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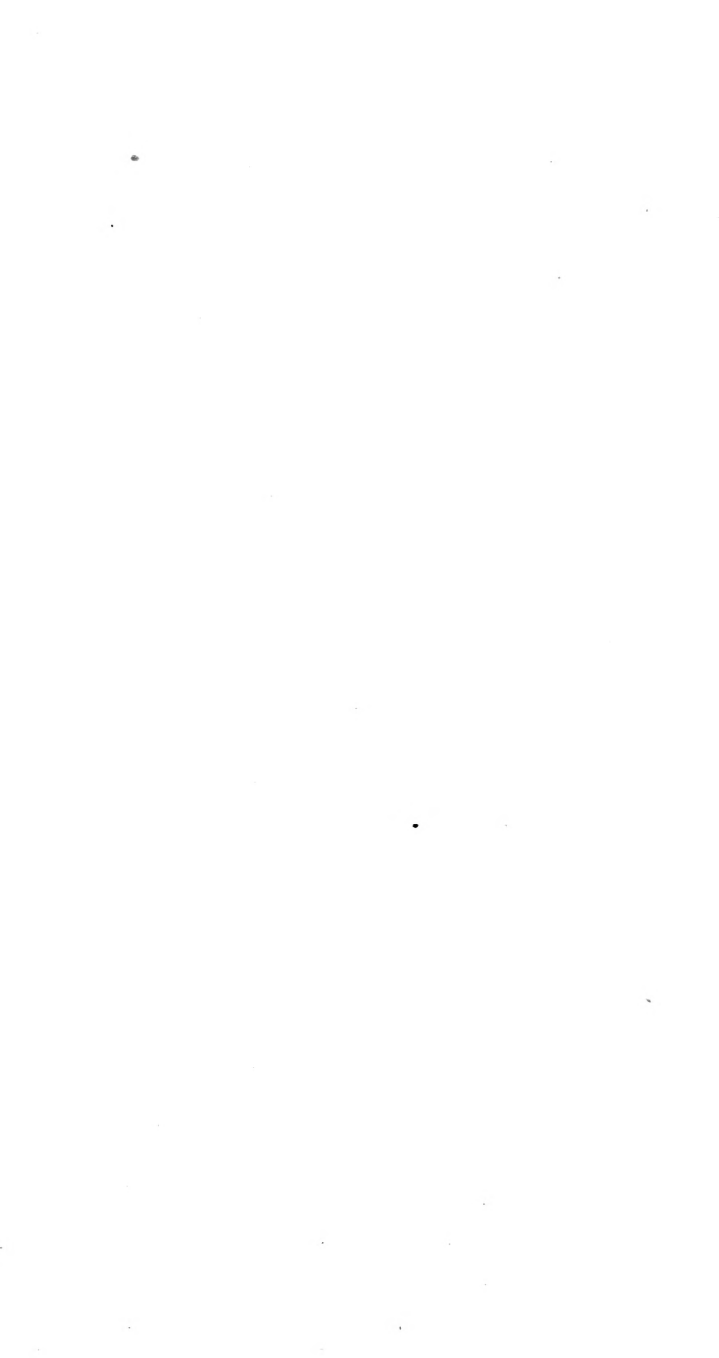
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WORD OF WARNING.

BY REV. MATTHEW HENRY.

IT is no time to dally and trifle, and speak softly, when precious souls are at stake, and their eternal condition is so nearly concerned. We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men. The blood of your soul would lie at our door, if we should not give you warning. But what shall I say? Shall I tell you, that

1. The God with whom we have to do is *a holy, righteous, all-seeing God*. That which makes sinners secure is their mistake concerning this. They think of the Almighty as if he were easily imposed upon, altogether such a one as themselves. Thus they cheat themselves. But be not deceived. Know that God's eye is always upon you. He is acquainted with your secret sins. He hates every sin; and to all who are impenitent, he "is a consuming fire." He is too wise to be deceived. He is true to his threatenings.

2. Your precious, immortal soul *must shortly appear before God in judgment*, to be determined by a righteous doom to an unchangeable condition. You have a jewel in your hands of inestimable value. It is thy soul, thy precious soul. It is not a trifle, or a thing of naught, but thy own soul; and once lost, it is irrecoverably lost. The gain of all the world cannot compensate it. This soul, at the best, is in a very hazardous state. It lies at stake. It is in great danger. Thou art on a trial for thy life.

3. If you live and die in a graceless, unsanctified state, as sure as God is in heaven, *you will be to eternity in hell*. Though you make a great profession; though you attain a

high reputation among men ; though you prophesy in Christ's name ; though you excel in gifts ; though you abound in usefulness ; yet all this, without a living principle of grace in your heart, will never bring you to heaven. And believe it, grace and holiness are quite other things than what the world take them to be. Religion consists in humility and self-denial, and the reigning love of God and contempt of the world. He is the Christian who is one inwardly.

4. There are thousands in hell who, when alive in the world, *thought themselves safe*. Multitudes have been deceived with dross for gold—have thought they were rich when they were not so. There is a generation of such. We have reason then to be jealous of a cheat in that in which so many have been cheated before us. This should startle us. Take heed lest while you sleep as others did, you perish as they did. How secure was the rich man in the midst of his prosperity ! But God called him a fool!

5. The unsanctified heart may have *a false peace*, while yet it is the devil's palace ; and while he, as a strong man armed, keepeth it. It would startle you to think of belonging to the devil, of being under his power, of being led captive by him, of being set on by him, of having him to work in you. You would be startled if the devil were to appear to you ; but he is as really working in the children of disobedience, as if he appeared to them. When you are going on in a sinful way, and yet say you have peace, it is the devil that tells you so : you are in the midst of enemies.

6. While you are asleep in carnal security, *your damnation slumbereth not*. The Judge standeth before the door. Death is at hand ; perhaps within a few days, a few hours of you. You would be startled, though you put far off the evil day, if I could assure you that you should live but one year ; and will it not awaken you, that I cannot assure you, nor can you assure yourself, that you shall live a day ? The veil of flesh is easily and quickly rent, and then appears the awful scene of eternity—eternity. Have you not seen many,

who were as likely to live as yourself, snatched away? How startling was the declaration, This night thy soul shall be required of thee! A criminal who is condemned to die to-morrow, cannot forget it; it fills him eating, drinking, sleeping: and can we forget the amazing doom, the amazing sight, the amazing gulf that we are just upon the brink of—just ready to step into?

7. As the tree falls, so it lies, and so it *will lie to eternity*. As death leaves us, judgment finds us. The doom is irreversible, the sentence irrevocable, the condition on the other side death unchangeable. A gulf will be fixed. It is too late to repent in the grave. Up and bestir yourself, for you have only a little inch of time in which to be doing.

But let me DIRECT you. When a man asleep is roused a little, he is, in some measure, capable of advice. Know then, generally, what you must do. Sleep no longer, be secure no longer.

1. *Suspect yourself* as to your spiritual state; self-suspicion is the first step towards awakening. What if, after all, my faith should be but fancy, my hope presumption? What reason have I to be so very confident? May I not be deceived? Many who eat bread with Christ, yet lift up the heel against him. The disciples, when our Lord intimated that one of them should betray him, began to say unto him, one by one, "Is it I?" Do not, in a matter of such great importance, always take things upon trust.

2. See and be convinced of *the miserable state you are in while out of Christ*. You are not the more safe for feeling secure. Look about you; consider, as men do who are newly awakened, where you are. See yourself wretched and miserable, a child of wrath. Be sensible of the guilt of sin that lies upon you, of the power of sin that rules in you. You are under the power of Satan. You are exposed to the curse of God. There is but one life between thee and hell. And is this a condition for a man to sleep in?

3. *Stir up yourself* to a due concern about your soul, and your eternal welfare. "If ye will inquire, inquire ye." Inquire as they did when awake, who are mentioned by the prophet Micah, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord?" Inquire as those new converts in the Acts of the Apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Inquire as the jailer did, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" There begins to be some hope of people when they look about them as men concerned. Here I am now, but where must I be to eternity? If I should die to-night, and go to judgment, what would become of my precious soul? That is the holy fear which is the beginning of wisdom. Seek unto Jesus Christ for life and light, and Christ shall give thee light. We must go to him by an active faith; consent to the gospel proposal of salvation by him. Say, Whither shall I go but to Christ? Sense of danger should drive us to him with all speed. We are never truly awake and up, till by faith we have "put on the Lord Jesus Christ."

4. Set yourself *with all diligence* to do the work for which you were sent into the world. Awake to righteousness. Up, and be doing. Your work is great; your journey long; your enemies many; opposition powerful; strength small; time short and uncertain. Son, go work to-day in the vineyard. Dost thou not see how it is grown over with thorns?

5. *Take heed of delays.* They have ruined thousands. "Yet a little sleep," said the ancient slumberers. Men are roused and disturbed a little, but they only turn and go to sleep again, and so become conviction-proof—can sleep in the midst of a thousand calls. Take heed of putting by conviction; it is bad freezing again, after a thaw. Let not this call be lost after all the rest. What effect it will have I know not, but I have delivered my soul.

THE

PRICE OF A SOUL.

THERE is a buyer in the markets of the world whose name is never in the newspapers, and whose bids are never in the prices-current. Nevertheless, his business is widely extended, and carried on with ceaseless activity. He chaffers in the open street. He walks boldly upon "Change." He glides into the dimness of the counting-house. He steps into the workshop. He goes out upon the farm. He is most successful at the theatre, the tavern, the race-course, and the ballroom. He is the *buyer of souls*.

He has various prices in his dreadful traffic. He bought one soul for thirty pieces of silver. He has bought some for less. But for a larger price—for heaps of gold, to shine and glitter in men's eyes, or for fame and guilty pleasures, how many have bartered away their immortal spirits!

Here is the history of one exchange of this kind. Some years since, the writer sat in the midst of a large congregation, gathered in a church in one of the eastern counties of Pennsylvania. It was the middle of the week, but the Spirit of God was upon the hearts of the people, and they came willingly to the house of God. It was a solemn place. Without the walls of the old church there waved an ancient forest, and hard by, the dust of our fathers slept. Within, the Holy Ghost was working in a hundred awakened hearts. The sermon of the morning had for its theme, the value of the soul. The servant of Christ closed his appeal with the following narration.

A few years ago, there was living in one of our large cities, a young lady who was the daughter of wealthy and worldly parents. She was fond of the gay pleasures of the city, and plunged into them with the eagerness of youth. Her gayety, youth, and wealth, were sure passports to the highest circles of fashion, and there she lived and moved and trifled as though there were no other world.

While thus living in pleasure she was invited one evening, by a friend, to accompany her to the weekly prayer-meeting in a church of the city. There it pleased God to

visit her with the influences of his Spirit. She was convinced of sin, and returned to her home in deep sorrow. Her heaviness of spirit was soon discovered, and her worldly parents were in consternation lest their beautiful daughter should leave the world of fashion for the service of God. They besought her and commanded her to return to the circles in which she had formerly shone. They surrounded her with her gay friends. Yet, she was still stricken in heart, and refused to be comforted. At last they succeeded in bribing her to attend a large party of pleasure, by the gift of the richest dress which could be purchased in the city. She reluctantly consented to their request, went to the festival, and returned without one trace of her religious emotions.

In a few weeks after, that daughter was lying at the point of death. Skilful physicians were around her, but they could only tell her dismayed parents that "there was no hope." When this opinion was made known to the dying girl, she lay for a few minutes in perfect silence. Then rousing herself, she ordered a servant to bring her *that dress*, and hang it upon the post of her bed. She then sent for her father and mother. In a few moments they stood weeping by her side. She looked upon each of them for a time; then lifting up her hand, and pointing to the dress, said to each of them distinctly, and with the terrible calmness of despair, "*Father, mother, there is the price of my soul.*" In a few hours she knew the full value of that which she had lost. There are lessons taught by this mournful story, to which we do well if we take heed.

1. It warns us against the terrible sin of *tampering with the soul that is under the influence of the Spirit of God*. Some men do this deliberately, and of purpose. They strive to defeat the merciful purposes of the Holy Ghost. They sneer at the wholesome fears of the sinner, as the imaginary troubles of a coward. Partaking of the malicious craft of the devil their master, they perplex the inquirer with sophisms, and thus fill his mind with doubts; or they lure him back to the world, by cunning temptations to open sin. Like some men of our Saviour's day, they neither go into the kingdom themselves, nor do they suffer those who are entering to go in. Surely when such men are condemned by God, all others must say Amen, and acknowledge that their "damnation is just."

It is to be hoped, however, that the large majority of the men who are educated under the light of the gospel, would not commit this sin intentionally, and of "malice afore thought." Even when careless concerning their own souls, and willing to barter them away for that which is vanity and a cheat, they would not choose to occupy the place of the parents in the foregoing narrative. They do not covet, they rather shrink from the agony those parents must have felt, when they looked upon their dying child. They do not wish to go to the judgment with the stain of another's blood upon their garments. They would not willingly increase the difficulties of the struggling soul.

Yet are they, in effect, upon the side of the avowed and impious opposers of God's Spirit. If not for Christ, they are against him. If not coworkers with God, they are coworkers with Satan. Their example and their influence can have but one result. They can lead men only in the way they walk themselves, and their pathway leads directly to the pit. Let all such hear this warning, and beware how they set themselves against the Holy Spirit.

2. We are warned against the sin of *grieving the Holy Ghost*. This was the sin of the daughter. Her parents tempted, and she yielded. They offered and she accepted the seducing gift. It is possible that the father and mother may not have been aware of the greatness of their sin. They may have done it "ignorantly, in unbelief." But the daughter had a quickened conscience. She was under the influence of the Holy Ghost. She had convictions of sin, and solemn impressions of duty. In doing what she did, she acted in direct opposition to the suggestions of conscience and of God's Spirit. She took the fatal bribe, and went where it was hoped conscience might again be stupefied, and the Spirit banished from her heart.

Can the human soul commit a more daring transgression, after it has been enlightened from on high, than voluntarily to return to the world and sin? Can there be a more presumptuous offence, than deliberately to close the eyes, and plunge into fresh guilt? Next to the gift of his Son, the gift of his Holy Spirit is the best blessing God has to bestow upon guilty man. Is it not, then, the crowning act of all wickedness, knowingly and wilfully to resist this Spirit? And if men will resist such mercies, who shall say aught against

the justice of the punishment, when the despisers “wonder and perish?”

3. Ponder now, solemnly and deeply, a question which is addressed to you in all earnestness and sincerity: *Have you not felt the strivings of God's Spirit, and have you not resisted them?* Have you never seen a hand which “pointed to the coming wrath?” Have you never heard a voice which “warned you from that wrath to flee?” And did you not forget these solemn warnings? Can you not look back upon a season, still well remembered, and visible yet in the waste of misspent years—a season in which the importance of this world manifestly dwindled, and your soul was brought under the power of the world to come—when truth stood out before you in no equivocal light, and duty lay before you as clearly as if traced by a sunbeam? Has not the law of God distinctly uttered its terrible threatenings? Have not convictions of sin darkened and disturbed all your thoughts? In the silence of the night, or in the glare and business of the day, and even in the haunts of revelry and crime, have you not heard peal after peal from Sinai, which made your soul tremble and fear?

If there has been such a season, what has been its result? What has been the effect of that critical period in your history? Did it leave you penitent and humble at the foot of the cross? Or did it leave you with a harder heart, and a more seared conscience, to await in indifference the judgments of Almighty God? If this is the case, ponder one question more; the Spirit you have grieved is its author: “If he that despised Moses' law, died without mercy under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, *and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?*” What must that punishment be, which is “sorer” than “dying without mercy?” Whatever it may be, it will be the portion of the despiser of God's Holy Spirit.

WILLIAM PATTERSON.

WILLIAM PATTERSON was born at Sligo, Ireland. He was a stone-cutter, a good workman, and lived many years on Arbor Hill, Albany, New York. He had a wife and one child. He was a careless, and an intemperate man till he was twenty-seven years of age, when his intemperance brought on palsy, which seized the right side of his body.

One morning when his physician visited him, he pretended he could not speak, thinking to alarm the doctor; and he never spoke again: thus he seemed to have been providentially rebuked for acting a lie.

Soon after this, he felt his lost condition as a sinner in the sight of God, and earnestly desired the use of his tongue to express the agony of his mind. He sorrowed for his sins, repented of them, confessed them to God, and found mercy in believing in Jesus, who died the death of the cross to save his soul, and whose blood would wash away all his guilt. This precious confidence in his Saviour continued during the whole remaining thirty years of his afflicted life.

Some time after the attack of palsy, his wife died, and he was removed to the almshouse, where it became necessary to amputate one of his limbs above the knee. In this helpless condition his piety shone brightly. It was the delight of Christian friends to visit and converse with him, he writing his thoughts with his left hand on a black-board with a piece of chalk. In this way he would relate his sweet experience, and the silent communings of his heart with his adorable Lord.

He was often surrounded by the wicked and profane, but in uncomplaining meekness submitted to his lot; praying for those he could not help in any other way. Besides the trial of being constantly surrounded with the ungodly,

he endured many inconveniences and discomforts; yet in after-years, when comparative comfort surrounded him in his daughter's dwelling, he thought his spiritual enjoyment while in the almshouse exceeded that of any other period of his life. So it pleases God to make his presence abound to his people under severe privations.

The grace of meekness shone peculiarly in him, and marked his countenance with a thoughtful submission, which was apparent to any observer, as he sat upon his little square cot-bed, where he could never lie down, because he was also afflicted with asthma, which was at times very oppressive.

His veneration for God in all his names, attributes, and providences was remarkable. He would bow his head and slowly raise his hand when spiritual subjects were introduced, expressing in this way his understanding and acquiescence in what was said. He did not fret under trifles, but in patience possessed his soul; neither summer's heat or winter's cold disturbed him, for he was reconciled to the will of God. He cheerfully suffered trials and necessities to which none but a person in his dependent circumstances could be subject.

He smiled with holy joy when his home in heaven was spoken of; his mind was always in tune for this theme. When left to himself, prayer and reading the Bible were his constant employments. To remember where he left off, he made a mark with his nail, and there is hardly a spot of his New Testament unmarked. He loved God's truth; it was his delightful resource for happiness and instruction. He would sometimes get the names of his benefactors written for him, and would afterwards be observed to read them and sit a while in silent prayer over each. He often had a keen sense of the punishment of the wicked; sin and eternal suffering were solemn and deeply affecting subjects to him. His subdued, devout appearance in his situation, sometimes affected persons to tears while they sat beside him: a young lady who

once visited him, could not control her feelings sufficiently to remain long in his presence.

There needed no proof that he was happy; his countenance expressed it. Once writing to a friend who sat beside him, among other things he said, "I am happier than a prince on a throne; indeed, I would not make the exchange." When he was removed to a friend's house for a time he said, "Jacob returned to his kindred, and I to mine." Another time, as a friend expressed the fear that he was fatiguing himself, he replied, "No; conversing with chalk, is like turning water into wine." Again, speaking of instruction, he wrote, "It is the immense load of ignorance that shields the conscience from the sword of the Spirit. Enlighten, then expect the blessing; people of the world are not such fools as we think they are."

Another time, as the conversation was upon faith, he wrote, "Coming as a little child asking a piece of bread, one seldom goes away empty. Simple faith goes further than worldly schemes. When we can in faith and full assurance say, Thou art the Lord my God, it is well with us." Speaking of heavenly mindedness, he wrote, "Poverty is riches, loss is gain, heaven is home, time is turned into eternity." Another time he wrote of heaven, "That sun in the firmament never sets. There, tides never ebb or flow." One warm day, as a friend spoke of the excessive heat, he wrote a beautiful thought, the words of which are not noted; it was to the effect, that the perfect symmetry of heaven insured the delight of its climate. These are a few of the beautiful things he wrote.

There were many precious links of Christian affection formed between this helpless child of God and his friends. He felt a deep and prayerful interest in their spiritual welfare, and in that of their children, who were very dear to him; and when the cares or sorrows of life pressed heavily upon them, they often returned from a visit to Mr. Patterson with new songs of thanksgiving and praise. He would pour out the calm, confiding exercises of his soul;

then lay by his board to join a prayer, and sometimes a hymn, which were peculiar enjoyments to him. They who have at will the delights of family and social worship, know not the sweet pleasure of having spiritual exercises fall on the ear, as those do who have silent Sabbaths and are without such privileges.

We are apt to think that the suffering children of God who are shut out from the active duties of life, have few or no spiritual trials; but it is not so. Mr. Patterson was not without inward temptations and outward troubles, even in the latter part of his life. About six months before his death he had a violent conflict with the enemy of his soul; and by the rather injudicious conversation of a friend, the trial was so increased that his limbs shook from the agitation of his spirit. A friend who had passed through deep waters heard of his anguish, and hastened to him, when by sympathy and recognition of the enemy, he was relieved. His peace was never disturbed again.

His gratitude to friends for their kindness was very great. To one who was allowed to be the channel of many of his comforts, he expressed anticipations of acknowledging all, when his tongue should be loosed in eternity; and when, if permitted, he would be the first to welcome his friend into the blessed world.

This dear cripple lay a long time at the pool of Bethesda; but in an unexpected moment, in the year 1836, and in the fifty-seventh year of his age, death broke up the tabernacle and set the longing spirit free. None can doubt that he is now adoring the Lamb that was slain for him. "Precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints."

He had been deeply oppressed with the wickedness and spiritual destitution of his neighborhood, and a neat little church has now been built a short distance from the spot where he spent the last eight years of his prayerful life.

STOP THAT THOUGHT!

THAT WICKED THOUGHT—STOP IT.

THE *divine law* denounces it. In a catalogue of sins, given by the Lawgiver himself, we find “*evil thoughts*” in connection with “murders, adulteries, thefts, false witness,” all condemned alike by the law. Wicked thoughts generate openly wicked actions. They as much violate law as the acts to which they lead. The law as much reprobates the viper in the egg as the viper full grown; and denouncing the sinful *act*, it does, by necessity, the sinful *thought* that led to it. If then the divine law has any authority with you, stop that wicked thought.

Wisdom bids you stop it. At the earliest period possible you crush other evils. What alarm and haste are inspired by a single burning shingle on a roof—by the first steps of disease. Early, prompt, and energetic are you to repel the first invasion of health or property. Be so to repel that wicked thought. For,

It will soon defy your power. Call it a drop if you please, so minute a portion is it of a man’s history. But it has the fearful power of attracting to itself other drops, till all admonitions, human and divine, are swept away by the flood.

Call it a particle, as of the small dust of the balance, yet it can attract other particles, till an overwhelming mass of guilt shall bury the soul in perdition.

An indulged wicked thought—how long before it excites other wicked thoughts, and the hateful passions of the soul are set on fire? Each of those thoughts is fuel to the flame.

All true philosophy directs us to the fountain, for the power we would have over the stream. Take care of the spark, if you would not have the flame, and the conflagration. *Human* wisdom lops off the branches, when it assails only outward evil habits. But *divine* wisdom lays the axe at the root of the tree, when it bids us "stop the wicked thought."

Kindness bids you to stop it. Had such a rebuke driven the first wicked thought from the bosom of the tempted Eve, what an amount of woe to the human family, temporal and eternal, would have been prevented!

Suppose that, with effectual power, it had fallen on David's ear, when the first impulse was given to that career of guilt which made him an adulterer and murderer; what shame and remorse, how many agonies and tears would have been prevented.

Had Judas stopped that thought which fired the train of covetous emotions in his heart, and which ended in the betraying of his Lord, what a kindness it had been to his soul.

Had the timid Peter repelled that unbelieving thought which laid open his heart to the tempter, and caused the countless tears of remorse, what shame and suffering had been saved him.

That thought of *malice*--stop it. Else it will gather other elements of flame, and burning more and more fiercely as kindred thoughts and emotions contribute to its power, some dreadful deed of blood may proclaim, "how great a matter a little fire kindleth."

That thought of *lust*--let it die as soon as it is born. It can live only to pollute. It will gather other vile thoughts to its company, and cause, by their accumulation, such a passion as shall clothe you with shame as with a mantle, and set the undying worm to work in your bosom.

That thought of *pride*—stop it. It has fired a train that has sent millions to perdition. Stop it *now*. To-morrow your effort may be in vain. To-day it is perishable. To-morrow it will defy you. Now it is weak, and a little strength will suffice for a death-blow. Soon all your power will not master it.

That *covetous* thought—had Ahab stopped it, or Gehazi, how different might have been their character and destiny. In *your* bosom it aims at power. It will have it. Nothing can prevent but its expulsion. And the power which, indulged, it cannot but gain, with what fetters will it bind the soul, and what stripes it will lay upon it.

We would stop the thief in his assault on the happiness of the community. We would stay disease, as we saw it widening the sphere of its ravages. We would arrest the flame we saw kindling upon a neighbor's roof. Pity for human woe and love for human happiness prompt this. But how many elements of evil concentrate in a wicked thought! What havoc, unrestrained, it will make in all the forms of human happiness. It is among its minor evils, that it can waste property and generate vices which will terribly torment the human body. It looks for nobler game, and never fails to find it. It strikes at that most magnificent of Jehovah's works, the immortal soul. It aims at laying that in utter and everlasting ruin. Do we not kill in the bud a most terrible agent of human woe, when we cause the death of a wicked thought? Christian kindness never does a nobler office than when so employed.

Who of us would not cry, in an agony of earnestness, "Stop that fire!" did we see it kindling upon a neighbor's dwelling? But there is a farther-reaching benevolence when we cry, "Stop that wicked thought." A house may be laid in ashes in the one case, but in the other an immortal soul may sink into everlasting burnings.

“Stop that leak!” What mariner would be heedless of such an admonition? Neglect will carry that noble ship down into the ocean’s fathomless depths. But of how much weightier import is the appeal, “Stop that wicked thought!” for, if it be not stopped, an object more precious than all the navies of the world will sink into the bottomless pit.

Saw you a chariot, whose frightened horses were fiercely dashing the crowded vehicle towards a dreadful precipice; would not your desire be agonizing that it might stop? But a wicked thought, suffered to accumulate power by the alliance of other wicked thoughts, how swiftly and fiercely it can drive the immortal soul over that precipice at whose base roll the billows of the lake of fire!

But while the guilt and danger of such a thought are thus set before you, we press another consideration of utmost moment. That thought indicates the most melancholy fact that can be affirmed of a rational being, namely, *the depravity of the heart* from which it issues. The corruption of the tree is proved by such corrupt fruit. And while, therefore, you are urged to arrest the sinful thoughts of such a heart, you are pressed to a duty more imperative than all others, that of seeking the regeneration of the heart itself. While unholy, it can never have any other issues than those of sin. And nothing but the atoning blood and precious grace of our Lord Jesus Christ can ever make it holy. Not a moment should be lost in making a believing application to Him who “taketh away the sin of the world.” What relations are borne by a wicked heart to the divine law, to the moral government of God, and to eternal destiny! And what motives, from such sources, urge the soul to Him “whose blood cleanseth from all sin!”

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SINNER'S HELPS AND HINDERANCES

THE course of human life is represented in the Scriptures under the figure of a road or way, in which mankind are travelling towards two different destinations. I wish briefly to remind you, dear reader, of some of the HELPS to your forsaking "the way that leads to destruction," and of some of the HINDERANCES to your entering "the way which leadeth unto life;" and then give a few DIRECTIONS which, by the blessing of God, may secure your salvation.

I. HELPS TO YOUR FORSAKING THE WAY THAT LEADS TO DESTRUCTION.

A religious education. Almost the first syllables which you lisped, the earliest sentences which you learned to repeat, were the hymns and prayers with which a child may address its Creator. Into your infant mind were instilled the principles, on your infant heart were impressed the obligations of early piety. These teachings were uttered by the persuasive lips of your mother, recommended by her benignant manner, and enforced by her Christian example. You were taught to discriminate between right and wrong, and admonished of the dangers of transgression; were reminded of the pleasantness of wisdom's ways, and of the rewards of obedience; were exhorted to forsake the evil, and pursue the good. Had you been true to the principles in which you were educated, you would not now be numbered with the enemies of God; and to persist in your present course, you must break away from the associations of childhood and youth. The holy aspirations which were breathed over your cradle, the parental counsels to which you listened at the fireside, the fervent prayers which ascended from the domestic altar, the gentle commands which were laid upon you and the winning entreaties which were addressed to you, the hallowed desires which were cherished for you and the high hopes which were

garnered in you—these all must give place to evil thoughts and guilty purposes and sad remembrances.

The means of grace. Amid the cares of your secular calling, you are in danger of losing sight of sacred things, and absorbed in temporal pursuits, may quite forget the enduring interests of eternity. The Sabbath therefore comes, by divine appointment, to “command a pause to business and to pleasure,” and invites you, by its stillness, to the closet of secret communion with Heaven, and to the silent pages of the inspired oracles; and then it conducts you to the sanctuary, and bids you unite in its supplications and songs, and listen to the expositions of the sacred word. You thus learn the character of the only living and true God, the nature of his government and the claims of his law, your own relations to time and to eternity, the sinfulness of your rebellion, and the way of salvation through a suffering Redeemer. To deter you from ruin and allure you to life, every motive which can be drawn from the divine perfections and from your own deathless spirit, its sympathies, fears, and hopes, is arrayed before you in favor of obedience; the light which can be gathered from three worlds is concentrated and reflected full upon your pathway. And if you go on, you must brave the terrors of Sinai, resist the gentleness of Zion, despise the sufferings of Calvary, and from the summit and sunlight of Christian privileges, sink to darker depths than the doom of paganism.

Divine providences. The Most High, as Lord of the universe, has many ways of addressing his creatures, and some of his loudest and most effective calls are his silent providences. These have met you when you have turned a deaf ear to the calls of the gospel. The kindness which has watched over your life, sustaining you in sickness, shielding you in danger, and surrounding you with comforts, has sometimes awakened in you a sense of obligation. There have been moments when you have felt that some return of gratitude, service, and love was due to the gracious Being who had made such bountiful provision for you. A sense of the goodness of God has almost led you to repentance. And the same goodness has addressed to you its admonitions, warn-

ings, and reproofs. The meaning of his chastisements has been perfectly intelligible to you. He has sought to subdue by trials the spirit which was only elated by prosperity ; and your dream of earthly happiness has been suddenly disturbed. You were devoted to the pursuit of worldly gain, and have met with reverses and losses ; you snatched at the pleasures of earth, and they have turned to ashes in your grasp ; "friend after friend" has departed, to remind you to prepare for eternity. These providential dealings, joyful and afflictive, will probably be continued towards you ; and if you continue in the way of death, you must harden yourself against God, against mercies and judgments which only a stubbornness the most inveterate can wholly withstand.

Christian friends. You are constantly experiencing the power of Christian example. You daily observe the force of religious principle, and are perhaps intimately associated with Christians whose lives are governed by purer maxims than those of the world. Their character commands your confidence and respect, their principles and feelings are to your mind a sufficient refutation of infidelity ; you need no other evidence of the reality of the Christian religion. In the consistent deportment and conversation of these its professed disciples, it exhibits fruits which can grow only on the tree of life ; and the strong impression thus made is adapted to check your course of impenitence. Nor is the power of a holy example the only influence of Christians with which you have to contend. Your way has been almost hedged up by the entreaties and prayers of your Christian friends. Look back and recall the influences under which you have been living. Have you not been met, at every turn, with the voice of tender solicitation from hearts which were pledged to feel, and lips that were entitled to speak ? You have listened to the words of those who were commissioned to address you, until, on the great subject of your soul's salvation, no additional consideration can be urged, either to convince your understanding or to move your heart. The whole matter is fully and fairly before you ; and in the way of personal appeal, your Christian friends may even feel con-

strained to leave you to yourself. But nothing shall prevent their souls from weeping in secret places over your hardness of heart and blindness of mind. Their stricken spirits will not be denied the relief of pouring their cries into the ears of Him who heareth the sighing of the needy.

The Holy Spirit. You have been conscious of seasons when your mind was more than usually exercised on the themes of religion, and you have felt that something was inclining you to make the better choice. You cherished desires and purposes which, if executed, would have placed you in the ranks of the followers of Christ. A holy influence was then operating on your heart to prompt your obedience and love, unseen, but alas, not unresisted. And when, after your attention had been held to the subject, and your sympathies interested in it, you stopped short of the decisive step, and partially dismissed the topic from your thoughts—then you grieved the Spirit of God. He entreated you, as truly as though his solicitations had been audibly whispered in your ear; and as really as though you had heard his retreating steps, he departed from you. Again you felt his strivings; nor until your day of grace has closed, will his influences be withheld from your soul. He is at this moment urging you to accept the offer of life, to improve this present opportunity of making your peace with God. Only a persevering indifference to his wooings and his warnings, and a sinful determination the most unyielding and desperate, can render these influences powerless.

II. HINDERANCES TO YOUR ENTERING THE WAY WHICH LEADETH UNTO LIFE.

A satisfaction with your present state. There is nothing in your character and condition which, as you view them, awakens in you any anxious concern for the future; and your secret feeling is, that the divine Being regards you with something of the partiality with which you look upon yourself. You cannot for a moment believe that he is about to banish you from his sight on account of your odiousness, and punish you for ever on account of your sins. You attend his

sanctuary on the Sabbath, if at all, as a self-complacent worshipper, and not as a sinner needing pardon. Confessions of grief and penitence for sins committed against a holy God touch no responsive chord in your heart; and an exhibition of the purity of the divine law does not shake your confidence in your good estate, nor weaken your conviction that you are safe. Or this complacency may not be habitual and entire, and biased as your self-judgment is, an occasional doubt will flit across your mind, like the shadow of a cloud over the landscape. But when haunted with secret misgivings and forebodings, your apprehensions are lulled by a presumptuous reliance on the future for the supply of any existing deficiency in your preparation for heaven. You are therefore satisfied with your present situation, either as it is in itself, or in connection with your supposed ability to change it at pleasure. You are willing, on the whole, to rest where you are and risk the consequences. Appeals to you to lead a new life are consequently thrown away. You are incased in the security of a self-confidence and self-satisfaction, impervious as a warrior's coat of mail, and from it the arrows of divine truth rebound as from a panoply of steel.

An engrossing worldliness. Religion may be confessedly important, the one thing needful, but you allow yourself no leisure to attend to it. You are immersed in worldly cares, which leave you neither time, strength, nor sympathy for any spiritual pursuit. You have powers which were designed to be actively employed, and you feel the need of something which may satisfy the cravings of your spirit; but you do not task your faculties and engage your affections with their appropriate objects. With an energy suited to their nature and to the high purposes for which they were formed, you devote them to inferior acquisitions; and thus you waste on the trifles of earth those exalted endowments, those heavenly aspirations and hopes, which were given you as a candidate for the skies. You renounce your celestial birthright, you compromise and debase your immortality. Absorbed in worldly schemes, engrossed with objects which belong to the domain of death, you will neither seek nor find the path to life.

A false sensibility. The finest sensibilities of our nature are allied to genuine piety; but these natural sensibilities are often perverted by the prevalence of arbitrary and artificial standards of propriety. If true religion were deemed by the world a polite accomplishment, you might be conscious of a desire to possess it; but while its doctrines and duties are the jest of the gay throng, you carefully stand aloof from it. You fancy that your accession to the ranks of the people of God would be a descent from your present position. Be assured that there is ample room for your character to borrow from the religion of Christ dignity and grace and true loveliness. You may reserve your sense of shame for other acts than those which excite the ridicule of your thoughtless companions. There is nothing in the public profession of Christianity, and the faithful performance of its duties, to try the feelings of an ingenuous spirit. You dread the raillery of your present associates, and conceal from them any indications of seriousness, only because you have factitious and foolish ideas of what is becoming. It seems strange indeed, that you should thus sacrifice your soul to escape the jests of those whose opinions you do not respect. But you have been intimate, and are ambitious to stand well with them; and to lose caste among them, and become a subject for their merriment, is a step from which you shrink. Thus a false sensibility overcomes the convictions of your better judgment, and obstructs your entrance into life.

A dislike of the requirements of religion. The terms of salvation are displeasing to you. Could you "do some great thing," and purchase a title to heaven by signal and meritorious service, you might have long since attempted it. But when you are met at the outset with conditions which abase your pride to the dust, you turn away in contempt. You may have inwardly thanked God that you are not as other men; and you must now exclaim, with a downcast look and a burdened heart, "God be merciful to me a sinner." You must renounce all self-righteousness, and receive salvation as a free, sovereign, and gracious gift, bestowed upon an

ungrateful offender. From a demand like this your proud spirit revolts; and like the Syrian leper, you seek cleansing, though vainly, in other streams than the waters of Israel. So true is it that the wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God. You dislike the duties of religion, as well as the terms on which it must be received. It requires you to relinquish indulgences from which you derive your principal enjoyment; and as you have no practical knowledge of the substitute which it proposes, it seems to involve the sacrifice of your earthly happiness. You cannot consent to forsake your present walks of amusement and gayety; your affections are placed on earthly objects; you feel an aversion to serious reflection, and a positive disrelish for spiritual services; and this constitutes a decisive impediment to your heavenward course.

Confirmed habits of sin. Habit is that disposition of mind which is acquired by a frequent repetition of the same deed. The constant recurrence of the same acts facilitates their performance; and the mind moves in an accustomed track without effort, and with the regularity of a fixed law. It was this which led the prophet to suggest, by so strong a comparison, the difficulty of doing good when once accustomed to do evil. Habitual guilt had dyed the soul with stains as indelible as the sable hue of the Ethiopian's skin, or the leopard's spots. Its effect upon yourself is mournfully attested by your own recollections, running back to the season of childhood and youth. The time was, and you remember it, when your heart was soft and sensitive; but it is hardened now. The time was, when your conscience was tender; but it is seared and callous now. Truths which once moved you, even to tears, do not affect you now; to the most earnest entreaties, and the most solemn admonitions, you now listen without emotion. The law of progress has been traced upon your course of disobedience in fearful characters. It is not more legible in the obduracy of your heart than in your accelerated career of open iniquity. Neglect of God, and violations of his law, which would once have startled you, occasion you no uneasiness now. And when to the evil ten-

dencies of a corrupt nature is thus superadded the ease of habitual transgression, there cannot be a doubt that confirmed habits of sin constitute the most formidable barrier to your entrance into life.

These are some of the hinderances to your salvation; they render the helps which have been kindly proffered to you, unavailing, and must be boldly surmounted. No half-formed resolution will ever save you; you cannot extricate yourself without an energetic, agonizing effort. You are entrapped in the snares of the Adversary, like the king of the forest caught in the hunter's toils; you are entangled in the meshes of sin, and by one collected and vigorous spring, God helping you, must clear yourself from them, or sink into hopeless captivity. No dreamy imagination, no vague anticipation, no languid desire will ever deliver you. An intention which looks to the future, is only an acknowledgment of present indecision—a moral inability now to sunder cords which are becoming every day more inflexible. Seeking the power of the Holy Spirit, you must rouse to the exigency at once, and with all your might; and this you will never do with a slight sense of your danger and guilt, with partial ideas of the claims of your Maker and your own obligations, and with superficial notions of the necessity of a change of heart. You must feel that in your present condition you are lost; that your prospects are those of irretrievable ruin; that there is but a single way of escape, and that the present is your only opportunity. Without a final and fixed determination, made in divine strength, all is in vain. This will give tone and efficiency to your character, and the want of such decision will stamp it with permanent irresolution. No weakness can be greater than the failure to act out the clear convictions of your judgment, the enlightened dictates of your conscience, and the best impulses of your heart. With this state of moral inertness will ever linger the consciousness of crippled impotency. Your soul will not bound with freedom, like the lame man that had received strength, “walking, and leaping, and praising God.” And the decisive step, which with the

blessing of heaven can alone save you, is becoming every hour more and more difficult for you. It is hard to-day ; it will be harder to-morrow ; it will soon be impossible ! Your progress towards ruin, on the other hand, is becoming every hour more and more easy for you. It is less difficult to-day than it was yesterday ; it will be easier to-morrow ; you will proceed with accelerated pace ; you will ere long reach the fatal termination, and your feet stumble on the dark mountains. Mournful at the last will be thy lost spirit's lament, "How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof ; therefore I must die without wisdom, for in the greatness of my folly have I gone astray !"

Do your feelings shrink from such an end ? Remember, then, that the way of life is still open to your choice, and now invites your steps to a happier destiny. The difficulties to be overcome will not deter you if you are in earnest, and a knowledge of them may save you from presumption and disappointment. You will see the necessity of not merely seeking, but striving to enter, and in the strength of the Highest you will press through all obstacles. *You will enter at once upon the performance of every known duty,* with a penitent, cordial trust in the grace of God for the forgiveness of what is wrong and the supply of what is wanting, and a hope of final acceptance through the merits of the divine Redeemer. If you are not ready thus to comply with your plain obligations, your prospects are discouraging and dark. If you are unwilling to discharge an admitted duty, because it is humiliating and trying, or for the want of satisfactory feeling, or lest if you begin you may not persevere—if for any cause you are thus waiting for certain emotions and exercises, which you mentally exact of your Maker as the condition of your obedience and service, your position is truly alarming. I would not needlessly distress you ; but in view of such reluctance and resistance, I feel that you have reason to be deeply concerned for yourself. The passing hour may be the crisis of your eternal destiny ; and you cannot too soon despair

of saving yourself, and desist from every work of self-righteousness.

If, through the blessing of God on the truths now before you, you are at length convinced that your situation is critical, if your false security is gone, if you are conscious of a desire to enter the way of life, are anxious to know what you must do to be saved, I would fain direct you. And I am to offer no counsel which can fail, if heeded, of guiding you to heaven. The familiar directions which follow will bear this test, and I commend them to your most serious consideration.

III. DIRECTIONS FOR YOUR SECURING SALVATION.

Repent of your sins. Look back upon your life, full of folly and transgression. Reflect that God is a holy Being, and that sin, as a violation of his perfect law, is the object of his infinite abhorrence. You are convinced of the utter wrongfulness of your course, which has been only evil in his sight. Not solely, nor principally, because you have incurred a just punishment, but because you have offended and grieved your heavenly Father, you should lament your life of guilt. The recollection of sinful indulgences must be bitter to your soul. You must loathe and abhor the bondage in which you have been held, and exclaim with the self-condemned publican, "God be merciful to *me*, a sinner!" Form the steadfast purpose, with divine assistance, to forsake sin and practise holiness; cease to do evil, and learn to do well.

Believe in Christ. Convinced that you are a great sinner, be persuaded that Christ is a great Saviour. Look upon the meek and blessed Immanuel, in the divinity of his compassions and the dignity of his sufferings; behold the travail of his soul for you, and admit that he is entitled to your confidence, love, and gratitude. Knowing that you are guilty, and unable to atone for your sins; feeling that you are lost and unable to save yourself, humbly ask for pardon, and gladly accept salvation as the free gift of God. Sensible that you can make yourself no better, renounce all self-

dependence, go to him in all your unworthiness, and ascribe to him alone the glory of your conversion. Forsake every other refuge, to hide yourself in the pierced bosom of the Redeemer. Abandon every other foundation, to build on the Rock of ages. Embrace the Lord Jesus Christ as your only hope and your only confidence, all your salvation and all your desire.

Submit to the divine government. You have failed to recognize the righteous authority of a sovereign God. You have acted with reference to your own convenience and pleasure, and sought the indulgence of your personal wishes, irrespective of his commands. A regard for his glory has never been an element of your character, nor a motive in your conduct. You have murmured at his dealings and rebelled against his laws, and you must now confess your crime, acknowledge his claims, and surrender yourself to his disposal. Feel that you have forfeited his favor and deserve his wrath, and let your submission be unqualified; leave yourself unreservedly in his hands. Cordially commit your interests, for time and eternity, to his keeping, and cheerfully conform to the allotments of his all-wise providence, the language of your heart being ever, "Not my will, but thine, be done." Aim unceasingly to do what is right in his sight, adopting his law as the rule of your life, honoring him as your absolute Sovereign, confiding in his character, and rejoicing in his government.

Choose the service of God. You have wasted your immortal powers in the service of the god of this world; and not having achieved the high end of a rational existence, you have the dreary retrospect of a misspent life. Reflect that you were created for nobler purposes, and devote yourself to better pursuits. Resolve that, whatever others do, you will serve the Lord. Heartily renounce the world as your portion, and choose the service of Christ as the employment and delight of your days. Identify yourself with the interests of his kingdom, and gladly take the lowest place among his disciples. Let your only inquiry be, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" In humble dependence on divine

grace and guidance, go forward in the faithful performance of every duty which belongs to the Christian life, and the careful cultivation of every grace which adorns the Christian character.

You perceive, dear friend, what these directions involve. Comply with them, I pray you. Repent, believe, submit, choose, with all your heart, and without delay. I am at liberty to urge nothing less; and nothing less, be assured, will meet your present exigency. Cease from the attempt to make a saviour of your own exercises and feelings, and confide yourself to Him who hath died for you, relying on his atonement for pardon, on his righteousness for justification, and on the promised aid of his Spirit for strength in the discharge of duty. Let this be the hour of your solemn

SELF-CONSECRATION.

“Almighty God, I come to thee as a sinner. My conscience tells me that thou art righteous, and that I am guilty. I have destroyed myself, and without thy mercy I am for ever undone. But with thee is forgiveness; may it be extended to the chief of sinners. I have no claim upon thee; my condemnation is just; I plead only the merits of thy Son; for his sake pity and pardon me. Let thy Holy Spirit enlighten my understanding, sanctify my heart, and control my life. I heed not the world; thou, O Christ, art all I want. Make me a monument of thy victorious love—a sinner saved by grace. Employ me as a blest instrument of thy glory. To thy service I freely devote my faculties, powers, and possessions. I cleave to thee as my chief good, and with help from on high will love thee supremely, and obey thee faithfully. Strengthen me to do thy will. Enable me to keep this sacred engagement to the end. Let me be thine alone, now and ever; and thine shall be all the praise. Amen.”

M I C K H E A L Y ,

THE BIBLE-READER.

MICK HEALY was a native of the county of Meath, Ireland. His parents were not rich, but they were respectable. His father held a small farm, to which, at his decease, Mick succeeded. He cultivated the few acres of which the farm consisted, regularly paid his rent, and by great industry and economy was able to provide for himself and his family. He had the good-will and respect of his neighbors, and lived in tolerable comfort. He was a strict Roman-catholic, went regularly to his place of worship, and performed his devotions with becoming respect. He went to confession, and punctually paid his dues. He had the approbation of his priest, and was looked upon by every one as a faithful son of the church.

Thus things went on during fifty years of Mick's life, when one day being detained in the house by rain, he employed himself for a time in rummaging an old trunk which had belonged to his father. In turning over some old papers which the trunk contained, he lighted on the fragment of a book; he took it out and read a few pages, and then carefully consigned it to the trunk again. The day cleared up, and he went out to his work. On each succeeding wet day, and at every leisure hour that he had, he visited the trunk, took out the fragment, and resumed his reading. His mind was arrested both by the nature and novelty of what he read. He was alarmed and then tranquillized; he was depressed and then elevated. He could not account for the emotions which he felt. The more he read the fragment, the more he wished to read it; he became deeply interested in the subject of it. He read it now not only on wet days, and at leisure hours on other days, but devoted his Sundays after

mass to the same pursuit ; and that he might enjoy the pleasure with the least interruption, he was in the habit of going out every Sunday to the back of the hedge, and poring over its pages for hours together. During all this time he had not the slightest notion what the book was, with which he was so much delighted. It was, in truth, only the fragment of a book, and had neither title-page nor inscription.

When he was engaged, one sunny day, in this his favorite recreation, the Roman-catholic schoolmaster of the parish happened to pass by. As Mick was an acquaintance of his, he came over to speak to him. He gave him the usual salutation ; and as he cast his more experienced eye on the pages which Mick was reading, he exclaimed, " Ah, Mick, you are reading the Bible—you are a swaddler, and I will tell the priest." " The Bible, indeed !" said Mick ; " it is only an old book of my father's that I am reading." " Oh, I know well that it is the Bible," said the schoolmaster, " and if you don't stop reading it, I will tell the priest." " I don't care to whom you tell it," said Mick ; " it was my father's book, and I will read it in spite of any one as long as I like." The schoolmaster was horrified, and that he might not appear to countenance such conduct, he lost no time in informing the priest how he had found Mick Healy employed.

The priest was speedily at Mick's house. " What is this I hear of you ?" said he ; " I am sorry to hear it of your father's son." " What is the bad thing you have heard of me ?" replied Mick. " Why, the schoolmaster tells me you are become a Bible-reader, and sure you will not bring disgrace upon your family, and bring a scandal on the parish ?" " Oh, never mind him," said Mick ; " it is only an old book of my father's, which I found in the trunk, that I be reading." " How long have you been reading it ?" said the priest. " Only about a year," said Mick. " Show it to

me," said the priest, alarmed at the length of time the mischief had been working. Mick proceeded to the trunk, and producing the fragment, handed it to him. "Sure enough," said the priest, as he looked through the pages, "it is the Bible, and, Mick, you must not read it any more; it is not fit for you. If you have not great learning, like the clergy, you may take a wrong meaning out of it, and it might make a heretic of you."

Mick, taking the book out of the priest's hands, said, "Oh, it wont do me any harm; it does my heart good to read it; I never met any book like it: if it does not make me better, I am sure it wont make me a worse man." The priest, suspecting perhaps that if he did not get the book out of Mick's hands, he might get no money out of Mick's pocket, said, in a mild tone, "Oh, Mick, you must not keep it at all; it is not safe for you to have it; give it to me, and as it was your father's, I will keep it, and take care of it for you." "Is it give you my father's book?" said Mick; "indeed, please your reverence, I will do no such thing; I can keep it and take care of it myself." The priest's tone was now changed; all his efforts to get it from him by coaxing were in vain. Mick would not part with his inheritance. The priest stormed; Mick was calm, which, no doubt, was very provoking. He held it in his hand, and, looking at it as if his bowels yearned upon it, he said, "And is this the Bible? But sure it wants a piece here," turning to the first page of his fragment, which was in the middle of Exodus; "and sure it wants a piece there," turning to the last page, which was part of the prophet Daniel. "Where could I get the pieces? Will you give them to me, or tell where I can find them?" This did not quiet the priest much; this cool confidence rather inflamed him. In an angry tone he refused to comply. Mick, in all sincerity, anxious only for the book, and without meaning any offence,

calmly urged his request. This made matters worse ; it was adding fuel to the fire ; it flamed the more ; yet what could be done ? longer delay might end in worse defeat. To avoid this, and to prepare for another mode of attack, the priest left the house, but in the worst possible humor, while Mick very composedly remained, and quietly sat down to read.

It was soon noised abroad that Mick Healy read the Bible, that he would not give it up for the priest, and that he was become a Protestant. The people shrunk from him as if he had the plague ; they shunned his company with the greatest aversion, and altogether deserted his house. They were warned to keep aloof from him, partly for their own sake, that they might not be infected, and partly for his sake, that he might be driven to give up the Bible. But neither cunning nor coldness, neither frown nor favor, would induce Mick to give up the book ; the more pitiless was the pelting of the storm, the closer he clasped the comfort to his breast. The coldness and aversion with which he was at first regarded were now succeeded by threats and abuse ; but as he had incurred man's anger for God's word, he seemed to obtain God's favor by it. He was now learning, like David, to comfort himself "in the Lord his God." The methods which were pursued against him seemed to produce an opposite effect to what was expected. The conduct of priest and people, together with the knowledge of Scripture which he was daily acquiring, gradually cooled his passion for the services of the chapel ; his visits to it became less and less frequent, and at length they altogether ceased.

He now heard, by some means or other, that a Protestant clergyman about twelve miles distant had Bibles, and would be likely to give him one, if he went to him for it. Accordingly he went there, and called on him. "Sir," said he, "I have a bit of the Bible, but I would like very much to have it all." He then took the fragment from his bosom,

and showed it to him. The clergyman entered into a conversation with him, and when he perceived that he had made good use of the part of the Bible which he possessed, and was really anxious to have the whole, the worthy man gave him a good octavo Bible, which Mick kept and read to the day of his death. Mick returned home with his treasure on the same day, having walked twenty-four miles; but this was as nothing to him for the love he had to the Bible. He now became a thorough and confirmed Bible-reader. He struck out boldly into the wide extent of Scripture; he felt himself in a new world, and new regions and new prospects opened upon his view. He was astonished at Abraham, and delighted with Joseph; but the bondage in Egypt came home to his heart. When he came to the New Testament, he was lost in amazement. He followed the "Man of sorrows" through his wondrous history, from the manger to the cross. Gethsemane and the judgment hall, the crucifixion and the burial, each in its turn filled him with awe. He felt that he had been poor before, but that now he was rich; he felt his heart dilating with love to all men. He would fain communicate what he knew of Jesus to every one he met. He could not, however, get his wife and children to enter into his feelings; and his neighbors and friends would not come within his reach.

At length, in 1829, he joined the congregation of Kilsallaghan church, about four miles distant from his house, of which the Rev. J. Gregg was then minister, and continued a regular worshipper in all weathers.

"A class for catechetical instruction," says Mr. Gregg, "assembled every Sunday in Kilsallaghan church, before divine service commenced. It lasted generally from eleven to twelve o'clock. At this Mick Healy regularly attended, and took his seat in the midst of the class. Between him and the children, the contrast in years, in figure, in dress,

and in manners, was of course strikingly marked; but in simplicity and guilelessness, the difference, I may say, was none. Often did he sit on the same seat with a lively boy, whose career has since been honorably marked both in school and college, and who is now a fellow of our distinguished university.

