latter his life.—*Watchman and Reflector.*

"EVERY ONE HAS A MISSION."

There is perhaps, no one point which requires more to be pressed on the attention of Christian men, women and children in the present day than this,—that every one is sent into this world with a mission, that is, for some particular object. Man is not sent here merely to vegetate and die—he is sent to do something for his Master; and there is no one who has not some talent which he can employ for God. Every one has a mission.

We know what the world consider their mission—just to live as happily and comfortably as they can, just to kill time, without any thought of what will become of them when they are called from earth.—And what do many Christians regard as their one and only business in this world? Why, they think that their mission is to take care of the salvation of their own souls, and that when they have secured

that, they have done all that is required of them. My friends, that is but the beginning of the work, not the end. Having been led to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and having become united to him by a living faith, and thus been saved forever, you were then to work, not for yourselves only, but for your fellow-creatures—for mankind. Having been raised up from death unto life, show the life which is in you; show it in action—press forward in your Christian course, and let your Master see that you are willing to do all that he has commanded you to do in his service.

Endeavour to discover *what is your mission in the world*. "Mission" may appear a cant word, but it contains the sum and substance of Christian usefulness in the world. Endeavour to find out what gifts God has imparted to you and set yourselves to work with them; and whether the door may be wide or narrow, whether it be in your power to benefit many or only a few, if you do the work which God in his providence has given you to do, you will at last hear your Master say of you, "He has done what he could." What we can, is all that our Master requires.—*Sir E. Buxton*.

WISE ANSWER OF A CHILD.

Children often put their elders to the blush by the simplicity of their faith, and their quick insight into the pith of great Christian doctrines. Dr. W. L. Breckenridge, in his opening sermon before the Old School General Assembly, gave a beautiful illustration of this:

It happened to me, in the good providence of God, years ago—but I shall never forget it—to have under my ministry in the gospel a child whose heart was won by the Saviour's love. After a while, with becoming diffidence, she made known her desire to profess her faith in Christ, and join herself to his people. But her parents thought she was too young, and wished to hold her back for a time. Finally they allowed her to meet the session, with some other persons who just then desired to take the same step. When the hour came we sat all together in the house of God, a grave but tender-hearted company. As the religious experience

of one and another of the applicants for church membership was stated, it came to the turn of this child to relate hers.

"My child," said I, "how old are you?"

"Thirteen," she answered.

"Do you think you are old enough," I asked, "to be bound to love the Saviour?"

"Yes, sir," she said, "I think I am."

"And do you love him, then?" I asked her.

"Yes sir," she answered, "I do love him."

"Why do you love him, my dear child?" once more I asked her.

She started, as if surprised at the question, and turning her beautiful and happy face upon me, bathed in tears, but radiant with joy and peace, she quickly answered, "Why, I love him, because he loved me, and gave himself for me!"

I thought within myself, if all the saints on earth, and the general assembly and church of the first-born that are written in heaven, were asked that question, not one of them could give a plainer or truer answer!

Richard Weaver on Baptismal Regeneration.

"It is only fair to hear both sides; and I have read Mr. Spurgeon's sermon, and an answer by a curate, I believe, of a church called St. Paul's, somewhere here in London. Now this man says that he never finds anywhere in the New Testament that baptized Christians are to be born again. No more do I. I don't believe that baptized Christians are to be born again, but I believe that baptized unregenerate sinners must be born again. I went through all the ceremonies, I was baptized and I was confirmed, but was I regenerate when I was cursing, drinking, fighting, gambling? And as to my godfathers and godmothers, why my godfather was the man who backed me in my first battle. If I was regenerated in my baptism, the Lord deliver me. No, my friends, if the devil can get poor sinners depending on this thing and that thing for salvation, it is all he wants; but if we can get a poor sin-sick soul to Jesus, to see Him bearing his sins in His own body, he gets salvation. We have redemption through His blood. Life, sinner, for thee and me is in the blood."

REACH OUT FOR HEAVEN.