“Some of my most pleasing recollections of that little country church, its peaceful Sabbaths, and its quiet people, are connected with Mick Healy. Mick’s controversial powers were peculiarly his own. He had strengthened and sharpened them in the best of all schools—the school of experience. In the class, he always held the Bible in his hands, which he never called by any other name than ‘the Book.’ Mick was the familiar name by which he was known, and by which, in church and everywhere else, he was always called.

“Imagine to yourselves, then, in a little country church, an athletic-looking peasant, in a large freize coat, with head erect, sitting in the midst of a group of children, a thick, stout Bible open in his hands, while some twenty or thirty of the friends of the children, sitting or standing in the pews around, were listening, with open ears, and eyes, and mouths, to what was going on.”

Questions and answers to the following effect might frequently be heard from Sunday to Sunday :

“Well, Mick, why don’t you now pray to the Virgin Mary?” “Because it is not in the Book.” “To whom only should you pray, Mick?” “To God only.” “Why don’t you now confess your sins to Peter and Paul, Mick?” “Because it is not in the Book.” “Mick, why don’t you call the Virgin Mary ‘refuge of sinners, your life, your hope, your advocate, and the gate of heaven,’ as Roman-catholics do?” “Because it is not in the Book.” “Who is the refuge of sinners, your life, your hope, and your advocate, Mick?”

“The Lord Jesus.” “How do you know, Mick?” “Because it is in the Book.”

“Well, Mick, why do you, who have no learning, read the Bible?” “Because the Book tells me to do so.” “But may you not take a wrong meaning out of it?” “I may; but, by the blessing of God, I hope I will take a right meaning out of it.” “But can you understand it all, Mick?” “No; but with the Lord’s help, I can understand enough.” “Why do you believe, Mick, that God’s anger is turned away from you, and that you are in his favor, if you have faith in Jesus Christ, without any merits or sufferings of your own?” “Because the Book tells me so.” “Mick, why do you believe that every man who trusts in the Lord is blessed?” “Because it is in the Book.” “Why do you believe the Bible to be sufficient to make you wise unto salvation, without tradition; that the blood of Jesus Christ is sufficient to cleanse you, without penance or purgatory; that Jesus Christ is both able and willing to save you, without saints and angels?” “Oh, sure it is all in the Book.” “Why do you believe that any poor sinner, at any time, may come to Jesus, and get pardon for all his sins, and peace with God, without help from saints or angels, or aid or leave from the church?” “Oh, because it is all down in the Book.” “Must every thing in religion be proved by the Bible, Mick?” “Yes; whatever is not so, is only moonshine.”

During many following years of reproach and persecution, Mick exhibited the same Christian spirit, and maintained the same Christian constancy to the very last. His honesty was unimpeachable, and with the exception of one “hour of temptation,” he uniformly bore all the petty annoyances to which he was perpetually subjected on account of his religion, with the utmost meekness. Shortly before his death, his son, probably urged by others, asked whether he would not have a priest sent for, to have mass said, the

litany of the Virgin, etc., or whether he would not wish to have a mass said, when he was dead, to get his soul out of purgatory. "Priests, Mickey," said the dying man, gathering up all his strength, "trash; mass, trash; litany of the saints, trash; purgatory, trash; praying for the dead, trash; help of the Virgin, trash." Then he spoke of Christ and the Spirit. He said, "Christ was all and every thing the sinner could want." "I am," said he, "a sinner, a great sinner, and Christ is all and every thing to me." "Roman-catholics will be trying," said he, "to get to heaven their way, but they wont be able; there will be a bush in the gap." This phrase is taken from the language of shepherds, alluding to the difficulty of sheep getting into a field, where the only entrance to it is stopped up by a thorny bush; it is commonly used in Irish to convey the idea of a difficulty that cannot be got over.

"Are you happy, father?" said his son. "Mickey, jewel," said the father, "no king ever went to his throne so happy as I now am going to my Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."

That Mick Healy had his faults and his failings, like other men, I have no doubt; but as they did not come under my notice, I cannot mention them. His noble struggle for truth I deemed deserving of honor, and his consistency of conduct worthy of imitation. His short and simple history affords convincing proof of the value of the Scriptures, and a pleasing testimony to the grace of God. He had his sins and his sorrows—they are all washed away in the blood of the Lamb; he had his foes and his fears, and his fightings; but he is now "more than conqueror through Him that loved him."

FROM "RECOLLECTIONS," BY REV. J. GREGG, DUBLIN.

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A GLIMPSE

OF

THE REDEEMED IN GLORY.

BY THE REV. JAMES HAMILTON,
NATIONAL SCOTCH CHURCH, LONDON.

FOUNDED ON REVELATION, CHAPTER SEVENTH.

THERE can be no question that this description unveils a state of glory. It is a glimpse of HEAVEN—one of the fullest and most satisfactory which the Bible gives. Perhaps it may do us good to dwell on it. It may give us more lifelike and more homelike thoughts regarding those who have gone to it; and it may make us more diligent in insuring that we ourselves shall go thither. All that need be said may be summed up in answer to these two questions: Who are there? And what are they doing there?

We speak not now of the original inhabitants, but of the Redeemed from among men; and we ask, WHO ARE THERE?

A *mighty* multitude. “A great multitude, which no man could number.” Not a stinted few—not a scanty and reluctant remnant, but a mighty host; like God’s own perfections, an out-flowing and exuberant throng—like Immanuel’s merits which brought them there, something very vast and merging into infinity; so great a multitude, that when those who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression are added to the many saved in the thousand years of reigning righteousness, it may prove, in the long-run of our poor earth’s history, that Satan’s captives are outnumbered by the Saviour’s trophies.

A *miscellaneous* multitude. “Of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues.” For many ages, one nation supplied most of the inhabitants. Most of those who passed the pearly gates, had spoken on earth the Hebrew tongue. But Jesus broke down the partition wall; and since his gospel went into all the world, all the world has contributed its citizens to the new Jerusalem. The Latin tongue has

sent its Cornelius and its Clement ; the Greek tongue has sent its Apollos and its Stephen, its Lydia and its Phebe. The Philippian gaoler is there ; and there is the Ethiopian treasurer. All kindreds and people are there—men of all aptitudes and all instincts—men of all grades and conditions ; the herdman of Tekoah, and the fisherman of Galilee ; the head that once wore Israel's crown, and the genius which managed all the realm of Babylon. And there, suffused with sanctity and softened into perfect subjection, we may recognize the temperament or the talent which gave each on earth his identity and his peculiar interest. David has not laid aside his harp, and there is still a field for Isaac to meditate. Solomon may have still the eagle-eye which searches Nature's nooks, and scans the infinitude of things ; and Moses may retain that meek aspect to which no future was anxious, and no spot suspicious, for every place and every future was filled by a Covenant-God. Peter's step may still spring elastic and eager on the sapphire floor ; while Paul triumphs in some lofty theme, and John's love-curtained eye creates for itself a brighter heaven. Blended and overborne by the prevailing likeness to the elder Brother, each may retain his mental attributes and moral features ; and in their magnitude, and the tinting of their rays, the stars of glory may differ from one another.

A multitude *who once were mourners*. “ These are they which came out of great tribulation.” To live in a world like this was itself a tribulation—a world of distance from God—a world of faith without sight—a world of wicked men ; but they have come out of that tribulation. To have had to do with sin was a terrible tribulation ; from the time that they were first convinced of it, and abhorred themselves in dust and ashes, all along through the great life-battle, contending with manifold temptations—contending with the atheism and unbelief within—contending with their own carnality and sloth, their pride and worldly-mindedness, their unruly passions and sinful tempers : but they have come out of that tribulation also—they are done with conviction, and the broken spirit, and the daily struggle, and the entire tribulation of sin. And most of them had sorrows of another sort—the tribulation of personal trials. One of them had a brave family and a splendid fortune ; but the same black day saw that fortune fly away, and the grave close over

seven sons and three daughters. Another was a king ; and his heir-apparent was his pride and joy—a youth whose beauty was a proverb through all the realm—so noble and yet so winsome that his glance was fascination, and the people followed his chariot with delirious plaudits : but while the doating father eyed with swelling bosom his gallant successor, the selfish youth clutched at his father's crown ; and the old monarch fled with a bursting heart, to return with a broken one—for his misguided son was slain. One of them filled a place of power in a heathen land, and fidelity to his God brought him into constant jeopardy ; till, reft of title, and torn from his mansion, he was flung, food for lions, into their howling den. Another was an evangelist, who delighted to go from city to city proclaiming that Saviour whom he dearly loved ; till the grasp of tyranny bore him away to an ocean-rock, and left him to chant the name of Jesus to wailing winds and booming waves. And many others were “ destitute, afflicted, tormented ;” but from all tribulation they have now come out, and are a safe and happy multitude before the throne.

And they are a multitude *who shall form an eternal monument of the Redeemer's grace and power*—a multitude who “ have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” There was a time when their robes were not white. Of many the character was stained by sensuality, and earthliness, and sin ; and though some had little more than the dingy dye of the natural depravity, others were filthy with many a crime, and much positive pollution. But, in his marvellous grace, God had opened a fountain for human guilt, and filled it with the precious blood of his own dear Son ; and in that sin-purging fountain these ransomed ones had washed their robes. It was there that Abel, so amiable and innocent, felt it needful to seek a cleansing, and trusted to a more excellent sacrifice than that which smoked on his own altar. It was there that Enoch found the white robe in which he walked with God. It was thither that Manasseh carried his raiment, red with the blood of Jerusalem, and found it suddenly white as snow. And it was there that the dying thief, blackened with many an atrocity, washed away his stains, and was that same hour fit for Paradise. White is the uniform of glory the spotless righteousness of Immanuel. This is the

only garb which a child of Adam can wear before the throne of God. And though the apparel of some may be more curiously wrought and exquisitely embroidered than that of others—though the hand of the beautifying Spirit may have made it “raiment of needlework”—the hue and lustre of each is the same. Every spirit in glory wears the vesture radiant with redeeming righteousness—the snowy robe which speaks of the fountain opened, and which will commemorate through eternity THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB.

Such are the human inhabitants of heaven. But WHAT IS IT THAT THEY DO THERE? What is their employment and their blessedness?

They celebrate a victory. They have “palms in their hands.” They are what the second and third chapters describe as “overcomers.” They have fought a good fight, and won the battle. Or, rather, they celebrate the victory which the Captain of their salvation has won for them. As the fifth chapter explains these palms: “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; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth.” It was once very like as if they would be worsted. The *world* opposed them. As Amelek withstood Israel as soon as he knew that Israel wished to go to Canaan, so the world opposed the believer as soon as he set his face towards Zion. First the world laughed; and then it frowned. First friends jeered and jested, and tried to rally him out of his religion; and then they looked severe. Ungodly relatives censured his foolish preciseness and fantastic scruples; and ungodly comrades sought to entrap him into ridiculous or wrong positions; and he felt so weak and friendless, that he was often ready to lose heart and give up this battle. And the *flesh* opposed him. It fawned on him, and flattered him, and said, “Master, spare thyself.” It coaxed him to be absent from the sanctuary, and to slur over secret devotion, and to make slight work of God’s service. And again he was ready to give up. He felt that he had acted a part so ignoble and imbecile, that it would be more consistent to abandon his Christian profession altogether, and become once more an easy-minded worldling. And the *devil* opposed him. The great adversary filled his mind with fearful doubts and im-

pious suggestions. Fiery darts were constantly alighting in his bosom ; and in the face of his most sober convictions, he would find himself questioning the most essential truths--the atonement's sufficiency, or the gospel's sincerity, or even the existence and perfections of God. Or he would find his heart dying away from the objects which once were dearest ; rather shunning than courting Christian fellowship ; sitting with averted eye, or delinquent heedlessness, under the preaching which once engrossed him ; tossing aside the books with which he used to be so enchained and edified ; seeing no force nor fulness in those texts which used to feed his soul as with marrow and fatness ; and deliberately eyeing that same Saviour whom his soul once loved, but perceiving in him no beauty that he should desire him. And again he was ready to halt. "Am I not a hypocrite?" he asked himself ; "and would it not be more honest to quit the name, seeing I have lost the thing?" But while he was thus trembling on the very verge of apostasy, an unseen power came to his rescue. The truths of God, or the terrors of judgment, or the attractions of the Saviour, told on him afresh ; and, he hardly knows how, but he was constrained once more to turn his face to the foe. The battle began anew ; and though he cannot boast of his exploits, he was fighting when he fell. The sword of the Spirit was then in his hand—a palm is in it *now*. And he wonders. How strange that such a dubious fight should end in such a glorious victory ! But here is the explanation : "*Thou art worthy!*" It was thou, O Captain of salvation, who didst shield my head in the day of battle. It was thou who didst uphold my slipping feet, and revive my fainting spirit. It was thou who didst repel those temptations which I hardly resisted, and didst give me victories where I put forth no valor. It was thou who didst slay the foe that slew me, and by conquering death for me, hast secured that thy servant shall be conquered no more. Thanks be to God, who gave me the victory, through my Lord Jesus Christ. Thanks for this vicarious conquest ; and thanks for this bloodless, but blood-bought palm.

They serve God. "They cry with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." "They are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple." Adoration at the

throne, activity in the temple—the worship of the heart, the worship of the voice, the worship of the hands—the whole being consecrated and devoted to God; these are the service of the upper sanctuary. *Here*, the flesh is often wearied with an hour of worship; *there*, “they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.” Here, a week will often see us weary in well-doing; there, they are drawn on by its own deliciousness to larger and larger fulfilments of Jehovah’s will. Here, we must lure ourselves to work by the prospect of rest hereafter; there, the toil is luxury, and the labor recreation—and jubilees of praise and holidays of higher service will not be wanting to diversify the long and industrious Sabbath of the skies. And it matters not though sometimes the celestial citizens are represented as always singing, and sometimes as always flying—sometimes as always working, and sometimes as always resting—for there the work is rest, and every movement song; and the “many mansions” make one temple, and the whole being of its worshippers one tune, one mighty anthem, long as eternity, and large as its burden, the praise of the great Three-One—the self-renewing and ever-sounding hymn, in which the flight of every seraph, and the harp of every saint, and the smile of every raptured spirit, is a several note, and repeats ever over again, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come!”

They see God. “He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.” Or, as we have it in chap. 22:4, “They see his face.” Where the natural enmity is destroyed, and the soul is brought really to love God and delight in him, there will be times in its history when it will desire more fruition of the great I AM than it has ever experienced yet. And when it is thus “breaking, for the longing which it hath” to look upon infinite excellence, it can sympathize with the exclamation of Augustine, “Lord, hast thou said, ‘There shall no man see me, and live?’ Then, let me die, that I may see thee.” Or rather, it can sympathize with the exultation of the patriarch, when he espied afar off his living Redeemer, and forgetful of his miserable plight, started from the dust-heap, and triumphantly exclaimed, “In my flesh shall I see God!” And this is heaven. To be brought so near the perfection of beauty, that every

competing perfection will look paltry—so near the Fountain of life, that we shall know no blessedness in which God does not form the largest element—so near the Light of life and the Source of love, that we can never more drag our hearts away: this is to dwell in God and have God dwelling in us; and what more is needful to make it heaven?

They follow the Lamb. “The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.” Even in heaven something of the mediatorial economy survives. Even where they see God, they follow the Lamb, and a close and conspicuous relation continues to subsist between the Redeemer and his ransomed. He remains the leader of his blood-bought company; and while he prescribes their occupation, he is the immediate source of their blessedness. They have faculties capable of vast expansion, an avidity for excellence which is now insatiable, and a susceptibility of sacred enjoyment which nothing can content short of all the fulness of God. And the spiritual food—the soul-expanding and heart-gladdening truth—the Saviour supplies. The Lamb feeds them. And in his care for them, he guides them to one well-spring of wonder and one river of pleasure after another. He leads them to living fountains of waters. The Godhead is a boundless sea, on which the thin island of creation floats; and though the region be ever so dry and arid—a burning Baca—and though the object be ever so bleak and bald—a grim Horeb, a flinty rock—it needs only the touch of the prophet’s rod, and forthwith a fountain springs exhaustless as that divine perfection whence it flows. In that better country the Horeb never stanches, and the Baca never dries. The fountains play perpetually, and the waters ever live. And the Lamb is familiar with them all. To the woody brink of one he leads his white-robed followers; and in its fringing glories and populous profound, they read the riches of creative power and skill. To the melodious verge of another he conducts them; and in the fountain of light which gushes high, and flings its rainbows wide—in the balm scattered by its wafted dews, and the songs with which the branches wave—they hear it endlessly repeated, “God is love.” And to another still, he guides them; and, simple as the margin looks, and limpid as the waters are, it dilates and deepens as they gaze—deepens till

it mocks the longest line, widens till Gabriel's eye can see no shore; and in its fathomless abyss, and ever-retreating bound, they recognize the divine unsearchableness. In Paradise every fountain lives, and each living fountain is a lesson full of God.

And—just to complete the glance—*there are some things which there they never do.* They do not want, they do not weary, and they do not weep. “They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

And now, if any of your friends have slept in Jesus, is it not blissful to know how they are engaged? You and they once journeyed together; but a sudden door opened, and your father, or brother, or child was snatched from your side; and ere you could follow, or even glance in, the door closed again. But the Lord has opened a crevice in the enclosing wall, and bids you look and see. See where they are—see what they are doing now. *You* are in great tribulation—it is even your tribulation to be deprived of *them*; but they have come out of all tribulation. You often find it hard to reach the throne of grace—hard to prevail with yourself to pray; they never quit the throne of God, but serve him day and night in his temple. It is only by faith that you can walk with Jesus; they see God, and follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. You suffer much from sickness, and languor, and bodily discomfort—our summers are too sultry, and our frosts too keen—and you lose much time through infirmities of the flesh: *they* hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither does the sun light on them, nor any heat. Your heart is often like to break; between the unkindness of some and the sufferings of others, you have tears to drink in great measure: God himself has wiped away all tears from *their* eyes. Your best frames and most blessed services are very brief. There is only one Sabbath in your week, and that is soon gone. *Their* palm never withers; their hallelujahs never cease; their congregation never breaks up; their Sabbath knows no end. “Wherefore, comfort one another with these words.”

THE ONLY SON.

Soon after the Rev. Pliny Fisk and Rev. Levi Parsons left their mountain homes in Western Massachusetts, near the close of 1819, as the first American missionaries to Palestine, their young friend JONAS KING, from the same neighborhood, was elected professor in Amherst college, and proceeded to Paris to pursue the study of Arabic with the celebrated De Sacy. He there became familiar with an American gentleman, then at the head of one of the first commercial houses in Paris, to whose care his correspondence was addressed.

In February, 1822, the lamented Parsons died, and Rev. Mr. Fisk without delay addressed a letter to Mr. King, requesting that he would meet him at Malta, and in the place of Rev. Mr. Parsons, accompany him as a missionary to Palestine; and fearing delay by waiting the action of the American Board of Missions, he in the same enclosure requested Mr. King's mercantile friend not only to second his invitation, but if possible to raise the sum of \$1,500, requisite for his support for three years.

Mr. King, receiving the letter in the merchant's counting-room, retired to his private office to read it. Oppressed with the weight of the proposition it contained, he spent an hour in prayer for divine direction; and hoping to gain further light as to the path of duty, sought the merchant's advice. He returned to the counting-room, and asked with deep solicitude, "What shall I do?" Said his friend, "Go." "But," said he, "what will become of my aged and infirm parents in America?" "I will be a son to them in your stead," replied his friend. "Then," said Mr. King, "I go up to Jerusalem, 'not knowing the things that shall befall me there.'"

"Now," said the merchant, "sit down at this desk, and write to my friends Thomas Waddington of St. Remy, France, Louis Mertens of Brussels, Claude Cromlin of Amsterdam, and John Venning of St. Petersburg: state to them the circumstances, and that you are willing to go; tell them I will give one-fifth of the \$1,500, and leave it to their decision whether they will join me in filling up the amount." By the return of the mails, it appeared that

God had put it into the hearts of these gentlemen cheerfully to respond to the appeal by enclosing each \$300, making the sum required; and Mr. King lost no time in preparing for his departure.

A few months previous to this, Mr. King had established the monthly concert of prayer in his own hired upper chamber in Paris, which had been attended with increasing interest; a large concourse assembled in the church of the Oratoire to listen to his farewell address and join in commending him to the God of all grace; he was cheered in a similar manner, on his way, by Christian assemblies at Lyons, Nismes, Montpelier, and Marseilles, where he embarked for Malta, whence he proceeded with Mr. Fisk to Jerusalem; and he is now the well-known, persecuted, but laborious and successful missionary at Athens.

His friend the merchant, from time to time, wrote to the solitary parents, enclosing some tokens of regard "from their affectionate son;" the next year he returned to America; and early in the spring of 1824 he was at Northampton, about twenty-five miles from the parents, meditating a visit to their humble abode. He applied to the landlord, who furnished him a wagon with *his little son* for a driver; and freighted with a bag of groceries which extended the whole length of the wagon, they set off early in the morning; and after encountering snow-drifts and other obstacles by the way, arrived at the cottage about two in the afternoon.

Leaving the lad with the wagon in the street, the gentleman knocked, saying as he entered, "It is a chill, uncomfortable day, friends; would you be so kind as to allow a stranger to warm himself a little by your fire?" He was welcomed and seated between the aged couple, in whom he distinctly recognized the features of their son Jonas, and they in turn fixed on him a scrutinizing eye. After a short pause he said deliberately,

"I once had a friend who said to me, 'What shall I do?' said I, 'Go.' 'But what,' said he, 'will become of my aged and infirm parents in America?' I replied, 'I will be a son to them in your stead.' 'Then,' said he, 'I go up to Jerusalem, 'not knowing the things that shall befall me there.'

Instantly the aged couple sprung to him, exclaiming,

"This is Mr. W——," and almost overwhelmed him with their tears and caresses. "Let us pray," said the father; and they unburdened their hearts at the throne of mercy.

Scarcely were they again seated, when the mother took from the shelf a new quarto Bible, saying, she hoped her friend would not blame her for paying ten dollars for it out of the fifty he had sent her a few months previous. "Our old eyes," she said, "could not well read the small print of the other Bible. I told Mr. King I did not believe we could make any better use of the money, or should ever be the poorer for buying a Bible that we could read; it is a great comfort to us." Their friend expressed his approbation of the purchase, admired the Bible, and before he returned it to the shelf, slipped into it unperceived a ten-dollar bill; which she afterwards wrote him had been found on the floor when they were reading the Bible, and which she recognized as from the hand of God, having no knowledge by what means the exact amount expended had thus come again into their hands.

After a brief interchange of confidence and affection, she said to her esteemed guest, "I presume, sir, you have not dined, and must be in need of refreshment. I am very sorry we have not a cup of tea to offer you, but we have some nice ham and fresh eggs, which I will immediately prepare." Her friend remarked, "There is a bag in the wagon, containing several articles from 'your son;' perhaps there may be tea among them."

The bag, with no little effort, was transferred from the wagon to the cottage floor, and the mother addressed herself to the task of taking out its contents. Among packages of flour, rice, loaf-sugar, coffee, chocolate, raisins, and other articles, each of which she held up with new expressions of delight, as received from one she so much loved, she at length came to a package of four pounds of hyson tea, when she held it out to the father with streaming eyes, saying, "Look here, papa, Jonas is the same dear good boy that he always was: he knew we were out of tea sometimes: he don't forget his poor father and mother." Then opening a package of Turkey figs, "And is this also," said she, "from Jerusalem? Papa, was there ever such a son as Jonas?" By this time all hearts were overflowing. "Let us pray," said the father; and the exploring of the

treasures was suspended, while they again united in thanksgiving to God.

It was not long before the little company were seated at a well-furnished table, refreshed by the gifts of the kind "son," mingling their sympathies, and recounting all the way in which they had been led. While thus conversing the merchant affectionately asked, "Do you never regret the sacrifice you have made in giving up your only son to be a missionary?" The aged father replied,

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" and shall I withhold my only son from obeying the command of our ascended Saviour, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature?'"

All present were deeply affected, a tear standing in the eye even of the young driver. They again bowed in prayer: both the father and the merchant led in turn, commending the little company, the absent son, and a sin-ruined world to the God of missions.

The interview was an hour bright with the beams of the Sun of righteousness amid the dark pilgrimage of life, an oasis in the desert, a season never to be forgotten by any one of the four persons who thus met for the first and the last time on earth.

That young driver, as he afterwards distinctly stated, here first had his mind impressed with the sacredness of the work of foreign missions. He gave his heart to Christ; pursued a thorough course of education; went forth to the heathen, and was no other than HENRY LYMAN, the noble martyr who fell by the side of MUNSON, in 1834, among the bloody Battas of Sumatra.

The aged father, in his will, bequeathed to the merchant, for the purchase of a book in token of his love, the sum of five dollars, which at his death was paid to the widow for the old small-print Bible, which is still possessed as a precious memento. The widow has entered into rest; and the stranger passing a rural graveyard in South Hawley, where the scenery opens in magnificence and beauty, reads on the tombstone of the father his reply just quoted to the question, whether he ever regretted the gift to missions of his ONLY SON.

SAVING A SOUL FROM DEATH.

“He that converteth the sinner from the error of his way,” says the apostle James, “shall *save a soul from death.*”

Would you save a *soul from death*? God gives you the privilege, and rolls upon you the responsibility. Is there is one sinner for whose salvation you feel solicitous—and if there is not, there must be a fearful shade over your hope of heaven—you may be blessed in leading that soul to Christ.

Consider the ENCOURAGEMENT you have to make an effort. How glorious the work, to save a soul from death; the soul, perhaps, of your dearest friend!

How much God has *said* to encourage you. “He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him:” not the minister or the influential Christian exclusively, but “he”—any one. “God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty.” “Not by might, nor by power but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.”

How much God has *done* to encourage you. He employed a little maiden captive to heal and convert the great Assyrian general; the trembling sister of Moses to introduce him to the Egyptian court. He made poor fishermen the pillars of his church. He made the scattered disciples, driven from Jerusalem, to go “everywhere preaching the word,” that is, speaking of Jesus, sowing this precious seed, and thousands were converted. Within a year a little child five years old has been instrumental in the conversion of an aged sinner of almost fourscore, who had not visited the sanctuary for twenty years, simply by asking, on a Sabbath morning, “Grandpa, don’t you go to church?”

Are you *ignorant*? “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.” Do you remember the aged infidel who had resisted all arguments from books and pulpits, but was finally subdued by overhearing the prayer of his own poor slave?

Are you *young*? I could tell you of a daughter of fifteen who embraced the Saviour in a family where father,

mother, and six brothers and sisters were all impenitent, and the father a bitter opposer. For weeks she meekly endured the derision of the whole family; but at length God heard her prayer, and that wicked father and every other member of the family were hopefully converted to God.

Do you still doubt, and say with Moses, "I am *not eloquent*?" All the eloquence you need is a heart of faith and love. Look in with me upon that dying mother in yonder cottage. Listen. You hear her say, "Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. My work is done. I have not another thing to ask." She has a posterity of eighty-three souls, and every one of them over ten years of age is hopefully a Christian. I knew her when she was the only professor in the whole circle, and her heart was rent by having an intemperate husband; yet she lived to see them all converted, and mainly through her influence. She could not speak for Christ; but she could *live* for him, and die for him, and here was eloquence. I know it well, for that mother was my mother. At her knee I learned my infant prayer, and at her feet in glory I would love to sit. Many a weary day she sowed in tears, but she is reaping in joy. Dear friend, lay aside all fears and excuses. By the grace of God you need not be *saved alone*. You may bring *SHEAVES* with you.

Do you ask, "*How* shall I save a soul from death?" I answer,

1. Let *your own soul* be deeply imbued with its importance. Seek a baptism from heaven. Let the fire of divine love be kindled in your bosom. Roll up the curtain, and look in upon that vast eternity where you and these perishing souls will soon appear. Then make it *your settled aim to guide these souls to Christ*.

2. Consider *your work*. Every one has an appropriate sphere. Who are about you, over whom you can exert an influence? When the wall of Jerusalem was to be built, "every one built over against *his own house*." So in the spiritual Jerusalem, God has set men in families, and established the strong bonds of social affection, that one may save another. "What knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband?" Consider in what way your impenitent friend may be influenced; by entreaty, argu-

ment, a silent tear, an appropriate tract, or persuasion to the house of God. Having surveyed the field, and fixed upon the individuals for whom God in his providence calls you to labor,

3. Fix your heart upon, and direct your efforts to, *their conversion*. Do not speak to them merely to relieve your conscience of a sense of duty. Do not aim merely to instruct, to correct an error, to produce an emotion or a tear, but, by divine aid, to *convert*. Count nothing done till your friend is born of the Spirit. Indeed, injury is oftentimes done to the soul by alarming, and then leaving it to sink into a state of indifference.

4. Equip yourself for the work. Select and mark appropriate passages of Scripture. Lay in a store of appropriate tracts. Gather up the history of the individuals for whom you would labor, and recall as many interesting instances of awakening and conversion as you can.

5. Enter calmly, but earnestly and perseveringly upon the work. Spread the case before God. Fervent, effectual prayer at every step is essential to your success. Bring forth your stores of truth adapted to the several conditions.

For the *thoughtless*, speak or write with great tenderness of their danger, ingratitude, and guilt. Give them some such tract as Baxter's Call; Heaven Lost; The Worth of the Soul; For Ever; The Lost Soul; The Day of Trial. Call their attention to some such passages of Scripture as Luke 12:16-21; 20:9-18; Psalm 34:16-21; Prov. 29:1; Matt. 10:28; Luke 16:19-31; 2 Thess. 1:6-10. And be sure to obtain from them a promise to read and reflect upon them. If you cannot gain this point at the first interview, try again, and press it with a heart overflowing with anxiety and love, and you may expect to succeed.

If your friend is already awakened, or when the Spirit of God has rendered your efforts the means of awakening, endeavor to impress upon the conscience a deep sense of the *wickedness of the heart*, and the *entire ruin in which the sinner is involved*. Scripture: Luke 16; Isa. 1 and 5; Rom. 8:7; Psalm 10:4; Matt. 21:33; 22:2; Jer. 2:19. Tracts: Quench not the Spirit; The Great Alternative; Have me Excused; Eternal Life or Death

Having brought your friends to this point, "travail in birth till Christ is formed in them the hope of glory." Urge

them to a full unconditional surrender of themselves to Christ as a Prince and a Saviour, to rule over them and save them, that they obey his precepts and trust in his grace. Encourage them to throw themselves at his feet with an humble and contrite spirit, and to lay hold on the hope set before them in the gospel. Direct them to such scriptures as the 51st Psalm; Isaiah 53 and 55; Luke 15, (Prodigal Son;) Luke 18:13; Acts 16:30; Rom. 5:1; 3:24; 5:6; and such tracts as, The Door was Shut; What is it to Believe in Christ? Sinner directed to the Saviour; The Way to be Saved; What must I Do? The Act of Faith; Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ; Self-dedication to God.

In these latter stages, all desire for concealment is often overcome, and you may safely and advantageously call in the assistance of your pastor or some experienced Christian friend; but in the earlier stages, the more noiseless and unobserved your efforts, the greater the probability of success; and always, the more evident your disinterested *Christian love and tenderness*, the easier will it be to find access to the heart. "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Avoid exciting unnecessary prejudice or hostility; but shrink from no faithful effort through fear of offending.

Dear Christian friend, will you make the effort? If so, *delay not*. Enter *now* upon it. And to avoid the danger of forgetfulness or neglect, it would be well to have a card suspended where you will see it when you rise, with these inquiries written on it, and spaces for replies in pencil, that can be erased, and others substituted:

1. Whom of my impenitent friends shall I see to-day?
2. What is the probable state of their mind?
3. What shall I say, or to what tract or scripture shall I ask their attention?
4. To whom shall I write, and on what points?
5. What printed truth shall I send them?
6. How shall I order my deportment so as to enforce these truths upon the minds and conscience of my friends?

Then bring them to God in the arms of believing prayer, and, by his grace, you shall *save many souls from death*.

At night inquire, "How have I discharged the duties of the day?" And commend all once more to God.

YOUR PLACE IN CHURCH IS EMPTY.

“And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.” Gen. 28:16.

Your place in church is empty. Sabbath after Sabbath your seat in the house of God has not been filled. There his people are gathered together; his ministers are there; above all, he is there himself, fulfilling his own word, “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Matt. 18:20. But *you* are not there.

God has sent for you to come to his house. It is not of man’s ordering that there should be churches built, and service in them every Lord’s-day. Who but God himself commands us to keep holy the Sabbath? “Keep the Sabbath-day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee.” Deut. 5:12. And how shall it be sanctified without gathering “the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord our God?” Joel 1:14. Is it not God’s word which says, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is?” Heb. 10:25. In the days of old, when God would send a message to his people, did he not say to his prophet, “Stand in the gate of the Lord’s house, and proclaim there this word, Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord?” Jer. 7:2. And in the New Testament, do we not read that, when the disciples were assembled on the first day of the week, “Jesus came and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you,” John 20:23; fulfilling, before their bodily eyes, that word of promise to which we have just referred, Matt. 18:20, and which, from that day to this, he hath never failed to fulfil spiritually to his church? Again, is it not written in God’s word, that it pleaseth him by “the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe?” 1 Cor. 1:21.

Your own heart tells you that it is God, and not man whom you are slighting, when you neglect his house of prayer. The Sabbath-bell calls you to "enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise:" this is its cheerful voice, heard and well understood by God's people, who know and acknowledge "it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture." Psa. 100 : 3, 4. *They* gladly obey the call of their God, and their Shepherd's voice: gladly they say one to another, "Let us go into the house of the Lord," Psa. 122 : 1; and, entering that house, they take each of them the place where his eye is waiting to see them. But *you* come not to *your* place!

God has something to say to you in that place. Every man has his own sins, his own thoughts, his own troubles, and his own wants. Go and take your place in the church, and see if you do not hear something which you will feel *must* have come to you from the God who alone knows all your *sins*—knows them as they spring up out of the impure fountain of a "desperately wicked" heart, in a way no fellow-creature can know them. Go and see if you do not find the *thoughts* of your heart so answered, that you will be constrained to say, "Verily the Lord is in this place;" even that Lord of whom we read in the gospel, "Jesus knowing their thoughts." Matt. 9 : 4. Some doubt, which you had never expressed to any one, is cleared up; some excuse for sin, which you had kept in the bottom of your own heart, is pointed out and shown to be a false excuse. Some fear about death and judgment, which you did not like to give way to, but which is still rankling there, is described, and you cannot but confess that you have it. Some perplexity about the right way of becoming religious, which you know not how to tell, is told for you, in a way which shows there is an eye which reads what your tongue cannot speak; and, moreover, the cause of that perplexity is shown, and the way out of it is put before you. Again, you have your own *troubles* and *wants*; "the heart know-

eth its own bitterness." Go to your place, and see if there is not something said to you which will make your trouble lighter ; or, at least, make you know that you ought to "cast your burden upon the Lord." Psa. 55:22. See, too, if you hear not there some promise, some offer from the Lord of the very thing you need, and which you know you need. There God is waiting to speak to you ; and will he not mark your absence ?

The excellent John Flavel, minister of Dartmouth, once preached from these words : " If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maran-atha ;" that is, accursed. The discourse was unusually solemn, particularly the explanation of the curse. At the conclusion, when Mr. Flavel was about to pronounce the blessing, he paused and said, " How shall I bless this whole assembly, when every person in it who loves not the Lord Jesus is Anathema, Maran-atha ?" The solemnity of this address deeply affected the audience. In the congregation there was a lad named Luke Short, about fifteen years old, and a native of Dartmouth. Soon after, he went to sea, and sailed to America, where he passed the rest of his life. He lived till he was " a sinner a hundred years old," and ready to die " accursed." One day his memory fixed on Mr. Flavel's sermon. The earnestness of the minister, the truths spoken, the effect on the people, all came fresh to his mind. He felt that he had not loved the Lord Jesus ; he feared the dreadful anathema or curse ; he was deeply convinced of sin ; and he was brought to " the blood of sprinkling." He lived to give every evidence of having been born again. Thus, when this youth was in his place in church, the word of God found him there ; it entered his heart, never to leave it, though it lay forgotten near a hundred years. " The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." John 6 : 63. Come then to your place, " hearken what the Lord shall speak," and you shall find the life of your soul.

But again, *there God is expecting to hear from you.*

The poorest man or woman on earth that enters the house of God, goes to the very place towards which the King of kings is looking, on purpose that he may hear their petition from thence. Remember that touching history of blind Bartimeus in Mark 10: "Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought;" and then said, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" So when we go up to the house of the Lord, we are certain that Jesus is there and is putting the same question to each one whom he finds there. Sabbath after Sabbath "he hath stood still," over against your place in his house, *but it was empty*; you were not there, to make your request to Him who is able to do all that is in your heart, and "exceeding abundantly above all that you ask or think." Eph. 3:20.

A mother gives the following simple narrative: "My poor son had no work. On Sunday morning the family ate their last bit of bread. After breakfast he put on his coat. His wife said, 'Why, John, you are not going to church to-day? you will go and try to get a bit of bread for the children?' And he said, 'Why, it is for *that* I am going there.' So he went to church; and he said that when the minister read those words about asking 'as well for the body as the soul,' he prayed for the body—for he thought of his wife and children. When he came home, he took the Bible and sat down to read; and his wife said, 'Why, John, do not read that to-day; go and try for a bit of dinner for the children.' But he said, 'Why, wife, it is *here* we must seek it.' Presently there came in a servant, from one of the farmers who had refused him work, and brought two buns and a cake of bread, and said her master would give him work the next day. And at supper-time a neighbor brought in a loaf for the children's tea. So he said, 'You see, wife, I was right when I went to seek it *there*.' Oh, how he did love his Bible! I have heard him say, he would sooner see the bed he lay on carried out of the house, than *that* should go."

Now tell me, was the Lord far from the place in which this his servant was that day? Was he not, indeed, mark-

ing it, as the place where he would receive the petition which he well knew this poor man was coming to put into his hand? Have *you* nothing to ask of God—no wants for soul or body—that your place should always be empty?

God will remember *every* Sabbath he has given you, and *every* time he has missed you from your place in his house. One day he will say, "Wherefore camest thou not to thy place neither on this Lord's-day nor on that?" Not one of them will be forgotten of God. And what will you say to him in that day? Will you tell him that you loved sleep better than the morning-worship, and idleness and sin and Sabbath-breaking better than that of the afternoon? Will you dare to tell him, as your excuse, that you were busy about the things of this world, when you know that it is his command that on the Sabbath-day we should rest from all those things, in order to give the day to him? Oh, how will such an excuse stand; pleading sin to excuse neglect of duty! Must he not answer, "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me," Mal. 3: 8, in giving my time to the world

But shall I speak to you only of the *duty* of going to the house of God? shall I speak only of the awful record that is kept, of those whose place is empty Sabbath after Sabbath? Friend, I want you to weigh your excuses in the balance of *your own happiness*: tell me, then, Do you choose well for yourself in choosing to stay away? O that I could make you know how much you might gain by being present, and then *you* should tell, if you had the heart to do it, what you get by staying away, and put it in the other scale. Christ says, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.*" John 14: 6. And what if, on going to your place in church, you should find Christ there? What if you should have the Holy Spirit given to you? What if you should be born again of the Spirit, John 3: 5; "begotten by the word of his truth?" James 1: 18. What if there you should be convinced of sin, and, finding yourself to be "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," should be led to buy of

Christ "white raiment," and "gold tried in the fire?" Rev. 3: 17, 18. What if there the Lord should open your heart, as he once did Lydia's, "that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul?" Acts 16: 14. What if Jesus should come and say, "Peace be unto you;" and all that great weight, that heart of stone, that load of sin, that unhappiness which has been yours for years, should be taken away? What if there you should discover "that way of life which is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath," Prov. 15: 24; the way which brings a man "peace at the last?"

Many, by going to their place in church, have found Christ there. I only say, "Come and see;" come to your place, and see what the Lord hath for you. It is that you may "win Christ," that I long with my whole heart to see you in your place at church. It breaks my heart to think that he is there, time after time, and so few in their places to meet him! I could say with the prophet, "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears!" because, while the little band of God's worshippers are gathered together in his house, rejoicing in his presence, crowned with goodness and loving-kindness, messages going forth to sinners of mercy and forgiveness, his word coming with power first to one heart, then to another; Christ revealed, now to this soul, and now to that—while all this is taking place, many are carelessly neglecting to come; they have their place, but are not in it; are missing heaven on earth, and heaven above; choosing the pleasures of sin for a season, that they may earn for all eternity the wages of sin, which is death. O what fruit will you have then, of those things whereof *even now* you are ashamed? Rom. 6: 21.

But before I bid you farewell, there is one solemn thought which I wish to put before you. The true church of God consists of every soul that has really fled for refuge to Christ, and has been washed in his blood and sanctified by his Spirit. "He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from

the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matt. 24:31. That will be a glorious church-going indeed for the people of God, gathered together into the actual presence of Christ their Redeemer, led in by him "through the gates into the city," even the heavenly Jerusalem, that city wherein is no temple; for they are in the very habitation of God himself, "presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." Jude 24. This is "the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven." No door will stand open there; no bell will chime its invitation; no minister "beseech you;" no friend say, Come in with me. Every saint will have his own mansion, his own place, prepared of Christ, John 14:2, and will enter into it—will go and "sit down in the kingdom of heaven." There will be no *empty* places; every child of God will have his place, and will be in it. No servant will come forth and say, "Yet there is room." And you, whose place has ever been empty in God's courts below, what will you do when you find there is none prepared for you in that congregation? O, can you bear the thought, when you remember that to be shut out of the church then, will be to be shut into hell for ever?

I should like just to remind you of a passage in that good old book, the "Pilgrim's Progress:" "I saw, also, that the Interpreter took him by the hand and led him into a pleasant place, where was builded a stately palace, beautiful to behold; at the sight of which Christian was greatly delighted: he saw also upon the top thereof certain persons walking, who were clothed all in gold. Then said Christian, 'May we go in thither?' Then the Interpreter took him and led him up towards the door of the palace; and behold, at the door stood a great company of men, as desirous to go in, but durst not. There also sat a man at a little distance from the door, at a table-side, with a book and his inkhorn before him, to take the name of him that should enter therein. He saw also that in the doorway stood many men in armor to keep it, being resolved to do

the man that would enter, what hurt and mischief they could. Now was Christian somewhat in amaze. At last, when every man started back for fear of the armed men, Christian saw a man of a very stout countenance come up to the man that sat there to write, and say, 'Set down my name, sir;' the which when he had done, he saw the man draw his sword, and put a helmet upon his head, and rush towards the door upon the armed men, who laid upon him with deadly force. But the man, not at all discouraged, fell to cutting and hacking most fiercely. So after he had received and given many wounds to those that attempted to keep him out, he cut his way through them all and pressed forward into the palace; at which there was a pleasant voice heard from those that were within, even of those that walked upon the top of the palace, saying,

'Come in, come in,
Eternal glory thou shalt win.'

So he went in, and was clothed with such garments as they." Will you not say, as Christian did, "I think, verily, I know the meaning of this?"

And now, my friend, what more can I say? I know that "though I spake with the tongue of an angel," it could be only "by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts," that your heart would be touched. Will you accept his message and come?

"And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the Lord being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city." Gen. 19:16.

Thus, O my God, be thou merciful to him or her who now lays down this tract, and who, but for such grace, will yet linger in the city of destruction: for the glory of thine own name, by Jesus Christ. Amen.

GRIEVING THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

As, in the providence of God, I have been brought into contact with thousands of persons who have told me with much candor the history of their own minds, and conversed freely in reference to the all-important subject of their salvation, I have thought it to be my duty to record some of the facts I have met, for the benefit and warning of others. That there is a point when the Holy Spirit, if wilfully and perseveringly resisted, ceases to strive with man, no one doubts who believes in his renewing and sanctifying agency; but too many take it for granted that this point is not reached till the close of life, and neglect or resist the strivings of the Spirit till he gives them up to hardness of heart, and blindness of mind, perhaps many years before their earthly existence has terminated.

The first case I shall mention is that of a woman about thirty years of age, with whom I conversed in the presence of her mother. I inquired if she was a member of any church. She answered, "No." I asked if she had not at some time felt concern for her salvation. "Yes," she said, "I think but few have been more anxious on the subject than I was once." I asked at what period of her life this occurred, when she gave me the following account of God's dealings with her. "When I was about fifteen years old, I felt that I was a great sinner in the sight of God. Often my distress was so great that I could not sleep; and for three years I seldom had peace for a week at a time. I knew that the Holy Spirit was striving with me, and that I ought to yield my heart to his influence; but I thought it would cut off my pleasures in the midst of youth. I tried to banish the thoughts of eternity; but they would still return and interrupt my pleasure. I tried reading novels and romances; they gave me relief for a while, but

my distress returned. At last I went to the ballroom—and I have never since had such feelings as before.” “And have you no fears,” said I, “that you have grieved away the Spirit of God for ever?” “Yes,” she replied, “I have no doubt of that, and that I shall be lost.” I proceeded to describe the state and misery of the lost, and appealed to her, by the prayers of her mother and the tears which were then falling from her sunken eyes, by the danger of an eternal separation from pious friends, by the glories of heaven and the agonies of the Son of God, now to make her peace with him and be saved. “All this,” she calmly replied, “has been tried upon me before. Nothing that you or any other man can say on that subject, can move me now. My doom is fixed.”

Another case was that of Mr. B——, who was over seventy years old, and living an ungodly life. I approached him with kindness, and at length he conversed freely. I spoke of the goodness of God to him in his advanced years, and asked if he hoped he had an interest in Christ. He replied, “No.” I asked if he received the Bible as the word of God. He answered, “Yes.” I said, “The Bible teaches that a man must be born again before he can enter the kingdom of God; do you think you have experienced that change?” “No,” said he, “I never have.” I saw that he was intelligent, and inquired if no “still small voice” had ever whispered to him, “Son, give me thy heart?” “Yes,” said he, “often. I used to feel, but for many years I have not felt as I did when I was young. I then had some very serious times.” I asked at what period he had felt most deeply the importance of religion. He replied, “When I was seventeen I began to feel deeply at times, and this continued for two or three years; but I determined to put it off till I should be settled in life. After I was married, I reflected that the time had come when I had promised to attend to religion; but I had bought this farm, and I thought it would not suit me to become relig-

ious till it was paid for, as some time would have to be devoted to attend church, and also some expense. I then resolved to put it off ten years; but when the ten years came round, I thought no more about it. I often try to think, but I cannot keep my mind on the subject one moment." I urged him by all the terrors of dying an enemy of God, to set about the work of repentance. "It is too late," said he, "I believe my doom is sealed; and it is just that it should be so, for the Spirit strove long with me, but I refused." I then turned to his children, young men and young women who were around him, and entreated them not to put off the subject of religion, or grieve the Spirit of God in their youthful days. The old man added, "*Mind that.* If I had attended to it then, it would have been well with me to-day; but now it is too late."

On conversing with a man in middle life, he informed me that his father was a devoted Christian, that he was faithfully instructed and his mind was early impressed with the importance of religion. In his youth, there was a period of six months in which he was in distress, day and night; and a voice within seemed to be continually saying, "Forsake your sins and come unto me, and I will give you peace." "But," he added, "I did not wish to be a Christian then; I thought it would ruin my pleasures. I visited a part of the country where dancing and balls were frequent; in a little time my serious thoughts were gone, and I have never had any since." I asked if he did not fear that God had given him up. "Yes," said he, "I am afraid he has. I go to church and read the Bible, and try to feel, but I cannot." I strove to arouse his fears; but it was in vain. I afterwards learned that he was pursuing his worldly business on the Sabbath.

It is not for me to pronounce that God had said of all these persons, they are "joined to their idols, let them alone;" "Woe to them when I depart from them;" but the state of all such is unspeakably alarming. If such is your

case—if you have wilfully dashed the cup of salvation from your lips, when God by his Spirit was wooing you to himself—if you have persisted in saying, “Go thy way for this time, let me alone that I may have the pleasures of this life,” and have quenched the Spirit by resorting to amusements, the novel, the ballroom, or the theatre, God may have given you what you desired; but what have you now of all these pleasures? Can you look back upon them with an approving conscience? Will they bring you consolation in a dying hour? No. You have, even now in your own soul, if you would make the confession, the gnawings of the worm that never dies, the burning of the fire that is never quenched. You will have no excuse when you stand before the throne of the eternal Judge. He will say, I called, but you refused; I stretched out my hand to you, but you did not regard it.

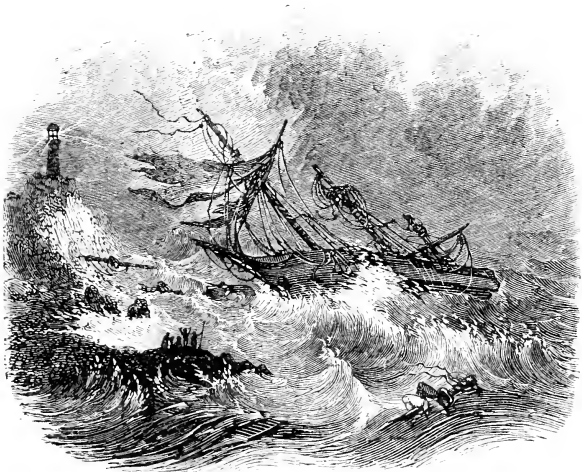
But to the dying sinner with whom the Spirit of God is now striving, let me say, It is the most momentous period of your existence. It is perhaps the turning-point between heaven and hell—the songs of angels, or the wailings of the finally lost. O seize the present moment, while the voice of the Spirit is whispering in your ear, “Now is the accepted time.” Beware of stifling that voice. Multitudes have told me the dreadful tale, “I went to scenes of amusement, or turned to the exciting romance, and I have felt no anxiety since.”

O awakened sinner, while the Spirit strives it is the seed-time of eternal life, the embryo of a happy immortality. Sit not down to count the loss of sinful pleasures; receive the Saviour into your heart, and you will have pleasures lasting as eternity—pleasures that leave no sting behind—pleasures that will sustain the soul when on your dying pillow, when the last trumpet shall sound, and the congregated world stand before God.

THE
FATAL MISTAKE.

OR,

THE MIDNIGHT SHIPWRECK.



BUT a short time since, the entire community was startled by the news of a sudden and fearful shipwreck. The bark "Elizabeth" was returning richly laden from a foreign port. Her voyage was almost finished, when, as she neared our coast, a violent storm arose. In the darkness of midnight, as she is driven before the tempest, her officers mistake the light on "Fire Island," for the one on the "Highlands;" and steering as they suppose for the *latter*, but in reality for the *former*, the bark is soon dashed, an utter wreck, upon the breakers, and part of the crew, and all her

passengers are swallowed up in the waves—swept, as in a moment, to eternity!

It is of little moment *how* the mistake was made; whether from erroneous calculation, or presuming confidence, or careless neglect of chart and compass. The fact that it *was* made, is certain; and the awful result, like all the realities of the past, is beyond the reach of prevention or remedy. All that remains for us, as we mourn the dreadful calamity, is, that we endeavor to open our hearts to some of the many lessons it so solemnly teaches. And,

1. *It shows that the SINCERITY of our belief, on any subject, is no proof of its CORRECTNESS.* Here is not an uncommon error, especially in reference to religion. How often, from sceptical or thoughtless persons, do we hear the assertion, "*It is no matter what a man believes, if he is only sincere.*" But alas, this fatal shipwreck tells a different story. Doubtless the officers of that ill-fated bark were *sincere* in their terrible mistake. They honestly believed that the light towards which they were steering was the one that would guide them to their expected port in safety. But did the *sincerity* of their belief prove its *correctness*? Did it calm the raging of the winds and waves, or break the violence of the terrific crash, or save from the jaws of death a solitary one of its appointed victims? And if sincerity of belief is not of itself an assurance of truth or safety in ordinary life, is it in matters of religion? If it is not a safeguard to the mariner on the deep, is it on the voyage to eternity? There are many *false* lights in this world of error and sin. See to it that you mistake not any one of them for *the true light*—the light of divine truth as it shines in the pages of the Bible. Err here, and your *sincerity* will not save you from the shipwreck of your eternal welfare—from the ruin of your hopes, your happiness, your soul!

2. *It shows that CONDUCT is necessarily connected with BELIEF.* It is often said, and here again, especially in reference to religious things, that "*it is no matter what a*

man believes, if his conduct is right." But this maxim, like the one already alluded to, is both false and dangerous. Would the officers of that shipwrecked bark have steered their vessel towards the wrong light, if they had not *believed* it to be another? Did not their *conduct* necessarily flow from their *belief*; and is it not self-evident that the former could not be safe, while the latter was erroneous? And as this principle uniformly holds good in common life, *so it does in religion*. No man can *act* right, who does not first *believe* right. All true morality must have its foundation in a true faith—all right conduct, in correct belief. No action is acceptable to God, or approved by an enlightened conscience, that does not spring from right principles. No stream can rise higher than its source—no water be pure, that flows not from a pure fountain—no action be right, or good, which does not spring from right principles: those of the Bible.

2. *We are as truly RESPONSIBLE for our BELIEF as for our CONDUCT.* And for the plain and conclusive reason, that conduct is always connected with belief, and originates in, and takes its character from it. The two are so inseparable, that to hold we are accountable for our conduct and not for our belief, is as unphilosophical and absurd, as to hold one responsible for the explosion by which he blows up his neighbor's dwelling, and yet not for the touch of the spark by which he fires the train! So we reason, and justly reason, in common life. If the officers of that lost bark had made their fatal mistake through gross carelessness and neglect, they would have been held accountable for its fearful loss; just as that druggist in one of our cities, who lately weighed out poison to a patient, is held accountable for the death caused by his mistaken belief, and is now in prison under indictment for the crime. And on the same principle implied in these cases, we blame our fellow-men for being uncandid and partial and prejudiced, and censure them severely for their *opinions*, almost as often as for their *conduct*.

But if thus *responsible for belief* in ordinary life, where we are so liable to err, much more are we *in religion*, where there is no need of mistake,—where the truth is plain from revelation, to all that *wish* to know it—so plain that even the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein; and where God has promised to enlighten and teach and guide all that ask him. And for this reason it is, that God not only invites but *commands* us to believe, and blames us for *not* believing, and threatens us with the *punishment* of eternal death for our unbelief, and ascribes the fact that we do not believe to a *wicked* heart. Reason, then, and the common judgment and practice of mankind, unite with the Bible in declaring, that *we are responsible for our belief*.

4. *How important to be ALWAYS PREPARED FOR DEATH!* The passengers in that ill fated bark little thought that their end was so near—that the progress they supposed they were making towards their expected port, was but progress to eternity! And yet, as in a moment, they were summoned to the world of spirits—ushered, almost without warning or season for preparation, to the presence of their God and Judge! Death may not come as suddenly to you as it did to them. But, on the other hand, *it may* You have no sure hold upon to-morrow. You know not what a day may bring forth. At any rate, amid all the uncertainties of the future, it is the part of wisdom to be prepared. And the warning, alike from God's providence and his word is, *that you prepare now*. Now put away your sins by repentance; now believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; now begin a life of faith and holy obedience, that whether living or dying, you may be safe. Delay not at once to enter on the great work of life, lest, when you stand upon the passway of death, you find it too late to obey the admonition, "PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD!"

RELIGION AND BENEFICENCE

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CHRISTIANITY is something more than a doctrine, or ritual, or code of morals; it is a life consisting in love to God and man. Love is the central and all-pervading element of Christian character. And nothing in the gospel aims more directly to nurture this life or love, than those provisions which make the pardoned sinner a giver of gifts to God. Here we solve the wonder that the Owner of the universe will have gifts made to himself, as though the silver and the gold, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, were not his. He has a great work to do in one dead in sin and selfishness—a work not usually accomplished without long-continued discipline to benevolent acts. To bring the redeemed soul under the needful training to benevolence, the Redeemer takes the place of the poor, and makes the wants of a suffering world his own, and causes his own voice to be heard in all the pleadings of human distress, and lays on every pardoned sinner the constraints of his dying love, to impel him to acts of love. For this end, the independent Source of all good receives gifts, as a parent receives gifts from his child to draw out generous dispositions.

The feeling of a regenerate heart in giving gifts to the poor for Christ's sake, involves that obedience, homage, and gratitude to God, and kindness to man, which form the prime ingredient of true religion, and which all the ends of religion require us to cultivate. Thus the wants of this shattered world serve as our means of grace and of progress in love to God and man; and the central purpose, to

which all requirements of alms converge, is MAN'S SANCTIFICATION FOR GOD'S GLORY.

This will more clearly appear if we trace out and lay together the different branches of scriptural instruction, touching the duty of alms.

1. The first of these is, *that the giving of property to God is everywhere made an indispensable ingredient of true religion.* Fair as is the semblance of piety which some maintain without acts of charity, it is deceptive. A religion divorced from that which is the prime element of godliness, is making its way to a terrible disappointment. From Genesis to Revelation, we find not a hint that such a religion is acceptable to God or profitable to man.

In the first account of religious worship by any of the human race, we read that the fruit of the ground and the firstlings and fat of the flocks were offered to God in acts of worship. Nor did the typical intent of Abel's offerings, nor of those of the Hebrews afterwards, as foreshadowing the death of Christ, exclude the intent to exercise the heart to self-denial and sacrifice in the cost of the offerings. The whole sacrificial institutions carried as effective a warfare against human selfishness, as if intended for that alone. Hence David would not "offer to God that which cost him nothing." The cost of the thing offered was indispensable, because one purpose of the act was, to subdue the selfishness of the heart, while doing homage to the God of love. So the religion of pardoned sinners had its first exercise in a devotement of property to God. And this offering of property was a spiritual act—an act of faith: "By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice."

And when, after the flood, the new head of the race came forth from the ark, he commenced just such worship, in the use of property devoted to God. He had but seven cattle and seven sheep with which to begin the world, and yet he hesitates not to sacrifice one of each, as soon as he sets foot upon the ground. For after all his intimate

communings with God, he had discovered no way of true religion which involved no cost, no sacrifice of selfishness.

The first thing done by Abraham after he got to Canaan, and indeed by the other patriarchs whenever they moved and made a settlement in a new place, was to erect an altar and commence the worship of God by costly sacrifices. Abraham sustained that intimate communion with God which entitled him to be called "the friend of God," by a form of worship that made constant drafts upon his property. His special ratifications of God's covenant were made by sacrifices. His grateful homage to God in view of victories over his enemies, had expression in his rendering a tenth of the spoils to a priest of God. His training to acts of self-sacrifice must have been the school in which he reached that sublime act of sacrificing his only son. By lesser sacrifices, he gained the strength of principle which could endure such a trial and compass such a reward in not only a son recovered as from the dead, but another Son who should be at once the Heir and Saviour of the world; yea, and other sons, as the stars of the sky for multitude.

When Jacob, newly awoke from the raptures of his visions of God, was moved to avouch Jehovah as his God and King, he took the accustomed form of owning allegiance while he said, "Then shall the Lord be my God and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee." Whenever this custom of tithing began, it seems now to have become a standing law of Jehovah's worshippers. Jacob adopts it, as a fit form of expressing at once his allegiance and his worship.

Notice next this same element of religion among the Israelites in the wilderness, while employed in building the tabernacle. This was done by the free-will offerings of the people, not because God had need of them, but because the people had special need to have their hearts opened to benevolence, after all the soul-withering influ-

ences experienced in Egypt. The same miraculous power that supplied food and drink on desert sands for a whole nation, could have brought from the sands and rocks the gold and pearls for the tabernacle; but while the body was fed by miracles, the life of the soul must be promoted according to its own laws. And as God gave special skill to the artificers of the tabernacle, so he gave special grace to the donors, in order to break the crust of selfishness contracted during the declensions in Egypt. Hence that outburst of generosity in collections for the building, which even had need to be checked. These offerings were eminently acts of worship. They were made for the house of God, were called offerings unto the Lord, and were made in homage and gratitude to God.

Not only the building, but all the ritual of the tabernacle, made acts of devoting property to God a substantial part of religion. Over and above the typical import of these countless offerings, observe how they drew upon the wealth of the people, and inserted the cost of money into almost every act of worship, and secured a constant exercise of self-sacrificing dispositions; and you cannot avoid the conviction, that a discipline of the benevolent affections was a leading purpose of the Mosaic institutions. Here all must see, that the exercise of religion and the worship of God were inseparably blended with gifts of property.

The revival, after sad declensions, which took place in the reign of David, carried with it a remarkable revival of this part of religion. It moved the whole nation to contribute the immense treasures needed to build the temple. No features of that revival have such prominence in its history as the alacrity with which king and people poured in the treasures for that building; and God was most devoutly acknowledged and worshipped in those generous acts. With one heart and voice they uttered this sentiment, which is the true source of religious gifts: "All

things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee."

In all Hebrew history, we see that the offerings of property to God were full or stinted in proportion as religion prospered or decayed; and they are currently alluded to as the visible exponents of thriving or decaying religion. David prays for a revival: "Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion. Then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar." And God pledged a revival in connection with the production of offerings that had been withheld: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, and prove me now herewith, if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing." And when the people grudged the expense, and offered the lame and the blind, he spurned a worship that withheld the required cost; and he said, I have no pleasure in you, nor will I accept your offering.

Yea, so fixed was the principle which identified religion with gifts, that the Old Testament requires men to show fruits meet for repentance by them. "Break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor." In the delineations of the character of a truly religious man given in the Old Testament, it is said, "He showeth mercy, and lendeth. He hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever." "He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed." The acts of worship connected with fasting are made acceptable by acts of beneficence. The fast which God has chosen, "Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?" Thus, in every way, the Old Testament makes religion and beneficence to be so much one thing, that they cannot be separated.

The New Testament does the same more effectually. While it substitutes the offering of Christ once for all in the place of the costly sacrifices, it substitutes broader and more pressing occasions to draw out the generosity of Chris-

tains, and discipline them to acts of love. Where the Old Testament required expense to foreshadow a coming Christ, the New requires a greater expense to proclaim his actual coming and redemption to all nations. The first recorded act of worship to the infant Saviour was rendered in "gold, frankincense, and myrrh." The first public discourse of Christ emphasized the duty of alms, and coupled it with prayer as an inseparable adjunct; and in the beatitudes, it places the merciful in the same class with the meek, the poor in spirit, and the pure in heart. And it is impossible for language to convey the sentiment that there can be no true religion without gifts to God and his poor, with more force and majesty than it is uttered in one of Christ's last discourses: "Then shall the king say unto them on the left hand, Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was a hungered, and ye gave me no meat." Let those whose religion is so spiritual and unearthly as not to touch their money, ponder this, and expect to hear it again at the last day.

Because Christ's religion took such a hold of one's property, his dealings with inquirers and opponents had so much to do with it. His way of presenting his claims led directly into the money interests of the heart. It made Zaccheus say, "The half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." To the blind Pharisees, famed for covetousness and given to superstitious and hypocritical washings, he said, "Give alms of such things as ye have, and all things shall be clean unto you." That is, bring your hearts into communion with God through benefactions to his poor, and you will have opened the purifying fountains upon yourselves. When dealing with the young man who had great possessions, he showed him what he lacked, by putting the demands of the poor upon his wealth into the foreground of religion. And it was in

this connection that he said, "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye," than for one who "trusts in riches"—that is, one who regards wealth more than God and his claims on that wealth, and who therefore lacks beneficence—"to enter the kingdom of God." This sentence is the doom of those, whether rich or poor, whose property stands without the circle of their religion.

He enforced the same identity of religion and beneficence, by putting the multiplied riches of earth and the treasures of heaven at the disposal of those who surrendered houses and lands for his sake. Indeed, through all his ministry are interspersed incidents and remarks to the same point. We have an instance, in his placing the highest value on the widow's gift, because it had more of religious affection in it—showing, that the essence and value of a gift consisted in the religious act involved. Also in his commendation of the expense upon his person of a costly perfume. This was worth more than three hundred pence given to the poor, because it was an exponent of a more intense religious affection and homage. A volume of pertinent meaning is expressed in this: "Sell that ye have and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also:" that is, be careful about your use of your treasure, for where it goes it carries the heart with it, whether to earth or heaven. The same is involved in the parable of the unjust steward, the sentiment of which is, that by acting as God's stewards while we may, and giving to the poor as we can, we in effect secure in the poor, friends who will have everlasting habitations for us when we fail and are driven out of our present houses, because in this account Christ and the poor are one.

The truth that religion and beneficence are one and inseparable, was powerfully set forth in the Pentecostal scene. Willing to test the generosity of the new converts,

God had gathered thousands of converted strangers into Jerusalem, and detained them perhaps for months without their own means of support. Here then was a vast seminary of preachers for the world, continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine—waiting to be endued with power from on high, to go out and spread the flame which had been kindled within them. For the feeding of this multitude, large draughts were made on those who had property in Jerusalem. These freely let Christ into their estates, so far as he had need. And without renouncing the right of property, or commencing any community system, each one, for that time and occasion, “possessed as though he possessed not.” So the first opening of Christianity, in the commencement of the dispensation of the Spirit, was signalized by an example of beneficence fit to instruct the world, and one that is destined to enlighten all nations into the true nature of religion.

Thenceforward, in spreading the gospel, the converts are everywhere seen freely risking or sacrificing property in proportion to the need of the spreading work, and taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods. Among no class of men has beneficence had such exemplifications as among the first Christians. And without hesitation, they said of those in whose religion it had no part, *How dwelleth the love of God in him!* Yea, they had such conceptions of the identity of beneficence and religion, that they could say, “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction.” So full is the evidence, that they commit a great and fatal mistake who expect to be Christians without habits of beneficence.

2. The next point of scriptural teaching about this duty is, that *acts of beneficence are required for our spiritual good*—for the exercise of our hearts to benevolence and our growth in grace. We are required to give, because “it is more blessed to give than to receive.” The redemption

of man involves his recovery from selfishness, the essence of sin, by training him to benevolent action. Hence, as soon as one is brought out of darkness into marvellous light, a world in darkness appeals to him for his aid ; and all the wants of a world appealing to him are his means of grace. "The poor shall not cease out of the land ;" but it is not because God could not have made them rich. Nor does he need our help in feeding them. He could have made all human supplies as plenty as water ; and could have written his gospel upon the skies, and saved the expense of publishing it. He lets the wounds of dying men plead because they plead against our selfishness ; and while we are healing the wounds of others, he secures a more effectual healing upon ourselves.

The general intent of the Spirit of inspiration in this respect may be well illustrated by one example, that of collections made for the suffering Christians in Jerusalem. About seventeen years after Paul's conversion, he visited Jerusalem, and was anew recognized as the apostle of the Gentiles, by Peter, James, and John, and then sent away with a special charge, that in his visits to the gentile churches he should remember the poor and make collections for them. In pursuance of this, we find Paul soon after in Ephesus, writing his first letter to the Corinthians, near the close of which he, as it would seem according to his custom, gave an order for collections for the Jerusalem Christians. He directed that each one should lay by every Sabbath such a portion as he could spare, that there should be no gathering when he came. In this connection he told them that he purposed, after a while, to make them a visit and spend a winter with them, before the donation should be completed by them. About a year after this, while in Macedonia, he wrote his second epistle to the Corinthians, and stimulated them to this work by telling how generously the Macedonians had done ; and in this he alluded to the order given in the previous epistle, and the readiness with

which they had commenced action under it, and urged them to complete their good beginnings. He told them that he had sent messengers to them, to see how they had carried out his plan, and to see that their donation should be made up before he came, that it might be ready "as a matter of bounty and not of covetousness."

Now mark how, in all that is said of this subject in the space of two chapters, the sufferings of the persons to be relieved, powerful as was their call for charity, are hardly alluded to, and the effect of the gifts on the givers is magnified. The giving is urged, because it is one of the graces of the Spirit, a part of one's self-consecration to God, a proof of the sincerity of one's love, and above all, an enriching of the soul of the giver to all bountifulness, and a glorifying of God thereby. The sufferings of the saints are so lost in the exuberance of other themes, as to be barely alluded to but once in the two chapters, as in these words: "For the administration of this service *not only supplieth the wants of the saints*, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings to God." The purpose to which these gifts were to be applied was one which had moved the sympathies of the Christian world, and hence it is the more remarkable that so little prominence is given to it.

This shows that both in giving his order for Sabbath deposits and in this enforcement of it, the Holy Ghost had a higher end than the relief of that case of suffering, and made that suffering a means of training the heart to beneficence and a point of light to illumine the whole subject. Because his great object is to produce the best results on the mind and habits of the givers, he so carefully provides that the streams shall flow without a forcing-pump, without urgent appeals to sympathy, and with the utmost spontaneity. The gifts must be a matter of bounty, and not wrenched from the fist of covetousness.

That Paul makes the sufferings at Jerusalem a pin on which to hang a document for the benefit of the donors and

for the broad instruction of the world, appears in every glance of his thought and every stroke of his pen, as he moves onward to the grand purpose of the Christian's sanctification for the glory of God. Hear him: "Let every one of you, as he purposeth in his heart," give cheerfully, abundantly. Why? "For God is able to make all grace abound towards you." Yes, that abounding grace is the thing. Hear him further: "That *ye may abound unto every good work,*" that God may "increase the fruit of your righteousness." And then he tells of this bountifulness causing thanksgivings to God, that God would be glorified in that the recipients of the bounty would see and gratefully acknowledge in it the proof of the reality of their Christian profession; yea, that God would be glorified in the acts of liberality themselves being intrinsically excellent, and in the prayers and blessings which would be showered upon the givers, yea, in longings after that exceeding grace of God which the donations evinced. This completes the climax of his argument, and he ends all in "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift;" for such thoughts of thanksgiving, generated by human liberality, lead naturally to that of the thanksgivings that will ring through a ransomed world, and be echoed by angel-voices in view of the unspeakable gift, the gift of the Son of God, the source of all other gifts of God to man.

3. Because the cultivation of the givers' benevolence and his abounding to every good work is the great end of the duty, it is, in the passage above commented on, and in other scriptures, so carefully guarded, that *the gifts shall be spontaneous*—that the mind shall work under its own sense of duty and impulse of love. When Jacob dedicates himself to God in the gift of a tenth of his income, the suggestion is seen to come of his own mind. The gifts required by the Mosaic institutions, definite as they were, left abundant room for the giver's heart to play between different degrees of generosity. So in collecting the materials for

building the tabernacle, it was over and over again provided that every man should "*give willingly with his heart;*" and in the contributions of the immense treasures for the temple, it was said, that "the people rejoiced that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord;" and David, with holy wonder, gave thanks that he and his people had been able to offer thus willingly.

This feature of the required beneficence has even more prominence in the New Testament. Christ says, "Freely ye have received, freely give." This freedom specially ruled in the Pentecost revival. "Neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own," though the apostles, the instruments of God's authority, acknowledged the full right to give or withhold: "While it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?" So Paul would have the gift made "as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness." "Every man as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give. For God loveth a cheerful giver."

4. Closely allied with this feature is another, that *each one's ability shall form the ground of his judgment of what he ought to give.* "Give alms of such things as ye have;" that is, according to your ability. He that ministers, "let him do it as of the ability that God giveth." God is able to make all grace abound towards you, that ye may abound to every good work." In building the tabernacle, the people gave "as God had prospered them" with the spoils of Egypt. God has named no fixed portion of income which it is the duty of each and all to give, for that would have made a tax and not a gift; nor can all, in the different circumstances of each, equally afford the same portion of income.

5. Another requirement of scripture is, that our gifts shall be *periodical*: that we shall have stated and frequent times of giving, both because our habits and hearts are

thereby better disciplined, and because we are really able to give more by frequent and small gifts, than by few and large ones. The offerings in the antediluvian church recurred at stated seasons, literally "in the end of days." Most of the offerings under the law were periodical; and as most other religious acts in the experience of pious men have stated seasons for their performance, so doubtless, under all dispensations, pious men have had more or less regular periods for their alms.

6. Still another feature is, that the alms shall have more or less *connection with other religious exercises*. Most of the offerings to God or for the poor, under the Old Testament, were formal acts of worship; and in the time of Christ, gifts were cast into the treasury at the temple, and tithes were collected at the synagogues on the Sabbath to be sent up to the temple. Every way, the first Christians, proceeding from the Jewish church, had been trained to connect alms with worship, and let their "prayers and alms" go up together as "a memorial before God."

Thus we have traced out the several branches of the duty as taught in the Scriptures: let us now lay them together.

1. It is taught that giving in charity is *essential to true religion*; that every one is as much bound to honor God by his gifts as he is to pray.

2. Our gifts are required as a means of *our spiritual good and growth in grace*, as the discipline to form us to a beneficent character.

3. Our gifts must be *free-will offerings*, and must be made according to a system that gives scope to the utmost freedom.

4. We must regulate them in our judgment according to *the ability which God gives us*.

5. They must be made at *stated periods*.

6. They must be made *in connection with our acts of worship*.

All these separate branches of the duty we find scattered through the scripture. Then, in the order given by Paul to the Corinthians, we find them all joined and compacted together in one condensed formula, as follows :

“Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”

These few words embrace every branch of the duty stated above. The first is involved in that the order runs to *every one*. The second, in that the deposits are to be made, not merely to meet emergencies and particular calls for them, but in a way to work our spiritual discipline and growth in grace. The third and fourth, in that the amount to be given is referred to each one's own judgment of the ability which God has given. The fifth and sixth, in acting on this subject on the first day of the week.

Here then we have, from an inspired pen, the whole duty reduced to the simplest form and the shortest compass. Here is the *multum in parvo*—a compact compendium of all scripture on this subject, yet intelligible to the merest child, and sufficient for the man of the most extensive and complex business. It requires that each one on every Sabbath, or statedly at longer periods, set apart what he thinks he ought, in view of the prosperity which God gives him ; thus creating a fund devoted to God, out of which he shall meet the calls for charity when they come. This does not require the deposits to be made always in money. They may be made in such fruits of labor as the donor has ; or, when ready money is not at hand, by entering it on an account kept with our charity treasury. It was doubtless intended by this rule, that those who receive the fruits of their labor weekly, and all others who can conveniently do it, should make their deposits as often as every Sabbath. But if any one, from the nature of his business or incomes, require longer periods, he may still retain a connection of the duty with the Sabbath. In the

case of the Lord's supper, it was clearly the intent of the Holy Spirit, to intimate that the Sabbath was the day for the breaking of bread; and the first Christians evidently celebrated the Lord's supper every Sabbath; and if our present circumstances favored that practice, it might be well to do so now. Yet we do not consider ourselves bound to repeat the act every Sabbath, nor to confine it to the Sabbath. And if any one conceives that this rule allows a similar latitude of interpretation, he will answer a good conscience in obeying the requirement to connect his alms with the Sabbath, in a similar way. If one's circumstances will not allow of so frequent a repetition of the act which disciplines the mind to beneficence and calls forth the melody of the heart in devotion, he is free to answer the spirit of the rule in such a way as he can. The rule is essentially an embodiment of the whole duty of beneficence, and he who obeys it in its spirit, fulfils this branch of the great law of love.

With this condensation of all the duty in one simple rule, we have something to propose, which is as definite and simple as it is important; or rather, we bring God's proposal to our fellow-Christian, or fellow-sinner, in a very simple and intelligible form. We do not say, "You must be generous to the poor," or "You must give such and such a portion of your income;" but we say, "Begin now, and continue a course of action on the line which the scriptures have so clearly drawn." We propose not a particular gift, but the beginning of a well-defined course, that cannot fail to educate the heart and conscience to the love of giving, and therefore to generous gifts. In this simple rule and the habit of action formed under it, you have a trellis-work of divine construction, on which your beneficence is gradually to lift itself up, spread abroad its branches, and bring forth its clusters.

Let us then commend it to general adoption, by specifying SOME OF THE ADVANTAGES OF IT.

1. The first of these is, that *it brings our work of charity within the Sabbath*, causes our gifts to be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, and our "prayers and alms" to go up together "as a memorial before God." It calls the mind to act on this subject when most susceptible; when disburdened of worldly cares; when most free from aspirations for worldly gains; when most engaged in contemplating the mercies of God, and the obligations resulting therefrom to make returns of love. It brings in substantial acts of love to God and man to modify our devotions. It quickens devotional thought and feeling with the impulse of self-denying acts. It awakes benevolence in a heart already warmed to prayer and praise by the word read and preached, and thus secures both body and soul to our devotions. So in effect the temple of our worship, like that of the Jews, has a Lord's treasury in it, to which we bring our grateful offerings while engaged in joyous celebration of the new creation in Christ; testifying our grateful joy in acts, as well as words and songs. Gifts are the most natural language of a grateful heart, and they mingle well with praise for redeeming love. Yea, they are as natural a medium of the soul's communion with God, as prayer. As devotion sharpens the mind for hearing the word, so giving attunes the soul to devotion, and devotion touches the rock of the heart, that the waters of its benevolence may gush forth.

2. There is a great advantage in *the frequent repetition* of the act, secured under this rule. If, as often as the Sabbath comes, the mind is called to exercise itself in a gift of property to God, or his poor, there must be more exercise of heart, a greater amount of thought and feeling about charity, than if we gave even in larger sums at longer intervals. If the great need and purpose of all our gifts is, that we may be "enriched to all-bountifulness;" if, in laying this duty on us, divine goodness has planned for the discipline of our spiritual affections, then

The same reasons operate in the frequency of the exercise, as in the frequency of the exercise of prayer. The oftener we are called to act, the more we shall think and feel about it. And it is the thought and feeling that plough wider channels for the outflow of benevolence. It is the continual dropping that wears the stone. Hence, if any find it somewhat inconvenient to make the periods of their gifts short as the weeks, it deserves to be considered whether the advantage in self-discipline will not more than overbalance the inconvenience. Be that as it may, any reflecting mind will discern great wisdom in that which holds us to periodical acts, that tend to our discipline in heavenly charity.

3. The provision *that a private charity treasury shall be kept into which the gifts shall be made before they are called to be given out*, works important results upon the mind. It facilitates our doing the work "heartily as unto the Lord." It turns the direction of our gifts first to him. If we give for charity when there is no distinct solicitation nor object of charity before the mind, God himself is near us as the object of the gift. Our reference to him is likely to be more distinct, than if some case of human distress stood between us and him. We come to the work simply because God requires it, and we need it. The Christian goes into his closet to pray sometimes, because impelled to intercede for a friend that needs his prayers; but more often because he feels himself the need of prayer, and because he loves it. In both cases his spirit of prayer is promoted. But if he prayed only when impelled to intercede for another, there would be a fearful chasm in the discipline of his spirit of prayer. And if we give alms only when beset with the solicitations of distress, we are as far from an adequate discipline of our spirit of benevolence. What havoc would be made of the piety of the church by annihilating all system, all regulated habits in prayer. But who can say that we are not suffering pro-

portionally as much by our want of system in this other branch of spiritual religion? If our benevolence be left so much to casual impulses, it will undoubtedly remain at a low-water mark.

4. This provision *secures the advantages of beneficence to every one, if he will.* "Let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." This assures us that God will look with equal favor on the small gifts of the poor and the large donations of the rich; and nothing in fact is more needed to move the masses of the church to action than this. Many are really able to do but little at a time—so little, that they are discouraged from attempting any thing. But these, when gained to the practice of dropping in their little every week, soon find that their littles have grown in months to a sum worth giving; and when made to feel that this little answers as rich a purpose towards the great end as the larger gifts of others, they find themselves engaged in a blessed work: a new world of duty is open before them. Poor as they may be, yet being asked to give only "as God hath prospered them," they feel no burden in it, and yet they divide with the rich the profits of a gainful commerce. He who has "chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom," will neither crush them with the burdens of his cause, nor exclude them from a share in its progress and triumphs. When weighing the widow's farthing-gift against princely donations, he struck the balance in its favor because it had more heart in it; because being attended with more sacrifices, it secured more sanctified affection, which is the true value of all gifts. Here, "the rich and the poor meet together" on a common level before God, in a work that carries blessings forth and back—blesses him that gives and him that takes. It makes your cent a week, if you can give no more, a means of an interchange of holy affections with Christ, a means of the enlargement of your heart and your sympathies for a dying

world. And perhaps that single cent, wet with your tears, followed by your prayers, sent to its place by the partial hand of Him who so valued a widow's farthing, hits its mark with greater force than whole talents of gold from other hands. A single penny tract has had now and then a history more to be coveted than some of the proudest productions of genius. And who can say that that tract, which has lighted here and there a fire that is destined to spread and burn, none can tell how far—yea, has generated a train of light that has already gone widening and brightening round the world—was not sent on its mission by the hard-earned and prayer-embalmed gift of some poverty-stricken child of God?

4. This rule further commends itself *by its superior efficiency in raising funds*. This end, though a secondary branch of God's great work of benevolence upon this world, is as important as the conversion of the world. The first adoption of the rule in a given church may be followed by no marked increase; for its power lies in forming and bringing to bear the settled habits which must have time to form. As fast as it forms these habits, it extends the sources of an enduring power. This provision comes to the poor and those of smaller means—the great majority of the church—removes the discouragement which they felt from giving any thing because their gifts must be so small, and shows the way for them to do a work second in importance to none; and having enlisted them, it has secured recruits by thousands. Great complaints are heard, that a large portion of members of our churches wholly refrain from gifts for evangelizing. True, it is not the poor alone who are thus remiss. But if the number who are so could be reduced by the stated gifts of all who have been deterred from giving by a discouragement which this rule, well considered, would remove, it might be hoped the others would come into the work. Any plan of raising supplies that discourages the small gifts of the poor, cuts its own sinews.

Our worlds must be made by the aggregation of atoms. Christ has fixed a premium on the gifts of the poor in what he said of the widow's farthing. And the rule under consideration works admirably in this view; generating funds where there are none, gathering a thick and pregnant cloud and drenching showers from exhalations too thin to be visible.

With admirable flexibility the rule bends to all varieties of cases. It commits us not for the future to any amount, but asks us to give only according to a prosperity already experienced, the income of the last week. It names no fixed percentage which each one must give, but leaves him to judge, in view of all his circumstances, how much he ought to give. He may, if he will, resolve to give such and such a percentage, as Jacob did; but in this he is determined not by this divine rule itself, but by his own judgment of what is right in his own case.

5. Another material advantage of action under such a rule is, that *it secures to us a fund always at hand to meet the calls for charity as they come.* In deciding whether to give for a particular object, selfishness cannot come in and plead against it; for it has no interest in the question. The money in hand, to be given or not given, is already the Lord's, and not ours; and acting as his stewards, we only decide how much of the Lord's money we will give on the occasion presented. Here is a means of becoming cheerful givers—of escaping from the control or bias of selfishness, while educating the conscience and heart to expansive love. The nursing of such a fund for Christ, while it insensibly interests the mind more deeply in every Christian cause, prepares us to give a cheerful welcome to every messenger of that cause that comes in the person of a soliciting agent. For we have but a simple question to settle with him, that is, how much of the Lord's money now in hand we ought to apply to the object he presents: yea, when all come to have such

funds, soliciting agencies will disappear, and with them all the cumbrous and costly machinery now so needful for financial collections. The plan which Paul struck out, though it required agents to *commence* operations under it, left little for agents permanently to do. He did not say, Wait till I or some other agent come, and give you the thrilling details of the suffering saints; but, Let "there be no gatherings when I come."

6. Action under this rule secures the impulses and growth of our benevolence *to come from the most spiritual and evangelical motives*. Paul did not make the fact that somebody will suffer if we do not give, the main reason for our giving, and thus leave the main-spring untouched. He did not rely on the energy and eloquence of agents giving the statistics and a panorama of the world lying in wickedness, and from these appealing to natural sympathies; but he took hold of an order of motives that are capable of rousing the whole energy of the heart. None ever felt more deeply the wants and woes of a dying world, but he presents motives still higher and more controlling. Under a rule which secured habits of stated giving as God prospered, he secured the preponderance of evangelical motives, and the more moving facts of Christ's redemption. He told of obligations to Christ, of the love of Christ constraining. He grasped the prime elements of persuasion, and descended not to lower themes. He sought to enthrone in the mind a steady and omnipresent principle of action—a habit of giving from the intrinsic blessedness of giving—of doing it, like the work of repentance, because it is right—demanded by our eternal relations to God and the wants of our immortal part.

7. Every Christian ought to enter into the habit of systematic beneficence, under this divine rule, in order to qualify himself to do what he can *to remedy one of the greatest deficiencies in the present habits and action of the church*. There is a general conviction that the church

is not doing what she can and ought ; and if we are not mistaken, the neglected source of the needed efficiency is in this heaven-appointed rule. If God has appointed action under this rule to be the great means of forming a benevolent character, is it a wonder that that benevolent character is so much unformed, where this rule is so much neglected ? The remedy lies in a restoration of this rule of action. True, the thing wanted, in order to a higher style of beneficence, is a higher tone of piety, raised by richer effusions of the Holy Spirit. But the aid comes not without the means. God will not, by any action of the Spirit of life, set aside any law of life, or reward us for a rejection of it. Nor will he give the needed vigor to our beneficence, while we reject the mode of action which he has appointed for us. As well might the churches on the continent of Europe, where the Sabbath is to so great an extent lost, expect to recover the blessings of the Sabbath without a reenthronement of the divine law of the Sabbath and conforming their practice to it. Needful as are the larger effusions of the Spirit to a higher style of beneficence in the church, they will not come except through the channels which God has appointed. We have, indeed, had revivals, many and genuine, within the last twenty years ; but no strongly marked elevation of the standard of giving by means of them, nor can we look for such a result till our revivals have a basis of better instruction touching this duty. Revivals, ever so powerful and far-spreading, cannot be expected fully to supply defects of character resulting from defects of instruction. While existing modes of thought and feeling prevail on this subject, we can hardly expect that future revivals will greatly raise the standard of beneficence ; the piety of future converts will be cast in the existing moulds.

But if this rule is what we conceive it to be, a compend of the whole duty of beneficence—the divinely chosen instrument of forming benevolent character—it is to be the

grand instrument of effecting the needed revolution in the habits of the church. As soon as you have gained the consent of one individual to act under it, you have secured the revolution in that one instance. You have gained, not simply another hand to give now and then so much, but another heart to come under a training to steady and expansive beneficence. You have brought the remedy to the very root of one of the greatest diseases of the church. You take those just initiated into the first principles, and teach them the alphabet, and put them forward in a divinely-appointed course. The mass of Christians cannot be brought up to their duty but by *training*, by action under such a specific rule. For this end you have this rule given of God, intelligible to the merest child, suited to the use of all. And as fast as you multiply persons acting under it, you throno the way to that consummation, when every church lesser or larger, every family rich or poor, shall be a generous source of supply to our grand schemes of beneficence.

While the fields of the world are white for the harvest, and money raised can be turned to so rich account, and yet while so many in the church are giving nothing, and so many others are giving so little, we naturally seek to reach the public conscience through some untravelled approaches. And here they are. Go to any Christian, and convince him that God requires him to act under this inspired rule of the apostle, and you lay a grasp on his conscience which it has never before felt. All count themselves to some degree benevolent, and all general exhortations to benevolence are taken as running in the line of their own present practice. But ask one to do this thing in this way, and you make a new proposal. Convince him that God requires it of him, and engage him to commence and proceed under the auspices of his own enlightened conscience, and you have put him in the path that leads surely on to a whole-souled benevolence. Then let it be seen that this rule is

entering into the common-sense and practice of the church ; let the common Christian life embrace it, and hold it forth as binding on all ; let it be seen that the neglect of this rule sets aside a substantive law of divine life, as really as would the neglect of daily prayer, or the profanation of the Sabbath—then will you reach the public conscience with new power. Let all Christians, by word and deed, contribute to give this apostolic rule the force of a living command of God—let it live and breathe through the common Christian practice, and soon all who profess to be Christ's will be in the practice of it.

Here then is proposed for adoption a rule of duty involving our highest interest and usefulness, imposed by divine authority, and leading to the richest results. If any feel that they need no rule of beneficent action because they intend no such action, they must be left to the final reckoning, with the simple admonition that God's great scheme of beneficence never can embrace those whom it does not penetrate and make beneficent. But all who mean to act on the principle, that it is "the merciful" who "shall obtain mercy," will find intrinsic excellence and manifold advantages in action under this rule, will find from experience that they cannot well live without it.

NOTE. Illustrations of the practical application and benefits of this divine rule will be found on the cover of this Tract. The Society also publish three able essays on the subject: "The Divine Law of Beneficence;" "Zaccheus, or the Scriptural Plan of Benevolence;" and "The Mission of the Church;" issued separately, and also bound in one volume. As an encouragement to themselves and others in adopting this system, many have united in substantially the following

PLEDGE OR COVENANT.

Believing that the scripture system of benevolence requires every one stately to "lay by him in store as God hath prospered him," I engage, on every Sabbath or at other stated periods, to set apart such a portion of what God shall give me as my judgment and conscience shall dictate; to be sacredly applied to charitable objects according to my sense of their respective claims.

SUBSCRIBERS' NAMES.

NARRATIVE
OF
PHEBE ANN JACOBS.

BY MRS. T. C. UPHAM.



“ My little house has become a *palace*.” PAGE 6.

THE subject of this narrative was a colored woman, born a slave in Morris county, New Jersey, July, 1785. At an early age she was given to Mrs. Wheelock, wife of President Wheelock of Dartmouth college, to be an attendant on her daughter, Maria Malleville, who was afterwards the wife of President Allen of Bowdoin college, Brunswick, Maine. She came to Brunswick with President Allen's family, in 1820, and remained with them until the death of Mrs. Allen, from which time she chose to live alone. She died in Brunswick, February 28, 1850.

Soon after she became a member of President Wheel-

lock's family, Phebe was brought to see her lost state by nature, and to flee to the Saviour as her only hope and refuge. Her subsequent life evinces that she had *clear* and *happy* views of the way of salvation by Christ.

Phebe, for the last eighteen years, supported herself by washing and ironing for the students of Bowdoin college. In her little habitation all was neatness and order. All her work seemed to be sanctified by prayer and praise, and to be done cheerfully, heartily, as unto the Saviour whom she loved. However busy, she was always ready to enjoy a season of devotion with her Christian friends who called to see her. She chose to live alone—*alone with God*, where, as she expressed it, "there would be no hinderances to prayer and praise at any time ; where she could converse with her Saviour all day long." So naturally would she speak to us of the presence of Christ with her, so happy was she in her testimony to the consolations she enjoyed in communion with him, that one could not but feel that Christ was with her, and that her little cottage on the plain was near to heaven.

Phebe was *contented and happy*. As a friend passed her dwelling, and it was beginning to rain, it was said to her, "I am afraid you will not get your clothes dry to-day, Phebe." "That is as the Lord pleases," she replied. All was right with her because she resigned her own will to the will of God ; hence she seemed to be always peaceful and happy. Every body knew that Phebe was *happy*, and that it was *religion* that made her so. Young persons and children, as well as those of maturer years, loved to visit her. At one time a little colored girl was spending several weeks with Phebe. A gentleman meeting her, said, "Where do you live, little girl?" "With *happy Phebe*," was her quick reply. Not long since, a kind neighbor sent her daughter to read to her the little book, "A Trap to catch a Sunbeam." After hearing it, said Phebe, "That is a beautiful book, but I don't need a trap to catch sunbeams ; I *find sunbeams everywhere*."

Who ever heard Phebe complain, or severely censure

any one? Fault-finding was not her way of doing good, or being useful in the church. When harsh remarks were made in her presence concerning her brethren or sisters, she would say, "We must pray more for them." And this was her custom. Not long since she was rudely spoken to, and her feelings wounded. Said Phebe, "I have a Friend, to whom I can go;" and with no other reply she turned away, and on her knees before God prayed for this individual. The next morning the person came and asked her pardon. How beautifully does this illustrate the passage, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves." Again, returning home from meeting one dark evening, with her head bowed down as usual, she was accosted, "Where are *you* bound, old woman?" "To *Canaan's happy land*," she answered.

Phebe *loved the Scriptures*. Near by her, and always on her mind and heart, was her "precious Holy Bible," and her large-print Testament. Phebe had the same Bible that others have, but she found in it a great deal more than is commonly found, as all may observe who have seen her Bible. There the promises, and the threatenings and warnings too, are marked or underscored by her pen or pencil. Phebe's marks beneath or beside a passage, made often with a heavy stroke of her pencil, come to our minds with the force of a commentary, for she was herself a "living epistle," "known and read" by us all. Said her pastor, "If a thousand devoted Christians were requested to mark their favorite texts and expressions, it is believed they would hardly mark one not underscored by Phebe."

Phebe *loved the house of God*. She took great delight in the services of the sanctuary: hence she was never absent except from sickness or urgent necessity. She was indeed a pillar of the church; one in whom the minister found support by her constant attendance and prayers, by her cordial reception and love of the truth. She was the first to be seated in her place at church. For many years, in our former house of worship, she was

seen sitting in one corner of the gallery, on the furthest row of seats, with her head bowed in secret prayer. To look up to her as we entered the house of God was, to some of us at least, a prayer, a sermon, a hymn of praise. The last winter, her health failing, she was unable to walk to church as formerly, and remained during the intermission—a season highly prized by some of her Christian friends, who would hasten back to meet her. That glowing look of hers, that close pressure of the hand, that Sabbath-day greeting, will never be forgotten. The best, the most experienced Christians loved to be with Phebe, because she was a happy, Bible Christian, a witness to the truth of God.

Phebe *loved to pray*. Many times a day would she go to her bedroom, carpeted as for a little sanctuary, and kneel and pray. So much was her soul awake to the interests of Zion, it was no uncommon occurrence for her to arise at *midnight* and pray. "At midnight I will arise, and give thanks unto thee." This is a marked passage in her Bible. About four years since, her pastor was strengthened more than usual in his labors; his soul was richly fed with heavenly manna; and of this bread many of his flock partook with him. Not long after this season of refreshing, it was ascertained that Phebe had arisen *every night, month after month, at midnight*, to pray for her pastor.

Many were the *individuals* for whom she prayed. During the past winter a friend called to see her. "What is the good word?" said Phebe. "Anna —— is serious, and inquiring the way of life." She arose at once from her seat, lifted her hands, and with tears of joy praised God aloud, and said, "For *her* I have been praying; God is a hearer of prayer."

Phebe's *faith and confidence in God were practical*, and availed her in time of need. When her "mistress," Mrs. Allen, died, whom she loved more than any being on earth, and whose death was very sudden, in the dead of night, causing great distress in the family, Phebe calmly said, "Don't we pray, '*Thy will be done?*' and now it is done."

Phebe *gave of her substance*. She made a monthly contribution of fifty cents to missions, and bequeathed her little all, remaining after her decease, to the cause of Christ.

Phebe *prayed for the college*. The officers and students she bore on her heart to God. She always manifested a deep interest in the annual concert of prayer for colleges. At this concert, in the year 1834, a six o'clock morning prayer-meeting was appointed. When the pastor came, he found that Phebe had been there, *on the door-steps, more than an hour praying!* While it was yet dark, she found her way to the prayer-meeting, as Mary to the sepulchre. Who can tell how many souls were converted in answer to the prayers on that door-step—how much they had to do with those conversions in college which occurred at this time, and the fruits of which may be seen in the ministers scattered abroad, preaching the gospel, gathering souls into the kingdom of Christ? Those seasons of revivals in college, have they no connection with the prayers of this humble saint, who lived to pray: lived in obscurity, and yet lived for the college, lived for the church, lived for the pastor, lived for the world?

Phebe *loved the church and female prayer-meeting*. Through the storm and wind and bad walking she would find her way to the place of prayer. In the female prayer-meeting, all loved to kneel when Phebe prayed. She approached the throne of grace as if her mind and heart were already there, and she had only to open her lips and the prayer of the heart ascended, in humility and faith and love. The last Sabbath she spent on earth she was at church as usual, and stopped at noon, and was conversing on the value and importance of this meeting. She then alluded to a time, about four years since, when "she could not hold her peace." About this time Phebe seemed more fully than ever before to receive Christ as an all-sufficient, present Saviour. The blessings of his salvation seemed as much her own as if she alone was heir to the redemption purchased by Christ. She "knew in whom she be-

lieved," and that "he was able to make all grace abound toward her." Grace was triumphant in her soul, and so continued, by her own testimony given at her last interview with her Christian friends. From this time, as she often expressed it, "she had never let her Saviour go;" "she had held him by the hand," nay more, "he had come into her heart, and continued to abide with her." "Satan is busy with me," she would sometimes say, "but my Lord is stronger than he." "My little house," said she, "this winter has become a *palace*: while sweeping my room to-day, I thought, I must sweep softly, for He was here, my Lord and King."

Phebe *was humble*. Her humility drew all hearts towards her. All the attention she received did not cause her for a moment to step aside from her own humble path, in which she continued to walk, doing her own work, or rather the Lord's, in her own humble, quiet way. She rarely, if ever, spoke first, yet was always ready to respond heartily to the greetings of her brethren and sisters in Christ. She literally and truly sought out the *lowest seat*. Down by the door at the evening meeting sat Phebe with her head bowed, neither seeing nor wishing to be seen. Being urged to come up nearer, as she had often been before, it was said to her, "What will you do, Phebe, when you get to heaven?" "My Master will tell me where to sit," she answered. There was a peculiar lowly attitude of spirit and manner which sat on her with a natural grace and beauty, that cannot be described.

Phebe *had no fear of death*. She died as suddenly as her mistress, and now lies by her side in the Pine-grove cemetery, where lie so many of the loved and honored. She had often expressed a desire to be placed at her mistress' feet. As she was expecting to die *suddenly and alone*, she had given the signal to her nearest neighbor, that when she saw no smoke from her chimney in the morning, she would know that she was gone. "When you hear I am gone home," said she to the writer of this the Sabbath before she died, "praise the Lord." "I

shall go soon, very soon. If to-morrow you hear I am gone home to heaven, rejoice and give thanks, and remember, it is well with me." "Jesus, lover of my soul," she repeated at this, our last Sabbath interview; "yes, lover, LOVER, LOVER! How can I better express it? '*Jesus, lover of my soul.*'"

A few hours only before she was called away, she came to look on the wife of her pastor, then sleeping her last sleep, from which she was to awake only in heaven. As Phebe was standing and looking earnestly and, as it was believed, wishfully on that near approach to heaven, she was asked, "Phebe, don't you wish you were going home so soon?" "Yes, indeed I do," was her emphatic answer. "Are you not unwilling to be there alone in your house, when you may be taken sick at any time?" She replied, with solemn earnestness, "I am not alone; my Saviour is with me: he is my keeper, my shepherd, my all—my all in all."

The next morning Phebe's body was found in her bed, cold and lifeless; her eyes calmly closed, the mouth shut, her hands placed by her side, her candle burnt out, her Testament and spectacles by the bedside, the door of her house unbolted; no smoke ascended from her cottage, and Phebe was not—God took her.

"Who now will pray for us?" said one; "Phebe is gone." "We have lost Phebe's prayers," said another; "what a loss!" Again, "Phebe has been praying for us all these thirty years; and now we feel that God has made a great breach upon us." Said another, "Yes, *we* have lost, but *heaven* has gained. Who will sing the Saviour's praises louder, sweeter, than Phebe?"

The Sabbath following, at the close of the afternoon services, her remains were brought to the house of God. A large assembly were collected from all the congregations of the village. The pastor; Rev. Dr. Adams, though in deep affliction, his companion lying dead, to be buried on the morrow, could not refuse to be present: a highly valued member of his church had been taken from him;

one on whose prayers he depended, whose encouraging words had often given him new strength ; one who was a living witness of the truths he preached ; an example to believers : yes, the pastor, though in tears, was present to read the hymns, to offer the prayer, to read the Scriptures, to address the assembly, to bear a testimony, a full and emphatic testimony to the worth of Phebe. His trying position and touching address ; the sympathy of his flock with him ; the loss to us of his companion, a woman greatly respected and beloved ; and the loss of Phebe, made this occasion one of peculiar tenderness and solemnity. Slowly and sweetly sounded forth the organ's notes on that day, as if a weeping angel touched the strings ; there was sadness and beauty in the strains.

The wife of the pastor died the same night with Phebe, and perhaps at the same hour of the night. We may think of them as ascending together to the mansions of the blessed. To *die with Phebe* was a privilege ; and the pastor remarked on this occasion, that if his wife had been permitted to choose a companion to accompany her through the "dark valley," and into the open portals of heaven, she would have chosen Phebe. She was heard to say, "I am perfectly happy ; Christ is sufficient for all my necessities ; I never supposed I could enjoy so much : there is no one on earth I would exchange places with but Phebe."

At the funeral of Phebe there was no relative, no kindred of the flesh. Those following nearest her remains were President Allen and daughters, who, informed by telegraph, had come nearly two hundred miles to testify their respect and affection for the deceased. Her remains were borne out from the church and accompanied to the grave by officers of the college and others, who might have been chosen for this purpose had the most honored and most beloved among us fallen. A long procession followed her remains and gathered around her grave.

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TRUE RELIGION.

FROM PRESIDENT EDWARDS' REFLECTIONS ON THE
LIFE OF DAVID BRAINERD.

IN the life of BRAINERD we may see, as I apprehend, the nature of true religion, and the manner of its operation, when exemplified in a high degree and in powerful exercise. Particularly it may be worthy to be observed,

1. How greatly Brainerd's religion differed from that of some pretenders to the experience of a clear work of saving conversion wrought on their hearts; who, depending and living on that, settle in a cold, careless, and carnal frame of mind, and in a neglect of a thorough, earnest religion, in the stated practice of it. Although his convictions and conversion were in all respects exceedingly clear, and very remarkable, yet how far was he from acting as though he thought he had got through his work, when once he had obtained comfort and satisfaction of his interest in Christ and a title to heaven. On the contrary, that work on his heart by which he was brought to this, was with him evidently but the beginning of his work—his first entering on the great business of religion and the service of God—his first setting out in his race. His work was not finished, nor his race ended, till life was ended.

As his conversion was not the end of his work, or of the course of his diligence and strivings in religion, so neither was it the end of the work of the Spirit of God on his heart. On the contrary, it was the first dawning of the light, which thenceforth increased more and more—the beginning of his holy affections, his sorrow for sin, his love to God, his rejoicing in Jesus Christ, his longing after holiness. There are many who, after the effect of novelty is

over, soon find their situation and feelings very much the same as before their supposed conversion, with respect to any present thirsting for God, or ardent outgoings of their souls after divine objects. Far otherwise was it with Brainerd. His experiences, instead of dying away, were evidently of an increasing nature. His first love, and other holy affections, even at the beginning, were very great; but, after the lapse of months and years, became much greater and more remarkable.

2. His religion apparently and greatly differed from that of many high pretenders to religion, who are frequently actuated by vehement emotions of mind, and are carried on in a course of sudden and strong impressions, and supposed high illuminations and immediate discoveries, and at the same time are persons of a virulent "zeal, not according to knowledge." If we look through the whole series of his experience, from his conversion to his death, we shall find none of this kind—no imaginary sight of Christ hanging on the cross with his blood streaming from his wounds, or with a countenance smiling on him, or arms open to embrace him; no sight of the book of life opened, with his name written in it; no hearing God or Christ speaking to him; nor any sudden suggestions of words or sentences, either of Scripture or any other, as then immediately spoken or sent to him; no new revelations; no sudden strong suggestions of secret facts. Nor do I find any one instance in all the records which he has left of his own life, from beginning to end, of joy excited from a supposed immediate witness of the Spirit, or inward immediate suggestion that his state was surely good. But the way in which he was satisfied of his own good estate, even to the entire abolishing of fear, was by feeling within himself the lively actings of a holy temper and heavenly disposition, the vigorous exercises of that divine "love which casteth out fear."

3. The great object of Brainerd's religion was holiness,

conformity to God, living to God, and glorifying him. This was what drew his heart; this was the centre of his soul; this was the ocean to which all the streams of his religious affections tended; this was the object which engaged his eager, thirsting desires and earnest pursuits. He knew no true excellency or happiness but this; this was what he longed for most vehemently and constantly on earth; and this was with him the beauty and blessedness of heaven. This made him so much, and so often long for that world of glory. It was to be perfectly holy, and perfectly exercised in the holy employments of heaven; and thus "to glorify God and enjoy him for ever."

His religious illuminations, affections, and comfort seemed, to a great degree, to be attended with evangelical humiliation, consisting in a sense of his own utter insufficiency, despicableness, and odiousness, with an answerable disposition and frame of heart. How deeply affected was he almost continually with his great defects in religion; with his vast distance from that spirituality and holy frame of mind that became him; with his ignorance, pride, deadness, unsteadiness, barrenness! He was not only affected with the remembrance of his former sinfulness before his conversion, but with the sense of his present vileness and pollution. He was not only disposed to think meanly of himself as before God, and in comparison of him, but among men, and as compared with them. He was apt to think other saints better than himself; yea, to look on himself as the meanest and least of saints; yea, very often, as the vilest and worst of mankind. And notwithstanding his great attainments in spiritual knowledge, yet we find there is scarcely any thing, with a sense of which he is more frequently affected and abased, than his ignorance.

How eminently did he appear to be of a meek and quiet spirit, resembling the lamblike, dovelike spirit of Jesus Christ! How full of love, meekness, quietness, forgiveness, and mercy! His love was not merely a fondness and

zeal for a party, but a universal benevolence, very often exercised in the most sensible and ardent love to his greatest opposers and enemies.

Of how soft and tender a spirit was he! How great and constant his jealousy over his own heart; how strict his care and watchfulness against sin; how deep and sensible were the wounds that sin made in his conscience! Those evils which are generally accounted small, were almost an insupportable burden to him; such as his inward deficiencies, his having no more love to God, finding within himself any slackness or dulness in religion, any unsteadiness or wandering frame of mind. How did the consideration of such things as these oppress and abase him, and fill him with inward shame and confusion. His joy seemed truly to be a rejoicing with trembling.

His religious affections and joys were not like those of some, who have rapture and mighty emotions from time to time in company, but have very little affection in retirement and secret places. Though he was of a very sociable temper, and loved the company of saints, and delighted very much in religious conversation, and in social worship, yet his warmest affections, and their greatest effects on his animal nature, and his sweetest joys, were in his closet devotions, in transactions between God and his own soul.

4. His religion did not consist in experience without practice. All his inward illuminations, affections, and comforts seemed to have a direct tendency to practice, and to issue in it; and this, not merely a practice negatively good, free from gross acts of irreligion and immorality, but a practice positively holy and Christian, in a serious, devout, humble, meek, merciful, charitable, and beneficent conversation; making the service of God and our Lord Jesus Christ the great business of life, to which he was devoted, and which he pursued with the greatest earnestness and diligence to the end of his days, through all trials.