You long for the bread of God to come down from heaven, and give you life such as the angels enjoy, do you? You long for a warmer, tenderer, more of the true neighbourly love, do you? You yearn for it, and pray for it? Then go : of yourself, and try to live for others. Try to do something to dissipate the darkness, to lessen the burdens, to alleviate the sorrows, to multiply the joys, to smooth the rugged pathway of some neighbour. Try to extract some rankling thorn, or to pour a little oil and wine into some bruised and wounded soul. Seek out some friendless and needy object, on whom to bestow your sympathy, your generosity, your offices of kindness. And you need not go far; such objects exist in scores all around you—objects needing sympathy and comfort, if not material aid. Do this, and see how your cold and hard-hearted selfishness will begin to diminish, and your neighborly love increase! See how the windows of heaven will be opened within you, and your before waste and barren soul begin to be flooded with the gracious outpourings of love from on high! It is the outgoings of our own thoughts and feelings with intent to bless, that cause the plentiful in-comings of the divine love and mercy, agreeably to the divine declaration, "Give, and it shall be given unto you."—*Religious Magazine*.

"TOO PROUD TO KNEEL" •

Being a few weeks since on a visit to friends, I accompanied them to a union prayer-meeting. It was a calm, quiet evening, the sounds of daily labour had in a measure subsided, and the hour seemed well fitted to bear on its passing moments the words of prayer, and the outgushing richness of the songs of praise.

One could not help being refreshed and quickened in spirit by the broken yet earnest words of an aged pilgrim, evidently a native of that "bonnie land" where the bluebells wave, and the broom and heather smile forth amid the rough passes of the Highlands—a man who seemed surely seeking in this land of his adoption "a better country, even a heavenly."

But my heart was most deeply touched when, towards the close of the meeting, a

noble-looking man arose, and after a few faithfully spoken words, told of a friend who for weeks had been sorrowing from a sense of his own exceeding sinfulness, and who, although professedly willing to pray, and expressing an earnest desire to experience the joy of pardoned sin, yet persistently refused to kneel; yes, even said "he could not, and would not kneel to God;" and yet, strange to tell, he was obliged, in the performance of his chosen avocation, to get upon his knees daily.

"*Too proud to kneel,*" and his prayers, like the sacrifice of Cain, met with no acceptance. No holy fire glowed on the altar of his rebellious heart. No justification through faith in the dying Lamb. No sending upward the prayer of the publican. No looking to Gethsemane and to Calvary. No true crying of the soul, "Lord, thou canst do all things; save, or I perish." No sense that Jesus only is the mediator. No prostrating of the soul before the throne of divine mercy. No *nothing* of this; he was "too proud to kneel," and so there came no peace; and the "still small voice" of pardon passed by him to fill some humbler soul with the bliss and lightness of sins forgiven and blotted out. Don't be "too proud to kneel." Don't forget th...

"The saint who wears heaven's brightest crown
In deepest adoration bends;
The weight of glory bends him down
The most, when most his soul ascends:
Nearest the throne itself must be
The footstool of humility."—*Am. Messenger*.

ESAU'S UNAVAILING REGRET.

"For he (Esau) found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." *Heb. 12: 17.*

The rejection of Esau was a fixed and final fact, not possible to be reversed, however deeply he regretted his folly and impiety in selling his birthright to Jacob, and however earnestly and sorrowfully he sought the recovery of his former position. He could not prevail on his father Isaac to *repent* of having given the preference to Jacob; that is, to *change his mind* and reverse the blessing.—The repentance, the change of mind which Esau sought, was not repentance on his own part towards God, a change in his own soul by which he might obtain forgiveness from God, but a change in the mind of Isaac, his father, by which the blessing pronounced on Jacob might be revoked and be transferred to Esau. This he was unable to effect, though he sought it so earnestly and with so bitter lamentations. The sad consequences of his impiety he must inevitably meet.—*Watchman and Reflector*.

WORLDLY AMUSEMENTS.

The question of worldly amusements is confessedly a difficult one; but the difficulty frequently arises from the fact that it is discussed, so to speak, from a wrong standpoint. Of course, in worldly minds one opinion only can prevail: the mind must be changed before the choice can be affected; and it is the choice which must be influenced, since this determines the value of any self-denial of natural inclination that may be practised.

This first principle should always be kept prominently in view, both in the case of actual sins and questionable amusements. In the one case, we should never be satisfied with anything short of the feeling of holy indignation, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" In the other case, we should cultivate and nourish the feeling of watchful stewardship and Christian devotedness. "How can I waste precious time in aimless frivolity; time which I hold as a talent; time which may be spent, if spent aright, both profitably and happily?"