ONE HONEST EFFORT;

OR,

THE COLLEGE STUDENT.

IN the year 1835 the son of a minister became a student of Brown University, Providence, R. I. At twelve years of age he had stood beside the couch of a dying mother, whose voice had often told him of Jesus, and whose prayers had constantly ascended for her first-born. The hand which had led him to the Sunday-school was now motionless. With weeping eyes and a sad heart the son saw the coffin placed in the grave. Two years afterwards, at the age of fourteen, he entered the college.

New scenes engaged the attention of the youthful student. His mother was dead. His father, having relinquished the pastoral care of his church in Boston on account of the failure of his voice, was absent on a missionary tour in Asia. More than two years soon passed away.

The last Thursday in February, 1838, was observed by the pious students as a day of fasting and prayer, in concert with many of the followers of Christ. A daily prayer-meeting was held each evening for one hour. The son of a praying mother and of a pious father did not attend, for he was living without hope and without God. One day a friend asked him, "Have you attended any of the prayer-meetings?" He replied, "I have not." The pious student kindly urged him to attend, and added, "Come with us, and we will try to do you good." Admitting the importance of religion, he determined to comply with the request, and was present at the evening prayer-meeting. Another pious student accompanied him to his room, and after conversing with him about his sinfulness and need of a Saviour, proposed to kneel and pray with him. He

felt very deeply, and wept much. Feeling himself to be a sinner in the sight of God, he resolved to seek the Lord.

During the succeeding fortnight his feelings rather abated, though he did not give up the subject entirely. At one of the prayer-meetings the president urged those that were impenitent to make "ONE HONEST EFFORT for the salvation of the soul." He spoke of their efforts in worldly pursuits, in contrast with their neglect of the undying soul. "Even if they should be lost," he remarked, "they would not regret that they had at least made *one effort*." The remark affected him, and he resolved to make *one* honest effort, and for that purpose set apart the next Sabbath as a day of fasting and prayer.

In the morning the president preached a very solemn discourse in the chapel. The young man retired to his room for prayer. Sins long forgotten rose up before him. He reflected upon particular sins, and tried to humble himself on account of them, confessing them to God. Doddridge's Rise and Progress, the Bible, and the earnest appeals contained in the letters received from his absent father, were read with many tears. The early religious privileges which he had enjoyed made his sins more aggravated. He felt that he had indeed sinned against a just and merciful God. He wished to sin no more. He felt willing to do any thing, or suffer any degree of torture ever inflicted, as an equivalent for the pardon of his sins; for he could not see how he was to be saved by faith.

In the evening he went to a prayer-meeting, which he felt to be the most solemn he had ever attended. Distressed on account of his guilt, he asked the friend who had invited him to attend the prayer-meetings to come to his room, that he might unburden his feelings to him. He readily consented, and after giving some directions, prayed with him. When his friend left, he felt that if ever he obtained pardon, he must do it then, for he could put it off no longer. Entering a vacant room he fastened the door, determining to remain till he obtained the pardon of his sins and reconciliation to God. He felt that he was

justly condemned, and deserved to perish. He saw that no efforts of his own would avail. There was left but one hope, "the Lamb of God," the crucified Saviour. He prayed for mercy, feeling that though his petitions should not be answered, yet his situation could not be more miserable. No longer did he feel that if *one* effort did not succeed, he would try no more; for now he resolved never to turn back, but if he perished, to perish asking for mercy. His agony was such that he could hardly utter his desires. He could only cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and think of the promise, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

The next morning his mind was calm and tranquil. His first impression was, that he could not have been in earnest on the previous day, but his feelings were entirely different from any ever before experienced. He now felt a love for Christians; the Bible seemed to be a new book; prayer had pleasures never known before. Seeking out his most intimate friend, he proposed a walk, that he might speak of Jesus, and urge him to repent and believe. During the day his joy gradually increased, till he felt greater happiness than he had ever before experienced. It was the joy of pardoned sin.

At the prayer-meeting that evening he arose to tell his fellow-students what God had done for his soul, and to urge them to make "one honest effort" for their souls' salvation. A student, now a minister of the gospel, was very much affected, and resolved that he too would endeavor to seek a change of heart. Some wept, and others sung the praise of the Redeemer.

In a few days a little band of ten students cherished the hope of pardon through the Saviour's atoning blood. A young converts' prayer-meeting was commenced, and continued each week until their studies were completed. Six of that little group entered the ministry, and among them the subject of this narrative, who has often from the pulpit entreated sinners to make ONE HONEST EFFORT.

A mother's prayers were answered, though she did

not live to witness the conversion of her son. The absent father reached the shores of his native land within ten days, to be cheered by the tidings of the conversion of his first-born; and soon afterwards he welcomed his son into the church as a professed disciple of Jesus. The prayers of Christians that more laborers might be sent into the harvest, were answered. The conversation of pious friends and the frequent meetings for prayer were blessed.

Christless sinner, will you make *one honest effort* for your own salvation? Is it not a reasonable request? Do not delay. Life is short. Death is certain. If you intend to repent at some future time, why do you go on doing the very deeds for which you expect at some future time to repent? Is not this course inconsistent? Will you not at least make *one* sincere, honest effort? You need not fear to give up your present enjoyments. If you love Christ, you will no longer desire the pleasures which you now think it a hardship to give up. The withering touch of disease may at any time reach you. You must shortly stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. Oh throw yourself now at the foot of the cross, and seek pardon for your countless sins against a holy God. Christ is able and willing to save sinners when they come to him. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." "Now is the accepted time; *now* is the day of salvation." Throw yourself upon the mercy of Christ, just as you are. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Make an unreserved surrender. This may be the crisis, the turning point. Decide as on a death-bed you will wish you had done. Oh resolve *now*, to make ONE HONEST EFFORT for the salvation of your soul.

"I can but perish if I go:
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away, I know
I must for ever die."

THE CONVERSION

AND

CALL TO THE MINISTRY

OF THE

REV. JOHN H. LIVINGSTON, D. D.

THE genuineness of the work of grace in the heart of this eminent servant of Christ, which is here given chiefly as narrated by himself, was evinced by the entire subsequent history of his long and eventful life. He was born in Poughkeepsie, N. Y., May 30, 1746. He was the son of Henry Livingston, Esq.; was a family connection of Chancellor Livingston, and of Philip and Robert R. Livingston signers of the Declaration of Independence; and was a descendant of the Rev. John Livingston, whose sermon at the kirk of Shotts, June, 1630, on the day after a communion-season, is celebrated in the annals of the church of Scotland as blessed in the conversion of hundreds of souls, and the extensive revival of the work of God.

Having had superior early advantages, he graduated at Yale College in 1762, at the age of sixteen, and for two years ardently pursued the study of law, when, as he believed at the call of God, he devoted himself to the ministry. At the age of twenty, in 1766, he proceeded to Holland, and joined the university of Utrecht, where he pursued his theological studies, and was licensed to preach by the Classis of Amsterdam, in June, 1769. By the same ecclesiastical body he was ordained, and invested with the office of collegiate pastor of the Reformed Protestant Dutch church of the city of New York, April 2, 1770. On the 10th of September following, he was introduced to his pastoral charge, in which he continued to labor faithfully and fruitfully for more than forty years.

The piety, talents, learning, and various accomplishments of Dr. Livingston, almost at once secured to him an unrivalled

influence in the church of which he became so conspicuous an ornament. This influence he neither perverted nor forfeited, but, in its just exercise, retained to the last. His agency was at all times prominently called forth in the promotion of every great measure designed to advance the edification and prosperity of the church; and more than any other man, he contributed to the healing of divisions unhappily existing, and securing peace. Having for many years had young men preparing for the ministry under his care, in 1810 he resigned his pastoral charge and removed to New Brunswick, N. J., where the remainder of his life was spent in the arduous endeavor to build up a theological institution commensurate with the wants of the church with which he was connected. In this service he sacrificed and toiled and prayed. On the 20th of January, 1825, in the seventy-ninth year of his age, and the fifty-fifth of his ministry, having served his generation by the will of God, without the least premonition or the movement of a muscle, in the night-watches and on his bed, "he fell asleep," and ceased from his labors.

Dr. Livingston was a man of noble and commanding presence, of peculiar gentleness and urbanity of manner, and great spirituality of mind and conversation; one whom even the most casual observer could not fail to remark as eminent in every circle.

"While I was yet a child," says Dr. Livingston, "the solemn impressions of the being and presence of God, of my dependence upon him, and the awful realities of a future state, were very strong, and frequently interrupted me in my play and sports. I often left my little companions and sought some retired spot, where I might pray without being observed. What I prayed for, and what my views and exercises in prayer were, I do not now recollect; but there was something of the fear and reverence of God, of a sense of the evil of sin, and a universal obligation to fulfil every duty, which occupied my mind, aroused my conscience, and convinced me that I could never be happy, if I remained an enemy to God, or wilfully transgressed his holy commandments. But these first principles, or convictions, whatever they were, did not prove effectual to produce

conversion. They were changeable and transient. They frequently returned, and were as frequently forgotten, excepting that they created in me a lively and tender conscience, which, through all the giddy mazes, violent temptations, and wild eccentricities of youth, never wholly forsook me. They excited a rigid monitor within my breast, and often silently but powerfully preserved me from follies and sins which, otherwise, I should undoubtedly have perpetrated. I recollect instances wherein the Lord, with a strong hand and discernible interposition, prevented me from committing sins where temptations were numerous and urgent. These early impressions went no further. The amount of benefits resulting from early parental instruction, and from all the ordinances and sermons I had heard during my whole life, was nothing more than some confused ideas of truths which I did not understand or believe. This was my own fault, for I had not been in earnest, or desirous to know the Lord or obey his word.

“A book of Bunyan—I think it was *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*—first excited sharp and irresistible alarms in my soul, but I obtained no particular instruction, nor received any other advantage from that book. In my father’s library, among other religious books, I found *Doddridge’s Rise and Progress*. This gave me more enlarged and correct views of religion than I ever had before. I perused it with great attention and much prayer, and wished to feel and experience the power of the truths as they occurred in succession. This book was useful and blessed to me beyond any uninspired volume I ever read. But my chief attention was fixed upon the sacred Scriptures. I knew nothing of the peculiar nature of a divine revelation, nor of the distinct classes of arguments which prove the Bible to be written by men inspired of the Holy Ghost; but there was an internal evidence in that sacred book—there was a majesty, sublimity, and authority, connected with perspicuity and power, which commanded my

attention, and enjoined obedience. The divine perfections of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God, and his glorious works, as delineated in the Bible, I was sure were agreeable to truth. And I found the secrets of my heart, my state, my character, my principles, and conduct were all naked and open to the word of God. To receive, therefore, that blessed volume, without hesitation, as the standard of my faith and practice, was my ardent wish; being firmly persuaded that I should be condemned or accepted agreeably to its infallible declarations. To understand the Scriptures, became, consequently, my earnest study and daily prayer; and to them I appealed upon every question which arose in my mind.

“Convictions of sin, of guilt, and misery, became clear and pungent; and some confused idea of redemption through a Saviour, and the possibility of pardon, and the restoration of my depraved nature, engaged my thoughts and prayers without intermission. For several months I could do nothing but read and meditate, plead at a throne of grace, and weep over my wretched and lost estate.

“As new inquiries and difficulties arose, and new truths, with their inseparable consequences, came under consideration, I repaired to the Bible; I supplicated for light and instruction, and had to contend, study, and struggle for every article of faith in succession.

“Two doctrines, above all others, engaged my ardent attention, and caused a severe and long conflict.

“The first was the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ I saw, in his word, that he was a great Saviour; that the Father was well-pleased in his Son; and that sinners, the chief of sinners, were accepted in the Beloved. I believed that he was able to save, even to the uttermost, all who come unto God by him. It was also evident, that in all his fulness, he was freely offered in the gospel, and the vilest sinners were authorized and commanded to believe in him, to accept him in all his glorious offices, and be-

come exclusively his property. But if he were only a man, I did not dare to give myself away wholly to him, as I should then, by a solemn act, engage to belong to a mere creature, and thus, by becoming united even to Jesus, I should not yet come home to my God, from whom I had revolted. This checked my exercises for a time, and brought me into great fears and perplexity; until, from his word, I obtained a clearer discovery of the perfections of God, and of the infinite evil of sin. This convinced me that no finite arm could vindicate the divine government, and rescue me from the curse; that He alone who made me, could possess authority and power to redeem me; and that my Saviour must not only be truly man, but also truly God. I then satisfactorily perceived and understood that this was the doctrine of the Bible: I saw it was the uniform declaration of the sacred Scriptures, that the Son of God was one with the Father; that he that hath seen the Son, hath seen the Father; and that, therefore, if I came to Jesus, I should come home to my God—my Maker would be my husband. Of that interesting truth I have never doubted since.

“The other doctrine which fixed my attention, and excited much care and study, respected justification.

“A conviction of guilt and misery, of pollution and inability, assured me of the impossibility of my being accepted of God, either in whole or in part, for any thing to be produced or performed by me. I was fully convinced that without a better righteousness than my own, I must and should perish for ever. This conviction prompted me most attentively to read, and with fervent prayer to study the word of God. I made no use of commentaries, nor any human aid, but perused and compared again and again the sacred Scriptures, especially the prophecy of Isaiah, the epistles of Paul to the Romans and to the Galatians, the first epistle of Peter, and the gospel of John. These I attentively read; upon these I meditated; and with a

sincere desire for instruction, continually supplicated the throne of grace to be led into the truth, preserved from error, and established in the doctrine of the gospel. And it pleased the Lord, I trust, to give me the light and instruction I sought. The righteousness of Christ, comprising his active and passive obedience, and the imputation of that righteousness to every soul who receives the Saviour by faith, and thus by his Spirit becomes united to him, which is the basis upon which imputation rests, were rendered so intelligible, clear, and convincing to my mind, that I considered the result to be the teaching of the Holy Spirit by his word, and received it and submitted to it as such, without any wavering or carnal disputation. That the atonement of Christ was specific, complete, and worthy of all acceptance, I was sure.

“These were my views of justification *by* faith, but not *for* faith. And my belief of the relation of God the Redeemer to all the redeemed, and of the imputed righteousness of the precious Saviour, was then so decided, clear, and full, that although a long life of study in this and other doctrines has succeeded, I do not know that I have ever obtained one new or additional idea respecting the justification of a sinner. All I know of it, I gained at that period of my life and of my exercises, and no adverse winds of false doctrines have ever shaken my faith.

“During these studies and conflicts a sense of guilt increased, and the most distressing convictions of sin excited amazement and terrors which no words can express. My unbelief prevented me from closing with the gracious calls of the gospel; my heart remained so hard and stubborn, and my fears became so alarming, that I was reduced to the brink of despair, and felt and experienced what it would be improper even to mention. In this dreadful horror of soul, and fearful state of mind, I continued many weeks; and had it continued much longer, or rose a little higher, I must have died. I believed the Lord Jesus was

able to save me, but I could not believe that he was willing to receive and save a wretch who had sinned so much, and resisted his grace so long as I had done.

“At length it pleased him to conquer my unbelief, by convincing me that if the Saviour was able to save me, he must, most assuredly, be also willing, and that as such, he had pledged himself not to cast out any who came to him. This broke the chains and brought me into liberty. This dispelled doubts, removed fears, and conquered despondency. This gave me free and cheerful access to the throne of grace. I found a warrant and freedom to give myself away to the blessed Jesus, and I did most unreservedly do it with the greatest willingness, sincerity, joy, and eagerness, that I ever performed any act in my life.

“Now consolations succeeded to griefs. I lived by faith. I found rest, and knew what it was to have Christ living in me. I had joy and peace in believing. I was conscious that I had received the divine Redeemer in all his offices, as offered to sinners in his word; that I had devoted myself, for time and eternity, to him, and was no longer my own; and that I had actually become united to him. I have never doubted of this transaction, through all the trials of faith, to this day.

“For some months my consolations abounded, and I felt a degree of that love which casteth out fear. Raised from the depths of despair, and brought out of darkness into light, I now enjoyed all that assurance of salvation, and rapture of hope, which a lively, direct, and appropriating faith in my blessed Jesus produced. I realized my union with him; I derived of his fulness, and walked in the light of the countenance of the God of my salvation.

“Sin appeared exceeding sinful. With a broken and contrite heart, I sincerely repented of it; and I especially mourned when I looked unto Him whom I had pierced. I abhorred myself as a monster of iniquity and ingratitude, while I fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before me

Willing and desirous to be saved from my sins, and hungering and thirsting after righteousness, my Saviour became very precious to my soul. He was the Lord, my righteousness and strength, my way, my end, my life, my all in all. The word, Gal. 2 : 20, was realized, and foremost in my exercises for some time ; I believed, experienced, and repeatedly said, ' I am crucified with Christ : nevertheless, I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me : and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.' I now knew that divine grace had reduced a prodigal to his right mind, and brought a wandering and unworthy child home to his Father. With my whole heart, I earnestly and repeatedly devoted myself to him in a covenant which I was confident was in all things well ordered and sure. I now had but one Master, who had bought me with a price. To him I exclusively belonged, and in the strength of his grace I resolved, with self-denial and perseverance, to follow and serve him alone.

“ This opened to me sublime and affecting views. This broke the prevailing power of sin in my soul, and it has never had dominion over me since. This inspired me with supreme love to God and holiness, and suggested ends and motives unknown to me before. Every thing appeared, and was in fact then new to me. With the change of my relative state, when upon receiving Christ I obtained the adoption, he changed also my internal state, and gave me a new heart, with the temper and affections of a child. John 1 : 12, 13. In the happy frame which these exercises and the communications of the divine presence excited, I continued for some time with inexpressible delight, and was convinced it would be easy to suffer martyrdom, if the Lord should please to manifest himself to the soul, and say, *I am your salvation*. These views and comforts engaged my total attention, and I expected they would always remain, and even daily increase ; and notwith-

standing a disappointment in that expectation, still, the recollection and relish of those first exercises of faith, of hope, of love, of joy, and peace, have never been lost. In the darkest hours which have since succeeded, in the heaviest trials and greatest discouragements, I have never gone to my blessed Saviour and God as to a stranger, but always have considered him as my covenant Head, my Lord, my Husband, and portion, who has united me to himself, and from whom, I am assured, nothing shall be able to separate me. I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep, and will keep, that which I have committed unto him against that day.

“The first alarm respecting a change in my comfortable frames, was occasioned by a sermon I one morning heard the celebrated Whitefield preach. His text was Psa. 40:1-3. In the introduction he said he had intended to preach upon another subject, but this passage was impressed with such power upon his mind, that he was constrained to take it; *and I believe, said he, there is one now present, for whom God designs this to be a word in season. The young convert, rejoicing in hope, and in a lively frame, expects he will always proceed, with swelling sails, before a propitious gale of consolations; but remember, said the great preacher—and I thought he pointedly and solemnly addressed me—that at some period of your life you will come into a situation and exercises which you will denominate with David, a horrible pit and miry clay; there you will remain until your patience is severely tried. Yet be of good courage: the Lord will bring you out with triumphant songs of deliverance. He will set your feet upon a rock, and establish your goings. Your restoration will be equal to your first joys. Be of good cheer. Look unto Jesus. The victory is sure.* From that hour, I considered this word intended for me, and expected its accomplishment. I knew not what it fully comprehended, but I understood it in part, and was persuaded that I should

know the whole. And in the progress of my spiritual warfare I have experienced it, although I still wait for its highest fulfilment. No word of scripture has been more constantly, for many years, present to my mind, influential to my heart, or oftener upon my lips in prayer, while patience is performing its perfect work.

“I began to feel even greater ardor for the study of divinity, than I had before entertained for the law; yet here difficulties which seemed insuperable, immediately occurred. My health was feeble; the pain in my breast was frequently severe; and I could scarcely hope that I should be ever equal to the labors inseparable from the ministry of the gospel. But this was only a secondary objection: my principal difficulty arose from another source. As the servant of Christ, I did not dare to engage in any profession or service without being first convinced that it was agreeable to the will of my divine Master; nor could I form any determination until I had obtained his permission. The duties and office of the ministry of the gospel especially, opened with such magnitude and high responsibility to my view, that I feared I was wholly unequal, and altogether unworthy of being employed in the sanctuary. I supposed it would be presumption in me to engage in this holy work; and the words, Isa. 1:12, ‘*Who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?*’ were awful and impressive.

“Convinced of the propriety and duty of acknowledging the Lord in all my ways, and particularly in a step of such importance, and believing that according to his promise he would direct my paths, I often prayed most fervently to obtain light and direction in this interesting object. Sometimes encouraged to hope that I might proceed, and again cast down and desponding, I resolved to set apart a day, with fasting and prayer, to pour out my heart before the Lord, and plead for his instruction. Upon this solemn occasion, after fervent supplications, reading the word, and

serious meditation, I endeavored to arrange the subject; and the better to understand it in all its bearings, I committed to writing in one column all the arguments in favor, and in another all those against it. These I maturely compared and disinterestedly pondered. Especially I endeavored most accurately to examine my motives and ascertain the end I proposed, if I ever should enter into the ministry. I found in this scrutiny, and was sure there was no deception, that I was solely prompted by a zeal to promote the glory of my divine Redeemer—by an ardent love for the souls of men, and a desire to bring sinners, by preaching the gospel, to the obedience of faith. I was conscious that I did not ‘desire the office of a bishop’ to gratify pride, indolence, or ambition, nor to promote my own personal advantage and profit, for I knew it would be a sacrifice of my secular interests and prospects; but that in sincerity, and before God, it was to labor in his church—it was to advance the cause of truth and holiness, and in this service to express my gratitude for redeeming love.

“But such was my fear of rushing inconsiderately and impiously into this solemn work, that I several times repeated these devotional exercises, and again set apart days for that purpose—still under the impression of those awful words, ‘Who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?’ Nor did I dare to come to any conclusion, nor should I ever have commenced the study of theology, unless it had pleased the Lord to hear my poor prayers, and convince me it was consistent with his holy will that I should devote myself to this arduous service.

“I did not expect or desire any immediate revelation, nor did I pray for any extraordinary manifestation. I only wished for a removal of my doubts and fears, for a confirmation of my motives and desires, and in this way to obtain a convincing and comfortable token of the divine approbation. Whenever I realized the voice of the Lord, saying, *Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?* the

reply of my soul was, *Here am I, send me.* Yet still I hesitated to conclude that he would send me, or expect he would honor me with his message. After some weeks spent in these exercises, the result was that my doubts and fears were all entirely removed, and I began humbly to hope and be persuaded that I not only might commence the study, but actually must proceed. Every other door was shut against me, while a sincere desire for this work, from honest and sanctified principles, prevailed; and I could not avoid considering all this as a divine response—as a gracious word of commission—*and he said, Go.* From that hour I never doubted of my duty, but have had incontestable and continued proofs that my Lord had called me to the ministry, and would in mercy employ me in his vineyard. My only remaining burden now was, to obtain the spirit of that station, to be furnished with special talents, to be instructed in the truth, and to be rendered faithful.”

NOTE.—The above record may be found in the able memoir of Dr. Livingston, by the late Rev. Dr. Alexander Gunn.

THE
SWEDISH NURSE-MAID.

BY MRS. KNILL.



In the year 1819, I was in Sweden, and wished to hire a nurse-maid to take with us to St. Petersburg. Among those that offered themselves, was a tall, fine-looking young woman, very neat in her person, of a lively temper; and being pleased with her appearance, I engaged her and she entered our family.

Louisa Söderberg—for that was her name—was, by birth, a Swede, and spoke the Swedish and German languages. Her disposition was remarkably good. She nursed

our infant well, and soon grew fond of it. In short, she was so well able to do what was required in her situation, that we were quite satisfied with her, as far as her work was concerned. But it was easy to see that Louisa was altogether without religion. She had never possessed a Bible, nor ever heard a chapter read, except when she went to church, which was but seldom. Though born in a Christian land, she was as ignorant of God's word as a heathen. And what was worse, she had the habit of taking the name of God in vain, and of crying out, "O Jesus!" upon every trifling occasion, whenever she was surprised or pleased or alarmed at any thing.

Those who truly fear the Lord are much grieved and wounded in spirit, when they hear these sacred names abused. They are ready to say, with pious king David, "Horror hath taken hold of me, because of the wicked that forsake thy law." It is a bad sign, if you can hear the name of God profaned without being pained by it; and worse still, if you can trifle with it yourself. Our ears were shocked, and our hearts filled with sorrow and pity for our poor unconverted servant. I say *unconverted*: do you know what that word means? It means that her heart was not right with God—that it needed to be turned, changed, made new, by the Holy Spirit. Every one has a heart either converted or unconverted. In what state is yours? Is it like Louisa's at the time I speak of? Then hear a little more about her history.

One morning—it was the day after she came to live with us—I said to her, "Louisa, do you know that God has commanded us, saying, 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain?' and yet you are sinning in that way from morning to night. It quite pains us to hear you." "Does it, ma'am?" she replied, "O, then I must leave it off. I suppose it is a habit with me; and I never thought about it, whether it was right or wrong." I opened the German Bible, and showed her the commandment, Exod 20 : 7. "There," said I, "read it; can any thing be plain-

er?" "So indeed it is," she replied, "plain enough; but no one ever told me of it before; so I never thought there was any harm in it. However," continued she, with a smiling countenance, "if you, ma'am, will check me whenever I forget, I will soon cure myself of this bad habit." In one fortnight, from no higher motive than to please her employers, she had entirely laid aside the sinful use of her Maker's and Redeemer's name in common conversation. How does her conduct condemn those who say, "I can't govern my tongue," or, "I can't control my temper," or, "I can't do what I know to be right." O, that word *cannot* is too often used to cloak the want of will. But God looks at the heart; and he knows, that where there is a disposition and a desire and an effort, much can be done; and that if we look to him for strength, his grace will be sufficient for us. Louisa did not seek divine grace at this time, for she was living "without God in the world;" but surely her conduct in the above instance may put to shame those vain excuses of inability, that is, of not being able to do right, by which people often try to shelter themselves from blame.

I now began to teach our Louisa the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. But finding it difficult to say all I wished to say in a foreign language which I had not fully learned, it came into my mind, that one of the best means of making her acquainted with the blessed truths of the gospel would be to teach her to read and understand English. So I asked her, "Louisa, do you wish to learn our language? If you like, I will teach you." The girl was delighted at the thought of learning English, and without delay we began our first lesson in the spelling-book. She made rapid progress, for her heart was in it; and in about four months she could read the gospels with ease, and understood many things that I said to her. Now I thought it was time to try to explain to her more fully the meaning of certain portions of Scripture, as she read them; such as, what it is to be "born again;" what is meant by "repent-

ance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, also about sin, and the great atoning work of Christ, and the way for a sinner to be made just with God and fit for heaven. Sometimes I spoke to her on one of these subjects, and sometimes on another, as the Lord enabled me. Besides, I now and then put a question to her, such as, "Do you, Louisa, feel yourself to be a sinner?" "Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?" and so on. But I soon perceived that she did not like this. She would have had me let her go on reading, without explaining or asking her any questions; for she did not like to have her conscience disturbed. In short, she displayed such a growing dislike to be spoken to about the salvation of her soul, that she would rather give up her reading-lesson, fond as she was of learning English, than suffer any text to be applied to her own state and character.

The enmity of Louisa's heart against the truth seemed to increase from day to day. She could now understand our family prayers, and the reading of the holy Scriptures night and morning, at which she was always present. But the more she knew of the gospel of God our Saviour, the more she resisted the light, and hated the humbling doctrines of the cross. I was greatly discouraged, and ready to give up all hope of seeing the heart of my child's nurse turned to the Lord. For a time my efforts for the good of her soul relaxed. But the good providence and abounding grace of God did not suffer things to continue thus. I was laid upon a bed of sickness, and Louisa became my kind, attentive nurse. Again I travailed in spirit for the salvation of her soul; and resolved, by the help of God, further to use every method that I could devise for her conviction and conversion. And now my prayer for her was, "Lord, if thou wilt not honor me to be the instrument of bringing her out of darkness into thy marvellous light, choose whom thou wilt; only let the glorious work be done, to the praise of thine own holy name."

In the meantime, as I was slowly recovering, there

began to be much talk about a good German preacher, now the celebrated Gossner, who was publishing the glad tidings of redemption through the blood of Christ in a very powerful manner, to the awakening of hundreds upon hundreds in the city of St. Petersburg. This news rejoiced me, and revived my hopes concerning Louisa. Accordingly, as soon as I was able to go out, I confided my child to a friend's care, and took Louisa with me to the large chapel where Gossner was expected to preach. I was not disappointed in the sermon: it was sound and faithful, and full of scripture truths put in such a way as to strike home to the conscience. On coming out, I turned to Louisa and said, "Well, what do you think of that sermon?" "I never heard such a sermon in my life," she replied, with a look expressing deep inward feeling, "and I hope I shall never hear the like again. It went through and through me, like a knife. I should soon be in my grave, if I were to hear such preaching as that."

I cannot describe what I felt on hearing these words. It seemed clear to me that "the word of God" had proved "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword," in the heart of this young woman, "piercing," as saith the Scripture, "even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow." I knew that he who had wounded is able also to heal; and I inwardly prayed that this soreness of mind might lead our Louisa to apply for help to Him who has said, "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." "I am glad," said I, "that you have felt so deeply. That which you have been hearing is the word of God; and when God speaks to us, we ought to feel." I said no more at that time, but walked home in silence, leaving Louisa to her own reflections.

How mournful a fact is it that many people sit and hear a sermon without any feeling of what is said. The preacher tells them, that "God is angry with the wicked every day;" yet they do not feel the least fear or alarm.

He tells them, that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" yet they do not feel any love to God for his "unspeakable gift," nor any stirrings of soul on the subject of their future everlasting condition. They hear the words, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;" yet no feeling of godly sorrow breaks in upon their spirit, and no tear of penitence is shed. They come away from divine worship just as they went, with their hearts as hard as the nether millstone. This is a great evil, and a very common one. Is it the case with any one who reads or hears this? If so, it is no wonder that you are a stranger to the joys of religion; for they who never tremble at God's word, who never weep on account of sin, and who never feel their need of a Saviour, cannot possibly enjoy the gladness of heart which flows from the divine favor. The time will come, however, when you must feel, when you will be made to feel; and what will you then feel? Not the short pain which Louisa felt when the Spirit of God pierced her "through and through" with a sense of her sin and danger, that she might flee to "the blood of sprinkling" for pardon and for peace. No; it may then be too late for you to seek for mercy, and if so, what you must feel will be the gnawing of that worm which dieth not, and the consuming heat of that fire which is not quenched. But, bad as your state now is, you need not despair. The same way of escape that was open to Louisa is open also to you, whoever you may be. I invite you, therefore, to attend to the remainder of her history; and may God be pleased to bless it to the salvation of your soul.

Before I proceed, it is proper that I should say a word or two about that wicked spirit the devil. It is said in the Bible, that "when a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace." Now, by the "strong man" is meant Satan, who takes up his abode in the heart of every sinner, living and rioting in it like a prince in his

pâlace; and so long as he can hold possession of the unrenewed mind, he keeps every thing still and quiet, because he knows that, if there is any stir made about the way of life and godliness, it may end in his being turned out in favor of another and a better Master. Such was the case with Louisa. The great enemy of souls had been dwelling in her heart, and he had kept her in a false peace, which had never been seriously disturbed before. But now a stronger than Satan, even the Son of God himself, came in the power of his word and Spirit, and broke up the deadly calm which the devil had spread over her mind. But the evil one does not easily let go his prey; and he struggled hard to keep his hold of poor Louisa. She was greatly shaken in spirit by her inward convictions; yet still she tried to sing, and to be as merry as ever. But she could not throw off the solemn impressions which every fresh thought of the sermon revived in her soul, and which threw a sad and anxious cloud over her features.

Another week rolled round, and again I bade Louisa get ready to accompany me to Gossner's chapel. She looked very unwilling, but of that I took no notice, and we went. It would make the story too long, were I to relate what passed on this and other occasions; and, indeed, I cannot distinctly remember all the conversations I held with her at these times. Suffice it to say, that she became less and less unwilling to attend the preaching of the worthy "Pastor Gossner," and at length showed an ardent desire to hear the word from his lips as often as I could spare her.

And now the effect of the truth upon her mind became apparent. She read her Bible diligently, and frequently came to me for explanation of what she did not understand. When a public holiday came round, instead of dressing herself out as before, to go to the summer gardens, or other places of concourse, to see and be seen, she would ask leave to go to public worship; or if divine service was not observed on that day, she would stay quietly at home,

singing hymns and attending to her daily business. Her mind was now enlightened to perceive how a sinner can be just with God. She saw that by the deeds of the law she could not be justified; for it was when she compared herself with the holy law of God, that she felt her sinfulness, and her need of a free and full pardon, through the grace that is in Christ Jesus. She was enabled to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and to lay hold on his righteousness for her justification. And O, how sweet she found that gospel which reveals the love of God in the gift of his dear Son! From that time, she bound the promises to her heart, and lived upon them as her meat and her drink; and the precepts were no less esteemed by her, for she loved holiness, and sought in all things to be conformed to the will of God.

A year and a half passed away, and during that time Louisa was growing in grace and in the knowledge of her God and Saviour. In this interval, we had been induced to part with her, to fill a place of great trust in the family of our dear friend and brother, the Rev. Dr. Paterson. This arrangement was made for the advantage of all concerned, though not without some parting regrets on both sides. But as we were living within reach of the family which Louisa had entered, we frequently saw each other, and often spoke one to another of those things which are most worth talking about—our hopes for eternity.

Soon after the time just mentioned, Louisa caught a severe cold, accompanied with a cough, which continued with great obstinacy for many months. Dr. Paterson used every possible means for her restoration to health. She was nursed with the utmost care; but one sad symptom followed another, till cough, pain in the chest, and nightly perspirations began visibly to waste her strength. She was kindly invited by J. Venning, Esq., and his lady, to spend the summer at their country-seat, a beautiful place called "Leisure Hall;" and there, by the use of milk and fruits, together with as much fresh air as she could take, the dis-

ease was checked for a season, so that we almost entertained a hope of her recovery. When, however, the cold weather set in again, and she returned to town, she soon grew worse than before, and judged, from her bodily sufferings, that she was not long for this world.

I shall never forget one day, when she was telling me that the pain in her chest was almost past bearing, that I said to her, "What a delightful thought it is, that when the bodies of those who are in Christ shall be raised from the grave, they will feel no more pain, neither will there be any more sickness or sorrow!" and upon my saying this, she looked upon me with earnestness, and asked what I meant. To my great surprise, I found that she was not yet acquainted with the doctrine of the *resurrection*. She had received all the truths which relate to the salvation of the soul, but her views and hopes had been confined to her never-dying spirit; and though she must have read and heard of "the redemption of our body," yet she had never understood it, neither had she seen the full meaning of that glorious truth, "I am the resurrection and the life." In fact, till that moment she had thought that the body was to perish, finally and for ever, in the grave. I turned to 1 Cor. 15, and read her a few verses respecting the body being "sown in corruption" and "raised in incorruption;" "sown in weakness" and "raised in power," and so on; and I showed her some other passages where the same doctrine is taught. It is impossible for any one who has from childhood been familiar with the idea of a resurrection of the body to life and immortality, to conceive the wonder and delight with which this dying saint beheld, for the first time, that provision has been made in the great scheme of mercy, not only for the salvation of one part of our nature, but for that of our whole being—body and soul. "This," said she, "seems the only thing that was wanting to reconcile me to the thought of dying. Now I am more than reconciled: I am happy in the prospect. I did feel it hard to part with the body for ever; it seemed as if I

should not be entirely saved without it; but O, what grace is this, that even my poor body is to be redeemed from the power of death and the devil!" As she uttered these words, her countenance was lighted up with joy; and she seemed ready to say with Simeon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

The willing spirit of Louisa had not long to wait for dismissal from its wasting tabernacle. A message was sent me that she was worse, and confined to her bed. I went to her without delay. She did not appear to be very near her end; but on my entering her room she said, "I have been longing for you to come. I am going fast. Do not leave me. I wish to die in your arms." I sat down by her bedside, and promised to remain with her. As if to chain me to her side, she said, "Put your arm under my pillow; let me feel it there." I did so; and began to speak to her of the glorious change that was approaching, and of the blessedness of being for ever with the Lord. Her mind was chiefly occupied with the Saviour's justifying righteousness; and she quoted with great feeling the words, "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." She told me that on the previous day her beloved pastor Gossner had been to see her, and had prayed with her. She derived much consolation from the sweet words of holy Scripture that he had brought to her remembrance, and blessed God for having cast her lot among those who cared for her soul. She spoke particularly of the Christian kindness of Dr. Paterson; and just as she was faintly laboring to tell me of his unwearied care, he came into the room to inquire how she was. Observing her breathing much oppressed, he said to her, "Ah, Louisa, what would you now do without Christ? It is hard work to die, even amid the hopes and comforts of the gospel;" and then, with a view to ascertain the nature of her experience, and the strength of her confidence in God, he added, "Is it not hard to die?"

“Hard to die!” she replied with something like surprise at the question; “O no: my Saviour is so near; there is nothing hard while he is with me.” And as she said this, her eye assumed an expression of holy triumph, that showed how completely she was raised above the fears and pains of nature. What a victory! It was a privilege to behold the scene, and to hear such a dying testimony. Reader, will you be able to triumph thus? How are you living? Tell me that, and I shall be able to tell you how it is likely to be with you in your dying hour. Whoever thou art, I beseech thee, “Prepare to meet thy God;” for death will come to thee, as surely as it came to Louisa. May it find thee, as she was, ready to depart and be with Christ.

The medical attendant having called to see his patient, pronounced that she might yet linger for two or three days, but gave it as his opinion that it was more likely she would go off in a few hours. At three o'clock I left her for a little while to take some refreshment; and then returned to satisfy the dear invalid by placing my arm again beneath her head. She now fell into a stupor, which continued till very late in the evening; and as it appeared to us that her strength might still hold out for days to come, it was agreed that we should watch her by turns, and that while one was resting, another should sit up for a few hours at a time. As I had been much excited during the day, I was urged to retire first; and accordingly, about eleven o'clock, I went into an adjoining room and threw myself on the bed, where sorrow soon sealed my eyes in sleep, though much against my will, which would have led me to continue watching. I had been but an hour absent, when the dear female friend who had taken my place roused me with the words, “Come quickly, for Louisa is dying!” She had suddenly waked from her lethargy, and raising herself up in bed, with all the energy of a person in full strength, had taken off her cap, and with uplifted eyes and hands exclaimed, in a sort of holy

rapture, "Give me my new dress!"—no doubt referring to the "white robe," Rev. 7—then falling back upon her pillow, she lay unconscious, as in death. In a moment I was at her side, and saw the last gentle breath escape her lips. Happy Louisa! I looked to see—would she breathe again? But no; she was at rest for ever.

The remains of Louisa Söderberg sleep in the Volkofsky burying-ground, in one of the suburbs of St. Petersburg.

The following hymn was sung at her grave.

O for an overcoming faith,
 To cheer my dying hours,
 To triumph o'er the monster death,
 And all his frightful powers!

Joyful, with all the strength I have,
 My quivering lips should sing,
 "Where is thy boasted victory, Grave?
 And where the monster's sting?"

If sin be pardoned, I'm secure;
 Death has no sting beside:
 The law gives sin its damning power,
 But Christ, my ransom, died.

Now to the God of victory
 Immortal thanks be paid,
 Who makes us conquerors while we die,
 Through Christ, our living Head.

DISCOURAGEMENTS AND SUPPORTS
OF THE
CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

BY REV. ROBERT HALL,
BRISTOL, ENGLAND.

LET me first request your attention to the SOURCES OF DISCOURAGEMENT connected with the Christian ministry. They are such as arise, in part, from the nature of the office itself, which is appointed for the purpose of converting souls to God, and conducting them in the path to eternal life. To you is committed the ministry of reconciliation, the office of promulgating that system of truth which is designed to renew the world, and sanctify the church. Under the highest authority you are enjoined to use your utmost efforts *to open blind eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.* The bare mention of such an employment is enough to convince us the difficulties attending it are of no ordinary magnitude, and to make us exclaim with an apostle, Who is sufficient for these things?

1. The minds of men are *naturally indisposed* to the reception of divine truth. The truths of the gospel are not merely of a speculative nature, which need only to be stated with their proper evidence in order to ensure their success: there are in the mind latent prejudices against which they strongly militate, and which, when excited, naturally produce opposition. Mankind are disposed to think well of themselves, to view their virtues through a

magnifying medium, and to cast their deficiencies and vices into the shade. Dissatisfied, as they often are, with their outward condition, they have yet little or no conviction of their spiritual wants; but with respect to these are ready to imagine, with the Laodiceans, that they are "rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." Hence, it is with extreme difficulty they are brought to acquiesce in the humiliating representations made by the oracles of God, of their native guilt and misery. They will readily confess they are not perfectly innocent or faultless: they have their imperfections as well as others, but they are far from believing that they are actually under the wrath and displeasure of the Almighty. They feel, on the whole, satisfied with themselves, and, by setting their supposed good qualities and actions against their bad ones, contrive to adjust their account in such a manner as leaves a considerable balance in their favor. On the mercy of God they feel no objection to profess their reliance; deeming it more decent, and even more safe, than to challenge his justice; but it is easy to perceive that the mercy of which they speak is of such a nature, that they would look upon it as an absurdity to suppose it could be withheld. In short, they are the whole who need no physician.

The gospel presupposes a charge of guilt; it assumes, as an indubitable fact, the universal apostasy of our race, and its consequent liability to perish under the stroke of the divine anger; nor can you acquit yourself of the imputation of handling the word of God deceitfully, if, from false delicacy or mistaken tenderness, you neglect the frequent inculcation of this momentous truth. You will find it, however, no easy matter to fasten the charge on the conscience; which, when it seems to be admitted, will often amount to nothing more than a vague and general acknowledgment, which leaves the heart quite unaffected. To convince effectually, is, indeed, the work of a superior Agent.

2. The very attempt to produce that humiliating sense of unworthiness and weakness which is essential to a due reception of the gospel, will *frequently excite disgust*, should it terminate in no worse consequences. You will be reproached as the messenger of evil tidings, and suspected of taking a pleasure in overwhelming the soul with dark and melancholy forebodings. By a part of your hearers you will possibly be regarded as an unnatural character, and as having in your religion a tincture of what is savage and inhuman; in consequence of which, they who refuse to profit by your admonitions will be apt to apply to you the language of the king of Israel, "I hate him, for he never prophesieth good unto me, but always evil." Of the common apostasy, one of the most distinguishing features is a stupefaction, an insensibility in relation to whatever is of a spiritual nature, together with a levity and carelessness which it requires the utmost effort of the Christian ministry to dispel.

3. If you should be successful in awakening a salutary concern in the breasts of your hearers, and exciting them to inquire what they must do to be saved, *fresh difficulties await you*. The enemy will leave no artifice untried to divert it, and to wear it off, by such a succession of cares and vanities, that as much attention and address will be requisite to maintain it till it issues in a saving effect, as to produce it at first. There are many who, after appearing for a time earnestly engaged in the pursuit of salvation, have, in consequence of stifling convictions, become more callous and insensible than ever, as iron is hardened by being first heated in the fire, and then exposed to the cold. The grand scope of the Christian ministry is to bring men home to Christ; but ere they arrive thither, there are numerous by-paths into which those who are awakèned are in danger of diverging, and of finding a delusive repose, without coming as humble penitents to the foot of the cross. They are equally in danger of catching at premature consolation, and of sinking into listless dependency. "Withhold thy foot from being unshod," said

the prophet Jeremiah, "and thy throat from thirst: but thou saidst, There is no hope: no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go." In the pursuit of eternal good, the heart is extremely inconstant and irresolute; easily prevailed on, when the peace it is in quest of is delayed, to desist from further seeking. During the first serious impressions, the light which unveils futurity often shines with too feeble a ray to produce that perfect and plenary conviction which permits the mind no longer to vacillate; and the fascination of sensible objects eclipses the powers of the world to come. Nor is there less to be apprehended from another quarter. The conscience, roused to a just sense of the danger to which the sinner is exposed by his violation of the laws of God, is apt to derive consolation from this very uneasiness; by which means it is possible that the alarm, which is chiefly valuable on account of its tendency to produce a consent to the overtures of the gospel, may ultimately lull the mind into a deceitful repose. The number we fear is not small, of those who, though they have never experienced a saving change, are yet under no apprehensions respecting their state, merely because they can remember the time when they felt poignant convictions. Mistaking what are usually the preliminary steps to conversion, for conversion itself, they deduce from their former apprehensions an antidote against present fears; and from past prognostics of danger, an omen of their future safety. With persons of this description the flashes of a superficial joy, arising from a presumption of being already pardoned, accompanied with some slight and transient relishes of the word of God, are substituted for that new birth, and that lively trust in the Redeemer, to which the promise of salvation inseparably belongs. Such were those who received the seed into stony ground, and who, having heard the word of God, anon with joy received it, but having no depth of earth it soon withered away. Others endeavor to soothe the anguish of their minds by a punctual performance of certain religious exercises, and a

partial reformation of conduct ; in consequence of which, they sink into mere formalists, and confounding the instruments of religion with the end, their apparent melioration of character diverts their attention from their real wants. and, by making them insensible of the extent of their malady, obstructs their cure. Instead of imploring the assistance of the great Physician, and implicitly complying with his prescriptions, they have recourse to palliatives. which assuage the anguish and the smart, without reaching the seat, or touching the core of the disorder.

Were the change which the gospel proposes to effect less fundamental and extensive than it is, we might the more easily flatter ourselves with being able to carry its designs into execution. Did it aim merely to polish the exterior, to tame the wildness and prune the luxuriance of nature, without the implantation of a new principle, the undertaking would be less arduous. But its scope is much higher ; it proposes not merely to reform, but to renew ; not so much to repair the moral edifice, as to build it afresh ; not merely by the remonstrances of reason and the dictates of prudence to engage men to lay a restraint upon their vices, but by the inspiration of truth to become new creatures. The effects of the gospel on the heart are compared by the prophet to the planting of a wilderness, where what was barrenness and desolation before is replenished with new productions. "I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah-tree, and the myrtle and the oil-tree ; I will set in the desert the fir-tree, and the pine, and the box-tree together ; that they may see and know and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this." Although the change is frequently slow, and the Spirit of God, in effecting it, may proceed by imperceptible steps and gentle insinuations, the issue is invariably the same ; nor can any representation do justice to its dignity. How great the skill requisite in those who are to be the instruments of producing it.

To arrest the attention of the careless, to subdue the

pride and soften the obduracy of the human heart, so that it shall stoop to the authority of an unseen Saviour, is a task which surpasses the utmost efforts of human ability unaided by divine power. In attempting to realize the design of the Christian ministry, we are proposing to call the attention of men from the things which are seen and temporal, to things unseen and eternal; to conduct them from a life of sense to a life of faith; to subdue, or weaken at least, the influence of a world which, being always present, is incessantly appealing to the senses; and to solicit the heart in favor of a state, whose very existence is ascertained only by testimony. We call upon them to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, to deny the strongest and most inveterate propensities, and to renounce the enjoyments which they have tasted and felt, for the sake of a happiness for which they have no relish. We must charge *them*, as they value their salvation, not to love the world, who have been accustomed to make it the sole object of their attachment, and to return to their allegiance to that almighty and invisible Ruler from whom they have deeply revolted. We present to them, it is true, "a feast of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined;" we invite them to entertainments more ample and exquisite, than, but for the gospel, it had entered into the heart of man to conceive; but we address our invitations to minds fatally indisposed, alienated from the life of God, with little sense of the value of his favor and no delight in his converse. The souls we address, though originally formed for these enjoyments, and utterly incapable of being happy without them, have lost, through the fall, that right taste and apprehension of things, which is requisite for the due appreciation of these blessings; and, like Ezekiel, we prophesy to dry bones in the valley of vision, which will never live but under the visitation of that breath which bloweth where it listeth. This indisposition to the things of God, so radical and incurable by human power, as it has been a frequent source of discouragement to

the faithful minister, so it would prove an invincible obstacle to success, did that success depend upon human agency.

4. To these difficulties, which arise from the nature of the work, abstractly considered, must be added those which are modified by a variety of circumstances, and which result from that *diversity of temper, character, and situation*, which prevails in our auditory. To the several classes of which it consists, it is necessary "rightly to divide the word of truth, and give to every one his portion of meat in due season." The epidemic malady of our nature assumes so many shapes, and appears under such a variety of symptoms, that these may be considered as so many distinct diseases, which demand a proportionate variety in the method of treatment; nor will the same prescription suit all cases. A different set of truths, a different mode of address is requisite to rouse the careless, or to beat down the arrogance of a self-justifying spirit, from what is necessary to comfort the humble and contrite in heart; nor is it easy to say which we should most anxiously guard against, the infusion of a false peace, or inflaming the wounds which we ought to heal. A loose and indiscriminate manner of applying the promises and threatenings of the gospel, is ill-judged and pernicious; it is not possible to conceive a more effectual method of depriving the sword of the Spirit of its edge, than adopting that lax generality of representation which leaves its hearer nothing to apply, presents no incentive to self-examination, and, besides its utter inefficiency, disgusts by the ignorance of human nature, or the disregard to its best interests, it infallibly betrays. Without descending to such a minute specification of circumstances as shall make our addresses personal, they ought unquestionably to be characteristic, that the conscience of the audience may feel the hand of the preacher searching it, and every individual know where to class himself. The preacher who aims at doing good will endeavor above all things to insulate his hearers, to place each of them apart, and render it impossible for him to

escape by losing himself in the crowd. At the day of judgment, the attention excited by the surrounding scene, the strange aspect of nature, the dissolution of the elements, and the last trump, will have no other effect than to cause the reflections of the sinner to return with a more overwhelming tide on his own character, his sentence, his unchanging destiny; and, amid the innumerable millions who surround him, he will *mourn apart*. It is thus the Christian minister should endeavor to prepare the tribunal of conscience, and turn the eyes of every one of his hearers on himself.

To men of different casts and complexions, it is obvious a corresponding difference in the selection of topics and the method of appeal is requisite. Some are only capable of digesting the first principles of religion, on whom it is necessary often to inculcate the same lessons, with the reiteration of parental solicitude: there are others of a wider grasp of comprehension, who must be indulged with an ampler variety, and to whom views of religion less obvious, less obtrusive, and demanding a more vigorous exercise of the understanding, are peculiarly adapted. Some are accustomed to contemplate every subject in a light so cool and argumentative, that they are not easily impressed with any thing which is not presented in the garb of reasoning; nor apt, though firm believers in revelation, to be strongly moved by naked assertions even from that quarter: there are others of a softer temperament, who are more easily won by tender strokes of pathos. Minds of an obdurate make, and which have been rendered callous by long habits of vice, must be appalled and subdued by the terrors of the Lord; while others are capable of being drawn with cords of a man, with bands of love. Some we must save with fear, plucking them out of the fire; on others we must have compassion, making a difference. You will recollect that He who spake as never man spake, mild, gentle, persuasive in his addresses to the multitude, reserved the thunder of his denunciations for sanc-

timonious hypocrites. In this part of our ministerial function we shall do well to imitate St. Paul, who became all things to all men, that he might win some; combining, in his efforts for the salvation of souls, the utmost simplicity of intention with the utmost versatility of address.

May I be permitted to remark, though it may seem a digression, that in the mode of conducting our public ministrations we are perhaps too formal and mechanical; that in the distribution of the matter of our sermons we indulge too little variety; and, exposing our plan in all its parts, abate the edge of curiosity by enabling the hearer to anticipate what we intend to advance. Why should that force which surprise gives to every emotion derived from just and affecting sentiments be banished from the pulpit, when it is found of such moment in every other kind of public address. I cannot but imagine the first preachers of the gospel appeared before their audience with a more free and unfettered air than is consistent with the narrow trammels to which, in these latter ages, discourses from the pulpit are confined. The sublime emotions with which they were fraught would have rendered them impatient of such restrictions; nor could they suffer the impetuous stream of argument, expostulation, and pathos, to be weakened, by diverting it into the artificial reservoirs prepared in the heads and particulars of a modern sermon. Method, we are aware, is an essential ingredient in every discourse designed for the instruction of mankind: but it ought never to force itself on the attention as an object apart; never appear to be an end instead of an instrument; or beget a suspicion of the sentiments being introduced for the sake of the method, not the method for the sentiments. Let the experiment be tried on some of the best specimens of ancient eloquence; let an oration of Cicero or Demosthenes be stretched upon a Procrustes' bed of this sort, and if I am not greatly mistaken, the flame and enthusiasm which have excited admiration in all ages will instantly evaporate; yet no one perceives a want of method in these im-

mortal compositions, nor can any thing be conceived more remote from incoherent rhapsody.

To return to the subject: whatever the mode of address, or whatever the choice of topics, there are two qualities inseparable from religious instruction; these are *affection* and *seriousness*. In the most awful denunciations of the divine displeasure, an air of unaffected tenderness should be preserved, that, while with unsparing fidelity we declare the whole counsel of God, it may appear we are actuated by a genuine spirit of compassion. A hard and unfeeling manner of denouncing the threatenings of the word of God is not only barbarous and inhuman, but calculated, by inspiring disgust, to rob them of all their efficacy. If the awful part of our message, which may be styled the burden of the Lord, ever fall with due weight on our hearers, it will be when it is delivered with a trembling hand and faltering lips; and we may then expect them to realize its solemn import, when they perceive that we ourselves are ready to sink under it. "Of whom I have told you before," said St. Paul, "and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ." What force does that affecting declaration derive from these tears! An affectionate manner insinuates itself into the heart, renders it soft and pliable, and disposes it to imbibe the sentiments and follow the impulse of the speaker. Whoever has attended to the effect of addresses from the pulpit, must have perceived how much of their impression depends upon this quality, which gives to sentiments comparatively trite a power over the mind beyond what the most striking and original conceptions possess without it.

Near akin to this, and not inferior in importance, is the second quality we mentioned, *seriousness*. It is scarcely necessary to remark, how offensive and unnatural is every violation of it in a religious discourse, which is, however, of wider extent than is generally imagined—including not merely jesting, buffoonery, and undisguised levity of every sort, but also whatsoever in composition or manner is inco-

sistent with the supposition of the speaker being deeply in earnest ; such as sparkling ornaments, far-fetched images and that exuberance of flowers which seems evidently designed to gratify the fancy, rather than to touch the heart. When St. Paul recommends to Timothy that "sound speech which cannot be condemned," it is probable he refers as much to the propriety of the vehicle, as to the purity of the instruction. There is a sober dignity both of language and of sentiment, suited to the representations of religion in all its variety of topics, from which the inspired writers never depart, and which it will be our wisdom to imitate. In describing the pleasures of devotion, or the joys of heaven, there is nothing weak, sickly, or effeminate ; a chaste severity pervades their delineations, and whatever they say appears to emanate from a serious mind, accustomed to the contemplation of great objects, without ever sinking under them from imbecility, or attempting to supply a deficiency of interest by puerile exaggerations and feeble ornaments. The exquisite propriety of their representations is chiefly to be ascribed to their habitual seriousness ; and this seriousness, to their seeing things as they are.

Having touched on the principal difficulties attending the *public* exercise of the ministry, it may be expected something will be said on *its more private functions*. To affirm it to be the duty of a pastor to visit his people *often*, is perhaps affirming too much ; the more frequently he converses with them, however, provided his conversation be properly conducted, the more will his person be endeared and his ministry acceptable. The seasonable introduction of religious topics is often of such admirable use, that there are few qualities more enviable than the talent of teaching from house to house ; though the modern state of manners, I am aware, has rendered this branch of the pastoral office much more difficult than in former times. In a country village, where there is more simplicity, less dissipation, and less hurry of business than in large towns, prudent

exertions of this kind may be considered as eminently proper and beneficial. The extent to which they should be carried must be determined by circumstances, without attempting to prescribe any other rule than this, that the conversation of a Christian minister should be always such as is adapted to strengthen, not impair, the impression of his public instructions. Though it is not necessary, nor expedient, for him to be always conversing on the subject of religion, his conversation should invariably have a religious tendency, that whatever excursions he indulges, the return to serious topics may be easy and natural. The whole cast of his character should be such as is adapted to give weight to the exercise of his ministerial functions. You are aware that moral delinquency in *him* produces a sensation as when an armor-bearer fainteth; that he can neither stand nor fall by himself; and that it is impossible for him to deviate essentially from the path of rectitude, without incurring the guilt and infamy of Jeroboam, who is never mentioned but to be stigmatized as he "who taught Israel to sin." "Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." Instead of satisfying ourselves in the acquisition of virtue with the attainments of a learner, we must aspire to the perfection of a master; and give to our conduct the correctness of a pattern. We are called to such a conquest over the world, and such an exhibition of the spirit of Christ, as shall not merely exempt us from censure, but excite to emulation. "Ye are the salt of the earth, ye are the light of the world," said our Saviour to his disciples, whom he was about to send forth in the character of public teachers. As persons to whom the conduct of souls is committed, we cannot make a wrong step without endangering the interests of others; so that if we neglect to take our soundings and inspect our chart, ours is the misconduct of the pilot, who is denied the privilege of perishing alone. The immoral conduct of a Christian minister is little less than a public triumph over

the religion he inculcates; and when we recollect the frailty of our nature, the snares to which we are exposed, and the wiles of our adversary, who will proportion his efforts to the advantages resulting from his success, we must be aware how much the necessity of maintaining an exemplary conduct adds to the difficulty of the ministerial function.

With the utmost propriety of conduct, and the greatest skill exerted in your work, we dare not flatter you with the prospect of unmingled success. Under the most judicious method of treatment, the maladies of some will prove incurable, and they will perish under your hand. While to some the gospel is a savor of life unto life, to others it will prove the savor of death unto death; and in the course of your labors, you will meet with frequent disappointments where you have formed the most sanguine expectations. Some who did run well, will afterwards be hindered; and of others who have clean escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, being afterwards entangled therein, the latter end will be worse than the beginning. Many a Demas, it is probable, will forsake you, having loved this present world; and by many of your hearers, who now evince the most zealous attachment, you may hereafter be considered as an enemy, because you tell them the truth. In certain instances, your ministry will be attended with consequences which you cannot contemplate without deep concern; for the sword of the Spirit is an awful weapon, which will exert, where it fails to inflict a salutary wound, its *destructive* edge. Against those of your hearers who reject your message, though now an ambassador of peace and often a weeping suppliant at their feet, you will ere long appear a swift witness before God, and be compelled, by your voice, to exasperate the accents of vengeance, and augment the vials of wrath. You are set for the rising and falling of many in Israel.

II. But it is time to turn to a more pleasing part of our

subject, and to remind you of some of the SUPPORTS by which these sources of discouragement are balanced.

1. The office you have undertaken is of *divine institution*. The unhappy disputes which have prevailed in the church, respecting the proper channels for conveying, and the legitimate mode of vesting it, are so far from weakening or perplexing the evidence of this truth, that they may be considered as so many concurrent suffrages in its favor; since it is allowed on all hands, that the Christian ministry is an ordinance of God—an expedient for the improvement of mankind, of his devising, and supported by his authority. But of that wisdom which pervades the works of God, the church is the principal scene; “to the intent,” saith the apostle, “that unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.” Hence we may be certain that so leading a branch of its constitution as that under our consideration, cannot fail of being adapted, in the best possible manner, to promote the interest of religion; nor is it difficult to perceive, that if men are to be wrought upon by reason and persuasion, the setting apart an order for the express purpose of instructing them in the concerns of salvation must have a beneficial tendency: an order, be it remembered, not appointed like the priests of pagan antiquity, for the performance of ceremonies, but for the inculcation of truth—not to conduct the pomp of lustrations and sacrifices, but to “watch for souls as those that must give an account.” Nothing similar to this was known in the heathen religions; it is peculiar to Christianity, and evincing the simple wisdom of its author, is as original in its conception as it is admirable in its effects. Its simplicity, its distance from whatever is dazzling in the eyes of mankind, is one of its highest recommendations; for the Christian minister is beautifully compared to a fisherman, who would only be embarrassed by those instruments and appendages which belong to more splendid but less useful employments.

2. Another consideration calculated to afford us encouragement is, that *the materials of our work are ready furnished to our hand.* and, at the same time, of a nature *admirably adapted to our purpose.* Our office is that of stewards of the mysteries of the kingdom; our duty faithfully to dispense the stores which superior wisdom and opulence have provided. It is not necessary for us to stretch our invention in the discovery of topics and arguments fitted to move the mind and impel it in a right direction, which, if we may judge from past experience, would be a most unpromising undertaking. A doctrine, full, pure, perfect, to which nothing can be added without debasing its spirit, nothing taken away without impairing its proportions, is committed to our trust, to be retained and preserved just as we have received it, and delivered to our hearers in all its primitive simplicity. Like the works of nature, while it exhibits at first view an impress of its author, in the unequivocal character it bears of purity and majesty, it improves on a closer examination; and the more deeply it is investigated, the more the wisdom of the contrivance in its exquisite adaptation to the state and condition of mankind becomes conspicuous. As the discovery of a way of salvation for a fallen race, of the method by which a guilty and degenerate creature may recover the image and favor of his Maker, which we must ever remember is its most essential characteristic, what is wanting to its perfection—what information or assurance beyond what it contains, calculated to awe, enlighten, convince, and encourage? The facts it exhibits, supported by clear and indubitable testimony, are more extraordinary than ever entered the mind of man in its widest excursions, combining all the sobriety of truth with more than the grandeur of fiction; and the doctrines connected with these facts by the easiest and most natural inference, are of infinite moment. To a serious mind, the truths of the Christian religion appear with such an air of unaffected greatness, that, in comparison with these, all other

speculations and reasonings seem like the amusements of childhood. When the deity, the incarnation, the atonement, the resurrection of the Son of God, the sanctification of the church, and the prospects of glory have engaged our contemplation, we feel, in turning our attention to other objects, a strange descent, and perceive, with the certainty of demonstration, that as the earth is too narrow for the full development of these mysteries, they are destined, by their consequences and effects, to impregnate an eternal duration. We are not at all surprised at finding that the ancient prophets searched into these mysteries with great but unsuccessful diligence, that the angels desire to look into them, or that the apostles were lost in the contemplation of those riches which they proclaimed and imparted. Are you desirous of fixing the attention of your hearers strongly on their everlasting concerns? No peculiar refinement of thought, no subtlety of reasoning, much less the pompous exaggerations of secular eloquence, are wanted for that purpose: you have only to imbibe deeply the mind of Christ, to let his doctrine enlighten, his love inspire your heart, and your situation, in comparison with other speakers, will resemble that of the angel of the Apocalypse, who was seen standing in the sun. Draw your instructions immediately from the Bible; the more immediately they are derived from this source, and the less they are tinged with human distinctions and refinements, the more salutary and the more efficacious. Let them be taken fresh from the spring. You will not satisfy yourself with the study of Christianity in narrow, jejune abridgments and systems, but contemplate it in its utmost extent, as it subsists in the sacred oracles; and in investigating these, you will permit your reason and conscience an operation as free and unfettered as if none had examined them before. The neglect of this produces, too often, an artificial scarcity, where some of the choicest provisions of the household are rejected or overlooked.

When we inculcate with so much earnestness an atten-

tion to the mind of Christ as exhibited in the Scriptures, let us not be understood to exclude his precepts, or to countenance for a moment the too frequent neglect of Christian morality. While you delight in displaying the riches of divine grace, conspicuous in the work of redemption, as the grand motive to love and trust in the Redeemer, you will not forget frequently to admonish your hearers, that he only loveth him who keepeth his sayings; the illustration of which, in their bearings upon the different relations and circumstances of life, will form, if you follow the apostolic example, a most important branch of your ministry. Not content with committing the obligation of morality to the arbitration of feeling, much less with faintly hinting at it as an obvious inference from orthodox doctrine, you will illustrate its principles with an energy, a copiousness, a fulness of detail proportioned to its acknowledged importance. You will not be silent on the precepts, from an apprehension of infringing on the freedom of the gospel, nor sink the character of the Legislator in that of the Saviour of the church. A morality more elevated and pure than is to be met with in the pages of Seneca or Epictetus will breathe through your sermons, founded on a basis which every understanding can comprehend, and enforced by sanctions which nothing but the utmost stupidity can despise—a morality of which the love of God, and a devoted attachment to the Redeemer, are the plastic soul, which, pervading every limb, and expressing itself in every lineament of the new creature, gives it a beauty all its own. As it is the genuine fruit of just and affecting views of divine truth, you will never sever it from its parent stock, nor indulge the fruitless hope of leading men to holiness, without strongly imbuing them with the spirit of the gospel. Truth and holiness are, in the Christian system, so intimately allied, that the warm and faithful inculcation of the one lays the foundation for the other. For the *illustration* of particular branches of morals, we may consult pagan writers on ethics with advantage; but

in search of *principles*, it is at our peril that we desert the school of Christ; since we are complete in him, and all the moral excellence to which we can aspire is but Christianity embodied, or if we may be allowed to change the figure, the impress of the gospel upon the heart. The perfection of the Christian system, considered as the instrument of renovating the human mind, is the second consideration.

3. The third consideration to which I would direct your attention is, that of its being *the dispensation of the Spirit*. To this the apostle refers, contrasting the Christian with the Jewish institute, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?" From this circumstance he infers the superior dignity of the Christian ministry. The miraculous gifts intended for a sign to unbelievers, and to aid the gospel during its first struggle with the powers of pagan darkness, have long since ceased with the exigency that called them forth; but the renewing and sanctifying agency of the Spirit remains, and will continue to the end of time—the express declaration of our Saviour not admitting a doubt of its perpetuity. "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." To the world, who, in their unrenewed state, are unsusceptible of his sanctifying impress, he is promised, in the preparatory form of a Spirit of conviction; to believers he is promised as an indwelling principle, an ever-present Deity, who consecrates the hearts of the faithful to be his perpetual abode. Hence the ministers of Christ are not dependent for success on the force of moral suasion—not merely the teachers of an external

religion, including truths the most momentous, and duties of the highest obligation; they are also the instruments through whom a supernatural agency is exerted. And hence, in the conversion of souls we are not to compare the difficulties to be surmounted with the feeble resources of human power, but with His, with whom nothing is impossible. To this the inspired historian everywhere directs our attention, as alone sufficient to account for the signal success which crowned the labors of the first preachers. If a great multitude at Antioch turned to the Lord, it was because the "hand of the Lord was with them;" if Lydia believed, in consequence of giving attention to the things that were spoken, it was because "the Lord opened her heart;" if Paul planted, and Apollos watered, with success, it was the Lord who gave the increase; and highly as they were endowed, and though invested with such extensive authority, they did not presume to count upon any thing from themselves; their sufficiency was of God. As the possibility of such an influence can be doubted by none who believe in a Deity, so the peculiar consolation derived from the doctrine that asserts it, seems to be this, that it renders what was merely possible, certain; what was before vague and undetermined, fixed; by reducing the interposition of the Almighty in the concerns of salvation to a stated method and a settled law. The communication of the Spirit to render the gospel efficacious, becomes a standing ordinance of heaven, and a full security for its final triumph over every opposing force. "My word," said the Lord by the prophet, "shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish the thing whereunto I sent it." At the same time, connected as it is by the very tenor of the promise with the publication of an external revelation, and professing to set its seal only to the testimony of Jesus, it precludes as far as possible every enthusiastic pretension, by leaving the appeal to Scripture as full and uncontrolled as if no such agency were supposed. It is strange that

any should be found to deny a doctrine so consolatory, under the pretence of its derogating from the sufficiency of revelation, when it not only ascribes to it all the efficacy that can belong to an instrument or external means, but confers the highest honor upon it by marking it out as the only fountain of instruction to which the agency of the Deity is inseparably attached. The idea of his immediate interposition must necessarily increase our veneration for whatever is connected with it; and let it ever be remembered, that the internal illumination of the Spirit is merely intended to qualify the mind for distinctly perceiving and cordially embracing those objects, and no other, which are exhibited in the written word. To dispel prejudice, to excite a disposition for inquiry, and to infuse that love of the truth without which we can neither be transformed by its power nor bow to its dictates, is the grand scope of spiritual agency; and how this should derogate from the dignity of the truth itself, it is not easy to conceive. The inseparable alliance between the Spirit and the word secures the harmony of the divine dispensations; and since that Spirit of truth can never contradict himself, whatever impulse he may give, whatever disposition he may communicate, it involves no irreverence towards that divine Agent to compare his operations with that standing revelation which, equally claiming him for its author, he has expressly appointed for the trial of the spirits.

Let me earnestly entreat you, by keeping close to the fountain of grace, to secure a large measure of its influence. In your private studies, and in your public performances, remember your absolute dependence on superior aid: let your conviction of this dependence become so deep and practical as to prevent your attempting any thing in your own strength—after the example of St. Paul, who, when he had occasion to advert to his labors in the gospel, checks himself by adding, with ineffable modesty, “Yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.” From that vivid perception of truth, that full assurance of faith,

which is its inseparable attendant, you will derive unspeakable advantage in addressing your hearers; a seriousness, tenderness, and majesty will pervade your discourses, beyond what the greatest unassisted talent can command. In the choice of your subjects it will lead you to what is most solid and useful, while it enables you to handle them in a manner the most efficacious and impressive. Possessed of this celestial unction, you will not be under the temptation of neglecting a plain gospel in quest of amusing speculations or unprofitable novelties; the most ordinary topics will open themselves with a freshness and interest, as though you had never considered them before; and "the things of the Spirit" will display their inexhaustible variety and depth. You will pierce the invisible world—you will look, so to speak, into eternity, and present the essence and core of religion, while too many preachers, for want of spiritual discernment, rest satisfied with the surface and the shell. It will not allow us to throw one grain of incense on the altar of vanity; it will make us forget ourselves so completely, as to convince our hearers we do so; and displacing every thing else from the attention, leave nothing to be felt or thought of but the majesty of truth and the realities of eternity.

In proportion to the degree in which you possess this sacred influence, will be the earnestness with which you implore it in behalf of your hearers. Often will you bow the knee to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he will grant unto them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, that they may know what is the hope of his calling, and what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance among the saints.

On the one hand it deserves attention, that the most eminent and successful preachers of the gospel in different communities, a Brainerd, a Baxter, and a Swartz, have been the most conspicuous for a simple dependence upon spiritual aid; and, on the other, that no success whatever

has attended the ministrations of those by whom this doctrine has been either neglected or denied. They have met with such a rebuke of their presumption in the total failure of their efforts, that none will contend for the reality of divine interposition as far as *they* are concerned; for when has the arm of the Lord been revealed to those pretended teachers of Christianity, who believe there is no such arm? We must leave them to labor in a field, respecting which God has commanded the clouds not to rain upon it. As if conscious of this, of late they have turned their efforts into a new channel, and despairing of the conversion of sinners, have confined themselves to the seduction of the faithful; in which, it must be confessed, they have acted in a manner perfectly consistent with their principles—the propagation of heresy requiring at least no *divine* assistance.

4. Let me request you to consider *the dignity and importance* of the profession which you have assumed. If the dignity of an employment is to be estimated, not by the glitter of external appearances, but by the magnitude and duration of the consequences involved in its success, the ministerial function is a high and honorable one. Though it is not permitted us to magnify ourselves, we may be allowed to magnify our office; and, indeed, the juster the apprehensions we entertain of what belongs to it, the deeper the conviction we shall feel of our defects. Independently of every other consideration, that office cannot be mean which the Son of God condescended to sustain; for the word which we preach first began to be spoken by the Lord; and while he sojourned upon earth, that Prince of life was chiefly employed in publishing his own religion. That office cannot be mean, whose end is the recovery of man to his original purity and happiness, the illumination of the understanding, the communication of truth, and the production of principles which will bring forth fruit unto everlasting life. As the material part of the creation was formed for the sake of the immaterial,

and of the latter the most momentous characteristic is its moral and accountable nature, or in other words, its capacity of virtue and of vice, that labor cannot want dignity which is exerted in improving man in his highest character, and fitting him for his eternal destination. Here alone is certainty and durability; for however highly we may esteem the arts and sciences, which polish our species and promote the welfare of society—whatever reverence we may feel and ought to feel for those laws and institutions whence it derives the security necessary for enabling it to enlarge its resources and develop its energies, we cannot forget that these are but the embellishments of a scene we must shortly quit—the decorations of a theatre,—from which the eager spectators and applauded actors must soon retire. “The end of all things is at hand.” Vanity is inscribed on every earthly pursuit, on all sublunary labor; its materials, its instruments, and its objects will alike perish. An incurable taint of mortality has seized upon, and will consume them ere long. The acquisitions derived from religion, the graces of a renovated mind, are alone permanent. This is the mystic inclosure, rescued from the empire of change and death; this is the field which the Lord has blessed; and this word of the kingdom, the seed which alone produces immortal fruit, the very bread of life, with which, under a higher economy, the Lamb in the midst of the throne will feed his flock and replenish his elect through eternal ages. How high and awful a function is that which proposes to establish in the soul an interior dominion; to illuminate its powers by a celestial light; and introduce it to an intimate, ineffable, and unchanging alliance with the Father of spirits. What an honor to be employed as the instrument of conducting that mysterious process by which men are born of God; to expel from the heart the venom of the old serpent; to purge the conscience from invisible stains of guilt; to release the passions from the bondage of corruption, and invite them to

soar aloft into the regions of uncreated light and beauty, to say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves! These are the fruits which arise from the successful discharge of the Christian ministry; these the effects of the gospel, wherever it becomes the power of God unto salvation; and the interests which they create, the joy which they diffuse, are felt in other worlds.

In insisting on the dignity attached to the ministerial office, it is far from my intention to supply fuel to vanity, or suggest such ideas of yourself as shall tempt you to lord it over God's heritage. Let the importance of your station be rather felt and acknowledged in its beneficial results, than ostentatiously displayed; and the consciousness of it, instead of being suffered to evaporate in authoritative airs and pompous pretensions, produce a concentration of your powers. If the great apostle was content to be a helper of the joy, without claiming dominion over the faith of his converts, how far should we be from advancing such a claim. If he served the Lord with humility and many tears; if he appeared among the churches which he planted, in fear, and in weakness, and with much trembling, we may learn how possible it is to combine with true dignity the most unassuming deportment, and the deepest conviction of our weakness and unworthiness with a vigorous discharge of whatever belongs to the apostolic, much more to the pastoral office. The proper use to be made of such considerations as have now been suggested, is to stir up the gift which is in us, to apply ourselves to our work with becoming resolution, and anticipate, in dependence on the divine blessing, important effects. The moment we permit ourselves to think lightly of the Christian ministry, our right arm is withered; nothing but imbecility and relaxation remains. For no man ever excelled in a profession to which he did not feel an attachment bordering on enthusiasm; though what in other professions is enthusiasm, is in ours the dictate of sobriety and truth.

5. Recollect, for your encouragement, *the reward that awaits the faithful minister*. Such is the mysterious condescension of divine grace, that although it reserves to itself the exclusive honor of being the fountain of all, yet, by the employment of human agency in the completion of its designs, it contrives to multiply its gifts and to lay a foundation for eternal rewards. When the church in the perfection of beauty shall be presented to Christ as a bride adorned for her husband, the faithful pastor will appear as the friend of the bridegroom, who greatly rejoices because of the bridegroom's voice. His joy will be the joy of his Lord, inferior in degree, but of the same nature and arising from the same sources; while he will have the peculiar happiness of reflecting that he has contributed to it—contributed, as an humble instrument, to that glory and felicity of which he will be conscious he is utterly unworthy to partake. To have been himself the object of mercy, to have been the means of imparting it to others, and of dispensing the unsearchable riches of Christ, will produce a pleasure which can never be adequately felt or understood, until we see him as he is. From that oneness of spirit, from that inseparable conjunction of interest, which will then be experienced in its utmost extent, will arise a capacity of sharing the triumph of the Redeemer, and of participating in the delight with which he will survey his finished work, when a new and fairer creation shall arise out of the ruins of the first. And is this the end, he will exclaim, of all my labors, my toils, and watchings, my expostulation with sinners, and my efforts to console the faithful; and is this the issue of that ministry under which I was often ready to sink; and this the glory of which I heard so much, understood so little, and announced to my nearers with lisping accents and a stammering tongue! Well might it be styled the glory “to be revealed.” Auspicious day on which I embarked in this undertaking—on which the love of Christ, with a sweet and sacred violence, impelled me to feed his sheep and to feed his lambs.

With what emotion shall we, who being intrusted with so holy a ministry, shall find mercy to be faithful, hear that voice from heaven, "Rejoice and be glad, and give honor to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." With what rapture shall we recognize, amidst an innumerable multitude, the seals of our ministry, the persons whom we have been the means of conducting to that glory.

Hence, we discern the futility of the objection against the doctrine of future rewards, drawn from an apprehension, that to be actuated by such a motive argues a mean and mercenary disposition; since the reward to which we aspire, in this instance at least, grows out of the employment in which we are engaged, and will consist in enjoyments which can only be felt and perceived by a refined and elevated spirit. The success of our undertaking will in reality reward itself by the complete gratification it will afford to the sentiments of devotion and benevolence which, in their highest perfection, form the principal ingredient in future felicity. To have coöperated in any degree towards the accomplishment of that purpose of the Deity to reconcile all things to himself by reducing them to the obedience of his Son, which is the ultimate end of all his works—to be the means of recovering, though it were but an inconsiderable portion of a lapsed and degenerate race to eternal happiness, will yield a satisfaction exactly commensurate to the force of our benevolent sentiments, and the degree of our loyal attachment to the supreme Potentate. The consequences involved in saving a soul from death and hiding a multitude of sins, will be duly appreciated in that world where the worth of souls and the malignity of sin are fully understood; while to extend the triumphs of the Redeemer by forming him in the hearts of men, will produce a transport which can only be equalled by the gratitude and love we shall feel towards the Source of all our good.

Before I close this discourse, let me suggest one reflec-

tion which so naturally arises from the view we have taken of the ministerial office, that I cannot think it right to pass it over in silence: the advantages possessed by the Christian minister for *the cultivation of personal piety*. "Blessed is the man," said the royal psalmist, "whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee; blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they will be still praising thee." If he was so strongly impressed with a conviction of the high privilege annexed to the priesthood, by virtue of its being allowed a nearer approach to God in the services of the sanctuary, the situation of a Christian minister is not less distinguished, nor less desirable. It is the only one in which our general calling as Christians and our particular calling as men perfectly coincide. In a life occupied in actions that terminate in the present moment, and in cares and pursuits extremely disproportionate to the dignity of our nature, but rendered necessary by the imperfections of our state, it is but little of their time that the greater part of mankind can devote to the direct and immediate pursuit of their eternal interests. A few remnants snatched from the business of life is all that most can bestow. In our profession, the full force and vigor of the mind may be exerted on that which will employ it for ever: on *religion*, the final centre of repose, the goal to which all things tend, which gives to time all its importance, to eternity all its glory; apart from which man is a shadow, his very existence a riddle, and the stupendous scenes which surround him as incoherent and unmeaning as the leaves which the sybil scattered in the wind. Our inaptitude to be affected in any measure proportionate to the intrinsic value of the interest in which we are concerned, and the objects with which we are conversant, is partly to be ascribed to the corruption of nature, partly to the limitation of our faculties. As far as this disproportion is capable of being corrected, the pursuits connected with our office are unquestionably best adapted to that purpose, by closely fixing the attention on objects which can never be

contemned but in consequence of being forgotten, nor ever surveyed with attention without filling the whole sphere of vision. Though the scene of our labor is on earth, the things to which it relates subsist in eternity. We can give no account of our office, much less discharge any branch of it with propriety and effect, without adverting to a future state of being; while, in a happy exemption from the tumultuous cares of life, our only concern with mankind, as far as it respects our official character, is to promote their everlasting welfare—our only business on earth, the very same that employs those exalted spirits who are sent forth on embassies of mercy, “to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.” Our duties and pursuits are distinguished from all others by their immediate relation to the ultimate end of human existence; so that while secular employments can be rendered innocent only by an extreme care to avoid the pollutions which they are so liable to contract, the ministerial functions bear an indelible impress of sanctity. The purposes accomplished by the ministry of the gospel in the restoration of a fallen creature to the image of his Maker, are not among the *things which were made for man*; they are the *things for which man was made*; since, without regard to time or place, they are essential to his perfection and happiness. How much of heaven is naturally connected with an office whose sole purpose is to conduct man thither; and what a superiority to the love of the world may be expected from men who are appointed to publish that dispensation which reveals its danger, detects its vanity, rebukes its disorders, and foretells its destruction.

He must know little of the world, and still less of his own heart, who is not aware how difficult it is, amidst the corrupting examples which abound, to maintain the spirit of devotion unimpaired, or to preserve in their due force and delicacy those vivid moral impressions, that quick perception of good and instinctive abhorrence of evil which form the chief characteristic of a pure and elevated mind.

These, like the morning dew, are easily brushed off in the collisions of worldly interest, or exhaled by the meridian sun. Hence the necessity of frequent intervals of retirement, when the mind may recover its scattered powers, and renew its strength by a devout application to the Fountain of all grace.

To the ordinary occupations of life we are rather indebted for the trial of our virtue, than for the matter or the motive; and however criminal it would be to neglect them in our present state, they can only be reduced under the dominion of religion by a general intention of pleasing God. But in carrying into effect the designs of the gospel, we are communicating that pure element of good, which like the solar light pervades every part of the universe, and forms, there is every reason to believe, the most essential ingredient in the felicity of all created beings.

If, in the actual commerce of the world, the noblest principles are often sacrificed to mean expedients, and the rules of moral rectitude made to bend to the indulgence of vain and criminal passions, how happy for us that we are under the necessity of contemplating them in their abstract grandeur—of viewing them as an emanation of the divine beauty, as the immutable law of the creation embodied in the character of the Saviour, and illustrated in the elevated sentiments, the holy lives, and triumphant deaths of prophets, saints, and martyrs. We are called every moment to ascend to first principles, to stand in the council of God, and to imbibe the dictates of celestial wisdom in their first communication, before they become debased and contaminated by a mixture with grosser elements.

The bane of human happiness is ordinarily not so much an absolute ignorance of what is best, as an inattention to it, accompanied with a habit of not adverting to prospects the most certain and the most awful. But how can we be supposed to contract this inadvertence, who are incessantly engaged in placing truth in every possible light,

tracing it in its utmost extent, and exhibiting it in all its evidence? Can we be supposed to forget "that day and that hour of which no man knoweth," who are stationed as watchmen to give the alarm, to announce the first symptoms of danger, and to cry in the ears of a sleeping world, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh;" or, however inattentive others may be to the approach of our Lord, can it ever vanish from our minds—who are detained by him in his sanctuary on purpose to preserve it pure, to trim the golden lamps and maintain the hallowed fire, that he may find nothing neglected or in disorder, when he "shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the covenant whom we delight in?"

Men are ruined in their eternal interests by failing to look within—by being so absorbed in the pursuit of external good, as to neglect the state of their hearts. But can this be supposed to be the case with us, who must never hope to discharge our office with effect without an intimate acquaintance with the inward man—without tracing the secret operations of nature and of grace—without closely inspecting the causes of revival and of decay in the spiritual life, and detecting the most secret springs and subtle artifices of temptation; in all which we shall be successful just in proportion to the degree of devout attention we bestow on the movements of our own minds?

Men are ruined in their eternal interests by living as though they were their own, and neglecting to realize the certainty of a future account. But it must surely require no small effort to divert our attention from this truth, who have not only the same interest in it with others, but in consequence of the care of souls, possess a responsibility of a distinct and awful character; since not one of those to whom that care extends can fall short of salvation through our neglect or default, but his blood will be required at our hands. Where, in short, can we turn our eyes, without meeting with incentives to piety; what part of the sacred function can we touch, which will not remind us of

the beauty of holiness, the evil of sin, and the emptiness of all sublunary good—or where we shall not find ourselves in a temple, resounding with awful voices, and filled with holy inspirations?

I feel a pleasing conviction, that, in consequence of deriving from your ministry that spiritual aid it is so adapted to impart, both your piety and usefulness will continue to increase, and by being intimately incorporated, aid and strengthen each other, so that your profiting shall appear unto all men, and while you are watering others, you yourself shall be abundantly watered of God. Thus will you be enabled to adopt the language of the beloved apostle, "That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life, declare we unto you." Thus will you possess that unction from which your hearers cannot fail, under the divine blessing, of reaping the highest benefit; for while we are exploring the mines of revelation for the purpose of exhibiting to mankind the "unsearchable riches of Christ," we are not in the situation of those unhappy men who merely toil for the advantage of others, and dare not appropriate to themselves an atom of that precious ore on which their labor is employed; we are permitted and invited first to enrich ourselves, and the more we appropriate the more shall we impart. It is my earnest prayer, my dear brother, that you may feed the church of the Lord which he has purchased with his own blood; that you may make full proof of your ministry; be instant in season and out of season; teach, exhort, and rebuke, with all long-suffering and authority. Then, should you be spared to your flock, you will witness the fruit of your labors in a spiritual plantation, growing under your hand, adorned with "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified;" and while neglecting worldly considerations, you are intent on the high ends of your calling, inferior satisfactions will not be wanting, but you will meet, among

the seals of your ministry, with fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers. Or should your career be prematurely cut short, you will have lived long enough to answer the purposes of your being, and to leave a record in the consciences of your hearers, which will not suffer you soon to be forgotten. Though dead, you will still speak; you will speak from the tomb; it may be, in accents more powerful and persuasive than your living voice could command.

The Pulpit ———

Must stand acknowledged, while the world shall stand,
 The most important and effectual guard,
 Support, and ornament of Virtue's cause.
 There stands the messenger of truth; there stands
 The legate of the skies: his theme divine,
 His office sacred, his credentials clear.
 By him the violated law speaks out
 Its thunders; and by him, in strains as sweet
 As angels use, the Gospel whispers peace.
 He establishes the strong, restores the weak,
 Reclaims the wanderer, binds the broken heart,
 And, armed himself in panoply complete
 Of heavenly temper, furnishes with arms
 Bright as his own, and trains, by every rule
 Of holy discipline, to glorious war
 The sacramental host of God's elect.

Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul,
 Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,
 Paul should himself direct me. I would trace
 His master-strokes, and draw from his design.
 I would express him simple, grave, sincere;
 In doctrine uncorrupt; in language plain,
 And plain in manner; decent, solemn, chaste,
 And natural in gesture; much impressed
 Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
 And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
 May feel it too; affectionate in look,
 And tender in address, as well becomes
 A messenger of grace to guilty men.

Cowper.

MEMOIR

OF

NATHANIEL RIPLEY COBB,

THE CHRISTIAN MERCHANT.

NATHANIEL RIPLEY COBB was born in Falmouth, now Westbrook, near Portland, Maine, November 3, 1798. His father died when he was very young, and in March 1802, he removed with his mother to Plymouth, Mass. Here he passed his childhood and youth till 1814, when he went to Boston, as a clerk to Messrs. Ripley and Freeman. His mind was drawn to the subject of religion; and in May, 1818, he was baptized by the Rev. Dr. Sharp, and became a member of the Charles-street Baptist church. In February, 1819, he commenced business with Mr. Gorman L. Freeman, under the firm of Freeman and Cobb, which in 1824 became the firm of Freeman, Cobb and Co. In February, 1820, he married Miss Sarah, daughter of Thomas Kendall, Esq. For some time previous to his death, his health declined and his strength wasted, till at length he was confined to his chamber; and after several weeks of decay, he died on the 22d of May, 1834, in the thirty-sixth year of his age. His widow, since deceased, and an only son survived him. These are the principal facts of his brief history; but how long was that life, if measured by his activity and usefulness!

Mr. Cobb resolved, at the commencement of his religious life, that he *would serve the Saviour with all his power, in that sphere which seemed to be particularly assigned to him.* He had not an opportunity to acquire extensive learning, and could not serve the church, to any considerable extent, by his voice or by his pen. But God endowed him with talents for business. He had great activity, acute penetration into the character of men and into the signs of the times, rapid decision, and unconquerable perseverance.

He displayed in the counting-room some of the mental qualities which made Napoleon the irresistible victor in a hundred battle-fields; he accumulated property with great rapidity; but he justly regarded his talent for business as an instrument which he ought to employ for the glory of his Saviour. He felt it to be his duty to use it in earning money for the cause of God, on precisely the same principle that it is the duty of the minister to devote his talent for preaching to the service of the Lord Jesus. He accordingly in November, 1821, drew up and subscribed the following very remarkable document:

“By the grace of God, I will never be worth more than \$50,000.

“By the grace of God, I will give one fourth of the net profits of my business to charitable and religious uses.

“If I am ever worth \$20,000, I will give one half of my net profits; and if I am ever worth \$30,000, I will give three fourths, and the whole, after \$50,000. So help me God, or give to a more faithful steward, and set me aside.

N. R. COBB.”

To this covenant he adhered with conscientious fidelity. He distributed the profits of his business with an increasing ratio from year to year, till he reached the point which he had fixed as a limit of his property, and then he gave to the cause of God all the money which he earned. At one time, finding that his property had increased beyond \$50,000, he at once devoted the surplus, \$7,500, as a foundation for a professorship in the Newton Theological Institution; to which, we may add, he gave on various occasions during his life, at least twice that sum. So scrupulous was he in his adherence to the covenant which he had made, that when peculiar circumstances required him to retain in his possession more than \$50,000, he consulted judicious friends whether he might do so consistently with the spirit of his pledge, provided he always held the surplus as really belonging to the cause of God. Here is the secret of that wonderful liberality which cheered so many hearts, and gave vigor to so many institutions and plans of benevo-

lence. It sprung from steady religious principles. It was a fruit of the Holy Spirit. He always felt that God had bestowed on him a rich blessing in enabling him thus to serve his cause. On his death-bed he said to a friend, in allusion to the resolutions quoted above, "By the grace of God—*nothing else*—by the grace of God, I have been enabled under the influence of those resolutions, to give away more than \$40,000. How good the Lord has been to me."

But Mr. Cobb did not satisfy himself with contributing money. Nor did he bestow his funds with careless profusion on every object which presented itself. His active mind, his sound judgment, and his searching penetration were employed in examining the plans which were proposed to him for his support. He must be satisfied that the project was a wise one, before he would lend it his countenance and aid. His services as a member of numerous benevolent societies were highly valuable. He was ready to aid all wise designs which seemed to have a claim on him as a Christian, a philanthropist, and a patriot. The lectures and other meetings of the church rarely missed his presence, amid the greatest pressure of business. He loved to aid his pastor in the inquiry-meeting, and he rejoiced in the conversion of sinners. While on a journey for his health, he wrote, "I want to get back to Boston, to our Charles-street meetings. There is nothing here that will answer as a substitute for them. *At home* is the place for the enjoyment of piety, and fashion leads to any thing but religion."

His affable manners, his talents, and his perfect integrity, won for him the confidence and esteem of all who knew him. In his last sickness, he said, "I can put my hand on my heart and say, I am at peace with all men; I do not know of a man who would call himself my enemy." So great was the confidence which was felt in him by mercantile men, that he was selected as a referee and assignee so frequently, that he was obliged at last to decline such invitations. He was a generous friend to many young men, whom he assisted in establishing themselves in

business. He was always prompt, and was often heard to say, "My way is, never to leave a thing till it is *finished*."

He felt an affectionate concern for the welfare of those who were employed in his counting-room. In his last sickness, he said, "I wish I could see the young men in the store; but I am not able. Tell them I die in hope, through Christ my Saviour. I am happy in the near approach of death. Tell them to devote themselves to Christ, if they would be prepared to die. Tell this to Mr. — and Mr. —. Tell them that Christ is precious." Of his love for his friends and family, we need not speak. A more affectionate husband and father never lived.

The last days of Mr. Cobb's life were brightened by Christian hope. While he was able to converse, he expressed his humble yet firm reliance on the Redeemer. He spoke with grateful joy of the Saviour's love and faithfulness, and of his desire to depart and be with Christ.

"MAY 1. Mr. Cobb said, 'Well, —, I believe I am going to die; but I think I am a Christian, and am ready to die. Within the last few days, I have had some glorious views of heaven. It is indeed a glorious thing to die. I have been active and busy in the world; I have enjoyed it as much as any one; God has prospered me; I have every thing to tie me here; I am happy in my family; I have property enough: but how small and mean does this world appear when we are on a sick-bed! Nothing can equal my enjoyment in the near view of heaven. My hope in Christ is worth infinitely more than all other things. The blood of Christ, the blood of Christ—NONE but Christ. Oh, how thankful I feel that God has provided a way, that I, sinful as I am, may look forward with joy to another world, through his dear Son. Oh, what a glorious thought! Only think, my dear brother, probably in a few weeks at most, I shall be in heaven, in the society of those saints of God, Ensign Lincoln, brother Freeman, Martyn, Doddridge, Watts, Cornelius, Mrs. Judson, the apostles and patriarchs; but Oh, above all, in the presence of Jesus Christ. Yes, I shall see him face to face. Oh to

be in heaven, in the presence of God and Christ and the saints made perfect.'

"MAY 2. He said, 'I feel that I am so near heaven, that I should hardly be willing to go back. Jesus Christ is the anchor of my soul, sure and steadfast. Live near to Christ; nothing is worth so much.'

"To another friend he said, 'Dear brother, I feel that I have got nearly where Moses was : ' and then repeated the verse in Watts,

'Could I but climb where Moses stood,' etc.

On repeating the last line, he said, 'I think I feel so; I think I can say with brother Lincoln, should I live to the age of Methuselah, I don't think I should ever find a better time to die.'

"MAY 3. Having occasion to speak of some of his deeds of charity, he said, 'Ah, it is by *the grace of God* I have been enabled to do this. I would hang my naked soul on Christ, as a poor sinner. He is all my salvation. Oh, I think he seems precious to my soul. The greatest evidence I have had in my life that I am a Christian, is that I have loved the society of God's people.' When mention was made of the mysteriousness of that providence which seemed about to call him away, he replied, 'Oh, it is all right. God saw that Spencer and Cornelius and Mrs. Judson could be spared, and he does not need me any longer.'

"MAY 7. He said, 'Dear brother, I have no transports, but it seems to me that I do love the Saviour. He does seem precious, and my soul rests on him. I can hardly realize that, in three or four days, I shall stand before God in heaven. Still, I feel that it will be so; and then I shall see all the holy angels, and all the prophets and apostles, and all the saints and martyrs; and very soon I shall meet with all my Christian friends who are now upon earth, and it will be a glorious and delightful meeting.'

"MAY 12. He said, 'I am very weak, but I think my soul rests on Christ. I thought last night, when I had an ill turn, that I was about to be released.' While kneel-

ing to pray with him, he said, 'Pray that I may have patience to wait till my change comes. God has thus far dealt very graciously with me. Oh, he is good.'

"MAY 13. Brother Cobb remarked, 'I am most of all concerned lest I should be impatient.' On being asked how his mind was to-day, he said, 'I think my soul is resting on Christ. I think the Lord would not have brought me so far to leave me to sink. I want to be gone. I think I cannot be denied.'

"MAY 14. Found brother Cobb very feeble in body, but strong in faith, giving glory to God. He said, 'I did hope to have been released before this.' On being asked, 'Does the way seem pleasant?' he said, 'I think it does, although there is some dread of the agonies of death; but I think it looks pleasant beyond.' On being asked, 'Can you rely on Christ?' he said, 'Oh, he is all my hope. What could I do but for him?' 'Does he appear precious?' He said, 'I think he does.' After a few words of prayer, he said very emphatically, 'Amen.' I saw him several times after this, but he was unable to converse."

A short time before his death, he said to his wife, "If any thing shall be put on my coffin, let it be these words, '*Christ is my hope.*'" This was accordingly done.

The example of this servant of Christ affords instructive lessons.

1. It reminds us of the duty of every Christian to serve the Saviour with whatever kind and degree of talent the Lord may have given him. The Saviour has displayed his wisdom and goodness by employing various instruments in the establishment of his kingdom on the earth. He requires every believer to live, not for himself, but for his Lord. He admits every Christian to the high privilege of sharing in the toils and rewards of his service. Every degree and variety of talent may be made useful. Every disciple of Christ may find his place and contribute his share to the prosperity of the church, the glory of God, and the salvation of men. Not only the faithful minister, but the brother who has the gift of prayer and exhorta-

tion, the judicious Sabbath-school teacher, the affectionate visitor of the sick, the believer who possesses money or the talent to procure it, and he who, without either talents or money, can walk with God and adorn the gospel by meek and patient holiness, may each and all be actively employed in promoting the one blessed cause.

2. Mr. Cobb resolved that he never would retain more than \$50,000. He thought this as large a sum as any Christian has a right to possess. He fully recognized the duty of the Christian to provide for himself and for his family. His dress, his house and furniture, and his mode of living, were such as befitted his station in life, without either meanness or extravagance. But he, at the same time, felt that no Christian has a right to hold more property than is necessary for the reasonable wants of himself and of those who are dependent on him. To retain any thing more would, in his judgment, be robbing God and abusing our stewardship. How many Christians are there in the United States who are richer than Mr. Cobb, who have already more property than they need, and who nevertheless are eagerly toiling for greater wealth, and refusing more than a trifling pittance to the cause of God.

3. But Mr. Cobb did not wait till he had acquired \$50,000, before he began to devote his money to religious uses. It was in 1821, while he was yet young, and comparatively a poor man, recently established in business, that he resolved to give one fourth of the net proceeds of his business to benevolent purposes. It was then uncertain what would be his success; but he felt it to be his duty to begin then, with the resolution to increase the proportion, if God should prosper him. There are many Christians who think that if they could accumulate a certain sum, they would then be generous. They say that they must first make provision for themselves and their families, and then they will distribute their money liberally. Mr. Cobb did not act thus. He, from the beginning, gave a large proportion of his income, and trusted in God that whatever should be necessary for himself and his family would be supplied.

4. Mr. Cobb acted on a settled plan. He had established a principle, and he adhered to it. His benevolence was not an occasional overflow, at the impulse of excitement. It was a steady stream. He was strongly convinced that his plan was the best one, and he advised others to adopt it. He would not trust to his feelings. He said that he sometimes gave money from principle, when, if he had consulted his feelings alone he might have withheld it. All Christians ought to have a regular plan, and ought to appropriate a definite proportion of their income to the cause of God. Such a system would increase their means of doing good, because they would regulate their other expenditures with a reference to the consecrated fund. It would add to the pleasure of benevolence, because they would feel that they were expending a fund which belonged to the Lord.

5. Mr. Cobb believed that to accumulate property for children is generally the readiest way to ruin them. While he made ample provision for the education of his son, he did not raise him above the necessity of personal industry.

6. Mr. Cobb was an evidence that a man may be most actively engaged in business without losing the vigor of his piety. A man may live in the world, and yet walk with God. He may be found in the counting-room or on the exchange, in the bank or in the insurance office, without compromising his Christian principles, or dimming the brightness of his example. It is true that these are places of temptation, but so is the cell of the hermit. There is danger everywhere, but everywhere there is safety to him who commits his ways unto the Lord. The solemn admonition which we ought especially to receive is, that we must all die, that like Mr. Cobb we may die young, and that it becomes us to do with our might what our hand findeth to do.

THE RUSSIAN TAILOR.

BY REV. RICHARD KNILL.



“I LOVE a religious tradesman,” said a celebrated author, and so say I. Men of this class are among the most honorable of the land; they carry their holy principles into the various duties of life, and shine as lights in the world. Such men must exert a mighty influence on society; and happily they are greatly on the increase. Much of what is done for the support of religion at home, and for the spread of religion abroad, is done by the hands and tongues and purses and families of religious tradesmen.

Close by the side of those excellent persons, I shall place

my Russian tailor. His short and simple narrative has been told to deeply affected multitudes, and not a few have acknowledged the benefit they have derived from his example. I now give it a more permanent form, in the hope that readers, as well as hearers, may be benefited by it.

When he was quite a young man, he visited England, and became a sailor. He first sailed in a Liverpool slave-ship, and made no less than six voyages from the coast of Africa to the West Indies. The account which he gives of the horrors of the slave-trade is dreadful. He was "in deaths oft," both among the negroes and the white men, but God preserved him. After this he entered "the king's service," and was with Nelson at the battle of the Nile. In this battle he lost an eye, and for which he was discharged; but it is a lamentable fact, that the mortality which he witnessed in the slave-ship, and his near escape from death in the battle where he lost his eye, produced no sorrow for sin, no desire to prepare to meet his God. No, the stony heart became like adamant. There was no pious friend near him in either of these situations to warn, exhort, and entreat. No man of God there to direct him to that Saviour who could "open his eyes, and turn him from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that he might obtain the forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified." Acts 26 : 18. How deplorable is the state of men so circumstanced! How pitiable in general is the lot of a sailor; especially the sailor who is long from home, without a Sabbath, or a preacher, or any thing to remind him of a God. How ought the situation of such men to awaken the zeal of the church, until "every ship become a Bethel, and every sailor's heart a temple for the Holy Ghost."

Now, being discharged from the navy, and having spent all his cash, he betook himself to his old trade, and a quiet life on shore. For some years he worked as a journeyman in London, and afterwards went to St. Petersburg, and became a foreman in an extensive business; but he carried so much of "the man of war" into the shop, and at times became so stormy, and swore so horribly, that the master was compelled to give the foreman his discharge. He then commenced business for himself, and entered into the honorable state of matrimony; he became very obliging, and his trade prospered.

My acquaintance with him began in the following manner: As I was conversing with one of my congregation, he said to me, "I have lately met with a member of the Russian church, who is uncommonly fond of the English. He has been in England, and speaks our language well. If you have any thing to do in his way, I wish you would employ him." "In what way is he engaged?" I inquired. "He is a draper and tailor, and has a prosperous business."

Some months after this, one of my young friends visited England, and on his return brought me a piece of Yorkshire cloth for a coat, and I sent it to the Russian tailor to make it for me; this he soon accomplished, and brought it home himself. Just at the moment that he called I had a gentleman with me on business, so I said to the tailor, "Sit down for a few minutes, and I will come to you; in the mean time, read this little book," and I put a tract into his hand.

I soon returned, and paid him his bill; and as he was going away he said, "I hope you are pleased with your coat." "Yes," I replied, "I am much pleased with my coat;

how are you pleased with my book?" "Oh," said he, "I never trouble myself about books." "Do you not? I am sorry for that, sir: you are getting an old man, and if you do not trouble yourself about books, I fear there is something else which you neglect." "What is that, sir?" "Why, your precious soul. 'And what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?'" "Ah," said he, "I guess what you mean; you think I ought to become religious." "Yes, that is it." "Bless you, sir," he replied, "it would be impossible for me to carry on my large business if I were religious." "You astonish me, sir; how would religion interfere with your business?" "Why, if I were religious, then I must go to church on Sundays." "To be sure you would; aye, and you would rejoice when Sunday came, that you might hear something of God and salvation." "I tell you, sir, that it would be impossible with my business. I have thirty men, and I pay most of my bills, and receive most of my money on Sunday; it is my busiest day." "What, do you never go to church?" "Never." "This is worse and worse, sir. You say you do not read good books, and you do not go to church; depend upon it you are going to hell. I have long thought that no man would go to heaven merely because he read the Bible, and went to church; but I am deeply convinced that the man who neglects these things, is not going to heaven. How can you live so? Do you not believe there is a God?" At this he looked angrily at me, and said, "God, sir! God! Have you ever seen God?" At this I trembled to think how far down a man might sink in his iniquity, and I replied, "I have not seen God, but I have seen you, and you are one of God's works." "Very well," said he, "when

you meet with any one who has seen God, please to let me know it. Good morning, sir."

The old man then took his leave, and I saw him no more until I met him at the funeral of the friend who had introduced him to me. This excellent man was seized with typhus-fever, and died; and great lamentation was made over him. The funeral was numerously attended, and I addressed the congregation from that beautiful verse, "They took up the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus." Many wept, and among them I saw the Russian tailor with tears rolling down his aged cheek; but I could not tell whether it was any thing that I said, or the death of my friend that so deeply affected him. On the following Sabbath I saw him present again; on the second Sabbath again, and on the third Sabbath again. This was very strange, yet I was afraid to call upon him, lest he might take the alarm and keep away altogether; but I said to one of my friends, "Did you see Mr. B——?" "Yes," said he, "I can tell you something very interesting about that old man." "Indeed! what, sir?" "He has purchased an English Bible, and says he is determined to read it; yes, and to read it all through, to see whether what you say is true or not." "Then," said I, "there is hope of him. There is always hope of a man when he begins to read the Bible with attention."

I now found him a constant attendant on week-days as well as the Sabbath, and I often saw his countenance lighted up with joy, but I never spoke to him until one Saturday night I was sitting in my study, when my wife entered, saying, "There is a stranger inquiring for you." "Who is it?" "I do not know, but I think it is the Russian tailor." So I walked out, and there I saw him. He said to me, "Satur-

day night is not just the time to call on you, Mr. —, but I have a little business.” “What business, sir?” “One of your hearers wished to present you with a new coat, and I have brought it. I hope you will not be angry. I answered, “I am not in the habit of being angry with any person, but especially with one who would give me a new coat; pray, what kind friend has done this?” “Ah,” said he, “that is a part of the business: he will not tell you his name.” “Is it a young man.” He answered, “No.” “Is it an old man?” “Yes, an old man with a grey head.” There he stood by my side, with his hair as white as milk, but I had no conception that he was the man. “Perhaps, sir, you will tell my wife who it was.” “Yes, I am not bound to keep it from Mrs. —;” so I left them, and he told my wife that he was the person who had given me this coat. Of course I soon knew it; and very peculiar were the feelings produced in my mind by the transaction. A few days afterwards I met him in the street, and said to him, “Now, sir, I know who my benefactor is, and I am greatly obliged to you for this kindness; but do tell me what induced you to give me the coat?” At this he burst into tears, and said, “Ah, sir, if God had not changed my heart, I never should have thought of giving you the coat.” “Thank you,” said I, “for this explanation, and if it be connected with a change of heart, then the coat is invaluable.” He then gave me a striking proof that his heart was changed indeed. He began to consult me about the spiritual good of his people. “I want to ask you, sir, what I should do for my men; I feel very much about their souls. What do you think I should do for them; should I give them copies of the Testament?” I was delighted to behold this mark of spiritual life in his own soul, and urged

him by all means to give them the Scriptures. This encouraged him. His youth seemed renewed like the eagle's. He ran home and called his men together and said to them, "I have something to propose to you, my lads;" then turning to one he said, "Can you read?" "Yes, sir, I read Swedish." To another, "Can you read?" "Yes, sir, I read German." To a third, "Can you read?" "Yes, I read Finnish." To a fourth, "Can you read?" "Yes, I read Russ." Having ascertained how many of his people could read, and in what languages, he came to me again, saying, "Now, sir, so many books in so many languages; for I am resolved that no man shall remain in my employ, who is able to read, without a copy of the blessed New Testament."