Education conducted on this principle undoubtedly has to contend with the corruption of human nature; but can it otherwise be Scriptural education?

The main difficulty seems to be to decide what restraint a Christian parent is bound to exercise. This question may give rise to a great deal of discussion; but, practically, we believe that where the due influence of parental example and authority has not been sacrificed by inconsistent compromises, no parent need be at a loss in the exercise of restraint both as to actual sins, and profitless worldly amusements,—restraint, too, unattended even by the appearance of hardship.

At an advanced stage of life, when education in this particular ought to have been completed, no doubt the difficulty is vastly increased; indeed, the task may then be impossible. In that case, let the blame be taken by the parent who has allowed the seed time to escape unimproved; but let no complaints be made against the sufficiency or efficiency of the means which God has given for the due exercise of parental influence and authority. Parents who "reap the whirlwind," the harvest of their own

misdoings, vainly seek to cast on others the blame which justly belongs to themselves.

These remarks are general. A particular application of them requires a knowledge of persons and circumstances. The chief point to be remembered is, that the restraint exercised should not be irksome to the young. To secure this is not impossible, at least during those years when restraint is the parent's duty. Opportunities continually arise—incidents occur in everyday life—whence the lesson may be drawn and presented to the young, not only of the worthlessness, but of the folly of worldly amusements. They may learn thus much from the experience of others, without being left to acquire that experience painfully for themselves. If, in conjunction with this negative teaching, every effort be made to introduce to them those amusements which confer positive pleasure and profit also, the difficulty of which Christian parents are prone to talk so much would almost vanish.

And surely the end desired should act as a powerful motive to induce them to emulate this course! If we contrast the characters produced by the two kinds of education even in this life, how deep must be the conviction, "Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is!" and who shall estimate the contrast in "the life that is to come?"

In the case of a family where, owing to past neglect, the spirit of workliness and giddy frivolity has already become paramount, let every effort be made, and be made at once, to recover the lost ground. But let not this be attempted by adopting severe measures—laying down strict prohibitions. This course would probably make bad worse. Let there be a more prayerful and diligent use of those measures which should have been employed all the way through. Although late, a mother's affectionate expostulations will not go for nothing; children, unless their habits are fixed indeed, will appreciate advice which evidently springs from parental interest in their well-being. This, followed up by the introduction of new and nobler pleasures, would, we believe, in most instances prove successful.

But "prevention is better than cure;" and the best way of guarding the young

from the ensnaring attractions of worldly amusements, is to be beforehand in providing and promoting lawful and Christian recreation. Let the active buoyancy of youth be encouraged in out-door games and exercises; let the sights and the scenes of nature be made a storehouse of rich treasures; let music and painting gladden and embellish, and so minister to their happiness; let science be employed to blend relaxation with instruction,—the microscope, and telescope, and magic-lantern, by thus exhibiting the wonders of ocean, earth, and air; above all, let a taste be encouraged to live to pleasure whilst living to God; and wisdom's way will still be found a "way of pleasantness" and her paths "paths of peace."—*Rev. C. Bullock.*

THE EVERLASTING.

What is eternal life? Not long since I learned the height of a hill by making its ascent. I had not climbed far before my ideas of its greatness became doubtful; with every step I took they continued to increase, and when I reached its brow, I was astonished to find myself shrinking back from the lofty and precipitous edge of a height I once despised. How little a thing in the eyes of unbelief is life eternal! Less in importance than the life which is but for a moment. The passing present, not the never-passing future, fills the mind of the unbeliever. Even in the Christian, how utterly low and unworthy is the estimate formed of endless existence. How feeble the influence of eternity upon the day of present life, the brief preparatory period which it should control and mould as by the power of an infinite pressure.