Reader, think what a great moral reformation it would produce in this world, if all our manufacturers and merchants and tradesmen were to imitate this example.

The inquiry he thus made led to another discovery. He not only found out who could read, but he also found out who could not read, and for them he bought spelling-books, and set the readers to teach them; for he also resolved that every man and boy in his works who could not read should be instructed.

In addition to all this, he usually spent half an hour in the evening with them in reading and expounding the Scriptures. The sight was at once novel and affecting. The old man would fix upon a chapter, then they would all read the same verse in their different languages, and then the master would give them a short exposition of it in the Russian language, which they all understood. By this means his house passed through as great a change as the master. Instead of being polluted with worldly occu-

rations on the Lord's-day, now every day was turned into a Sabbath. Prayer, and praise, and religious instruction were carried on daily. The voice of joy, thanksgiving, and praise was heard in the tabernacle of the righteous.

During the next two years, I do not know any man who read his Bible so much as Mr. B——, and his pleasure in this sacred exercise at times arose so high, that it might be called "joy unspeakable and full of glory." His religion made him a happy man. From this time I watched the progress of his piety with intense interest. His conversion was no common event, and my heart has often been cheered by the grand and glorious views which he had of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was a stranger to the conflicting opinions of men on religious subjects. He had drawn his religion directly from the Bible, and thought that all men must think and feel like himself; but one evening he found his mistake. In walking home from divine service with an Englishman who was half a Socinian, a conversation began about the sermon. "What do you think of it?" said my friend. "Think of it," said the Englishman, "why, I think there was rather too much about Christ in it." This startled him. He stopped, and exclaimed, "Too much of Christ, sir! you alarm me. Too much of Christ, sir! He is every thing to me: wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Too much about Christ! why, I shall sing his praises for ever."

The next day he called on me to inquire if there were many persons who held such degrading views of his Saviour, and I told him, "Yes." "Alas," said he, "that men should be so blind. By professing themselves to be wise, they become fools. No wonder they are not happy."

This shows us the secret whence his happiness pro-

ceeded. God had given him strong consolation and good hope through grace, and he went on his way rejoicing. He could not but be happy; and I sincerely believe that Christians in general would be vastly more happy than they are, if they thought more of Christ, and of the claims which Christ has upon them.

But although he was so happy, yet he was not satisfied. This may appear a paradox; I will explain it. He believed there were heights, and depths, and lengths, and breadths, in the love of Christ, which he had not yet known, but which he felt anxious to know; therefore, like one who runs a race, he was ever pressing towards the mark for the prize. Hence, he was most diligent in religious duties whenever he had an opportunity. For a short time in the summer I had retired with my family nine miles into the country, and held service on a week evening in a room. On one of these occasions, just before the service commenced, I saw my friend arrive. I said to him, "This is a long way for you to come, sir; I hope God will meet with you and bless you." "O sir," he replied, "God met me on the road, and came with me, so that I have been well paid for coming already." This was the way he lived; so that at home and abroad, in the house and by the way-side, he seemed to enjoy a constant sense of the divine presence.

I have often thought, when meditating on the wonderful conversion of this man, that in him was exemplified the language of the poet,

"Lions and beasts of savage name,
Put on the nature of the lamb."

Persons who have known him only a few years, can hardly conceive what he was when he angrily said to me, "Have

you ever seen God?" but men of no religion who knew him in his unconverted state, have been exceedingly struck with the change. One instance will suffice. A gentleman who had left Russia to reside in England, returned one summer to see his old friends. The ship in which he sailed was commanded by a praying captain, who had the worship of God daily in his cabin. The gentleman passenger could hardly avoid being present at prayer-time, though he was not fond of it; indeed it often led to a controversy, when the gentleman tried to laugh the captain out of his religion. At last the voyage ended, and the gentleman went in a steamer to Petersburg.

Mr. B—— had formerly worked for him, and he called and talked about the fashion, and swore, etc. Once this was just the thing which pleased my friend, but now he had lost his relish for such talk. It was not only distasteful, but offensive. The grace of God, which bringeth salvation, had appeared, and taught him to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously, and godly in the world, and he frankly told the gentleman so, and proposed to read a chapter to him, which he could not resist. Then he proposed to pray with him, which he could not resist. The scene filled him with astonishment. He could not laugh now. He was so impressed that he sought out the captain, and rehearsed the whole matter, and said, "Now I know that there is a reality in religion. Before I saw the Russian tailor, I thought you religious folks were all hypocrites; but I can think so no more. You must go with me, and see the man." To this the captain consented, and afterwards told me what pleasure he felt in the good old man's society. Oh what a mercy it is to be able to bear such a faithful testimony for God; what

a mercy to be able to lodge such a witness in the bosom of an unconverted man. What a comment on that verse, "Let your light so shine before men, that they, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father who is in heaven."

His growing acquaintance with the Bible brought him into a new world. He had lost his relish for "the pleasures of sin," but the discoveries which he made in his Bible often filled him with rapture. I imagine that persons who have been acquainted with the Scriptures from their infancy, have no idea of the pleasure and wonder and astonishment which burst upon the mind of a man who for the first time in his life hears the affecting history of our Lord and Saviour. This was the case with my friend. He was born again when he was old, and with his new birth he began to read the Bible; and he frequently called on me to relate the glorious discoveries he had made; and having related them, he would ask me with childlike simplicity, "Did you ever hear any thing so delightful before?" Dear old man! It was all new to him, and he thought it must be all new to me also, when alas, my comparatively unfeeling familiarity with the subjects often made me tremble. Oh, how happy should we be if we could retain the freshness of first impressions.

But it was not from the Bible alone that he derived instruction. He was a spiritual bee. He gathered honey from every flower. Take the following as a specimen. Once when I was preaching to young people, I recommended them to treasure up in their memory that beautiful hymn which begins with,

"Not all the blood of beasts,
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away the stain.

“But Christ the heavenly Lamb
Takes all our guilt away :
A sacrifice of nobler name,
And richer blood than they.”

The old man took the hint, and learned it, and then called on me, saying, “I have learned the hymn.” “What hymn?” “Why, that which you recommended to the young people ; and I thought if it is good for them, it must be good for me also. Shall I repeat it?” “If you please.” So he began and proceeded very courageously with the first and second verses, but in repeating the third his voice faltered, and when he was repeating the fourth—

“My soul looks back to see
The burdens thou didst bear,
When hanging on the cursed tree,
And hopes her guilt was there”—

he burst into tears, and could proceed no further. This was to me an overpowering sight : his hoary head, his tremulous voice, his blind eye, his flowing tears, his holy zeal, all combined to make it one of the most interesting spectacles I had ever witnessed.

I should wish now that my reader beheld him engaged in the hallowed work of circulating divine truth. It is often said that charity begins at home ; but it does not stop there. This was the case with Mr. B——. His first care was to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure. Next came his household, then came the congregation, and then came all within his reach. To meet the last class, he employed himself a good deal in the distribution of tracts and portions of the Bible, and was ingenious in finding out ways for their circulation.

On certain days it is usual for the trades in the imperial city to meet at the Guildhall to transact the affairs of

their various guilds. These were harvest-days for the good old man. A day or two previous to the meetings, he would come to me, saying, "I want some tracts in different languages. We are going to have a great day at the Guildhall, and I wish to improve the opportunity. Let me have as many tracts as you can for an imperial"—about a guinea. Then, after the business was over, he would come to me and report: "Dreadful work yesterday, sir, at the Guildhall." "What was it?" "Some people took tracts and tore them in pieces, and trampled upon them before my eyes. Others took the tracts and threw them in my face, saying, What have you to do with my religion? while some threw them into the fire: but I am not discouraged, sir, I will try it again next meeting. I will never give up. Oh, no. There is not one of them who has been so great a sinner as I have been. And if the Lord Jesus Christ could condescend to take hold of such an old rebel as I am, and change my heart, do you think I'll be discouraged, sir? No. I will work for Christ till my dying day."

Was not this apostolic? He knew that the same mercy which had been bestowed on him was sufficient to soften the hardest heart, and to purify the most polluted heart; therefore he was never discouraged.

His kindness towards me was great and unabated. He invariably made me an annual present of a new coat, and the last he gave me was accompanied with this remarkable expression, "There, sir, take it as a token of my love; and remember, it is as much a trophy of the grace of God as the idols which were sent home from Tahiti."

Oh with what joy will the Tahitian converts meet this good old Russian tailor before the throne of God. With

what rapture will they unite in singing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. For he hath redeemed us to God by his blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

How many lessons may be learned from the short history of this good old man!

1. It affords encouragement to those who are endeavoring to lead aged sinners to repentance. To convert a sinner from the error of his way, and thus save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins, is a great work; but there are formidable difficulties in the way. Can the Ethiopian change his skin? Can the leopard change his spots? Can those who have long been accustomed to do evil, learn to do well? Can the habits of threescore years be entirely changed, and the old man become a new creature? Oh, what a work! who is sufficient for these things? To all who see these difficulties I would say, "Take courage." Behold this aged sinner, and go forward in your endeavors, nothing doubting. You cannot find a man more unlikely to become a devoted Christian than he once was. Think of the hardness and blindness of his heart when he said to me, "Have you ever seen God?" and then view him instructing his workmen, combating the Socinian, and trying to convert hundreds at once, and say, Is any thing too hard for the Lord? Oh, no. Therefore seek out the very worst characters in your neighborhood, and point them to "the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." Remember, that the worse any man is, the more he needs your help; and the more aged a sinner is, the more need there is of immediate help. If you were to see a man sinking in a river, you would perceive that if you wished to do him

good, you must do it quickly, or it would be too late. So it is with aged sinners. It is now or never. They will quickly be gone.

2. The happy change which this aged man experienced affords great encouragement to aged sinners to seek the same blessing. Yes, aged friends, it affords encouragement to you not to live any longer as you have lived, but now at the eleventh hour to seek mercy. The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness; but what an awful sight is a grey-headed sinner, unprepared to die, unprepared for heaven! This was once the condition of my old friend in Russia; but he forsook his sins. He parted with his sinful companions. He cast himself upon the mercy of Christ for salvation. He delighted to retire from the world, and to pour out his heart in prayer before the Lord; in this way he became happy himself, and then labored to make all around him happy also. He had neglected sacred things when he was young, but now he determined to work for God when he became old. He knew that he had only a short time to work, and he made the best of it, and did much in a little time. Nothing seemed to move him from his purpose. When he met with difficulties, they only roused him to greater activity. "I am not discouraged, sir," he would say. "I will never give up. No; I will work for Christ till my dying day." And ought not his example to encourage you to go and do likewise? If God had mercy on him, would he not have mercy on you if you sought it? If God made him happy, would he not make you happy also if you prayed to him? If God made him useful, would he not make you useful also if you desired it and employed God's appointed means for doing good? To be sure he would. Oh then come to

a decision. While Jesus calls, do you answer. While Jesus invites, do you run. While Jesus offers a free pardon, stretch out your hand to receive it, and having obtained it, then sing aloud, O Lord, I will praise thee; though thou wast angry with me, yet now thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation. I will not be afraid.

3. It presents a fine subject for contemplation to devout young tradesmen. One morning when I met him, he said, "I feel very anxious about the souls of my people; tell me what I can do for their souls." Think of this. Oh what would Britain and America soon become if all pious tradesmen felt like this man? What did his anxiety lead to? My tract tells you. And I hardly ever saw a man "feel deeply," but it led to good results. Matthew Henry says, "Deep impressions produce strong expressions," and we see the truth of the remark in this good old man. And if he in his old age planned and accomplished so much, how much more might you do who are now in the morning or midday of life? Try; yes, try; and "whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," copying the old man's resolution, "I will work for Christ till my dying day."

A VILLAGE PREACHER.

BY REV. RICHARD KNILL.

THIS excellent man was first made known to me on a Sabbath morning. His wife came to me, saying, "I have a favor to ask, sir; will you please to speak to my husband?" "What do you wish me to speak to him about?" I said. "Does he get drunk?" "No, sir; he has left off *that*." "Does he swear?" "No, not *now*." "Does he bring you his wages?" "Oh yes, sir; he is a good husband." "Then what am I to speak to him for?" At that she wept, and replied, "Ah, he is going out of his mind." "Pray tell me, what signs has he given that he is going out of his mind?" "Why, he was out on Sunday at the preaching *three times*; and in the evening he would take our little boy with him, and the child ought to have been in bed." "Any other sign?" "Yes, sir; he would insist on my kneeling down with him while he prayed with me."

"Then your husband had never prayed with you before, had he?" "No, never." "Well, good woman, I do not see any signs of madness in all this. Is there any other sign?" "I assure you he is very far gone. He is losing his appetite; he would not eat his supper; he said he *could not*." "How long have you perceived it coming on?" "About a month, sir. Oh, what shall I do? Our house and land will be sold. He will go to the asylum, and I and my children will be left destitute."

It struck me that I understood his case. He was not the first man I had met who had lost his appetite, and his sleep also. Many a sinner, when the arrows of the Almighty fastened in his conscience, had suffered agony indescribable. When God wounds, it is only God who can heal. There is no peace until there is an application of the precious blood of Jesus. I asked,

"What followed when he could not eat his supper?" "Why, he went to bed; and I thought, we will not disturb him; I hope he will fall asleep; perhaps a good night's rest will restore him. But Oh, sir, when I got up

stairs I found him wide awake. I soon fell asleep, and about midnight he awoke me with his groans. This was dreadful; but I fell asleep again, and soon he woke me again with his groans. At that I could refrain no longer, but said to him, 'My dear husband, what is the matter?' He replied, '*I believe the devil will have me.*' Now, sir, what am I to do?" "Do," I replied, "do this: Never cross him. If he asks you to join him in prayer, kneel down in a moment. If he asks you to go to the preaching, go; and I will venture to say, he will soon be better."

I became quite interested about the man, and soon obtained an interview with him. He seemed glad to find one who understood his case, and who could sympathize with him. He was in great sorrow of heart. The Spirit of God had deeply convinced him of his sin and danger. He was a burdened, broken-hearted sinner. The weight of his guilt pressed him down. The fiery law thundered its curses, and his views of Christ as the atoning Saviour were very gloomy. I directed and encouraged him, pointing out particularly that scripture, "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." Much of his time was now spent in strong crying and tears; and the prayer-hearing God gave him such a sight of Jesus as filled him with joy and peace.

After some months he joined us at the Lord's table, and for several years I have rejoiced in his holy walk and conversation. It was delightful to witness his constant attendance at the house of God, to see him turning over his *new* Bible, and to mark the oft-falling tear. I remember on one occasion to have been greatly moved by his prayer, so humble, so fervent; and I ventured to ask him, if on that Sabbath night when he woke his wife with his groans, he said to her, "I believe the devil will have me." "Yes," he replied, "I said so, and I thought so. I have been a very passionate man, and often gave loose to my feelings, when I swore and cursed most horribly; and when God opened my eyes to see my guilt and ruin, I feared it was impossible there could be love enough in the heart of God to save *me*; but it is not so now. Oh, no. Blessed be God, I now see Christ mighty to save; yes, to save even me."

And now this trophy of the grace of God stands up at

times to proclaim salvation, through the blood of the Lamb; and I am told that such is the unction which attends his preaching, that his hearers are often melted to tears. Does this short history teach us any thing?

1. Here is encouragement to *preachers*. What a mighty instrument they yield! In every large congregation there are men, and women too, of violent passions, of proud hearts, of rebellious wills—persons who are fighting against God, and ruining their own souls. Now the gospel meets their case. It is intended for such sinners. Preachers ought to cherish the hope, that every sermon they preach will cause joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth. Have we not the “fire,” the “arrow,” the “hammer,” and the “sword?” Is the Lord’s arm shortened, that it cannot save; or is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear? We who preach the gospel should expect great conversions, and many of them.

2. The subject is full of instruction to *husbands and wives*. In a time of great and powerful awakening in a congregation, where many are converted to God, it will often happen that wives are converted, and their husbands are not; or husbands are converted, and their wives are not; and this may cause great alarm. It is a new thing in the family. It is a breaking in upon all former plans. Oh, it is wonderful! A man praying, who used to swear—and the loss of appetite, loss of sleep—and this followed by tears and sighs and groans. There may be much love and pity, but no sympathy from the unconverted. They do not understand it. God only can reveal it unto them. This woman loved her husband, but not knowing the terrors of the Lord, or the love of the Spirit, she cried, “Ah, he is going out of his mind.” But she now rejoices in a holy, peaceful, happy husband. Things like these are greatly to be desired, and ought to be prayed for; and if we expected them, and prayed for them, we should doubtless have them. Any thing is better than death. “Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.”

3. The state of this family, before the conversion of the husband, is just a *picture of the fearful state of multitudes*. I know there are happy exceptions; but let us suppose, that next Sunday night one thousand of the

drunken, swearing, God-forgetting husbands of this country were to say to their wives, "I cannot live any longer as I have lived. Come, dear wife, kneel down, and let us pray." Would not the wives take the alarm, and fear that their husbands were going out of their minds? Alas, how many prayerless families there are! Masters, can you expect God's blessing, when you shut him out of your house? Parents, can you expect your children to obey you, while you trample on the authority of your Father in heaven? Oh, tremble at your neglect, and repent and believe the gospel, lest that dreadful verse be fulfilled on you: "Pour out thy fury upon the heathen, and upon the families that call not upon thy name."

4. The vast increase of our population shows how much need there is of good, zealous *village preaching*. A reading population is growing up around us. Good books are plentiful, and easily obtained; but if every man could read, and every man had a Bible, still, a voice from the eternal throne would sound in our ears, "*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*" The living voice is God's chosen instrument for converting the world; and the ministers, officers, and members of the church of Christ should personally address all who are far from him on the great salvation. We must have such preaching, or the people will perish.

5. Lastly, how greatly favored are those congregations which have a few warm-hearted and faithful brethren, who are able and willing to direct their fellow-creatures to Christ Jesus the Lord. Multitudes would live and die without the knowledge of the way of salvation, were it not for the labors of such devoted men, who have themselves experienced deep distress of soul, agonizing views of guilt, and exalted views of Jesus. By their deep experimental acquaintance with the gospel, they often melt those whom they address to tears. God honors them, and will honor them. I have lived among them, and have witnessed the happy results. "Oh that all the Lord's people were prophets," and "great the company of those who publish salvation!"

A VISIT TO YOUR FAMILY.

I HAVE called to see you and your family, to speak to you about your soul, and the souls of your children and servants. DOES GOD DWELL IN YOUR HOUSE ?

DO YOU READ HIS HOLY WORD MORNING AND EVENING, AND PRAY WITH YOUR FAMILY ? God has made you the head of your house for the purpose of training up your family in his ways and for his service. Of Abraham he said, "I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, that they shall keep the way of the Lord." Gen. 18 : 19. Joshua said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Josh. 24 : 15. God constituted the family relation, "that he might have a godly seed." Mal. 2 : 15. The everlasting happiness of your family depends on their being servants of God. You must be destitute of the best of feelings, if you do not desire the welfare for time and eternity of your wife, children, and servants. God says, "These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart ; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up," Deut. 6 : 4-9 ; and by Jeremiah, "Pour out thy fury upon the families that call not on thy name." Jer. 10 : 25. Philip Henry used to say, "If the worship of God be not in the house, write, 'Lord have mercy on us,' upon the door, for there is a plague, a curse in it." His son Matthew said, "A family without prayer is a house without a roof, open to every storm, and exposed to the wrath and curse of God."

DO YOUR CHILDREN AND SERVANTS REGULARLY ATTEND UPON FAMILY WORSHIP ? It is of the greatest importance to form a regular habit for them. To do so, you must be very particular in requiring their attendance. Neglecting this duty to your servants, by their influence and example they may undermine the principles you would cultivate in your children, and defeat all your exertions. Few persons properly estimate the influence of servants upon the children of a family : it will be felt by them until they die.

DO YOU MAKE CONSCIENCE OF SECRET PRAYER? It is a good plan, not only to pray for yourself, but for each member of your family by name, for whatever you think they need. Pray for the church you attend, its minister and members, and always that the Spirit of God may accompany the word preached with power to the hearts of sinners. Your love for, and practice of secret prayer, is one of the best tests of the honesty and sincerity of your religion. God does not forget secret prayer. Mat. 6:6. You cannot wish ill to any man, if you sincerely pray, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." Ministers of the gospel need your prayers. They want praying people. By prayer we bring God to our help. No money, however liberally given, can buy the gift of the Holy Ghost; but prayer enters heaven and draws down the gracious influences of that blessed Spirit. A poor praying member of a church is a greater blessing to it than the influence of many rich ones. Urge your children and servants to pray in secret for the influence of the Holy Spirit to renew and sanctify their hearts. Endeavor to teach them the true nature of prayer, that it is not any form of words, but the offering up of the desires of the heart to God, in the name of Jesus Christ, for things which are agreeable to his will. Give each of them a Bible for their own use, and urge them to read a portion of it every day. Teach them about God—his true character, and their duties to him. Do not let any child or servant go out of your family without a Bible.

HOW DO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY SPEND THE LORD'S DAY? It is the Lord's time. It is the hem of the week. Don't waste it. It is more precious than other days. Do you rise as early on it as on other days? Do you use diligence in improving its sacred hours? Let no unnecessary work be done. Leave none of your Saturday's work that may delay you in entering upon the sacred duties of this holy day. You cannot rob God of his day without loss.

Get all your family ready, and take them to the house of God in good season. Require all to go that are able. Don't let trivial excuses keep any away, and while there keep them under your own charge. Some secure themselves a seat in the house of God, but care not where their children or servants are. A parent or master's duty is as binding in the church as at home.

When you go to the house of God, do not stand at the door, or wait in groups around the house, as if the Lord was not in his holy temple, and would not hear your prayers or accept of your praise until the minister enters. Pray before you leave home; pray in his courts. "My house shall be called the house of prayer."

Teach your children to reverence and love God's house. It is the place where he has promised to meet and bless his people. We should love to be where God has said he will be, and should be anxious to appear before him. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, *there am I* in the midst of them." Mat. 18:20. The psalmist said, "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth." "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord." "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house." "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Psa. 26:8; 27:4; 84:2, 4, 10.

Accustom your children, on returning from the house of God, to repeat the text and as much of the sermon as they can remember. It will impress the truth more deeply upon their memory, and influence them to hear more attentively. You will thus be able to see how much of the sermon they understand, and will have an opportunity of explaining what they do not. This practice will greatly benefit them and yourself. Never permit them to spend the Sabbath in idleness at home, nor to visit among their neighbors and friends. Let them employ the portion of the day not devoted to public worship, in reading and studying the Bible, in reading religious books, in learning their catechisms, or whatever may implant good seed in their hearts.

Good practical religious books can now be readily procured at very little cost. Supply your family with them, and thus when you or they are unwell, or have rainy Sabbaths, you may improve precious time to great profit. You can scarcely do any thing for the same cost, that will repay you so well, or be such a means of good to your own soul

and to your household, as the providing and giving them good books. They have been instrumental, with the influence of the Holy Spirit, in convincing of sin, leading to Jesus Christ, and comforting with a glorious hope of heaven, myriads of souls. Get for yourself, get for your children, good books, such as Baxter, Bunyan, Alleine, Flavel, Owen, Edwards, and Doldridge. One of the last acts of the late Rev. Dr. Archibald Alexander, after serving God in the ministry nearly sixty years, was to appropriate \$10 to procure the Tract Society's Religious or Pastor's Library for a destitute minister. Of good books it is well said,

“They live when you are dead;
Light on the darkened mind they shed;
Good seed they sow from age to age,
Through all this mortal pilgrimage;
They nurse the germs of holy trust;
They wake untired when you are dust.”

DO YOU CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS SUPPORTING THE GOSPEL? Do you consider the laborers that do your work as needing support for themselves and families, and yet neglect to sustain the ministers who labor for you in the gospel? How can you expect God's blessing upon his word, if you are unwilling or neglect to contribute for its continuance among you? If you desire it, you will strive to sustain it. No greater blessing can abide with a community, than the pure gospel faithfully preached, and there is no stronger mark of God's displeasure than the withdrawing of his servants.

HAVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY OF DOING GOOD TO THOSE WHO ARE NOT OF YOUR IMMEDIATE FAMILY? Is there a Sabbath-school, or prayer-meeting, or a feeble church near you, that needs your aid? Give them your countenance and support. Help them while they need it. The man that will congratulate or manifest willingness to help when the difficulty is over, is of little use anywhere. Ask yourself, What can I do where I now am, at this present time, for advancing the pure worship of God? You may have the ability given you by God to sustain a minister in some destitute place, or to help to retain one in a feeble church, in danger of being deprived of theirs from inability to support him. You may support one or more colporteurs in distributing religious tracts and books from house to

house. You may perhaps have preaching in your own house, or a Sabbath-school, or Bible, or catechetical class, that would be a nursery for heaven. You could put Bibles, tracts, and religious books into the families of your neighborhood, that after many days would bring forth fruit. "Blessed are they that sow beside all waters."

Christians sometimes complain of the ignorance and wickedness of their neighbors, and yet do nothing to benefit them. God may have placed such around you for the very purpose of making you instruments of good to them, and your duty is to try to do them good. Perhaps you would not seek a field of labor, and God has placed it at your door. It may be that there is no church near, and God has given you land suitable, and influence and means which, if properly used, will secure one. Consider it an honor put upon you, if the Lord will allow you to be the instrument of erecting a house for his worship. Do not act as some who think the land is theirs, and that it is a favor done by them to give it to the Lord. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Psa. 24:1.

Can you ever regret giving back to the Lord of that which he has lent you, or rendering any labor which he will permit you in his service? Whatever you can do for promoting the kingdom of Christ, consider as your highest privilege and greatest honor. In your family, with your children and servants, or your neighbors, let it be the desire, and purpose, and effort, and prayer of your life to promote the cause of Jesus Christ, your Lord and Saviour.

The worship and service of God is the noblest work in which men or angels can engage. The early Christians took joyfully the spoiling of their earthly hopes, that they might have an inheritance in heaven. To mention the name of Christ with respect would endanger their lives; and afterwards, in papal countries, to be found with a copy of the word of God, would subject the possessor to persecution and death. In this happy land, every man may read the word of God, teach it to his children, and train them up in the knowledge of it, without any to molest him. He may become a follower of Christ without forfeiting his standing in the community or being deprived of any of his civil rights. But to be a disciple of Christ, he must deny

himself ungodliness and worldly lusts, take up his cross, and follow Christ in newness of life and conversation. He must not be conformed to the world, but be transformed by the renewing of his mind. That renewed mind will seek to render to God the very best service. No sacrifice will be considered too great. Flowing from love to Him who first loved us and gave himself for us, it will constrain us to glorify him in our body and spirit, which are his.

Is the service of Christ your delight? Do you desire for yourself and children an interest in him, more than all earthly good? You labor to provide food and clothing for yourself and them: do you use as much diligence in seeking the Saviour and striving to lead them to him? All labor for your bodies will soon be over: what have you done, and what are you doing for your souls? O, what thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.

Should you neglect to provide food for your family until they died from starvation, you would rightly be judged guilty of their death. How much more guilty, and how much more terrible will be the judgment due to you, who, as a parent or master, have made no provision for the eternal welfare of the souls of your children and servants! In that great and dreadful day, when they shall stand before God, and charge their ruin upon you, what answer will you be able to give? Will you be able to call God to witness how you longed for their salvation; how diligently, and carefully, and regularly you trained them in the knowledge of the way to heaven? Will you be able to point to the days and nights when you plead with him for a blessing upon them? Will they bear witness for you, remembering the family altar, the prayers, and the example which you set before them? Will they say, "We were taught the knowledge of God, to reverence and keep holy the Sabbath-day; were prayed with, and prayed for, and entreated to seek and serve the Lord, and prepare for heaven?" Or will they, in that day, stand before God your judge, to upbraid you for your unfaithfulness and neglect of their souls?

If their souls are cast into hell, under the wrath and curse of God, how aggravated will be your anguish, to hear one and another charging you, their parents and masters, before an assembled universe, as being instrumental in their damnation! "Oh, if it had not been for you, this

would not have been our place. You never prayed with us, nor for us. You never taught us to read God's word, or to keep his holy Sabbath. You never led us to the house of God, nor taught us that we must worship him. You did not pray with us nor for us, either in your family or in your closet. You never told us that we should prefer eternal things to the perishing things of time." Some may then say, "We saw you read the Bible at times, and go to the house of God, but you never urged it upon us. One single word from you as parents and masters, might have kept us out of the evil company into which we were led, and one word from you might have directed us to the Bible, and the Sabbath, and the house of God; but you never spoke to us one word about God and our souls. Now all these opportunities are over; now it is for ever too late. We are ruined, without hope. We chose our own wicked ways and our wicked companions, and you never restrained us. Now, warnings can do us no good. *We are lost; LOST FOR EVER, without remedy.* But our blood is upon you. You might have warned us of our danger; you might have taken us by the hand and led us to the house of God. You might have cautioned us against the company and example of the wicked. You might have restrained us from evil, and persuaded us to follow that which was good. When we were young, you might have taught us about God and heaven, about our souls and Jesus and salvation, and then we might have been saved. Alas, alas!"

To see your children among the lost, will be enough to break your hearts; but to hear their wailings, and in the depth of their sufferings to hear them charging their ruin upon their unfeeling and unfaithful parents, will extort from many the lamentation, "I have damned my own child, I have damned my servants, and Oh, I have damned my own soul! I spent my life in providing for their bodies; to feed and clothe, and give them an inheritance on earth, was all my labor. I made no provision for eternity. Now I see and feel the madness of my folly; but alas, alas, *it is too late!* TOO LATE!"

The object of my visit is to speak to you before it is too late, and to call you to redeem the few remaining moments, to embrace the present opportunities, and to begin without delay to train up every member of your household

in the way of the Lord, and strive to fit them for heaven. You may have gone far in the way to eternal ruin, and may be confirmed in your own way. Stop but for a moment. Will you go on and destroy your own soul? Will you draw your wife and children and servants down to eternal burnings? Would you have them to be your companions in hell? You may now treat these things lightly, and even scorn this warning, but the day is coming, when, with all the earnestness of a tormented and lost sinner, you will cry for a drop of water to quench your burning thirst, and when you will beg for some one to go and warn your family not to come into that place of torment. Luke 16 : 27, 28.

Before you put this tract out of your hand, I want you to give a direct answer to these questions. Say from your heart, before your Maker and Judge, "God helping me, I will without delay seek after him; I will set up his service in my house; I will pray with and for my family; I will put the word of God in their hands, and strive to teach them its sacred doctrines; I will take my family regularly to the house of God; I will there, and in my family and in my closet, pray to God for the sacred influences of his Holy Spirit to renew my own heart, and all the members of my family."

To persuade you to form such resolutions, is the design of my coming into your house. And I want you, before you turn your thoughts to any other subject, to make these resolutions. If you do not begin now, I cannot see any reason why you will ever begin. If your house was on fire, would you wait until to-morrow to put out the flames? To-morrow your soul may be in hell. To-morrow your children may be in eternity. God says, "To-day." His voice is the voice both of wisdom, mercy, and love. **TO-DAY** you may be saved. **TO-DAY** come thou and all thy house into the ark. **TO-MORROW** the door may be shut, and the vengeance of a dishonored and provoked God may overwhelm you in endless ruin.

My visit has been to invite you to come to Christ, and by divine help, to bring with you your wife, your children, and servants. **WILL YOU COME?**

THE TEACHER.

TRAVELLING in a mountainous region at nightfall of a tempestuous day, and having lost my road, I was directed for a lodging to "Squire D——'s, who keeps the ferry." After supper, I had a pleasant talk with the father of Squire D——, on whose head the snows of eighty winters had fallen, and soon the family were gathered round us, engaged in delightful converse. I inquired as to the high-handed wickedness of a neighborhood not far off, where I had heard that meetings were frequently held in mockery of religious worship—

"Yes, yes," said the squire, with just enough of the Welsh accent to betray his origin, "and our neighborhood here was just as bad ten years ago; we were all alike; no church, no preacher, no Sunday-school, no day-school. One evening a minister and a young lady stopped at my house for the night; I thought them very inquisitive people. They asked if we had any preaching. 'No.' Any schools? 'No; we have had several teachers, but no one will stay more than a quarter with us.' The young lady said she would come and take a school among us, if we would employ her. After some further conversation, I told her I would see what could be done and write her the result. Next morning they left for the minister's home at M——, some fifty miles distant.

"In a short time I had a school made up and board engaged for the new teacher, and wrote her to that effect. She came and commenced her school at the time appointed. But soon there was complaint that the new teacher *read the Bible and prayed in her school*. And her troubles did not cease here. The man at whose house she boarded insisted that she should leave, because she prayed, sung hymns, and would keep talking about religion all the time. Miss H—— then set out to look up another home for herself; but she met the same reply from all: 'We cannot receive you, unless you leave off praying and singing.'

"When she applied to me, I objected on the same grounds. Finally, I told her if she would come on my own terms, I would take her into my family. She inquired

wnat those terms were. 'Why,' said I, 'you shall have such a room to yourself; there you are to stay from the time you return from school until you start to go back, only when you come to your meals: you must not sing hymns; you may pray as much as you please, but mind you don't let us hear you at it; and *remember*, the first time you infringe this contract, you leave the premises.' To all this she agreed with as much meekness as if my terms had been reasonable and right. That evening she took up her abode under my roof; and little did I think what a blessing God was sending me in that frail, delicate girl.

"The children all loved the new teacher very much. So one day she told them to ask their parents' permission, and if *they* were agreed, she would teach them on Sunday too. This proposal pleased us all. If she taught on Sunday, that was so much clear gain to us.

"I soon observed that my children took to staying in the teacher's room much of their time. At length, one Sunday morning, they came down with some tracts; I looked over them, and found they were on the subject of religion. Ah, said I, my lady, I've caught you now. I called her down, told her she had violated her contract, and must be off. The poor girl began to weep; I felt ashamed. 'Dear sir,' said she, 'will you read those tracts? If you do, and still continue in your present mind, I will leave your house immediately.'

"Here was a pretty fix; the children were all crying, and begging me not to send Miss H—— away; and the books, Oh, they could not part with the books. I was mightily perplexed; at last I gave in. Said I, 'Miss H——, you may go back to your room; I will consider the matter.' I shall never forget the smile that passed over her face as she thanked me and went back to her room. Thanked me, indeed! Well, I set to work, read one of the tracts, felt self-condemned; read it again, felt dreadfully troubled. Then I read them all, and felt that I was a great sinner. I said nothing more to Miss H—— about leaving my house. Each day my convictions became deeper. At last I could bear it no longer. Thought I, this wont do; I must talk with Miss H——. So I invited her to come and sit with us in the family. She cheerfully complied. I asked her a great many questions

about the doctrines of the Bible, not meaning to let her know any thing about my concern. But all would not do; my distress continued, or rather my agony, for I thought I was the greatest sinner on earth.

“At last, I sent one evening for Miss H—— to come down, and I told her my troubles; for my proud heart was well-nigh broken. Said I, Miss H——, I feel so and so ever since I read those tracts of yours; and I related all that was passing in my mind; and, said I, do you think there is any mercy or hope for such a poor miserable sinner? The tears began to run down her cheeks; then she laughed; then she caught me by both hands, and looking up into my face, she said, ‘Oh, my dear friend, I am so glad.’ ‘Why,’ said I, ‘are you glad because I am in trouble?’ ‘Oh, my dear sir,’ says she, ‘this is the Spirit of God operating on your heart.’ All at once a great light seemed to shine into my mind. All that I had been learning for so many weeks seemed now just as plain as A B C. Said I, ‘Come, Miss H——, kneel down then and pray for me;’ and she did pray for me, and I do bless God for his wonderful mercy to such a poor hardened sinner. I believe that God *did* change my heart just while that *very prayer* was going up. All at once it just came: I loved my Bible and I loved to pray, and I could not bear the company that I used to take so much delight in.

“On the next Sabbath, Miss H—— asked me to go along with her and the children to the school—which was, and had been a Sunday-school, though we never suspected it; and here came a trial. If I go, they will say I am getting religious; if I stay, it will be a sin, for I know I *ought* to go; and then it will grieve Miss H——. These last considerations were the strongest; so I went. The room was crowded with children, all waiting for their teacher; I thought they all looked happy. After a little while, Miss H—— took the Bible, and coming to me, she said, ‘Mr. D——, will you read and pray with us this morning?’ I was startled; my very heart trembled. Said I, ‘Oh no; not now.’ Then she read a chapter and prayed herself. Oh, how I felt, to think that I was ashamed to pray before those children! Ah, thought I, this will never do; I will come here and pray next Sunday. That

night I read and prayed with my family; and the next Sabbath I opened the school with prayer.

“The news spread soon all through the settlement. D—— has got religion and is praying in the Sunday-school! strange news this. Very soon the people began to drop in to our Sunday-school. Then Miss H—— said to me, ‘You had better read us a sermon at the Sunday-school, after the other exercises are over.’ She selected the sermons, and I read them. Our meetings grew very solemn. Presently we sent word to a good man at B—— to send us a minister; he did so. The minister came and preached for us. The little school-house could not contain one-half the people who crowded to hear him. We held our meetings in the open air, under the trees.

“Ah, that was a wonderful time; the cry of the anxious sinner went up from every house. The Spirit of God was moving mightily upon the hearts of the people, and many were born into the kingdom of Christ. All this brought a great change in our settlement. Instead of the dance, and the gaming-table, and the foolish song, we had meetings for prayer and praise; and the tavern and still-house were exchanged for the temple of God.

“The Sabbath became a day of holy rest among a people who used to spend it in revelry or idleness. Houses of worship were built, where our population flocked every Sabbath to hear the preached word from the living minister; and in the course of two or three years, hundreds professed faith in Christ, and joined the church. We have had a flourishing church here ever since. Ah,” said the good man, in his peculiarly emphatic way, “see what God hath wrought for us.”

How often have I reproached myself, when I contrasted the heroic conduct of this devoted female with my own man-fearing spirit! She has gone to her reward: her memory will be cherished for a few more years in the hearts of those to whom her humble efforts were of such immense value, and then pass away and be forgotten. But her *influence* will pass on, an ever increasing current, down the long tracts of time, and throughout the endless ages of eternity.

JUST TOO LATE.

THE wharf from which one of our large steam-boats was about to start, was crowded with persons of almost every description. Every one seemed full of life and activity, and those who were about to take their passage in her, were anxious to secure their places. At length the last bell gave notice that the time for departure had come. The captain, standing aloft near the wheel-house, gave the signal for the plank to be raised, and the boat slowly left the wharf. At this moment, a traveller was seen running in great haste to the landing; but before he could get to the wharf, the boat was beyond his reach, and he turned back disappointed, exclaiming that it was always his misfortune to be "JUST TOO LATE."

A physician sat in his office; the night was cold and stormy, but the bright fire in the grate, and the other comforts with which he was surrounded, rendered him indifferent to the inclemency of the weather. He had just opened an interesting book, and was anticipating a quiet evening, when he heard a knock at his door, and upon opening it, he was addressed by a little girl, who said, in a sad voice, "Please, sir, wont you come to see my mother? she is very sick." "Where do you live?" "We live quite near, in F—— street," was the reply. "I will come and see your mother in a few minutes," said he, and the child left the door. The doctor glanced for a moment at the rain, which was fast falling in the street, and then turning a lingering look to the fire and the comforts he was about to leave, again took his seat saying to himself that he would just finish one chapter before he ventured out. An hour passed, and still he moved not; that chapter had been finished, and many more, and yet, so interested was he in his book, that his promise was entirely forgotten, till he was aroused by another knock, and the same plaintive voice, saying, "Please, sir, wont you come *now*? mother is much worse."

Reproaching himself for his neglect, he rose hastily, and told the child to lead the way, and he would follow. Walking quickly through the streets, in a few minutes they were at the house; and upon opening the door, he found himself in the room where the poor woman was lying; but how did his heart sink within him, when he saw that life was just departing, and perceived that, although an hour ago her life might have been saved, yet now he was "JUST TOO LATE."

My dear reader, permit me to inquire whether you have an interest in the Saviour's sacrifice, and have made your peace with God. If not, allow me, with all kindness, to present you a few reasons why you should attend to the interests of your never dying soul, lest, if you put it off, it may be for ever *too late*. The promises and invitations of the Bible are only made with regard to the *present time*. "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation;" "to-day if you will hear his voice, harden not your heart." In all the Bible there is no offer of mercy for future repentance. Now, what would you think of a man, justly condemned to die, and only awaiting the day of his execution without knowing when it might come, to whom his king whom he had offended had sent many messengers and letters, telling him if he would repent and ask for pardon his life should be spared; and who, notwithstanding all this, should refuse time after time, saying that there was "still time enough," till at last, his patience and long-suffering having been exhausted, the king, instead of a message of mercy, sent an order for his execution? Would you not say that he deserved to die? And yet this is just your case. The Bible declares that we are all "condemned already," and if you are out of Christ, that condemnation still rests upon you. But God, who is not willing that any should perish, has sent you, by the mouth of his servants, many invitations and warnings; and this tract comes to you as a letter from him, saying, "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?" Oh do not refuse. To-morrow he may say of you, as of the barren fig-tree, "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?"

Eighteen hundred years ago, when Paul the apostle to the Gentiles was taken prisoner, and carried before Felix to answer for his religion, we read that, "as Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and said, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." Alas, that convenient season never came; and should you now put off religion with the same excuse, a more convenient season will never arrive for you. You will never again have a more favorable opportunity to believe in Christ and trust in him for salvation, never have less sin to repent of, than you have this day.

You know that "unless a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," and yet you are willing to put off repentance and faith in Christ. How strange! Suppose that, as you were travelling to a neighboring city, you should meet an acquaintance coming from the opposite direction, and yet hoping to reach the same city as yourself. "But," say you, "my friend, you are going the wrong way." "Oh, I know that," says he, "but after travelling this way for some distance further, I intend to retrace my steps before night come." Would you not think he had lost his reason? And would you wonder if, when night came, he was still travelling in the wrong direction, or at best groping his way in the dark, vainly striving to find the road that led to the city? Need I say that this is a fair representation of your case? You are a traveller to eternity; you acknowledge that you are a sinner, but you hope to be a follower of Jesus before you die. Oh beware lest, like the traveller, the night of death overtake you, while you are vainly striving to grope your way to the Saviour amid the fast-falling shades of a dying hour. Perhaps you reason with yourself that you can go on in your sins till you wish to stop, and then, with but little effort, can break away from all your evil habits and be a Christian. Alas, you know not what you are doing, but are like the man who stepped into a boat some distance above the falls of Niagara, and was slowly borne down the

stream. At first he smiled on all around, feeling confident of his power to stop himself; but as he got further into the current, and saw that he was going onward with increasing velocity, he cried out in great alarm, and strove to stop himself in his mad career; but alas, it was *then* "too late;" and he was borne over the falls, and lost in the abyss beneath!

Do you say that you "have no time?" Suppose that God, having offered salvation to you which you refuse, should now declare, that henceforth your own repentance would avail you nothing; but that your salvation would depend upon the repentance and faith of some one of your ungodly acquaintance; and if he died without repentance, you must be for ever lost. Would you not go to that man and urge him, by all the motives you could think of, to repent? And should he say that he had "not time now, but would attend to it at a more convenient season," how anxious you would be that he should not put it off; and how small and insignificant would all his concerns appear, in comparison with your soul's salvation. Oh, then, let not Satan deceive you. To-day the Saviour says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." Open to him without delay, lest if he should depart from you, he may never return.

"Hasten, sinner, to be wise;
Stay not for the morrow's sun:
Wisdom if you still despise,
Harder is it to be won.

"Hasten, sinner, to be blest;
Stay not for the morrow's sun;
Lest perdition thee arrest
Ere the morrow is begun.

"Hasten, sinner, to return;
Stay not for the morrow's sun;
Lest thy lamp should cease to burn,
Ere salvation's work is done."

THE MISSIONARY'S NEPHEW.

DE WITT HUNT, of the Junior class in the New York University, a promising youth of nineteen, "the only son of his mother, and she a widow," died in humble, joyful trust in the Redeemer, January 19, 1852. A train of circumstances, commencing with the following letter which was addressed to him a little more than two months before his death, by his mother's brother, Rev. Dr. Seudder, the veteran missionary to India, will be regarded with interest by those who love to trace the dispensations of divine Providence and grace.

The letter, it will be perceived, was written at Madras, on the other side of the globe, November 12, and breathes the spirit of prayer, love, and fidelity, which the author has manifested for multitudes of the young. Four days after the letter was written, Sabbath, November 16, his mother, as if by an impulse from on high, spent the whole evening with him in religious conversation and prayer, to which he gave the most serious attention. On November 27, he called on the pastor whose ministry he attended, and "addressed him in anxious inquiry for the way of life." On December 10, he first expressed to his mother a trembling hope in Christ. On January 8, he was examined for admission to the church, and on this day the letter from his uncle was received. As he read it, his spirit responded to it all, and he said, "If my heart were not now in the right place, I do not know how I should bear it." On Sabbath, January 11, he joined the people of God in commemorating the Lord's death at his table. "*It was the last day of the two months which his uncle had set apart for special prayer.*"

He returned from the communion-season to the chamber of death, the state of his mind calling for "rather praise than prayer" from the pastor and all around him. His heart was set on the ministry and the missionary work, but he sweetly acquiesced in the divine will, dwelling on the sufferings and glory of Christ, and the assurance that nothing should separate him from his love. As he perceived death approaching, he exclaimed, "I am now

ready at any moment to say. Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. The Lord is my strength, of whom shall I be afraid? It is better to die than to live." Nor did the blessing rest on him alone. His only brother died in peace on the day he was admitted to the church. A number of that family circle were awakened and publicly professed Christ, among whom were both of his surviving sisters, and a daughter of Dr. Scudder who had returned to this country. The letter is sent forth in the hope that it may be blessed in gathering other fruits unto eternal life.

"MADRAS, November 12, 1852.

"MY DEAR NEPHEW—Harriet received your letter by the last steamer. I have not the least evidence from that letter that you love the Saviour, for you do not even refer to him. On this account, I may perhaps be warranted in coming to the conclusion that He is not much in your thoughts. Be this, however, as it may, I have become so much alarmed about your spiritual condition as to make you a special subject of prayer—as to set you apart for this purpose; and I design, God willing, to pray for you in a special manner, until about the time when this letter should reach you, that is, about two months. After that, I can make you no promise to pray for you, any further than I may pray for my friends in general. I have now set apart a little season to pray for you, and to write to you.

"Do you wonder at this? Has it never occurred to you *as a very strange thing*, that others should be so much concerned for you, while you are unconcerned for yourself? I can explain the mystery. It is this. Your pious friends have seen you, and your uncle among the rest, has seen you walking over the pit of destruction on a rotten covering as it were, liable at every moment to fall through it and drop into everlasting burnings. *This* you have not seen, and therefore you have remained so careless and indifferent. Whether this carelessness and indifference will continue, of course I know not. All that I can say is, that I am greatly alarmed about you. It is no small thing for you to trample under foot the blood of Christ for *nineteen* years. It is no small thing to spend nineteen years in rebellion against God. Justly might the Saviour say of you, as he said of the people of old, "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone." Your treatment of the

blessed Saviour is what grieves me to the heart. What has he not done to save you? Were you to fall into a well, and a stranger should run to your help and take you out, that stranger would for ever afterwards be esteemed as your chief friend. Nothing could be too much for you to do for him. Of nothing would you be more cautious than of grieving him. And has Christ come down from heaven to save you? Has he died for you? Has he shed his very blood for you, in order that you might be delivered from the worm that dieth not, and from the fire which is never quenched? And can you be so ungrateful, so wicked, as not to love him? My dear nephew, this will not do, it must not do. You must alter your course. But I will stop writing for a moment, and kneel down and entreat God's mercy for *you*. I will endeavor to present the sacrifice of my Redeemer at the throne of grace, that I may, for this sacrifice' sake, call down the blessing of the Holy Spirit of God upon you.—

“I have been away and plead for you; and how many prayers has not your dear mother made in your behalf. Whether you will wade down to hell through these prayers, or not, remains to be seen. Should you be lost after all that has been done for you, after all the prayers which have been offered for you, how sad, how sad! Oh, that word *lost*. ‘What a living scorpion will it be to your deathless soul!’ But let me hope better things. Let me hope, that though your rebellion against Christ has reached even up to the end of your nineteenth year—alarming thought indeed—it is now to come to an end for ever. Let me yet hope for your salvation. But for me to entertain such a hope, there must be an entire change in you. *You must be born again*. You must give up this vain world as your portion, *repent*, and give yourself entirely and unconditionally to your Saviour. And will you do this? And will you do it now? If so, throw yourself at his feet; tell him that you are a wretch undone, deserving nothing but his vengeance. Tell him that though you have trampled on his blood, you will, in his strength, do so no more, but be *His* for ever. Plead with him with tears of anguish, to give you the influences of his Holy Spirit, to create in you a clean heart, and renew within you a right spirit, without which you are eternally undone;

and continue to plead until you hear him say, 'Son, go in peace; thy sins are forgiven thee.'

"But notwithstanding all the hopes just expressed, there may be an entirely different result. It may be that you will not comply with perhaps my last entreaties for you to dedicate yourself to Christ now. If so, I must tell you, my precious nephew, that it will be no wonder if God should withdraw his Spirit from you for ever. You very well know, that if one comes to your door day after day, and is received with unkindness, he will leave you to return no more. Christ, the best and the only real friend whom you have in the universe, has come to you by his Spirit day after day, and month after month, and year after year, and Oh, dreadful to relate, *for nineteen long years*. Do you yourself think that he ought any longer to continue to come to you? To-day he is coming, perhaps *for the last time*. If you reject him to-day, I shall not wonder if he abandons you to your own ways, to be filled with your own devices. I shall not wonder, if this day a seal is put in heaven to your everlasting damnation.

"And now, my dear nephew, I bid you farewell. It will be but a little while before you and I are summoned to appear at the judgment-seat of Christ—the judgment-seat of the last day—that awful, that dreadful day. Oh, how will your heart sink and die within you, if, with all those whose sins are not washed away in the blood of the Lamb, you hear the awful sentence, 'Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.' And when millions and millions of years shall have rolled away, and you are constrained by the gnawings of the worm which never dies, and by the torments of that fire which is never quenched, to lift up your voice and say, 'How long, O Lord, yet how long?' and when the voice of infinite justice proclaims, FOR EVER, with what wailings and bitter lamentations will you look back and remember the transactions of *this day*, when you deliberately and voluntarily *chose the world instead of Christ as your portion!*

"Your affectionate uncle,

"J. SCUDDER."

THE
POWER AND GRACE OF CHRIST

IN

THE LAST YEARS OF JOHN COLBY.

“WONDERFUL things happen in this world, and one of them is that John Colby has become a Christian,” was a remark addressed to the tenant upon his home farm, by a great statesman, one of the most distinguished of his country and age. According to a fine habit of his when visiting his native hills of New Hampshire, Mr. Webster had been engaged in seeking out the acquaintances of his childhood. He had just returned from a visit to the old friend named, and after sitting in his mansion a while, as if in thought upon the interview recently had, he suddenly and emphatically gave utterance to the above remark.

It *was* a wonderful thing that happened in this world when John Colby became a Christian, although the wonder and joy of it were not confined to this earth. He was brother-in-law to the great statesman, and at the period of the change referred to, had reached the age of eighty-four years, a time of life at which the natural sensibilities are apt to be blunted, and the habits of sin fixed and strong in the soul. Strange as it may seem, such had been his heedlessness of instruction, that though surrounded by an intelligent community, he had never learned to read. What knowledge and mental discipline he possessed had been acquired in the school of the world, and not by means of books.

Under such circumstances, it is remarkable that *any* considerable change should take place in his character. That a revolution should be wrought in it such as should place the remaining years of his life in direct contrast with his whole previous career, is wonderful, and can be

attributed only to the power of Him who wrought miracles of grace on the day of Pentecost, and converted the hostile traveller on his way to Damascus. The writer enjoyed frequent opportunities of visiting the subject of these pages after his conversion, and the following narrative is taken substantially from his own lips.

Mr. Colby had a pious mother, who inculcated upon him when a child the precepts and duties of the Bible, and her teachings dwelt in his memory and conscience. These, with the subsequent counsels and solicitude of his wife, at times deeply impressed him with the importance of seeking the salvation of his soul. The goodness of God, also, in bestowing temporal blessings—in enabling him to get free from debt, and to acquire a competency for the support of himself and family—sometimes affected his heart and called forth the feeling of obligation to devote himself to the service of God. But the love of the world grew strong within him, and his desire for earthly treasures quenched his anxieties as to his salvation. From year to year he neglected the claims of God, till at length age stole upon him, and his brow was whitened by the snows of more than fourscore years.

“What was it,” inquired the writer, “that at last roused you to act in view of the prospect before you?”

“The good words of my mother and of my wife,” he replied, “kept by me, but I thought there would be time enough left to seek the Lord, until last fall, an acquaintance of mine dropped down dead. He was standing at the railroad dépôt, as well as usual, and without any warning he fell down dead. I felt that it was time for *me* to get ready to die.”

“What did you do when this warning reached you?”

“I cried to the Almighty to have mercy upon me; to pardon and save my soul. I prayed to him day and night.”

“Did he hear you immediately?” “Not at first. But I was afraid to die. So I kept calling upon him, and he gave me *a heart for this book*,” said he, putting his hand upon a New Testament in large type before him, kept open by his spectacles at the place where he had been trying to read. “*The Almighty gave me a heart for this blessed Testament.*”

“But you were not able to read it?” “No; but my children read some of it to me, and I began to learn to read it for myself.”

“Did you not find it hard work, at your time of life, to begin with your letters and learn to read?”

“Yes, it was hard work. It was difficult for me to find out the meaning. Sometimes I would find a part of a word on this end of the line, and another part of it over on the other end of the next line, and I could not make out the sense. But I would pray to the Almighty to help me, and then I would try again, and he would help me to find it out. So that now I have read the Testament through eight times, and here I am, in the epistle of Peter the ninth time; and O,” added he, with streaming eyes, “it is glory and praise in my heart.”

Deeply interesting was it to see this aged man, so recently awakened to the realities of his immortal existence, and in possession of the true portion of his soul, pour out his feelings of confidence and joy in God. His form was large and vigorous, his ample features and expanded brow, crowned with hair abundant and white as the driven snow, imparted to him an air at once venerable and commanding; while the deep furrows which grooved his countenance suggested the thought of a strong impelling power, and gave token of the fires of passion that had burned and raged within. But the harshness was now softened, and his features were lighted up with the benignity of heavenly love. The Bible had met his wants; he was filled with rapture, and from the abundance of his heart his mouth spoke.

Desirous of knowing what relation his joyful experience bore to the power and grace of the Redeemer, I once asked him how Christ appeared to him. He raised his hands adoringly, and exclaimed, “Glorious, blessed Saviour!” After expressing, at some length, his love and gratitude, he gave the following relation.

“When I began to seek religion, I determined that I would not go to the Son of God, nor to the prophets nor apostles, but to the Almighty. I determined to go to the Being that built the mountains, and made the rivers and the trees, and created all the world.”

He was standing, as he spoke, on the threshold of his

cottage door. A short distance before him flowed the waters of the beautiful Pemigewasset. Beyond it sloped the hills, which extending off to the north and east, rise into the magnificence of the Franconia and White mountain ranges. As the venerable old man spoke, he pointed with an air of dignity to these familiar tokens of divine power. "I wanted," he said, "a religion that should be good and strong, and that would keep by me, and help me when I came to die. So I cried to the Almighty, and he gave me a heart for the blessed Testament. I found out how to read it, and then I read in it that Jesus Christ made the world, and the rivers and the mountains. And then I began to pray to him that he would give me a new heart; and he gave it to me. And I read that when he lived on the earth he healed the sick and the blind, and was good to the poor, and then I knew that he would be kind to me; and he forgave me, and gave me a new heart." And then in a manner impossible to describe, he broke forth into an ardent doxology "to Christ the Almighty God, who had been so kind to him and given him a new heart."

On one occasion, I asked him how he expected to keep his hold upon the Saviour, and preserve his joy and delight in him. "Oh," he replied, "I must read the blessed words of Christ and obey all his commandments; and don't you think the Almighty will help me to keep on and hold out to the end?" I assured him that Christ who built the mountains and created the world and the men who live in it, is able to keep all that we commit to him, and that he will never leave or forsake those who trust and obey him.

This state of religious sensibility and enjoyment did not prove transitory, but continued till the close of his life, a period of about three years. The most of his waking hours he employed in studying the New Testament. His soul appropriated its truths and fed upon them. This was the only book he ever read. His attention was several times called to the Old Testament; but it was always a toil to him to read, and he had become to a degree familiar with the New Testament writings, which became increasingly precious to him, so that he never left them.

The change wrought in the character and spirit of Mr. Colby was great. He had been harsh and domineering in his spirit. He had been hard and exacting in his treatment of others. His passions had been strong and unregulated. He had neglected the worship of God and the ordinances of the gospel, and at times had been opposed to the offering of prayer by any one in his family. The work to be accomplished in his soul was obviously great. It is not asserted that every thing desirable was wrought in him; it must be acknowledged that he had faults to the last. Still, without doubt, he told the truth to his great kinsman and friend, when he said to him, "I have had done for me, Daniel, what neither you nor all the great men in the world could do for me. I have got a new heart." His spirit and temper were softened and improved; and the power of the gospel, having carried the main citadel of the heart, seemed to make progress in the conquest of his sinful habits as long as he lived.

To worship God became his delight. One Sabbath evening, when he could no longer go to the sanctuary, the writer held a religious service at his house. At his request, the neighbors had been invited in, that he might once more have an opportunity of worshipping God in company with them. The exercises appeared to refresh and rejoice him. The singing particularly, seemed to elevate his spirit and waft it away to the realms of perpetual praise and song. He could not withhold his thanks from the singers who had come to sing with him "the Lord's sweet hymns."

Some months before he was taken seriously ill, he became lame, so that he was unable to walk abroad. This was a trial, as it prevented his going around to declare to others the precious Saviour and his joy in him. As long as he lived he was anxious to bring others to behold the glory of Christ as a Saviour, and to submit their hearts to him.

His last illness, which was accompanied with much suffering, he bore with Christian patience and resignation. On one occasion, and as far as known on one occasion only, darkness came over his spirit, and in tones of anguish, he exclaimed to a granddaughter present, "O,

Dorcas, if I should be cast off at last, what should I do?" But the eclipse was not of long duration; faith resumed its sway, and the almighty Saviour, who reared the mountains and hills, manifested his presence in the hour of his extremity, and brought light and salvation. He called his grandchildren around him, reminded them that they must all die like their old grandfather, and exhorted them early to give their hearts to Christ. Disease gradually increased upon him, until at length on the sixth of August, 1852, he yielded his willing spirit to the divine Redeemer, at the age of eighty-seven years. When nothing else that he uttered could be understood by the friends in attendance upon him, "Jesus," "glory," were the last articulate sounds that dwelt upon his lips.

The power and grace of Christ are strikingly illustrated in the life of Mr. Colby. Created and placed on earth to glorify God, for more than fourscore years he neglected the Author of his being, and left unaccomplished the great work of life. Powers of mind were wasted, influence for good was lost, exposure to divine wrath and everlasting ruin was dared, yet forgiveness was found with God. Habits of sin had been formed, and the faculties and susceptibilities of his soul devoted to his own worldly objects, yet Almighty power was bestowed—the Holy Spirit's influence was sent to recover his soul and fit it for heaven.

No one could come into the presence of Mr. Colby in his latest years, and witness the action of his mind under the influence of the Saviour's love, and not feel that his powers were much greater than ordinary, and that they had been fitted for great influence and usefulness in life; but they were perverted, and employed in the service of sin. How admirable the grace, that so long forebore, and at last restored and saved. It was the constant theme of his tongue. It filled his heart with joy and praise. While the hazards and ingratitude of such a life should deter men from neglecting the call of the gospel for a day, the example of sovereign grace and power here presented should encourage every aged sinner, even the most aged, to call upon God, and press into his kingdom. Jesus Christ here "shows forth all long-suffering, for a pattern," that men may "hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."

It is interesting also to notice the manner in which Mr. Colby came to a true knowledge of God, and found life in his Son. Unenlightened as to the way of approaching God, and prejudiced against Christ as the uncreated and divine Redeemer, he resolved not to go to him, but to go directly to the Almighty Father. Yet he was resolved to seek the Lord, and he was earnest and sincere. A gracious God showed him the way by *giving him a heart for the Bible*. In that sacred book was a full disclosure of the true and living "Way" to everlasting life. He did not hesitate as to his course. He entered at once upon the stupendous task of acquiring, in extreme old age, a knowledge of the English language, that he might himself read and learn the mind of God and the way to glory. He succeeded in the work. His earnest mind, shrewd and practised in worldly affairs, soon found in the Bible what reason had before taught him, that the Builder and Maker of all things is God. And he soon read that all created beings and things were made by Christ—that he created them all for himself and not for another—that by him they continue to exist—and that he is "Head over all things" for the purpose of establishing his kingdom in the hearts of men and over the whole world. This was such a Saviour as, from the first, he had felt he needed.

He read also that Christ was *God manifest in the flesh*—that he was *the man* Christ Jesus; and with open heart he dwelt on his recorded kindness when on earth—upon his sufferings and death, and his propitiation for the sins of the world. In this scriptural portraiture of Christ, he discovered a foundation for hope on which he could venture, and that would be firm as the everlasting mountains. He planted himself upon it. He believed and found life. On Christ he rested all his hopes; and to him, at last, like the dying Stephen, he committed his soul, in expectation of a glorious immortality.

In like manner doth Jehovah Jesus, the crucified one, present his glorious attractions to the view of every lost sinner, and invite him to take refuge in Him—to repent, believe, obey, and live for ever. Why should He not be sought and found as the deliverer and hope of every sin-

ful heart? Why should not "Jesus," "glory," be the watchword and song of every one while travelling through the valley of the shadow of death?

"JEHOVAH TSIDKENU*—THE LORD OUR
RIGHTEOUSNESS."

I once was a stranger to grace and to God,
I knew not my danger and felt not my load;
Though friends spoke in rapture of Christ on the tree,
"Jehovah Tsidkenu" was nothing to me.

When free grace awoke me by light from on high,
Then legal fears shook me; I trembled to die:
No refuge, no safety in self could I see,
"Jehovah Tsidkenu" my Saviour must be.

My terrors all vanished before the sweet name;
My guilty fears banished, with boldness I came,
To drink at the fountain, life-giving and free—
"Jehovah Tsidkenu" is all things to me.

"Jehovah Tsidkenu!" my treasure and boast;
"Jehovah Tsidkenu!" I ne'er can be lost:
In thee I shall conquer, by flood and by field;
My cable, my anchor, my breastplate and shield.

Even treading the valley, the shadow of death,
This watchword shall rally my faltering breath;
For while from life's fever my God sets me free,
"Jehovah Tsidkenu" my death-song shall be.

M'CHEYNE

* Jeremiah 23:6 and 33:16, marginal reading.

SOWING AND REAPING.

A DIALOGUE.



PART I.

MONDAY EVENING.

SOLOMON. I am glad, neighbor, we happened to meet.

JOHN. Well, company does not make a road longer. And now that work is so scarce, many a weary walk we are likely to have of it to this out-of-the-way place.

SOLOMON. Still, John, work is worth a walk any day; and so I doubt not you will think it on Saturday night, when you put your money into your wife's hand.

JOHN. Well, for all that, one gets weary with the best

part of four miles to tread morning and night ; and besides, I can tell you I have been working extra hard to-day.

SOLOMON. What have you been doing, neighbor ?

JOHN. Wheat-sowing ; the man I work for had half a field to finish, and he was very anxious to have it done.

SOLOMON. We have both been about the same work. for I have been sowing—sowing *two crops at once*, I hope.

JOHN. Two crops at once, man, what do you mean ?

SOLOMON. One for this world, and the other for the next : one for next summer's harvest, please God ; the other for heaven's harvest : one for my good master yonder ; the other for my Master above.

JOHN. Strange enough ; all riddles to me. Explain yourself.

SOLOMON. If you will allow me, I will read two verses of God's word, which just show what I mean, (taking a well-worn Bible out of his pocket.)

JOHN. What, do you carry that book about with you, and all your tools too ? When do you find time to read it ?

SOLOMON. Oh, it is no great weight, friend ; not half so heavy as that keg of beer you are carrying. I often get a nice thought out of it when under the hedge at noon-time, and so feed both body and soul. But will you hear these verses ?

JOHN. Yes, read on.

SOLOMON. Only please remember they are the words of God, and not mine—that God who cannot lie. You will find them in Galatians 6 : 7, 8. “Be not deceived ; God is not mocked ; for *whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*”

JOHN. Well, but there is nothing here about a crop for the next world, and for the harvest of heaven, which you were talking about.

SOLOMON. Listen, friend. It goes on, "For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

JOHN. Well, that cannot mean wheat and barley, I grant you; but it is quite above me: so now let us talk of something else. How old is your youngest child, the merry-faced little thing that chuckled to me the other day?

SOLOMON. Two years last July, John. But let us go back to what we were talking of; for I know if the Lord opened your eyes to see it, you would find it the most interesting subject in the world. May I ask you one question?

JOHN. Oh, to be sure.

SOLOMON. You see there are only two sorts of people spoken of in that verse—those who sow to the flesh, and those who sow to the Spirit; and thus it is with all men. Now, John, are you among those who are sowing to the flesh, or those who are sowing to the Spirit?

JOHN. Well, I really cannot tell. You know God is merciful, and I hope to go to heaven when I die; but as to which of these I am among, I tell you plainly I really don't know, for I have not thought much about it yet.

SOLOMON. Thank you, friend, for being so plain with me. Now let me be plain with you. If you do not know in which of these classes you are, because you have not thought much about it, I must say I fear you are in the wrong one, and will reap the bad harvest.

JOHN. Well, that is what I call uncharitable. If I do not know myself, how should you have even a guess at it?

SOLOMON. Why, this way, John. Because we are all from the first in the wrong class: that is clear from God's word; for David says, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity;

and in sin did my mother conceive me." Psa. 51: 5. Then, I fear you are in the wrong class, because I do not believe a person ever gets into the right without thinking a great deal about it—without being made by God's Spirit to wish and pray and strive. For this change is compared in the Bible to the difference between night and day, between sleep and wakefulness, between life and death. Now, could such a change take place without your knowing any thing about it? Could you be awake and stirring without ever having thought about it? O, neighbor, I tell you as your friend, I fear your soul is yet in a sleep and in a dream. I fear you are sowing for a bad harvest.

JOHN. Your mind runs on sowing and reaping, I see; but do you really think that my case in another world will be altered by what I have said and done to-day?

SOLOMON. Yes, I do, John; you could scarcely have put it more to the point. I believe your thoughts and words and works to-day have all been seeds, and seeds that will grow too. You remember the Bible says, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Now, suppose there was a poor man who had a piece of land, and that all the support for himself and for his family depended on what he might sow in this land. Suppose he had two or three days allowed him in spring-time to sow it in. Suppose the ground was all prepared, and all things were inviting him to sow. What would you say to such a man, John, if you passed him at noon-time, and saw him standing idle at his cottage door, having lost many of the hours he could never call back again? Would you not cry to him, "Friend, what can you be thinking of? the hours are flying fast; seed-time is precious time; do not waste it; think of next winter—think of a starving wife and children; up and be doing, friend, as you value your happiness."

JOHN. To be sure I should, if I did not say any thing sharper; but I do not see that this is like my case.

SOLOMON. Not exactly. Suppose you passed him the next day, and this time saw him sowing all kinds of seed in all directions; scattering weeds instead of wheat, and seeds of poisonous herbs instead of those of nourishing food; how would you feel then?

JOHN. I can hardly suppose such a case.

SOLOMON. It is difficult; but would you not, if you loved him, say, "Friend, think what a harvest you will have; whatsoever you sow you will surely reap. You are sowing misery and disappointment; and such will be your harvest. Be warned; prepare your ground quickly, and sow good seed while there is time." But suppose he were to refuse to listen, and to laugh at your earnestness, and peevishly to answer, "How foolish you are to think there is any connection between six months hence and now. Harvest, man, harvest; that does not depend on what I am doing now for my own amusement. I hope to have a good harvest when the time comes, and to live in plenty as well as you"—and so he were to go on trifling away, or worse than trifling, the whole of his short and precious seed-time. What would you answer, John?

JOHN. Well, I do not know, neighbor.

SOLOMON. Would you not be heartily sorry for him, and say he was deprived of common-sense?

JOHN. I tell you I never heard of such a case; and yet I have half a guess what you are driving at.

SOLOMON. Well, to tell the truth, I was shaping my thoughts to meet yours. Let us see how the case stands. In the light of God's word, time and eternity stand close together; this world and the next have close connection. They are bound together by a chain that nothing can separate. They are united as a stream with its own fountain-head: if the fountain be sweet, so will the stream

be, if the fountain be bitter, the waters will be bitter too. Or to stick to our old subject, they have as close a connection as the harvest with the seed-time and the seed that is sown. Neighbor, your life hereafter is bound up in your life here. Do not think to separate them. God tells you it is vain. He warns you not to be deceived because so many men are. I know, John, I am a poor wretched sinner myself, but I feel constrained to give you this message from God to your soul. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." This world is the short seed-time, and the next world is the long, eternal harvest. Do make your girl Mary read those verses over to you and the rest at supper to-night. They are in Gal. 6:7, 8; and may God make them a message of mercy to your soul.

JOHN. Well, I will, neighbor, for I do not know that I ever saw it so before. But here we are almost home, and not too soon either, for yonder comes the rain my master feared. I am right glad we got the wheat in when we did.

SOLOMON. That reminds me of one thing more. The seed-time for our souls is uncertain. We cannot say we have even two or three days before us. Friend, your seed-time may be cut short any day, any hour, at a minute's notice. But here we part. Good-night to you, John.

JOHN. Good-night, friend. Sixth chapter of Galatians, did you say? Good-night.

PART II.

TUESDAY MORNING.

(John comes to Solomon's gate, and calls out to know if he is ready.)

SOLOMON. Here I am ; we are in good time : (and out comes Solomon with hoe, basket, and Bible.)

JOHN. Bible in hand, I see, again ; however, I am not the man to quarrel with you for that.

SOLOMON. Well, I hope you were not angry with me for what I said last night.

JOHN. Angry ? O no. I never wish to be angry with a man for honestly telling me his mind. I like a true-speaking friend ; and besides, to tell you the truth, I was a long time before I got to sleep last night.

SOLOMON. So was I : but what kept you awake, John ? Did you get your girl Mary to read those verses ?

JOHN. To be sure I did ; but I will show you the whole of it. Do you know that I felt so strange about asking her, that we had got our supper long before I could make up my mind to it ; but at last I did say, " Mary, lassie, get the big Bible off the shelf there, and dust it, and look in the sixth chapter of Galatians till you find something about sowing and reaping," for I forgot the verse. She looked so surprised ; but she is a good girl to do a thing she thinks will please her father. She soon found the place, for she is very handy with her book, and read the verse out as smoothly as you could. Then she came and sat upon my knee, and would know why I wanted to hear them. I told her you and I had been talking about seed-sowing, and you had read that text. But then she would know how the conversation began and what you had said, and what I had said, and all about it. So I had to go over it all again ; and my wife listened, and the rest, and closely too, to that story of the

man and his garden. But little Mary's eyes filled with tears, and she said, "Father, father, what shall we do? Oh, father, if our seed-time should end to-night!" And she sobbed quite loud. Her question went right to my heart, and I thought again of what you had said. We all went to bed, but I could not get to sleep. I thought and thought within myself, we cannot have been sowing good seed without knowing it or caring about it. Then, again, I thought of what you said, that there were only two sorts of people, and that I was among the wrong sort, until it made me quite miserable, especially when I thought again my seed-time may soon be over. At last, what with thinking and tossing about, I fell asleep, but I believe the old clock had struck twelve some time first.

SOLOMON. I must say I thank God for it; he often begins his work this way. But had it all worn off when you woke this morning, and found the sun shining as usual?

JOHN. No, it had not, for I was thankful to think my seed-time was not over yet. I wished to pray, but scarcely knew how to set about it. So now *tell me how you began.*

SOLOMON. Well, John, all the first part of my life my heart was without any good seed, and choked up with thorns besides. Busy enough I used to be about this world's concerns, till one day those words of Jesus were sent like an arrow to my heart, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Mark 8:36. Well, I said, I am risking my soul for a very little of the world. The thought of a lost soul, and that soul *mine*, made me tremble. Wherever I went, whatever I did, it stared me in the face. I never thought I was safe. But at length God led me to cry in earnest, "What must I do to be saved?" And I made up my mind to go and tell our minister all I felt and feared.

It was long before I could persuade myself to go. More than once or twice I went up to his gate and turned back, saying, I was going to make a fool of myself; but at last I went in. And I thank God I did, for he seemed to know at once, when I told him I was anxious about my soul, what I was feeling and suffering; he told me he had passed through just the same himself. He showed me, indeed, from God's word, far more of my own heart than I knew before—far more of its blackness and vileness and sinfulness; but then he led me to the fountain open for sin and uncleanness: he pointed out Jesus the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world; he prayed me to fix my weeping eyes, and lean my weary heart on Christ, and assured me that I should find peace and comfort. And after a prayer which seemed to tell every desire of my heart, he begged me to come again as soon as I could.

That was the beginning, John, of putting the plough into my heart: it was hard work at first; the ground was dry and hard, but by God's grace the ranker weeds began to fall fast. I had not been what is commonly called a wild man. But I tell you, John, when once I got a little sight into my own heart, it was enough to frighten any one. It was the Bible showed it me. It was just like carrying a candle into a dark room full of dust. Then I thought of God's goodness in having made me, and having preserved me since I was a child, and kept me in health and strength; and what was far more than all this, now that I had begun to see the horrible danger my sins had brought me into, I saw his mercy in giving his Son to a cruel, shameful death, that my sins might be pardoned. Then when I turned to my own heart and past life, and saw that I had been neglecting, forgetting, grieving him, refusing his offers of mercy, vexing his Spirit, living as if there were no hell nor heaven; and yet, fool that I was, had

been thinking myself better than others : I tell you, John, I almost despaired of ever getting either pardon or peace. I do not know what I should have done if the sermon next Sunday had not been on that text, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." I thought again and again, Well, that must mean my sin. I could not shut myself out from those words, "the sin of the world," though Satan tried hard to make me. So, afterwards, I went to the room where I lodged, shut the door, and prayed over and over again, "God, be merciful to me a sinner; Lord, take away my sin;" and the answer seemed sent from God to my soul, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." From that time I began to feel the sweetness of pardon. From that time I began to love, and I hope to do a little for my newly-found Master. Often I know I have grieved him even since that, by my many sins; still I stick to him, and he is the best of masters. I fear I have wearied you, John, with this long story, but a sailor loves to tell how he was saved from shipwreck.

JOHN. Not at all; I would not have it one word shorter, for I would give much that I were like you. But I have lived a ten times worse life than you did. If you were nearly lost, and found it so desperately hard to turn about, what hope is there for me?

SOLOMON. Every hope, John; nay, a certainty, if you come. Can you shut yourself out, any more than myself, from those words, "the sin of the world?" Or if that will not satisfy you, take this: "He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him." Do try, friend. If you wish, I will come, and we will pray together after your supper to-night.

JOHN. Thank you, thank you; but my wife and children will stare. By the by, how did you bring your wife to your way of thinking? for I reckon she was not so before.

SOLOMON. O John, that was the greatest mercy of all. You do not know half the tender love of our God before you try him. I prayed and prayed, and it pleased God to make poor miserable me the means of bringing her to Jesus. That was the happiest day in my life when she told me what was stirring in her heart. We were married six weeks after, and married "in the Lord."

JOHN. And a good harvest you will have, friend, I warrant you. I tell you what, neighbor, I am afraid I have been stone-blind all my life. I thought the main thing was to be happy and comfortable, and yet I never was really happy either; something was always wanting, I could not tell what. But now I begin to see life is a short journey, and heaven or hell at the end of it. I have been sowing bad seed up to this time. God grant me time to sow good. I have had thoughts about leading a different life in years past, but I soon put them aside; it shall not be so now. By God's help, I will begin to-day

SOLOMON. That is right, friend; put it off till to-morrow, and Satan wants no more. May God enable you to keep your purpose; it must be God's work, not yours. You must pray, John—pray before night, pray all day as you work in the field. It is no slight work you are about—to save a soul that is worth more than all the world; to forsake the broad way that leads to destruction, and enter the narrow gate of life; to change your eternal home from hell to heaven. It is a great work; Satan cannot abide it: your friends at the "White Horse," I know, will try to beat it out of you; and, worse than they, your own treacherous heart, as mine did, will say twenty times, "Give it up—plenty of time yet."

JOHN. It is all very true, friend; how shall I keep my resolution? I feel as weak as water.

SOLOMON. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the moment you come to him, determined to have him for

your Saviour, he will see you, pity you, hear you, answer you, and help you. I have prayed for you, and will.

JOHN. Was that what kept you up last night?

SOLOMON. Well, my wife and I did pray for you for a long time; for ——

JOHN. Did you now, really? To think of that! to give up your sleep for me—a man who had laughed at you fifty times, and never did you a good turn!

SOLOMON. Did you not sit up seven or eight hours last winter when your master's horse was ill? Shall I think it much to sit up two or three hours when a precious soul may be at stake, that must live for ever in glory or in misery? Oh, believe me, we are all much too sleepy about souls, or we should not mention such things. I will come to night, but I fear we shall not have any more walks together for two or three weeks to come; for my employer wants me to go to-morrow and lodge at his son's farm for so long, and that you know is the best part of twelve miles off. But I can pray for you there, and will, please God.

JOHN. Do, neighbor, do.

PART III.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, THREE WEEKS LATER.

SOLOMON. Good-morning to you, John.

JOHN. Good-morning, neighbor; right glad I am to see you home again. I thought it long, I assure you, and quite looked forward to this morning; and a very nice morning it is, after the rain: it seems, too, some way to speak what I feel; for I do not know when I have been happier and brighter than now, and I may say for a week past.

SOLOMON. I have often thought of our prayer together

that night before I left home. Did you not find it comfortable ?

JOHN. Yes, I did ; and when you began to answer my Mary's questions, and showed her that, little girl as she is, she had a bad, sinful heart, every word came home to me : for I thought if she, little dear, is a sinner in God's sight, why, I must be ten times worse, and twice that. You did not talk to her as I expected, but you were right ; for when you began to show her that bad and black as her heart was, Jesus' blood could wash it white, and Jesus' Spirit make it good, I saw you had got to the bottom of her trouble. And when you left, like a child as she is, you know, she took all you said upon trust, and knelt down and prayed some way like this : " O Lord, I have a very sinful heart, and have never really loved thee, or tried to please thee ; but, Lord, I know too that Jesus Christ died for poor sinners just like me. Pardon my sins because he died, and give me thy Holy Spirit, that to-night and to-morrow, and ever after, I may love and serve thee as thy own child, for Jesus Christ's sake." She then said a word or two to herself, and rose up, and told me she felt easy in her mind. I said, " Why, Mary, how is this, so soon ?" She said, " Father, I remember a nice short text, ' Ask, and it shall be given you.' I never prayed before as I did just now. I asked with all my heart : I asked, father, so of course I shall have, for God never says what is not true, you know ; so he will pardon all my sins, and give me his Holy Spirit, and make me his child ; and this makes me feel so happy. Do you pray too, father, for I know he will hear you."

My heart was full ; but I bid her be quiet and go to bed : and then I bethought myself, she has taken all like a child upon trust ; but let me consider, the words that neighbor had spoken were not his, but God's, that great God who made me, and who will be my judge. Sure

enough he always speaks truth, and he tells me, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Why should I give him the lie? My girl is not so simple as I took her for; she is right, after all. So I knelt down by myself, the first time for many years, and prayed in some way like her, only much longer, for I had many more sins to think about than she. And when I prayed and thought over the text, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," it seemed as if a hundred pound weight had been taken off my heart: the more I prayed, the more comfort I had. At times the thought came, "You are mad, it is all in vain;" but I answered, "I have God's word for it." And if I kept awake the night before for sorrow, I kept awake that night for joy. And here I am, neighbor, this morning, sober enough, only in a mighty fear lest I should lose the thoughts that filled my heart, and still fill it, with a hope and peace I never knew before.

SOLOMON. Give me your hand, neighbor. God be thanked for what he has done for you, and give you grace to persevere.

JOHN. Ah, that is what I fear so much, for just now I would rather lose my head than give up; but time and temptation have turned stronger hearts than mine; pray for me. Now do you really think the ground has begun to be broken up?

SOLOMON. I trust so, John, I trust so. But as you would say, it is early day yet. There is a word that was very useful to me when I began, it often kept me humble and sent me to my knees. In the parable of the sower, Mat. 13: 5, 6, "some" seeds "fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched, and because they had no root, they withered away." And Jesus explaining

this, says, "But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." Ver. 20, 21.

JOHN. You frighten me, neighbor; what shall I do?

SOLOMON. Cleave to the Lord, neighbor, and be much in prayer. We are told, "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." Prov. 16:1. Trust wholly in the Lord, and the Holy Spirit will soften your heart; he will keep the good seed; he will give it rain and sunshine, and thus faith in Christ will bring forth fruit for Christ. For you may remember how the Lord Jesus tells us there is no such thing as bearing fruit apart from him. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." John 15:4.

JOHN. Well, neighbor, I believe God has given you words to speak my wants to-day. I see how it is, the Lord helps with his strength his poor weak children who believe in him. But O, to think of his ever having put such thoughts into my poor sinful soul, to think of his softening my heart, putting good seed into it and nursing it; to think of my ever having a harvest in heaven. I wish much for the same blessing to my children. Oh, my children, if your father can beg this for you, and have you with him to reap that heavenly harvest, he would rather than that you should be the owners of all these fields, and fifty times more.

SOLOMON. You must pray for them, and train them in the way they should go, carefully striving to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," and commit them in faith to him. God knows what a parent's heart is. You must set up family prayer too; have the

Bible read aloud, and pray together every day. This draws down family blessings. It is not enough to honor God in private, we must honor him in our families too. Perhaps you will meet with some trouble and vexation here, and I dare say tears may go with your prayers for your children; but here is a blessed promise for you that has often cheered me: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Psalm 126: 5, 6.

JOHN. Rejoicing, indeed; if God bring my wife and children along with me, I shall be perfectly happy.

SOLOMON. *Very* happy, John, but not *perfectly*, while you and they are in a world of sin and sorrow; and when you see so many sowing the bad harvest, you will learn to mourn over them too, and strive for their salvation. I know you like not only good grain, but plenty of it. Sow then plentifully beside all waters, as the Lord shall give you opportunities to benefit your fellow-men.

JOHN. I certainly am right glad you did not keep your seed to your own plot. Oh that God may keep me steadfast, and then make me bold to speak to others. But what should I say?

SOLOMON. I do not recollect any thing better than the words God sent home to your heart: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." But I remember two others on the same subject; one a warning in Job 4: 8, "Even as I have seen, they that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same;" the other a gracious invitation in Hosea 10: 12, "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you."

JOHN. Thank you, friend, thank you And may God ever bless you for your kindness to me

“HINDER ME NOT.”

So said Abraham's servant to the family of Laban, as they were trying to persuade him to tarry longer with them; and so should you say to every one and to every thing which would hinder you from yielding your heart to Christ. You may meet with many hinderances, but they all must be overcome by faith in Christ, with firmness and resolution. What are some of these HINDERANCES?

The *opposition of a wicked heart* hinders. “The heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.” Their sinful affections carry them away in a course of disobedience, and if they go not after iniquity in one form, they will in another. This, sinner, is your condition. You will not come to Christ. Your wicked heart keeps you away from him. You strengthen yourself against conviction; and for this, if you do not repent and believe the gospel, God will judge and condemn you.

The *persuasions of impenitent friends* hinder. They desire companions as unmoved and unconcerned as themselves. Does one of them by any means become serious they ply him with every motive which can drive out the thoughts of God and a concern for his salvation. They soothe him with the deadly thought that he is in no danger, or the specious plea that there is time enough yet, that there is now no need of damping the joys of life by the gloomy subject of religion. Oh, how many are persuaded in this manner to turn from the path of uprightness, and to walk in the ways of darkness until their steps take hold on hell.

Ambition and love of earthly greatness hinder multitudes from submission to the Saviour. They cannot be content to be lightly esteemed and neglected for the sake of Christ. They will not forego the distinctions of earth for the approbation of God and the crown of glory which fadeth not away. They barter their souls for the miserable enjoyments of sinful pride, and in the end will lose both. “Whosoever will be the friend of the world is the enemy of God.”

The *cavils of unbelievers* hold many in doubt and suspense all their lives. They hear so many objections against the truth of the gospel, that they do not decide in its favor; and yet such are the convictions of reason and conscience, that they dare not decide against it. The caviller is ever busy in pointing out some imaginary flaw in the evidences of Christianity, some fancied absurdity in its truths, or inconsistency in the lives of its professors. His own dark deluded mind raises fancied difficulties where there are none in reality, and seeing every thing through a mist, he imagines inconsistency where all is light and harmony and glory in the view of those who love God. Like the serpent, the caviller strikes ere he is perceived in his true character, and the deadly poison is spreading through the unsuspecting soul, and sinking his victim in eternal ruin, before he is aware of his danger. Thousands are thus prevented from escaping for their life, and embracing the offers of mercy.

Others are hindered by *the ridicule of the openly vicious*. Ridicule is a weapon often hurled at the young and unguarded. Oh, what numbers are now lifting up their eyes in torment and wailing in hopeless despair, who, under the guidance of an evil heart, were brought to that world of woe by a banter or profane jest which they had not the moral courage to withstand, nor the wisdom to despise. Remember that ridicule is not argument; it proves nothing; it stabs in the dark. Shun him who would turn the realities of eternity into a jest, as you value your soul.

Others are hindered from trusting in Christ by *the cares and pleasures of the world*. Probably more souls are lost by yielding to the pressure of business, and the calls of vain pleasure and fashionable amusement, than by all other causes. Men of business, take heed lest, under the plea of being diligent in business, the soul be wholly given to this world and the "mammon of unrighteousness," and thus God be shut out, and the soul be lost. And ye followers of sinful pleasure, hear the declarations of God's word respecting such as you: "Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." "Deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures." "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." 2 Tim. 3:4; Titus 3:3; 1 Tim. 5:6.

How then are we to OVERCOME these and all other hinderances to embracing Christ, and securing our salvation? Say to them unhesitatingly, “Hinder me not.”

God commands your *immediate repentance and submission to Christ*. He says to you as to Lot, “Escape for thy life.” “Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.” “God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.” “Submit yourselves therefore to God.” In this urgent and forcible manner the Lord of heaven and earth commands you to turn to him. He who has made you, and given his Son to die for you, who claims your obedience by the most tender and overpowering obligations, bids you forsake your sins and embrace the Saviour.

Think of *the numerous mercies and favors* which God has bestowed upon you. How constantly has he preserved your lives from destruction. With what powers of mind has he endowed you, with which to love and serve him. What rich means of grace has he conferred upon you. How has he opened the way for you to come to him for salvation through the blood of his Son. And how has he followed you with the pleadings of his Spirit and of his word, saying to every sinner, as he said by the prophet to Israel, “Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.” Ezek. 18:30-32. Resolve in the strength of the Lord,

“Through duty and through trials too,
I’ll go at his command;
Hinder me not, for I am bound
To Immanuel’s blessed land.”

Consider *the alarming providences* of God. A once blooming young woman, of high hopes, who had often joined in worldly scenes of dissipation, but who at last felt the chilling hand of death upon her, said, “Oh, what shall I do? I am not prepared to die. I have been such a sinner, there is no mercy for me. Could I live to get well, I would make it my first business to obtain religion,

to secure an interest in Christ; but I cannot attend to it now." These were her last words. In a few minutes she expired. Hasten your return to God, if you would not be arrested in a similar manner, and die without hope.

You have *a great work to do*. In matters of earthly business, men exert themselves according to the greatness of the work they have in hand. Thus, the long distance of Abraham's servant from home made him the more anxious to return immediately. You have a great work in hand; you are far from God, and far from that home which is eternal in the heavens. Turn then, lest it be for ever too late. Seek the Lord Jesus Christ, believe in him, and begin a new life of loving obedience. If you grieve the Holy Spirit, and he leave you to your native blindness and obstinacy, you will never see the face of God as the God of grace. Fear will soon come upon you as desolation, and destruction as a whirlwind.

Let *the difficulties of the way* excite you to break through all hinderances at once. Dangers lurk in your path. The snares of the adversary are spread beneath your feet; the world without, and evil propensities within, like so many enemies, lie in wait to destroy your soul. These difficulties are already formidable, and by delay will soon become insurmountable. Hasten to the Lamb of God without delay, or you will never enter the mansions of the blessed.

You are *intrusted with immortal interests*, with the care of the undying spirit. If saved, who can number its joys while the vast periods of eternity are passing on? If lost, who can count the billows of wrath which shall roll over it in that lake which burns with unquenchable fire? Will you not instantly throw yourself on the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, receiving and believing the promise of God in him? You defer at your peril. You put to hazard your soul and your eternal interests, of more value than worlds and the universe. May the Holy Spirit lead you to come to the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood cleanseth from all sin.

THE OLD PLOUGHMAN;

OR,

A NEW WORLD.

GEORGE MEDWAY was born in a small cottage near a village in Shropshire, England. In this village there was no Sabbath-school for the instruction of the young, nor any benevolent society to afford relief to the sick and the aged; and alas, the people were living quietly together in a state of spiritual death,

“ Without one cheerful beam of hope,
Or spark of glimmering day.”

He was a ploughman, and lived there for upwards of seventy years. When a young man, he was noted among his fellows for his great strength, his fleetness in running, his skill in all the sports of the village, and equally noted for his profaneness and habits of intemperance. He married about the age of twenty-five, and had three children; one died when an infant, another was a cripple, and the third when a youth went to reside at a manufacturing town, taking with him some of the worst principles and habits of his father.

George Medway, though a very depraved man, and as ignorant of the religion of the Bible as though he had been born in the wilds of Africa, was an honest servant, and labored on the same farm though under different masters, from the time he was able to ring a bell to frighten the birds from the ripening corn, till he completed his seventy-first year. His habits at home, in course of time, became very orderly; he went to and from his labor very punctually. On the Sabbath he spent the morning at home, and in the evening he constantly visited the “Hare and Hounds,” to take his pipe and tankard of ale, often boasting that he had not missed one night for upwards of half a century.

At length having buried his wife, and become too weak to follow the plough, and being unable to get lighter work, he took his crippled child to the union workhouse, and removed to spend the few remaining years of his life with his son, who kept a public-house. At first, having free use of the ale, he became intemperate, till his son very prudently fixed the quantity, and even this less amount of beer greatly deadened the power of his mind, and he now became, to all appearance, very dull and stupid. Thus passing from the quiet of a village where he knew every face, to the hurry and bustle of a large town where he knew no one, he often wandered about alone, gazing around him seemingly with entire indifference.

One day when thus wandering, he turned into a little pathway leading to a garden, and at the end of this pathway he saw a cottage, and at the door of the cottage stood its inmate, a very godly and zealous disciple of Christ, who seeing a stranger, and that stranger an old man like himself, invited him to walk in and take a seat. He did so; and being now surrounded by shrubs and trees, which hid the great town from his view, he began talking of country employments and the scenes of his early days. Mr. John Dean, the master of the cottage, gave full leave to the tongue of his visitor, supposing that when he had gone on a while, he would become quiet, and then an opportunity would occur to speak on other and more important subjects. As Mr. Dean expected, so it came to pass; and he found the old man not only very ignorant of the facts and doctrines of the Bible, but apparently without the power of understanding them when presented in the simplest form, or even of listening with any degree of fixed attention to the statements and explanations which were given. The only remark he made was, after an account of the crucifixion of the Son of God, "Methinks it was too bad to serve him so; they wouldn't do so in Shropshire."

As he was leaving the cottage, Mr. Dean said to him, 'You had better come in some evening, and then we can

Have a good long chat." This invitation was given because he knew there was a power connected with the truth as it is in Jesus, which, by the help of the Holy Spirit, could open this contracted mind, and give feeling to this hard heart. He also knew that the Holy Spirit sometimes employs a feeble instrument in his work. "We must pray to the Lord for the poor old man," said Mr. Dean to his godly wife, after he had left. "and who can tell but our prayer may prevail, and we may see him a new creature in Christ Jesus?" "The Lord grant it," she replied, "for it does seem as if nothing could change him. But the Lord Jesus Christ can subdue all things to himself."

The next evening Medway came in his best coat, sat down and talked away at a great rate about the doings and events of his past life; but after a while, having got through his scanty store of knowledge, he sat in silence, a dull and stupid listener, as it seemed, to all that was said to him about Jesus Christ and the great salvation. Many efforts were made by Mr. Dean and his wife to make him feel that he was a sinner who needed a Saviour; but they seem not to have the least effect. Still, though depressed, they did not despair, as they knew that the divine Spirit who regenerates the soul can open and strengthen the dullest mind to understand the truth, and can enable the hardest heart to feel its power to purify and console.

At parting, Mr. Dean said to him, "I wish you would come next Sunday morning and go with me," which he engaged to do, thinking it was to take a walk into the country. He was punctual at the hour; and after resting a little, they took their staves and set off. As they were walking up the pathway leading from the cottage, Mr. Dean said in reply to a question, "I am not going into the country, but to a church, and I suppose you will have no objection to go with me."

"Why, as for that I shan't tell what to do, for I never went to one but when I was married, near fifty years ago."

“You will have nothing to do but sit still and just hearken to what the minister says.”

“Part of that, methinks, is easy enough, as I shall soon be off to sleep, if I be to sit still and do nothing.”

As I had to administer the Lord's supper, I preached, as my custom was on such occasions, on the design of the death of Christ, and on the obligation of commemorating it. Now and then, during the sermon, my eyes turned towards the pew in which Medway was sitting, and I was more than once struck with the singularity of his attitude and appearance. He sat almost motionless, with his hands hold of the little book-shelf in the inside front of the pew, and his mouth open, gazing at me with a fixed and intent look. When this part of the service was over, many of the congregation withdrew, leaving the communicants to engage in the solemn act of commemorating the death of the Son of God for sinful men. On coming from the pulpit, I saw a slight confusion in the pew in which Medway was sitting, which somewhat startled me, as I did not know the cause of it; but I found afterwards that it was caused by his positively refusing to go away with those who were leaving. His first remark rather astonished his friend Mr. Dean, especially as he uttered it in a very firm and rather loud tone, “*I am in a new world; and I shan't go till you go; and I shall do as you do.*” What to do Mr. Dean did not know, as he was unwilling to let him remain, and equally unwilling to force him away; but at length he resolved to leave him to act for himself.

Medway now resumed his seat, and sat quietly. His countenance seemed to become more intelligent and his features less stern and stupid; there was even an appearance of feeling in them, and his eye seemed moistened. He took the bread, and took the wine also; and when the plate was handed to the pew, for the offerings of the church in behalf of its poor members, without any hint from his friend he put in his penny—all that he had—along with the other contributors. On going away, he walked some distance without speaking. At length he

broke silence by repeating his first startling utterance, "I be in a new world; yes, I be in a new world." This he repeated again and again as they passed along to their home, apparently insensible to every question or remark which his friend uttered.

On entering his son's house he excited no small degree of alarm, by saying to his son and some of the neighbors who were sitting in the tap-room, "I have been and heard a man who has taken me into a new world; you must all go with me and Mr. Dean to-night. It is a wonderful world." He called on his friend Dean in the early part of the afternoon, and took tea with him, and then went with him to the evening service. The text was from Luke 15: 2: "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." I saw him as I read the text, and his eye told the tale of what was passing within. The words arrested his attention, and he continued to listen with evident feeling to all that was said, and particularly to some remarks to the following effect:

"Jesus Christ is able and willing to save the chief of sinners, such as have gone even to the greatest length of wickedness. In proof of the truth of this, look at the facts of this history, which will tell what he has done. There is Zaccheus, who grew rich by oppression and extortion; there is the dying thief; there are the sinners of Jerusalem who imbrued their hands in the blood of Christ, and who mocked and insulted him when in the agonies of death; there is Saul of Tarsus, the chief persecutor of his age; and there are some of the citizens of Corinth, who were guilty of the most shocking crimes. Perhaps there were not any greater sinners on the face of the earth, yet they were forgiven and renewed and sanctified and saved. And Jesus Christ is the same now as when he saved these men from their iniquity and from eternal woe: the same in power, and the same in compassion and in his disposition towards fallen man. And are not some present living witnesses of the truth of this assertion? Have you not gone with the multitude

doing evil, surpassing many in the number and greatness of your sins? Do you not even now tremble when you look back on the precipice on which you once stood careless and indifferent? Can you retrace your history without being stung with remorse and overpowered with shame and contrition? Is any language too strong to describe your guilt and your depravity? Will you not own that you have been the chief of sinners; and yet through the exceeding riches of divine grace you have been saved even as others?"

Having expressed an earnest desire to speak to me, Medway came to me one evening, preceded by his friend Dean. I at once recognized him, and rose, offering him my hand. For a few moments there was obvious embarrassment, which I endeavored to relieve, but still he was embarrassed; he looked on me with great benignity of expression, and his eyes showed the deep feeling of his soul at this crisis in his history; but he remained silent, the power of utterance was suspended. I spoke so as to encourage him, adverting to the scenes of his early life which I had heard of before, and he very soon recovered himself, and said, in a firm tone, "I am now, sir, in a new world. I'll tell you what I mean. I know I am in the old world; but what you said on Sunday has put my heart into a new world, and my heart sees wonderful things."

I knew his meaning, and answered him in the same form of expression which he had used.

"And what have you seen in this new world?"

"I see I am a great sinner. I have lived near seventy years, and have been all along sinning against God, and didn't know it till Sunday."

"What sins have you committed?"

"A power of sins. I've been a great sinner. Why, sir, I didn't love God nor fear him. I didn't know any thing about him till Sunday morning."

"What else have you seen in the new world?"

"I have seen Jesus Christ. O, how kind to come

down from heaven and die for us. This is new to me—it is wonderful!”

“What made you stay and take the bread and the wine on Sunday morning?”

“Why, sir, you said all should do it who loved Jesus Christ. I felt I loved him. Yes, my heart told me so. It has been telling me so ever since. It tells me so now. I can’t speak his name but I feel I love him. I can’t think about any thing else very well. If I think of any thing else my heart gets dull and cold; but when I think about Jesus Christ it gets young again.”

“But why do you love Jesus Christ?”

“Because he came down from heaven and died on the cross. I don’t know how to make out very well what I mean; but I think Jesus will save me. This makes me love him. I feel a great change here,” putting his hand on his heart. “I can’t tell it, but it is something real.”

“Are you quite sure that you feel your heart really changed?”

“Why, if there be no change in my heart, where do my fresh thoughts and feelings come from? I never had such till Sunday morning. I don’t know much now; but I wouldn’t be again such a poor old ignorant sinner as I was before Sunday morning for all the lands and houses in our village.”

“I hope your change is real, and that it will prove a lasting change.”

“I hope so: I should cry a power of tears if I thought I should be changed back again. The Lord save me from that.”

“Then you must thank him for making this great change in you, and pray to him to make the change a lasting one.”

“I do; I’m sure I do. I cried hundreds of tears last night when I was in bed, and they be such tears as I never cried before: tears of heart-sorrow, and heart-gladness.”

“You hope to be saved?”

“I do, and am most thankful for it.”

“But how do you expect to be saved?”

“Why, just how you told on Sunday morning. By Christ, and by nothing else. I should not like another Saviour, because he was so good as to die for us. How wonderful! I never heard any thing like it before. I wish I had heard that blessed sermon fifty years ago.”

I was much pleased with the artless and guileless simplicity of the old man, who, though unable fully to describe in language the great change through which he had evidently passed—from a state of spiritual death to newness of life—said enough to satisfy me that he was become a new creature in Christ Jesus.

Such was his attachment to public worship, that he allowed neither the heat of summer nor the frost or snows of winter to prevent his regular and punctual attendance. But it was when singing the praises of the Lord that he was most powerfully excited, having a natural love for music, and a strong melodious voice, not much injured by age. No language can do justice to his appearance when thus engaged, especially on one occasion when the congregation were singing the following verse of a favorite hymn :

“Lo, the incarnate God ascended,
Pleads the merit of his blood;
Venture on him, venture wholly,
Let no other trust intrude :
None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good.”

He stood erect, with his hands resting on the pew, and his eyes closed, yet allowing the tears to steal silently out and trickle quietly down his deep-furrowed cheek; and when the last stanza of the verse,

“None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good,”

was repeated in full chorus, he caught the inspiration of the blessed fact, his countenance showing by its expression his deep feeling as he raised and joined his loud notes with those of the congregation.

I was prevented from having any conversation with

him for many months; when, feeling anxious to learn what progress he had made in knowledge and in grace, I met him by appointment at Mr. Dean's cottage. He was still the same man as when I first saw him, but he looked, I might almost say, younger; his voice was firmer, his eyes brighter, and he was now able to converse with an ease which surprised me.

I said to him, "I suppose you would not like to go back to your native village and live as you used to do?"

"Why, sir, methinks no happy spirit would like to come out of heaven to live on earth again."

"Do you often think how you used to live?"

"I think of it with sadness and horror. But I knew no better then. What a mercy that I was not taken for death when my poor wife died!"

"What thoughts had you of God?"

"I didn't think about him much; but when I did, I thought he was a great mighty Being, who cared nothing at all about what we said or did."

"Had you any idea of your soul, or its living for ever?"

"Why, sir, I was always puzzled about it. Sometimes I thought that very wicked people went to hell when they died, especially the rich."

"Had you never any fears about going to hell?"

"No, never. My common thoughts were, that when I died there would be an end of me; just the same as with the sheep or the horse."

"You believe there is a change in you now, and one for the better?"

"Oh yes, the Lord be praised. I knew there was a change in me when I spoke to you after I heard that blessed sermon; but I know it better now. I now find it lasts with me; but then I feared it wouldn't. If I had known fifty years ago what I know now, it would have been a good thing for me. I should have been all that long time a power happier in my soul. I wish my poor wife had lived to see this day."

“To whom do you ascribe the great change that has been produced in you?”

“Yes, it is a great change, like changing a flint stone into bread, or a bog into a garden. The Bible calls it, being called out of darkness into marvellous light. This is a true account of it. Darkness, I take, means ignorance; and light, I take, means knowledge. I have come from one to the other, and nobody can make me think otherwise. Why, if a blind man sees the sun, he must know that his eyes be opened.”

“Very true; but who produced the change which you say you have felt?”

“At first I thought it was you, because I felt it when you were preaching. But now I know better. Now I know that it is the Lord that gives light to the understanding, and love in the heart. And, praised be his name, I can now say what Paul said, ‘By the grace of God, I am what I am.’”

“You have felt a great change, but do you feel perfect? or do you feel that your heart is still wicked?”

“O, sir, there is a power of sin in my heart. The fallow-ground is ploughed up, but it is not cleared yet. And this puzzles me. I pray the Lord to make me holy, but he hasn’t done it yet. But I had great comfort when Mr. Dean read to me the seventh chapter of the Romans. I thought when he was reading, that the writer of that chapter felt that he had a wicked heart, as I often feel that I have one.”

“I suppose you believe that He who has begun the good work in you will carry it on, and bring it to perfection?”

“Yes, if you mind, sir, you proved that, when you preached a sermon t’other Sabbath from the gladsome words of Paul. I have remembered them ever since. ‘Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.’ Phil. 1:6.”

“Do you recollect any thing which I said to show that

we ought to expect that the Author of the good work of grace will complete it?"

"Yes, sir; you said that a wise builder, when he has put in the foundation, and carried up the house a story or two, will not leave off, and let it tumble to ruins, when he wants to use it. No; he'll go on till he has finished it. And so I hope the Lord will finish the good work he has begun in my soul. It is wonderful. I sometimes think about it till I get puzzled how God can be so good to such a sinner. But my heart gets warm to him, and then all is right again."

"I suppose you sometimes long to have the good work brought to perfection?"

"Now, sir, on this point I'm a bit disappointed. I thought at first, when I felt the change, that I should soon get free from sin. But now I find, from the Bible, and from Mr. Dean's talking to me, that I sha'n't get quite free from sin till I get to a better world. The sermon you preached last Sunday morning brought a power of comfort to my soul; I put the text on my heart, and don't think it will e'er get off: 'We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.' How wonderful! To see Jesus Christ in his glory, and to be like him! I should like that hour to come."

I was much gratified with this interview, and at finding how rapid a progress he had made in learning to read. At the age of seventy-two he could not tell a letter, but now he could make out, with a little help, several chapters in John's gospel, and some other parts of the Bible. The 23d and 103d Psalms greatly delighted him. In addition to the regular time he devoted to his studies, every Monday morning he went to the cottage, and got his friend Mr. Dean to help him read the texts of the preceding Sabbath; and he learned several by heart, and was soon able to repeat many verses, and relate the leading particulars of some of the more striking and interesting narratives of the Bible.

He came to me one evening, and said, "I can't, sir, do

much to serve Jesus Christ and his cause, as I'm old and poor; but I should like to do what I can, as the woman did you told us about on Sunday. I'm thinking I could get rid of some tracts among the boatmen that come to my son's tap-room. And perhaps the Lord may bless the reading of them to the conversion of some poor sinner, as old, and as ignorant as I was once. If he should, I shall have a power of heart-gladness."

Some tracts were given to him. In addition to his labor of distributing them, he became a visitor of the sick, and, from the devotion of his spirit, and the humble simplicity of his manners, he was always welcome in the chamber of affliction and death. On one occasion, when calling to see a person who was dangerously ill, I found the old ploughman was with him, and stepping up the stairs very cautiously, I had the satisfaction of hearing him in prayer. I could not catch every sentence of his prayer, but I heard the following confessions and petitions:

"O Lord, by nature we be poor, and wicked, and ignorant sinners. O Lord, we don't know ourselves. We don't know thee. We don't know Jesus Christ.