How great a thing in the eye of God is eternal life, in the eye of Him, to whom "a thousand years are but as yesterday when it is passed, and as a watch in the night." To Him to whom all time is but a moment, eternal life, how great a thing even to Him! Witness the words and work of Christ! What was the greatest, grandest blessing brought by the Son of God to sinners? What was that richest gift of God; of which He spoke so often, summing up its fulness in two simple mighty words? "Eternal life!" What was the way Jesus took when seeking to

prove to man the love of God which is measureless? It was this: He showed that in that great love God had given his Son, in order that in Him He might give to sinners eternal life. And what was the blessing of all blessings which He purchased for us by the shedding and sacrifice of his very blood? *Eternal life.* Even now, as seen by our dim eyes, the gift seems vast, unsearchable, but oh! when we enter upon it, when we taste life in its fulness yonder at the right hand of God,—the life of soul, of mind, of body, perfected, glorified, filled with the spirit of Christ, filled with the possession of Christ, filled with the unsearchable riches of Christ, filled with all the fulness of God; when we taste this, drink this, age after age, and find no diminution, no cessation, but only increase of fulness, and lengthening out of the long prospect of its possession, unto realized endlessness, then, oh! then shall we bow beneath the exceeding and eternal weight of its glory, and offer to God for it the thanksgiving and gratitude which cannot be uttered!

And as age succeeds age, gliding away with unfelt pressure and silent speed, giving us a vista of memories which, to our present powers, would be measureless, shall our views of eternity change? Yes, but only to enlarge! for then shall we realize to our rapture, in a way that now transcends conception, that, long as we may live and endure, we can never pass the threshold of eternity, never get beyond its mere commencement! Far onward as we move, we can never, never enter it, for the sun of all the ages we shall ever have existed will bear to the eternal life still before us no proportion whatever!—*none—absolutely none.*

Oh, Christian, wonder and adore!—Estimate right the gift of God, and the sacrifice which has made it ours! For this sing praises to God, and be never silent; and for this live. For, oh, be well assured, that the brief present tells on this unending future; as one has said, "At every step we take, we tread upon chords that will vibrate for ever." How vast even the smallest blessing of that future becomes by the fact that it is endless, everlasting! And so the loss of any reward we might have won, oh how serious it seems in the

light of the *Heaven*. What is it? An eternal subtraction from the weight of glory which might have been ours, an everlasting loss of that which is (and which we shall then *feel* to be) unspeakably precious! Oh, who would willingly suffer such loss?

If, for faithful service here, we receive from Jesus the commendation, "Well done," and are rewarded with the approval of his smile, think of what that smile will be worth when we find it, age after age, the same for ever! And such it surely will be, for with Him is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Even the cup of cold water shall not lose its reward, nor shall its reward (whatever its nature) be less than eternal in duration! Paul taught this truth when he wrote, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." There was no comparison between the two, for the sufferings of the present were but temporal, the unseen glory they were working for him *eternal!*

And then think of the woes of the lost! But from this my soul shrinks with unutterable horror. Oh, the length of their night of "outer darkness"! Saints of God, awake! Arise and toil. Toil hard, toil on, toil prayerfully, toil in the power of Christ, pulling sinners out of the everlasting fire; for the light burns low, the moments flee, the night is near, *their night eternal.* — *Revival.*

LED NOT DRIVEN.

A mother, sitting at her work in her parlour, overheard her child, whom an older sister was dressing in an adjoining room, say repeatedly, as if in answer to his sister, "No, I don't want to say my prayers."

How many, thought the mother to herself, often say the same thing in heart, though they conceal, even from themselves, the feeling!

Mother, said the child, appearing in a minute or two at the parlour door; the tone and the look implied that it was only his morning misadventure.

"Good morning, my child."

"I am going out to get my breakfast."

"Stop a minute; I want you to come here and see me first."

The mother laid down her work in the next chair, as the boy ran toward her. She took

him up. He kneeled in her lap, and laid his face down upon her shoulder, his cheek against her ear. The mother rocked her chair slowly backward and forward.

"Are you pretty well this morning?" said she, in a kind, gentle tone.

"Yes, mother, I am very well."

"I am very glad you are well. I am very well too; and when I waked up this morning, and found that I was well, I thanked God for taking care of me."

"Did you?" said the boy, in a low tone, half a whisper. He paused after it. Conscience was at work.

"Did you ever feel my pulse?" asked his mother, after a moment of silence, at the same time taking the boy down, and setting him in her lap, and placing his fingers on her wrist.

"No, but I have felt mine."

"Well, don't you feel mine now? How it goes beating?"

"Yes," said the child.

"If it should stop beating, I should die at once."

"Should you?"

"Yes, and I cannot keep it beating."

"Who can?"

"God."

A silent pause.

"You have a pulse too, which beats in your bosom here, and in your arms, and all over you, and I cannot keep it beating, nor can you. Nobody can but God. If he should not take care of you, who could?"

"I don't know, mother," said the child, with a look of anxiety; and another pause ensued.

"So, when I waked up this morning, I thought I would ask God to take care of me and all the rest of us."

"Did you ask him to take care of me?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"Because I thought you would ask Him yourself. God likes to have us all ask for ourselves."

A very long pause ensued. The deeply thoughtful and almost anxious expression of countenance showed that the heart was reached.

"Don't you think you had better ask for yourself?"

"Yes," said the boy readily.

He kneeled again in his mother's lap, and uttered, in his own simple and broken language, a prayer for the protection and blessing of Heaven.

Suppose another case. Another mother, overhearing the same words, calls the child into the room. The boy comes.

"Did I not hear you say you did not want to say your prayers?"

The boy is silent.

'Yes, he did,' says his sister behind him.

'Well, that is very naughty. You ought always to say your prayers. Go right back now, and say them like a good boy, and never let me hear of your refusing again.'

The boy goes back pouting, and utters the words of prayer, while his heart is full of mortified pride, vexation, and ill-will.—*Mother's Magazine.*

A FERVENT SPIRIT.

A fervent spirit is the most abundant source of an active life. In heaven there is perfect activity, because in heaven there is perfect fervour. They are all happy there; they have a sufficient end in all they do. There is no wearying in their work, for there is no wanting in their love. The want of a sufficient object would make any man idle. A friend once found the author of the "Seasons" in bed long after noon; and upbraiding him for his indolence, the poet remarked, that he just lay still because, although he were up, he would have nothing to do. But, even in this sluggish world, there are those whom hearty relish of their work and sense of its importance so inspire, that they are very loth when slumber constrains them to quit it, and often prevent the dawning in order to resume it. It was mathematical fervour which kept Newton poring on his problems till the midnight wind swept over his pages the ashes from his long-extinguishing fire. It was artistic fervour which kept Reynolds with the pencil in his glowing hand for thirty-six hours together, evoking from the canvas forms of beauty that seemed glad to come. It was poetic fervour which sustained Dryden in a fortnight's frenzy, when composing his Ode of St. Cecilia's Day, heedless of privations which he did not as much as perceive. It was classical fervour which for six successive months constrained the German scholar, Heyne, to allow himself no more than two nights of weekly rest, that he might complete his perusal of the old Greek authors. And it was scientific fervour which dragged the lazy but eloquent French naturalist, Buffon, from beloved slumbers to his still more beloved studies, for many years together. There is no department of human distinction which cannot record its feats of fervour. But shall science with its corruptible crowns, and the world with its vanities, monopolize this enthusiasm? If not, let each one consider. What is the greatest self-denial to which a godly zeal has prompted me? Which is the largest or greatest work through which a holy fervour has ever raised me?—*Rev. James Hamilton, D.D.*

"OUR FATHER."

The preface to the ten commandments teaches us who it is that we are to obey. So the preface to the Lord's Prayer teaches us who it is that we are to pray to. It is the same God in both cases. But in the one case we have before us his claims as a law-giver, in the other his claims as a prayer-hearer. The command confronts us with our Sovereign, the prayer with our Father. In the one case we appear as subjects, in the other as children. At the foot of Sinai, the behest comes from the "Lord, thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt." It is as if he had said, "I, who am about to impose this law, am Jehovah, thy deliverer; therefore, give heed to what I say." His supreme Godhead, His infinite benefits and protecting care, are assigned as reasons why He may lay upon us absolute commands, and challenge from us perfect obedience. But what reason can be given why we should pray to him? What encouragement have we that he will hear us? As the sum of all the reasons for obedience is contained in that brief formula by which God introduces His commands at Sinai, so these few words, "Our Father which art in heaven," contain, in germ, all that can be said in favor of prayer.

When Jesus taught his disciples how to pray, the very first word which He put into their mouth, was the revelation of a great and precious truth. The God we worship is no cheerless abstraction, no impersonal something, standing aloof in unapproachable distance from His creature, no inexorable avenging destiny, no Moloch, or Juggernaut, but a Father. How precious to the child of God is the word thus put into his mouth! Who has a strong arm to protect, who has a heart of tenderness to forgive, who is full of solicitude to provide, who has wisdom to guide, who is patient with weakness, who can interpose authority without terrifying, if not a father? *Dear name!* If the Christian really believes that God is his Father, what further need has he of argument for his duty or the privilege of prayer!—*John S. Hart, Esq.*

"LIFE DOES NOT PAY."

"Life does not pay," said a man whom the world esteemed rich, but upon whose constitution disease had made some inroads, thus perhaps, accounting for the remark.

The blind preacher, Milburn, declared "that though he had never seen the 'human face divine,' yet he should say, judging from the ceaseless murmur of discontent that came up from the world, it wore an expression of sadness." Carlyle says that "beneath every house-top is a tragedy being enacted in real life." If we open the books of the poets, we shall read that—

"The spider's most attenuated thread
Is cord, is cable to man's tender tie
On earthly bliss; it breaks at every breeze."

Byron, in the bloom of life and vigour of early hope, could write—

"My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief,
Are mine alone."

Then Shelley bursts out, "Our very dreams are but varied agonies that pray like scorpions upon the springs of life." Shakespeare said—

"There is nothing in this world can make me joy!
Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale,
Vexing the dull ear of a drowsy man."

Solomon sought for that good which has ever been the hidden thing of life—happiness. He planted his vineyards, and made orchards and gardens; he planted trees of all kinds of fruits; he filled his palace with servants and maidens, and gathered men-singers and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts; he withheld not from his heart any joy, or whatsoever his eyes desired; and thus he sums up the mournful result: "Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me, for all is vanity and vexation of spirit."

"Life does not pay," is the echo of voices far down the generations that have passed.

And life does *not* pay, considered simply as a game of pleasure—pleasure balanced against the toils, the sorrows, and the privations of life.

But life *does* pay, considered as a battle for the right against the wrong. The consciousness of being an instrument of good, may bring a joy so exquisite, so intense, so lasting, as to balance a long life of sorrow, privation, and toil. But he who lives simply for the pleasure of his own soul—simply for

the pleasure of life, whether that pleasure be based upon light amusement, upon sensual or intellectual enjoyment, or the more noble thirst for fame and station,—will make a failure of life. He may obtain the external, be surrounded by all the luxuries of life—attain glory, power, wealth; but if it has all been to satisfy the inner cravings of the heart for selfish pleasure, the internal reward of happiness will never be reached.

A Christian life pays!—*Christian Treasury*.

LOST TO JESUS.

When we wish to know of any thing which is lost—a lost sheep, a lost piece of money, or a wandering child—we always ask, To whom did it belong? Who is its owner? When we discover the owner, we discover the loser. Who then is our owner? To whom do we belong? Ourselves? Surely not. Do we then belong to the devil? No, we belong to neither him nor to ourselves. We have a very different owner. We belong to Jesus. He created, preserved and redeemed us. We are His sheep, His precious treasure, His family; and therefore our loss is a loss to Him. One soul lost, is a sheep lost out of that fold, which, but for man's wicked wanderings, would include every man. It is precious coin lost from God's treasury, which, but for man's robbery would include every man. It is a child lost out of that family which, but for man's prodigal spirit, would include the whole family of man.

Lost sinners are a loss to Jesus. This is not the thought of sinners. They will admit that their loss is a loss to themselves, a loss of good and of happiness, but they never think, and cannot be made to believe, that their eternal loss is a loss to Jesus Christ.—*Rev. J. N. Macleod, D.D.*

A Perfect Woman.

"A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller betwixt life and death;
The reason firm—the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill,
A perfect woman—nobly plann'd,
To warn, to comfort, and command."

—*Wordsworth*.

Sabbath School Lessons.

December 18th, 1864.

SAUL'S DISOBEDIENCE.

1 Sam. xiii. 1-23.

Ver. 1-7. Hitherto Saul's conduct has been commendable. Where did he show himself a good son? 1 Sam. ix. 5. How did he show his modesty? 1 Sam. ix. 21; 1 Sam. x. 22, 23. His prudence? 1 Sam. x. 16. His forbearance? 1 Sam. x. 27; 1 Sam. xi. 13. His skill and courage? 1 Sam. xi. His regard for God's honour? 1 Sam. xi. 13. His conduct from this time is not so praise-worthy. The Philistines were the most dangerous neighbours of Israel, and of very different metal from the hordes of the Ammonites. They were thoroughly discomfited some years before this under Samuel, 1 Sam. vii., but renewed their aggression, principally it would seem by establishing garrisons in commanding positions, 1 Sam. x. 5, 1 Sam. xiv. 1, which enabled them to keep the Israelites in check, 1 Sam. xiii. 19, 20. This passage probably refers to Southern Palestine; it certainly does not refer to Gilead, see ver. 7.

Saul in beginning this war neglected the rule of Luke xiv. 31, he did not consult whether he was able to defeat the Philistines; 3000 men, (ver. 2.) was a small force with which to begin a campaign against a nation so warlike. His preparations were very unlike those of his enemies, ver. 5; he had many men, ver. 4, but few soldiers, ver. 7, and these ill armed, ver. 22. They had little courage, no confidence in Saul, great fear of the Philistines, and little hope in God. It will not do to trust in God's help and use no means ourselves. Gideon conquered a host with only 300 men, but God had restricted his army to this number, Judg. vii. 7-16. Saul had no such promise. We are to trust in God for daily bread, Matt. vi. 25, but yet to work for it, Ex. xx. 9; Eph. iv. 28. God gives salvation, Rom. v. 1; but yet we must labour for it, John vi. 27; Phil. ii. 12.

Ver. 8. It is trial that brings out a man's qualities. Saul was better fitted for a sudden and bold attack than for patient endurance.—It was a great trial to him to see his followers so cowardly and feeble; but what ought he to have done? Jas. i. 2-4. We must bear God's will as well as do it; and this is often the hardest of the two. It is easier for a child to obey its parents than to suffer chastisement for disobedience; but he should do both. It was a trial to wait so long for Samuel; he came on the day appointed, ver.

10, but about the close of it; but since God by Samuel had bidden him wait, he should have delayed another day. See Balaam's conduct, Num. xxii. 20, 21. Was it less a sin to make these offerings on the last day than on the first or second? Why not? Gen. iii. 11. Beware of what people call little sins. The road to heaven is so narrow, a very little declension right or left takes us off it, Eccles. i. 15.

Ver. 9-12. Saul is not charged with making the offering himself; which would have been an intrusion into the priest's office, (a priest was with him, 1 Sam. xiv. 3) but with disobeying God's command, ver. 14. He does not confess his sin, but excuses it, ver. 11, 12. To excuse a sin is to deny it is a sin, so Adam and Eve, Gen. iii. 12, 13. Saul says, he forced himself, ver. 12. True he sinned with compunction; but then he did sin, which is the main point. Some run swiftly in the ways of evil, others go with leaden feet but they reach the same end. Do you sin? It matters not how, whether you take pleasure in it or not.

Ver. 13, 14. Samuel reminds Saul that though a king he was merely God's servant, ver. 13, 14; 1 Sam. x. 1. A rebel against God was not qualified to govern God's people. What might not he do next? All disobedience is punished, 1 Sam. xii. 13. God is impartial in his judgments: rich and poor, kings and working-men, old men and little children, will be dealt with in perfect rectitude, Job x. 14.

Ver. 15-23. The Israelites had trusted to their king to save them; now they learned God's help was as needful as ever. Some think if they were only rich what they would do, or in some other situation. Be satisfied with what you have, and do at the time what God demands. The Philistines would be glad to see the Israelites tilling their fields, ver. 20, 21, for the richer the harvest the greater the spoil, ver. 17. What a dreadful thing war is. God made us to love as brethren, and war makes men waste and destroy. A quarrel between children is just a little war, and quarrels some boys are no better in their battles than these ruthless Philistines. Saul's soldiers had probably slings like David, and clubs; it is only of the six hundred it is said they had no swords or spears, ver. 15-22: They were scarce, that is all that is said.—God brought the Israelites so low that they might trust less in their king, and more in Him. "There is no king saved by the multitude of an host. Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him. He is our help and shield," Psa. xxxiii. 16, 20.—Edin. S. S. Lessons.

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