"O Lord, we were once under a sentence of death, but we didn't know it. Pardon all our wickedness, and all our sins, for Christ's sake.

"O blessed Jesus, we thank thee for living for us. We thank thee for dying for us. We thank thee for living again for us. We come to thee for rest of soul; and we come to thee for eternal life.

"O blessed Jesus, look upon our dying brother. Comfort his heart. Keep away the great enemy. Come and meet him on his way to thy kingdom. May he soon see thee, and be like thee.

"O Lord, save me, a poor old sinner, who lived for threescore years and ten, and didn't love thee nor pray to thee. Make me fit for thy kingdom, and take me there when I go out of this world of sin and sorrow.

"O blessed Jesus, we bless thee for going to get a

place ready for us, that we may have a good home when we are taken out of this world of sin and sorrow."

After pursuing the noiseless tenor of his way for about the space of five years, growing in knowledge and in grace, and walking in the great and good and lovely principles of the Christian faith, and highly esteemed by those Christians who knew him, his natural strength began to decline, and other symptoms indicated the approach of his latter end. I visited him during his confinement, and was much pleased by finding him patient and resigned, looking forward, with subdued eagerness, to his entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

I once asked him, "Are you suffering much?"

"Yes, sir, my sufferings be great, but not so great as the sufferings which my dear Saviour bore for me. When he was suffering for me he was forsaken, but the Lord does not forsake me. He was on a cross, but I be on a good bed. He was mocked when dying by the wicked, but all speak kindly to me."

"You are not afraid to die?"

"Why should I be? I got upon my heart yesterday this blessed verse, 'Because I live, ye shall live also.' Oh, I long to see my dear Saviour, and be like him, and with him for ever."

"Then you have no doubt of going to him?"

"Why should I, when Jesus Christ says, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out?'"

"Then you consider his kingdom as your future home?"

"Yes, sir, I do, and I believe my dear Saviour is waiting to receive me. This comforts my heart."

He was confined to his room during the whole of the winter. In the spring he rallied, and recovered his usual flow of spirits; and as the summer advanced, he again attended public worship, which he called "the gate of heaven to his soul." The last time I saw him was when administering the Lord's supper; his countenance showed that he felt much, and after taking the cup his tears could be seen. My eye followed him as he walked down

the aisle with his friend Dean; and had I then known that I should see his face no more, I would have stepped after him, and bid him farewell: I would have offered him my congratulations on his coming joy. In the course of the following week, I abruptly heard of his death, which deeply affected me. On inquiry, I found he died suddenly and alone, being found dead by his relatives when they arose in the morning.

“I didn’t suppose,” said his friend Dean, “that he would leave us so suddenly, though we have thought lately that he would not stay with us much longer, his common conversation was so much about Christ and heavenly things. When looking on a field of wheat we had both seen the week before, he said, in allusion to a remark he heard from the pulpit on the preceding Sabbath, ‘If we did but get ripe for heaven as fast as this bit of wheat has ripened for the reapers since a week ago, we should very soon be meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.’ Having got on this subject, which for some weeks he had been fond of speaking about, he exclaimed, with quite an animated voice and look, ‘Oh what a wonderful world heaven must be; how I long to get there; how I long to see my blessed Saviour, and be like him! O how I long to bow down on my knees to worship him; how I long to sing his praises! What grand music there; what a power of voices to sing his honor and glory; and they will sing for ever! Oh, if I had never left the country to live here, I should have known nothing about these grand and glorious things. What a mercy! the Lord be praised!’”

“His conversation, sir,” said Mrs. Dean as I was rising to leave the cottage, “certainly showed the power of the Lord Jesus over a stupid mind and a stubborn heart, and the exceeding riches of his grace in the salvation of the chief of sinners. A joyous day it was, sir, for the angels, when he heard the first sermon.”

With what rapidity did George Medway pass through a series of wonderful changes within the space of a few

years! At the age of seventy-two he had never looked into a Bible, knew not a letter of the alphabet, and was apparently ignorant of the facts of the Christian revelation. Consenting to be led to a place of worship with no other expectation than merely to enjoy a nap, yet when there, his attention is riveted to the words of the preacher, he hears the truth and understands it, feels a renovating power, and shortly comes forth before the eye of the world a new creature in Christ Jesus. In his case there was no long training, no long continued efforts to enlighten his dark mind; his spirit was made free, and at once he saw the Saviour and believed in him, as clearly as though he had long been taught and felt his obligation to obey the laws of Jesus Christ. This did not turn out to be a daydream, a passing fancy, but a positive reality, leading to great improvement of mind, and a life practically devoted to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The sceptic, who has never fairly examined the Christian religion, may look on such a fact as this with indifference, and imagine that it was the power of enthusiastic fanaticism; but no wise man will feel satisfied till he has found something like a sufficient cause of its existence. To suppose that the old man himself effected the great change which took place in his mind and in his character, would be absurd. And it would be equally absurd to refer it to the mere agency which was employed in its production, because there were wanting both the intellectual capacity and moral sensibility for that agency to act on. To what other cause can it be referable, but to the intervention of a divine power, rendering the preaching of the gospel effectual to the recovery of the fallen spirit of this old man from the dominion of ignorance and of sin, and to his final salvation?

It is in reference to such a case as this that Foster says, "We cannot close this subject without adverting to a phenomenon as admirable as, unhappily, it is rare, and for which the observers may, if they choose, go round the whole circle of their philosophy, and begin again, to

find any adequate cause other than the most immediate agency of the almighty Spirit. Here and there an instance occurs, to the delight of the Christian philanthropist, of a person brought up in utter ignorance and barbarian rudeness, and so continuing till late, sometimes very late in life; and then at last, after such a length of time and habit has completed its petrifying effect, suddenly seized upon by a mysterious power, and taken with an irresistible force out of the dark hold in which the spirit has lain imprisoned and torpid, into the sphere of thought and feeling.

“Occasion is taken of adverting to such facts, not so much for the purpose of magnifying the nature, as simply exhibiting the effect, of an influence that can breathe with such power on the obtuse intellectual faculties, which it appears, in the most signal of these instances. almost to create anew. We have known instances in which the change, the intellectual change, has been so conspicuous within a brief space of time, that even an infidel observer must have forfeited all claim to be esteemed a man of sense, if he would not acknowledge, ‘This that you call divine grace, whatever it may really be, is the strangest awakener of the faculties, after all.’ And, to a devout man, it is a spectacle of most enchanting beauty, thus to see the immortal plant, which has been under a malignant blast while sixty or seventy years have passed over it. coming out at length in the bloom of life.”

Should any unhappy sinner, weary and heavy-laden with the burden of his guilt, read this story of George Medway, may the desire be given him to seek mercy, and may he too enter that *new world* in which alone is life and peace—the knowledge of himself as a lost sinner, and the knowledge and love of Christ as his Saviour, full of power and of love. And may he be brought to feel and pray as Medway did, “O BLESSED JESUS, I THANK THEE FOR LIVING FOR ME. I THANK THEE FOR DYING FOR ME. I THANK THEE FOR LIVING AGAIN FOR ME I COME TO THEE FOR REST OF SOUL, FOR PARDON OF SIN. I COME TO THEE FOR ETERNAL LIFE.”

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT.

BY THE REV. C. MALAN.

I was travelling towards Bordeaux, and had just set off from Angoulême, when a handsome, showy-looking young man accosted me politely: "I think, sir, you come from Paris." "I left Paris the day before yesterday," I answered. "And I suppose," he added eagerly, "you have seen the 'Huguenots'"—a theatrical performance at that time, 1839, very famous at Paris—"it is a remarkably original composition; every one goes to see it; were you not delighted with it?" "The Huguenots," I replied, taking my New Testament from the pocket of the coach; "I have their treasure with me here."

"The treasure of the Huguenots," said the young man with surprise; "and pray what is that?" "I offered the sacred volume to him. He read the title and returned it immediately, saying, with scorn, "Ah, I think that book only fit for old women and weak minds."

"I know, sir," I answered seriously, "that it is very good for me, though I am certainly not an old woman. As to a weak mind, I will not decide upon that."

"I beg your pardon, sir, for my foolish expression; but allow me to say, that I cannot understand how a man of sense and education can approve, and above all, can believe such a production. Voltaire at least did not, and certainly he was not wanting in discernment, or knowledge, or good sense." Here the pupil of such a teacher repeated, with equal fluency and sharpness, the invectives of the philosopher against the Galilean and his doctrine. The incarnation of the Word, the miracles, the prophecies, the death, and above all, the resurrection of the reputed son of Joseph, were passed in review, and the conclusion of the whole argument was a song of triumph as to the reason and wisdom of the present age. The young unbeliever was delighted; he thought me reduced to silence and overcome, for I listened to the whole without saying a word.

When he had ended, I own I was tempted to oppose sword to sword, and to answer the follower of Voltaire by arguments, as I thought, of better reasoning than his own. But I was impressed by these words of holy writ, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong-holds," 2 Cor. 10 : 4 ; and leaving in its sheath the feeble weapon of my own reason, I seized the sword of the Spirit, and answered only in these words: "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." 2 Cor. 4 : 3, 4.

"Yes, yes," replied the youth, "so says that book; but on what authority does it speak? that is the question."

"If any man will do his will," I continued, still reading, "he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." John 7 : 17.

"That is to say," he answered, "that all the learned scholars and philosophers; in short, all men of sense and judgment, in civilized society—all these superior men are wicked and impious, and even atheists or scoundrels, because they refuse to believe the mysteries, not to say the absurdities, of an obscure book."

"That your faith," namely, of the Christian, I replied, still reading, "should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." 1 Cor. 2 : 5. "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty." 1 Cor. 1 : 27. "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." John 3 : 18. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John 3 : 36.

"Very well, sir; my lot, you think, is settled; and hell, with everlasting flames, is prepared for me, and for the flower of the whole human race. I thank you for your charity."

"Sir," I answered calmly, "it was not I, but God himself, who said by his apostle, that 'there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must

be saved,' but that of Jesus. Acts 4:12. Jesus also says to you, as well as to every other sinner, 'That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.' John 3:15. You hear these words; they are full of love and mercy."

The youth was silent, and knit his brow. His countenance was gloomy, and for a long while he remained still. Night came on. My neighbor was still dumb, and I thought his ill-humor would last until he fell asleep, when suddenly turning towards me he said, with much appearance of feeling, "Where, sir, can I obtain the book you have there? for I must tell you, I begin to think that perhaps I may be wrong, and that you are in the right path. I am even concerned, sir, for the thoughtless words that"— I interrupted him. "Pray, sir, do not think of an apology; but as you seem already to feel that the word of God is superior to that of a philosopher, do not let us part without your having this book, which you will allow me to offer to you when we reach Bordeaux."

From that happy moment our conversation was easy and unrestrained; and it was not till after we had spoken of all the vital doctrines of Christianity, that we both yielded to slumber.

The next day my young companion was calm, cordial, and perfectly open; and when I left him he took my hand, saying, "Do you remember the promise that you kindly made me? There is my address." "In a few moments," I answered, "the most precious of books shall be in your hands;" and I hastened to the house of a friend, a Christian brother, to whom I related the above-mentioned facts, and who immediately went to the house of the young traveller, to whom he gave the book of God, accompanying it with words of peace. He also informed him that, on the same day, and other days following, I should explain some portions of the holy Scriptures, at meetings to which he would be welcome.

This invitation was not given in vain. The same evening the young man, with his book under his arm, came to take his place among the serious hearers whom the gospel drew together.

The next day he returned again at the same hour, and after service came up to me and said, with earnestness,

“Sir, you never can know all the good which this book has already done me, and all the pleasure I have felt in hearing you, both yesterday and to-day. Henceforth this book shall be my study—my sole study.”

“And what will you do to-morrow?” I asked him. “It is the king’s birthday; there will be a great ball, and much bustle, and no doubt you will be invited.” “I have refused,” answered the young man with firmness. “I shall not be there. In the morning I shall go and hear you, as you preach in public; and in the evening, if it please God, I shall come and hear you again.”

He came; and, for the first time, this fashionable young man, who had hitherto made plays and balls his chief pleasure, considered it his highest privilege to worship God in his temple, and in the evening to join some disciples of that Saviour whom he had once learned to scorn.

On the same evening I took leave of this youthful seeker after the truth. He again expressed his gratitude and earnest desire for the accomplishment of the prayers I offered for him, and he declared, before many witnesses, that he believed the Bible, that he worshipped the Lord Jesus, and desired to live and die a Christian.

Here may be seen how the word alone resisted the attacks of an infidel, and subdued, at the feet of Jesus—the follower of vanity, even one who had long scoffed at the Son of God, and his gracious offers. Let this word, then, be in your mouth, when you attempt to answer the wisdom of this world, or the treacherous arguments of infidels, for this only can reduce them to silence.

If you are not a believer, but are resting on your own reason, and the Bible is in your eyes only a book for narrow and weak minds, learn that this very word will judge you at the last day; and it were better for your soul that you had never been born, than that, despising Him who speaks to you from heaven, you count as an unholy thing the blood of Jesus shed upon the cross, which alone can cleanse you from all sin.

ANOTHER DEBT;

OR,

JESUS THE SINNER'S SURETY.

A POOR man being unable to pay a small sum of money, was put in prison. A kind Christian who knew him, hearing of his distress, went to see him. After asking the cause of his debt, and finding that he had not contracted it through bad conduct, he placed the money in his hand, saying, "I pay your debt because I hear you are an honest, steady man, with a family to support."

The poor man seemed very thankful, and the gentleman was about to take his leave, but he paused and said, "John, I have paid this debt for you, but I fear that you owe *another* and a far greater debt."

The poor man, somewhat alarmed, replied, "Whoever has told you that, sir, has told an untruth. I do not owe another penny. My wife and I pay for all we buy, as soon as we get it; and I never should have owed this money if my poor wife and children had not fallen ill."

"I have no doubt of it, John; I believe you do not owe another person a penny; and yet you are in debt to God, who made you and preserves you, and whom you are bound to love and serve. Have you read your Bible?"

"Yes, sir, when I was young, my mother often made me read to her, and there was a good minister who used to visit us and talk to us; but I must own that since I have had a family to work for, I have not looked much into my Bible."

"Having a family to work for is a poor excuse for neglecting your soul, John, and will not serve you at the day of judgment. If you had read your Bible more, you

would have known in what way you are bound to serve God. I will read you two verses from the Bible, which set forth this duty. 'What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul?' Deut. 10 : 12. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind.' Luke 10 : 27."

"The first of these verses seems very plain, sir, but the last speaks nothing about serving, only about loving."

"True, but I will read you a verse which will explain that: 'Love is the fulfilling of the law.' Rom. 13 : 10. When 'the love of God is shed abroad in the heart,' that principle of love will lead us to fulfil the law, for whom we love, we delight to serve; in other words, he who loves God, fulfils his law. Let me ask this plain question, Have you, all your life long, served God in the perfect manner that his holy law requires? Have you loved him and served him in thought, word, and deed? Have you given to him, as your Master, that service which he has a right to expect?"

"I should be only telling you a lie, sir, if I said yes, for though, when my poor mother used to talk to me—and many's the time, with tears in her eyes—I used to wish to serve God, mostly, I believe, to please her; yet I am quite sure I have never served him for one single hour in the right good way you now talk of."

"You have lived at least forty years in the world, and by your own confession you have never served God aright for one single hour. Is it not true then, that you owe an immense debt of service to God; and that every moment you live adds to your debt? for every moment you live without perfectly loving God, your debt is increasing upon you."

John looked at the gentleman in astonishment, and said, "Indeed, sir, I never saw it in this way before: I remember well reading in the Bible, 'Forgive us our debts,' but I never rightly knew what it meant."

"It means," said the gentleman, "forgive us our sins. But not only are our sins debts, but every omission of doing what is right is a debt, and therefore also a sin."

John looked very thoughtful without speaking, and the gentleman continued, "Now, John, did I not tell you true when I told you that you owed another and a far greater debt than the one I have just now paid for you?"

"Sure enough you did, sir," said John; "but I am thinking—sir, I am thinking—"

"Perhaps you are thinking how you will ever be able to pay this debt; but as I have brought you good news this morning about the money you owe, so perhaps I may be able also to give you good news about this other great debt."

John looked surprised, and the gentleman said, "I want you first to consider well what I have now been saying. Search the word of God to find out what your debt is, and when you can, call at my house, and we will have some further conversation on the subject."

The gentleman then took his leave. The poor man was released from prison, and went home to his wife, very gladly telling her of the gentleman's kindness towards him.

John followed the gentleman's advice, and during the next few days employed his spare time in diligently searching the Scriptures of truth. That gracious God who has promised that the seed of Israel shall not seek him in vain, and who is ever nigh to those who draw nigh to him, was pleased to meet this poor man with a blessing.

While he was thus employed, the Holy Spirit directed his attention in an especial manner to that verse in Isa. 44:22, "*I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.*" He read it, paused, and thought upon it, and presently he said to himself, "If in one place in the Bible our sins are called debts, and if in another place they are said to be blotted out, then surely the debt must be paid." This seemed very plain to him, but still several difficulties arose in his mind as to who had paid the debt, and whether every one's debt was paid, and

if not, whether his was. In this state of mind, earnestly desiring to know the truth, he remembered the gentleman's invitation to call at his house, in order to have a little further conversation with him on the subject. He accordingly went, and found the gentleman at home.

"Well, John," said he, "have you taken my advice, and searched the Scriptures since I saw you?" "Yes, I have, sir, and have thought a good deal of what I have read, but one verse somehow has struck my mind above all the others. I can understand part of it, but I cannot understand it all." "What is the versè?" John found it and read it. "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." "That verse," said the gentleman, "contains good news, the good news of God's boundless grace and forgiving mercy towards poor guilty sinners."

"Yes, sir, that is just what I want to understand. It does seem to me that this verse has good news indeed, but I do not quite understand in what way. Perhaps, sir, you would be so good as to explain it to me."

"The first thing to understand, John, is, that we have been born into this world sinners, and are such in the sight of God. This verse will never become precious to us till we have been led to feel this by the teaching of the Holy Spirit. When the poor sinner is led by the Spirit to see what he is by nature and by practice, and reads in the Scriptures, 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die,' then the cry of his heart for the first time is, 'What must I do to be saved?' Blessed be God, he does not leave the sinner with this question unanswered, for the same Spirit who points to his sins, points also to Jesus; and when he teaches him that he is by nature in 'a horrible pit' of sin, he also teaches him that, through abounding grace, there is 'a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness.' Zech. 13: 1. While he shows him that all his righteousnesses are as filthy rags, he also shows him that 'the righteousness of God is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.' Rom

3:22. When he teaches him the greatness of his spiritual ignorance, he also teaches him that Jesus is one 'who can have compassion on the ignorant.' Heb. 5:2. In a word, when he teaches the sinner that in himself he is lost and ruined, he also teaches him that in Jesus he is found, restored, renewed, and made completely happy. All this, when received by the teaching of the Spirit, is such good news to the poor sinner, that he now rejoices as one who has found a treasure, and spiritually understands how Jesus is the 'Pearl of great price,' for whom he could willingly suffer the loss of all things."

John seemed interested, and his countenance brightened while the gentleman thus talked to him. Presently he said, "I wanted, sir, to understand a little better the meaning of 'I have blotted out thy transgressions.'"

"You know, John, that in transactions among men, when a creditor and a debtor have accounts to settle, the creditor will take good care that the account shall not be blotted out till the debt is paid."

"That is true, sir, and my creditor proved it."

"Then you understand, that when the creditor blots out the debt, it is as much as to say that it is paid, and he is satisfied."

"Yes, sir," said John, "I understand that."

"Well, then, this may help you to see how the matter stands between God and sinners. Our sins are debts, and we are debtors to God. If God says, 'I have blotted out thy transgressions,' or in other words, thy debts, then we may be well assured that the debt is paid, and that God is satisfied. If you ask when and by whom was the debt paid, listen and I will tell you. You know that God created man like himself, righteous and happy, 'for in the image of God made he man.' He gave him laws, which if he kept, he was to live, and which if he broke, he was to die. Man refused the good, and chose the evil. He broke the law of God, and from that moment his debt began. The longer he lived, the greater his debt became; for as the first transgression was a debt, it is plain that

every succeeding transgression must increase the debt. The law of God is unalterable, and that law declares, 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die.' Every one has sinned, and therefore every one deserves death. How sad then was the state of fallen man, who had ruined himself by departing from God! What could be done? The infinite wisdom of God did what no finite wisdom could; and what was it? Let us answer in the words of holy Scripture: 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' John 3:16. God gave the promise of his 'only begotten Son' to man when he first fell; and 'when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.' In this lies the great mystery of godliness, 'God was manifest in the flesh.' He who is God over all, became flesh and dwelt among us for man's salvation. He in whose mighty hands are the keys of life and death, willingly laid down his own life for sinners, and humbled himself even to the death of the cross. Phil. 2:8. Sin is an infinite evil, because committed against an infinitely holy God, and therefore it required an infinite atonement. None but one who was both God and man could make such an atonement. We see in the sacrifice of Jesus the God-man, the wonderful provision which the Father in his wisdom and love made for the redemption of sinners, whereby the Son, in the depth of his love, became the surety of his people. Heb. 7:22. You of course know that a surety is one who stands in the place of another, and engages to become answerable for all that the other is liable to."

"Yes, sir," said John, "I understand that."

"Now in whose place did Jesus, as a surety, stand? and for what did Jesus, as a surety, become answerable?"

"He stood in the place of sinners."

"Yes; for he died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. He took the sins, that is the debts

of his people upon him, and endured the wrath and curse of God which those sins deserved; and therefore it is written, 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.' Gal. 3:13. He left nothing undone and unendured, which, as our Surety, he had engaged to do and to endure; and therefore it is that God is said to be 'faithful and just to forgive us our sins.' To the believing sinner, he says, 'I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.' I have blotted them out because Jesus, thy Surety, hath fully paid the debt. Poor penitent, trembling believer, because Jesus thy Surety has fully answered every charge, I send thee this joyful message in the gospel of my Son, that I have 'cast all thy sins into the depths of the sea.' There is no hinderance whatever to the full and free forgiveness of every sinner who goes to God for pardon in the name of Jesus; therefore Jesus says, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' But we must ever remember, that while God the Father, in pardoning sinners, does it in justice to his Son, as the sinner's Surety, it is at the same time in the most unbounded mercy to sinners. That which Christ procured at the expense of his own sufferings and death comes to sinners freely, 'without money and without price.' To that holy law of God which we have violated in thought, word, and deed, he rendered an absolutely perfect obedience even unto death; so that he could say, 'I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.' John 17:4. He wrought out a perfect righteousness, fulfilled the whole of God's righteous law. It was for sinners, for the unrighteous—for those who, having no righteousness of their own, must have perished for ever without his—that God made this wonderful exchange. He imputed the sins of his people to Christ, reckoning them as his, and thus believers are saved from wrath through him; and God imputes the righteousness of Christ to them, reckoning it to be theirs, and thus gives them a title and a righteous title, to his kingdom. Thus

Christ, as the Surety, not only saves a sinner from wrath, but leads him to glory. How wonderful is the love of God to poor wretched man! The more we meditate upon it, the more wonderful does it appear."

John had been very attentive, and apparently deeply interested, while the gentleman thus opened to him "the gospel of the grace of God." Presently he said, "I thank you, sir; it seems much plainer than it did; but then, how shall I know whether my sins are blotted out? because if they are not, I see plainly that I cannot be saved."

"That is a very important question, John, but it is easily answered. The tidings of pardon and mercy in the Bible are addressed to sinners as sinners, without any distinction of circumstance or condition; then if you and I believe and know ourselves to be sinners, we have an undoubted right, on the authority of God's word, to receive them as addressed to us. It is this very fact, namely, our being sinners, that makes these blessed tidings suit us; for Jesus 'came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' Nay, we may take even higher ground still, for in the Scriptures we find that God reckons our not believing as disobedience; for it is written, 'This is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ.' 1 John, 3:23. You see from these words, that God has made it the duty of every one who hears the gospel, to believe it; then disbelieving it is disobedience to God's plain command. And this is what makes the gospel so unspeakably precious to sinners, because, though no man can find his own name annexed to any promise of pardon and mercy in the Bible, yet reading over and over again that this grace is all for sinners, a man may look up to the Lord and say, 'Lord Jesus, thou didst die for sinners, for poor guilty sinners, and such a one, Lord, am I; therefore, help me to believe that I may be saved.' How simple is the gospel! Its message is, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' Acts 16:31. Believe, and be saved. To all who believe, God proclaims in his word, 'I have blotted

out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.' This is God's gracious message to sinners, wretched, undone, guilty, hell-deserving sinners. It is addressed to no one exclusively, but it is the bounden duty of every one who reads it, or hears it, to take the message as spoken to himself, and by faith in Christ to 'receive the forgiveness of sins.' It is not the nature of the gospel to tell a man, that if he repent of his sins and leave them off, and does the best he can for the future, therefore God will have mercy upon him, and save him: it would be no gospel, no good news to him to tell him this, for this message would not go to the root of the matter; it would not reach the sinner's case. But the glad tidings of 'the everlasting gospel' for poor sinners are these: that every thing they can possibly require from first to last for their salvation, is treasured up in Christ, and that God in his boundless grace freely bestows Christ and all blessings in him upon them. All salvation is in Christ, 'neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.' So that none ought to seek in themselves for what is only to be found in Christ. Blessed be God, the salvation of Jesus is a finished salvation, and he who is enabled by the power of the Holy Ghost to receive this salvation, shall indeed prove that 'blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.' The sinner who believes in Jesus will have boldness in the day of judgment, for he will then be able to look upon Jesus and say to him, 'Thou wilt hear,' or answer for, 'me, O Lord, my God,' Psa. 38:15; while the unbeliever, the rejecter of the gospel, must go into the eternal world without a surety, without one to answer for him."

John thanked the gentleman very heartily for the instruction he had given him, and then took his leave.

For some months the gentleman, who took a great interest in the welfare of this poor man, had many opportunities of seeing him and of conversing with him, and

had good reason to believe that "the Lord the Spirit" was carrying on a "work of grace" in his soul. He had ever been an upright, honest man, as far as outward conduct goes, though hitherto he had been a stranger to the mighty power of grace; but he now became a spiritual man, inwardly delighting in the ways of the Lord, and giving evidence that he had been "born from above."

He whose ways are not as man's ways, and who giveth not account of any of his matters, was pleased in his wisdom to appoint that the spiritual life of this poor man should not be a very long one, for, a few months after, the gentleman heard that John had been seized with a violent disease. He went to him, but found that the disease had already gained such a height, that the physician gave no hope of his life. The gentleman said to him, "John, it seems to be the will of God that you should soon be in another world. How is it with your soul?"

For a few minutes the poor man was in such an agony of pain that he could not answer. At length, when an interval of comparative ease was granted to him, he said, "Sir, I feel and know that I am a dying man; I believe that my hours, and perhaps my minutes, will soon be numbered, and I know that if I had the wealth of worlds, it could not purchase for me a longer life."

"That is true," said the gentleman; "but if you have Christ, you have what is infinitely better than the wealth of worlds, for he is able to give you 'eternal life.'"

"Ah, sir, he has taught me that; and what a blessed thing it is, that he taught it to me before he laid me on this bed of death; for how could I now think of the way to be saved, when my body is racked with pain?"

"Very true," said the gentleman; "men commit a fearful mistake when they put off the greatest concern of their lives till the last, for this is the way to lose the soul. And after all, it is not a few tears, and prayers, and resolutions of amendment if life be spared, which men often make on a dying bed, that can prove them to be believers in Jesus; but it is a life spent in his service, and in doing

his will. But what has the Lord taught you about himself, which he enables you to find so comforting in the prospect of death?"

"He has taught me to know and to believe that nothing but the blood of Jesus can wash away sins."

"And do you believe that he has washed away your sins?"

"Yes," said the poor man, "I do believe what you taught me from the Bible, that Christ has put away sin, and he has taught me to believe it for myself."

"And do you find that the Lord Jesus is suited to you in the extremity to which he has now brought you?"

John looked at him with a countenance full of meaning, as though he would fain give a long answer to such a question; but his great weakness, and the increase of his pain prevented him, and, in a feeble voice, he said, "If Jesus does not suit me now, who else could?"

The gentleman then waited a few minutes, thinking his end was very near, but the physician said it was probable he would yet live three or four hours. He then repeated very slowly several texts of Scripture, ending with this, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

The poor man seemed as though he would gladly listen, but his great pain made it very difficult to do so. After an interval of about a quarter of an hour, he made an effort to speak, and repeated again, "If Jesus does not suit me now, who else could? His blood has washed me from my sins, his righteousness can take me to heaven, and he has taught me that in his presence I can be happy for ever."

"Very true, John; it is the only ground of consolation that any one can have in the prospect of death; all other hopes and grounds of confidence will pass away like a breath, and leave the soul exposed to the wrath of God for ever. But the true foundation of hope, even Jesus, is a foundation that will stand for ever. Millions of sinners have tried this foundation, and it has never failed one. Jesus is the Surety, and he who trusts in this Surety for

salvation shall never be ashamed nor confounded world without end."

The dying man smiled, and tried to speak, but was unable to articulate distinctly; and not long after, his soul departed in peace to the presence of the Lord, the sinner's Surety.

If you know not Jesus as your Surety, it would have been better for you if you had never been born. If he be not your Surety, your debts must remain on your own head, and they will sink you down into eternal ruin. There is no other surety but Jesus; there is no other atonement for sin, but the one he has made. His blood has power to wash you from your sins, his righteousness can give you a title to heaven, though you may be the most unrighteous sinner under heaven. May the teaching of the blessed Spirit reveal Jesus to your soul in all his preciousness as the sinner's Surety.

And you to whom Jesus is precious as your Surety and as your title to heaven, rejoice every day in his suretyship engagements. Make him your glory and boast, and "crown of rejoicing." Seek grace daily to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ," and to walk "even as he walked." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Remember, for your encouragement through this wilderness world, that the Father sees you complete in Jesus your Head, and will one day "present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." Remember, for your daily joy, that "there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus;" and that in the last great day, when the assembled universe shall stand before the "Lord of hosts" in the judgment, you shall be honorably and righteously acquitted from every charge brought against you by man or devils, for Jesus says, "Every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." And this is because Jesus, the sinner's Friend, is also the "sinner's Surety."

“TO WHOM SHALL I GO?”

OR,

THE CHURCH-MEMBER IN DOUBT AND DISTRESS.

THERE is a class of persons who are seldom or never made the subjects of direct address and appropriate instruction from the sacred desk. It consists of those within the enclosures of the church who have come to an intelligent conviction that they have neither part nor lot in the kingdom of Christ. We do not remember to have heard a single discourse which was suited to the condition of such. No treatise with which we are acquainted addresses such exclusively, and furnishes them with that information which is specially appropriate to their case. Often do the ministers of religion insist on the danger of self-deception, and paint, as do the Scriptures, the fearful doom of the hypocrite. Frequently do they exhibit the tests of Christian character, and unfold the rules and evidences by which any man may pronounce upon his pretensions to the Christian name. But the persons of whom we now speak are by no means self-deceived, neither are they acting the part of hypocrisy. By the employment of those very tests with which they are furnished, they have been led to decide unfavorably concerning themselves. They write gloomy things against themselves. They have come to feel that they are not, and never were true Christians. They have abandoned their hope. They are not a little disheartened because of their condition. They know not what to do.

They feel that their own state differs in many material points from that of men of the world who have never professed to be any thing besides. They are already within the church. They are reputed to be Christians. At times they may be ready to wish that they were cut of the church, occupying the same place which they did before they entered it. They are inclined to think that it would be better for themselves if it could be so. But now that they are already known as the professed disciples of Christ, many things combine to perplex them concerning the course which it would be proper for them to pursue. Shall they publicly confess that they are strangers to religion? Shall they withdraw from the church, erase their names from its records, and hereafter neglect its ordinances? This they fear to do, though at times they are almost forced to the act. Shall they remain as they are; pass through the forms of religion with conscience against them; organize their lives on the general principle of a reputable morality, and for the rest abide the issue? Their condition demands our profound concern. If the truth were known, many more would be found in this state than we have ever imagined.

To such as are ready to admit that they belong to this description of persons, I would say,

1 In the first place, *look diligently, cautiously, intelligently into the reasons* which lead you to such a decision. Is it with good reason, or otherwise, that you so judge in reference to yourself? It is possible that you are mistaken in your judgment, and need only to be corrected. Perhaps your gloomy opinion may be the result of a constitutional cautiousness of mind, or improper conceptions of the gospel of Christ, or depression of the animal spirits in consequence of bodily infirmity, disease, or other cause.

The mere absence of all hope does not render it certain that you have no good ground to hope. There may be the very best evidence of Christian character where there is no happy hope, just as truly as there may be a confident hope where there are no evidences to justify it. Doubts concerning one's own piety often indicate a healthy condition of the conscience. They imply anxiety and discrimination, and a desire to know the truth; and when compared with their opposite, a self-confident and presumptuous habit, are infinitely to be preferred. Great sensibility to pain is not the most dangerous symptom in disease.

A deep feeling of *unworthiness* is no evidence that you are not in your right place. You are mistaken if you suppose that any other feeling is becoming in one who hopes to be saved only by the mercy of Jesus Christ. You may possess the most profound sense of your personal unworthiness, and be ready to admit that all others are better than you; that there is no one more undeserving the privilege of being admitted to Christian ordinances: this feeling may be daily deepening and extending, and of itself presents no good reasons which should debar you from the table of Christ. You have been subject to great misapprehension, if you have ever supposed that you should feel otherwise, or have wished to feel otherwise; for no other feeling is becoming in one who trusts in the cross of Christ.

It may be, therefore, when better informed on these points, and exercising a more impartial discrimination, that you will find much reason to hope on your own account. On the other hand, if it be true, that upon an intelligent survey of the evidences of Christian character; after making all possible allowances and exceptions in your favor, which a sound and cautious judgment will

permit; after the most careful and honest scrutiny into the motives and emotions of your heart, you come to the rational conviction that you have never been renewed by the Spirit of God: then to you I say,

2. Be grateful to God *that your eyes have been opened* to see your true condition before it was too late. This is a mercy which few appreciate. We have reason to believe that of those who enter the church on earth with hearts deceived and unchanged, few are ever brought to true and saving repentance. We think we see many reasons why it must be so. Many influences there are, whose natural effect is to perpetuate that delusion and confirm that impenitence. There is the manner in which that entrance was effected. It was upon examination. Those in whose piety and judgment all confidence has been reposed, pronounced favorably upon their qualifications for admission to Christian fellowship. These persons were questioned by the teachers of religion; the elders of the people looked into their experience, and they were ready to welcome them to the table of Christ. In consequence of this, it is not to be denied that there is a sense of security which is likely to endanger and ruin such as were self-deceived, when official judgment was thus given in their favor. Deceived they will, on this account, be likely to remain.

There is another influence at work which tends to the same result. There is a public separation made between the church and the world. It is visible; it is recognized by all the appeals which are made by God's ambassadors. By a very natural process, there is a corresponding distribution and partition made by such persons, each for himself. The professed disciple appropriates to himself whatever is designed for the consolation and blessedness of the people of God. Whatever is said concerning the

guilt and danger of impenitence, and the necessity of conversion, is conducted off from himself to those who are confessedly in an impenitent state. Such appeals were not designed for him. They were intended for the great body of unbelieving men. There is a shield over his heart and conscience, through which the arrows of the Lord do not pass. A sense of security is generated by this habit, which we have reason to fear is but seldom effectually disturbed. Not as likely is he, on this account, to apply the truth which is really appropriate to his case.

Besides all this, there is the certain effect produced upon the character by a participation in Christian ordinances, and the enjoyment of peculiar privileges. Very solemn it is to sit down at the table of Christ. It is a very solemn thing to put to one's lips the cup which symbolizes the blood that was shed for our salvation, and to eat of the bread which reminds us of the body which was pierced and broken on the cross. What scene more impressive, more awful, more tender, more fitted in every way to subdue and break the heart, can ever occur in the present life? We look in vain for any thing more powerful to affect us than this. But what if one participates therein with a heart unchanged? Is there not an effect produced upon his character which is absolutely fearful? Does he not acquire a power of resistance to truth and love and motives, which leave us little to hope? While his sense of security has been deepening, has not his heart really been growing hard proportionably fast? We cannot doubt it. We cannot conceal it from ourselves that there are reasons why those who are admitted to the number of God's people with hearts deceived and impenitent, will probably continue in that state for ever. We cannot but tremble when we admit the probability, that of those

who eat and drink unworthily, very few are ever awakened and converted.

Therefore it is that we say to you who have been brought to an intelligent conviction that you have no evidences of conversion, though in the bosom of the church, that you have reason to thank God for his mercy in having dispelled your delusions, broken up your security, and brought you to a knowledge of yourself. You might have slept on, and deceived yourself as do others, till life was all over. The Spirit of God has not deserted you. You are not given up to believe a lie. God is still waiting to be gracious to you; and the proof of it is already before you for your encouragement.

3. It is important for you to understand, in the next place, that you cannot find a refuge in a *retreat to the world*. You cannot go back; you cannot exclude yourself from the church. Upon this point there are many prevalent errors, both of opinion and practice. Many who like you have come to the conviction that they never knew any thing of true religion, have resolved that they would silently withdraw from the communion of the church. They absent themselves from the Lord's table. They perhaps give no more attendance on the ordinances of the Lord's house. Convinced that they are strangers to piety, they consider this a good reason why they should, of their own accord, retire from Christian fellowship.

All such are under a palpable mistake. There are none appointed in the church of Christ to grant permission to any who may desire it, to withdraw and return again to the world. No man within the church has the right to assume this permission for himself. The Scriptures recognize but two ways in which any communicant can ever be removed from the church on earth. The one is by the direct agency of God himself. Death removes

one after another, and takes them into eternity. But death does not absolve any one from his solemn vows; he transfers the true Christian to the church in glory, to abide there for ever. The other method is by exclusion because of offences. For the preservation of her own purity, the continuance of her own institutions, as well as the discipline and recovery of her own members, the church has been invested with the power of cutting off such as offend and will not be reclaimed. When admonition has failed, and all suitable efforts have been frustrated, then is the church required, in the name of her great Lord and Head, to pronounce such excluded from all Christian rights and privileges. Ever after, unless they repent and return, such are to be held as heathen men and publicans. Other than the two methods which I have now described, death by the agency of God himself, and exclusion in the manner and for the reasons which have been defined by our Lord himself, there is no way of being disconnected from the church of the living God. He is subject to a great misapprehension who supposes that he may withdraw at his own pleasure.

For in the first place, such a withdrawal, if it could be permitted, would not absolve one from the vows which have already been made. Once made, they can never be retracted or broken. The language of the church to such as come to the Lord's table is in substance, "Let it be impressed on your minds that you have entered into solemn relations which you can never renounce, and from which you can never escape. Wherever you go, they will be upon you. They will follow you to the bar of God; and in whatever world you may be fixed, will abide on you to eternity. You can never be again as you have been. You have voluntarily, publicly, and unalterably committed yourselves, and henceforth you

must be the servants of God." There is no retreat, no retirement, no crowd, no cavern, no island of the sea, no spot in all the creation of God to which you may betake yourself, where the solemnity and obligation of these vows will not rest upon you. Retrogression, therefore, is not to be thought of for one instant.

Besides all this, if you are not a Christian now, your obligation to be a Christian is not diminished in the least by any change in your outward circumstances and relations. You cannot escape from that duty. It is omnipresent, like the air you breathe. Are not the crowds of living men, heedless, impenitent though they be, under obligation to believe and obey from the heart? Does not God lay righteous claim to their services? Ought they not to be the disciples of Jesus Christ? Will not their guilt be great, and their punishment intolerable, if they refuse? Is it to such that you would think of withdrawing? Withdraw from what? Not surely from responsibility. Not from the duty to be from the heart a believer in Jesus. Had you the wings of the morning, you could not fly beyond the reach and jurisdiction of this equitable requirement. To retire from the church, even if it were permitted, would not lessen your obligations, or lighten their pressure, or diminish their solemnity, or absolve you from the moral government of God.

Withdraw from the church! To what would you go? To the world again? To the unbelief and heedlessness of impenitent men? But this is to rush upon a certain destruction. To such, nothing remains but a looking for of judgment which shall devour the adversaries. Hope there is none in that quarter. Absolutely certain is it, that all such as obey not the gospel of God will be visited with tribulation and anguish. To go back, is to go back to perdition. There is nothing in a state of unbelief which can

comfort your heart or illuminate your prospects. To go back to the world, is to go back to infamy and death. Retreat is cut off. Whatever is to be done, we cannot go back, unless we have made an agreement with hell, and with death are in covenant, and the last hope has gone out, and our resolution is formed to meet our inevitable fate in the sullenness of despair. It is not so with you. Evident is it, then, that you must hope for relief from another quarter; instead of retreating, you must advance. You are shut up to an onward movement. You can move only in one way. True wisdom it is to say, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

When convinced of this, the next direction is obvious.

4. Begin now, begin anew *those very acts which are necessary to pardon and life*, in the case of those who have made no pretensions to religion. It is a great mistake, into which many fall, to suppose that when the hope of forgiveness is once obtained, then they are no more concerned with that class of truths which are addressed to those in an impenitent state. It is to be received as a general rule of great practical importance, for all to continue to hear and repent and pray, just as if these duties were now required for the first time. There are some qualifications and limits to this rule, no doubt, but these are such as the fulness of one's religious experience will readily suggest; but that it is a direction both safe and wise cannot be questioned. Edwards, than whom few men have known so much of the complexities and varieties of Christian experience, insisted much on this rule in his day; and had it always been adopted and applied, there would have been less of delusion and disappointment.

You consider yourself an unconverted man. You are convinced that you have never experienced a sav-

ing faith in Christ. Admit it. Be it so, that there is no mistake in your judgment. *Act now on this conviction.* Surely you can not be in doubt as to what you must do. Your past professions, your standing in the church cannot change the directions which are addressed to all in an impenitent state. Like any other unconverted man, you must cry out, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. The motives to do this, and to do it speedily, are more numerous and pressing in your case than in any other. You must begin at the very point where you would begin had you never had a hope before. You must open your eyes to behold your own sinfulness. You must be careful that you grieve not the Spirit of God, which has come to convince you of the truth. You must set yourself to rehearse your obligations violated, and sins indulged. You must bow down, confess, and plead for pardon. Oh, repent of thy wickedness; if you did not go far enough before, come now and say, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee. If there was some secret thing before which prevented you from closing quite with the only Saviour of sinners, be sure that there is nothing now. If you were only almost persuaded to be a Christian before, be altogether persuaded now. If you failed of entering the kingdom of God before only by *a little*, be sure that you now enter quite within. If in your first approaches to the Master you kept back part of the price, now come and give him your all. I know of no other terms of salvation than these. I know of no other conditions of return and acceptance. These are suited to all the varieties of an impenitent state. To men of every grade and character, under whatever name they pass, of whatever appearance, the same direction is to be given: Repent, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

I am not ignorant of what may be regarded as the peculiarities of your case; I know what distrust, what difficulty, what fear, what agitations of soul you must experience. I know to what temptations of the great foe you will be exposed; what deceits, what diversions, what delays, what hinderances, he will employ with his extremest skill, to prevent your cordial acceptance of pardon. Of these, none will he be so sure to try, as the fear that in your case pardon will not be granted. If possible, he will make you think that your guilt is of such a character that you cannot expect to be forgiven. My last direction accordingly is,

5. Be confident of this, that if you ask for mercy on the same terms in which all must plead for it, with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, *you will be forgiven*. It is true, that your sin has been very great in having rejected the Saviour so long, and under such peculiar circumstances; but there is no sin which a God of infinite mercy cannot forgive, if it be repented of. That you could have passed through such privileges, looked upon the body and blood of Christ with a heart unsubdued, ungrateful, is indeed a great aggravation of your guilt; but there is no degree or amount of iniquity which atoning blood cannot wash away, if the penitent spirit will but ask for its application. To eat and drink unworthily is not the unpardonable sin. To take of the bread and of the cup with a heart deceived and unchanged, does not of itself seal one's damnation. There is no sin which cannot be pardoned if it be confessed and forsaken. We must never suffer ourselves to think that there is any kind, or quality, or amount of sin, though it be high as mountains, and dyed deep as crimson blood, which God is not both able and willing to forgive. Broad, deep, and full as the sea, his mercy can roll over a world of sin,

and wash away a world of iniquity. His offers of merey are made to you as really as to any other; his promises are just as sure in your case as in any other; and if you have been a stranger to true peace and hope before, you may come, if you will, and try the efficacy of a Saviour's blood applied to your conscience now. There is no sin which is unpardonable if it be repented of. The sin which excludes one from mercy both in this life and that which is to come, is such a resistance to the Holy Ghost as makes repenting impossible.

With you the Spirit of God seems to be striving now. That very thing which it is his peculiar province to do, he is now doing with you. He is convincing you of your sin; he is showing you your need of a Saviour; he is pointing you to the cross, he is moving you to repentance. And if there be one person on earth whose condition more than any other awakens the pity and tenderness of the Redeemer of sinners, it seems to me it is the professor of religion who has come at length to be convinced that he is not a Christian; who dares not go back; who is afraid to go forward; who, though called a disciple before, yet having denied and forsaken his Master, is now weeping bitterly over his sin, and for the first time longs to lay his head at the Saviour's feet, and bathe them with tears which cannot be feigned.

MARY ELIZA.

THE subject of this narrative was descended from Irish parents, who were Roman-catholics. She attended the confessional at the usual age, and partook of the sacrament with great regularity. She was remarkably conscientious on all religious subjects, being always disposed to do what she considered her duty.

When arrived at the age of maturity, her parents removed from W——, where they had resided, to N——, in the state of V——. Here she married an enterprising mechanic, who has since acquired considerable property. Her husband was a Protestant by education, but not a communicant in any church. He was in the habit of accompanying his wife to the door of her church, but seldom or never entered himself. This difference of religious sentiment made her unhappy, and had also an influence to render him neglectful of public worship.

In the autumn of 1841, the writer of this narrative was called to the pastoral office in the town where Mrs. N—— resided, but he did not form an acquaintance with her until she became much concerned about her soul, and sent for him to give her instruction and advice. Her priest, the Rev. Mr. H——, had gone to a distant city to collect funds for his church. There was at the time an unusual attention to religion in the writer's congregation. Meetings were numerous, and many, both old and young, were seeking the salvation of their souls. Among others, Mr. N—— attended, though manifesting no special interest on the subject. On one occasion he requested his wife, who had never witnessed a Protestant service, to accompany him. She consented to do so, but solely, as she informed the writer afterwards, upon the ground that she

desired to cherish in her husband a regard to religion, even though it should be of a Protestant type.

Her feelings on this occasion were very trying. She was doing an act which her church positively forbade, and she was entering a place where she expected to hear her own doctrines and practices abused. The result of this first attendance upon Protestant worship was a double gratification: first, that not a word had been said against Roman-catholics; and then, that the Bible had been expounded in a way she had never listened to before. Highly pleased with what she here heard and saw, she returned the next evening, and still the next, until her attendance became regular and earnest.

She afterwards informed the writer that each discourse she heard at this time seemed like a new revelation from heaven; so different were her present instructions from what she had been accustomed to. She even longed for the time to come when she should again hear the blessed gospel preached, not mixed up with the superstitions and follies of Popery, but "in simplicity and godly sincerity." In this incipient change her husband took a deep interest, and in order to encourage her to attend our church regularly, rented a pew for her accommodation. Never will the writer forget with what earnestness from Sabbath to Sabbath Mrs. N—— listened to the word that he preached. With a countenance irradiated and eyes burning and eager, she gave an attention to preaching that he has never seen surpassed. Indeed, by this time Mrs. N—— had become deeply concerned about her soul; and as she had little or no instruction, save what she obtained from the pulpit, she came each Sabbath morning to the sanctuary literally "hungering and thirsting after righteousness."

The subject of regeneration particularly impressed her mind. She had been taught that this change occurred in the rite of infant baptism. This notion she now discovered to be erroneous, and that the new birth was the

work of the Holy Spirit in turning the heart to God. She saw and felt that all men were guilty and lost, and that salvation was to be obtained only through faith in a crucified Redeemer. Giving up the Roman-catholic idea of church-salvation, and not being able as yet to realize a better hope through grace, her anxieties were multiplied and she had no rest.

While in this agitated state of mind her priest returned, and hearing that she had been attending Protestant worship, he soon called to see her. Their interview, as narrated by herself, was substantially as follows :

PRIEST. "Well, I hear that you have been attending a Protestant church, since my absence!"

MRS. N——. "So I have; and can truly say that I have never heard the Bible explained so much to my satisfaction before."

PRIEST. "What! and have you been reading that book also?"

MRS. N——. "Yes; for our Saviour himself has commanded us to 'search the Scriptures;' and how can you forbid it?"

Finding her inflexible, the priest assumed for a while a milder tone, and tried the art of persuasion. Failing here also, he told her her perdition was certain, should she relinquish the Catholic church. "It is possible," said he, "for those who have been raised in error to be saved without connection with the Catholic church; but when one has been reared in the bosom of that church and yet forsakes it, there can be no hope." He then tried to intimidate her by telling her that many severe temporal judgments would befall her and her family, if she continued in her apostasy.

All, however, was of no avail; for her mind was now too far enlightened by the gospel to yield to either the errors or the threats of Popery. A few Sabbaths afterwards she was excommunicated, and even her own parents and sisters forbidden to have intercourse with her!

The writer can never forget the Christian meekness with which she met this anathema of Rome. No bitterness or anger was expressed. "It is their rule," said she, "and of course I expected it. It is hard that my own dear sisters and parents should pass me in the streets without speaking; but then all this is by church authority, and they are still in ignorance. I do not feel angry at it, but am only the more anxious for their conversion."

During the summer of 1842, Mrs. N—— seemed to despair of ever becoming a Christian according to the standard of the church which she was now attending. She stumbled at the doctrine of regeneration. She was a Protestant, and desired to be a communicant; but according to the requirements of the church, she felt that she dared not apply for admission.

While she was in this state of perplexity, on a Sabbath evening the writer was led to preach from the words of Ruth to Naomi, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." The discourse from this text was made, by the Spirit of God, the means of leading her to the Saviour, where she obtained that peace which she had long sought. So much was she excited during the night, that she slept but little; and in the morning as soon as her husband left the room, she arose and fell upon her knees, beseeching God for forgiveness through a crucified Redeemer. Scarcely had the first petition fallen from her lips when she was blessed with such a sense of acceptance as filled her with joy almost approaching to rapture. "Now," she exclaimed, "I am ready to die; now I can join Mr. C——'s church." The light of the risen sun had just entered the room, in which she seemed to recognize God's goodness and love in all the works of his hands. Her soul went out in affection for all mankind, and the peace of God was so shed upon her as to remove doubt and fear.

Early that morning the writer was called in to see her, and found her one of the happiest persons he had ever known. It was impossible to repress the holy exultation of her spirit. There was no self-exaltation or boasting in her manner, but on the contrary, a spirit of deep humility and penitence. Still, the change wrought in her had been so sensible, so powerful, that she could not but rejoice.

The writer is aware that some have a prejudice against what are termed "sudden conversions." This prejudice has been strengthened by many instances in which those who have professed such conversions have returned soon afterwards to the world. But such lapses into old practices are not confined to this class of converts, but may too often, alas, be met with among those whose religious concern was both protracted and moderate. The truth is, that where the heart is not renewed, the professed convert, whatever may have been the mode of his apparent conversion, will in most cases renounce both the practice and the profession of religion. If, however, the change is real, its effects will abide, whatever may have been the peculiar character of the soul's exercises in the earlier operations of grace. Mrs. N——'s conversion, however, was not liable to the objection referred to. Her mind had been under the operations of the Spirit for nearly a year. Her sense of forgiveness was sudden, but the burden of sin had long been borne by her.

A few weeks after her conversion, Mrs. N—— applied for admission to the church. She was examined both on the points of doctrinal difference between Protestants and Roman-catholics, and on experimental religion. On the former, it was amazing to hear with what fulness and accuracy her views were expressed. She believed the church of Rome essentially in error on all the fundamental doctrines of Christianity; and that their mode of presenting the gospel was calculated wholly to obscure it as a system of grace for lost sinners. Their manner of

teaching regeneration and the method of a sinner's forgiveness with God, she deemed especially unscriptural and destructive. So much was she impressed with the belief that the Romanists were entirely astray, that when asked by the pastor whether she was willing to receive as baptism the rite as already administered, she exclaimed immediately, and with great animation, "Oh, I must be baptized; for I do not consider baptism as administered in the Roman-catholic church to be valid."

On the following Sabbath she and seven others were received into the communion of the church, and for the first time she now sat down at the table of the Lord, to partake of both the bread and the wine, representing our Saviour's broken body and shed blood. It was a memorable day to her, and one that filled her with overflowing gratitude to God for his amazing goodness in plucking her from the errors and delusions of Popery. "It seems an easy thing," she said, a short time afterwards, "for Protestants to be converted. They are taught from childhood to know the truth; but for a Roman-catholic, ah, that is a work! How can they be converted," she continued, "when the walls built around them reach even to the heavens? They are not allowed to read the Bible, and must take what the priest teaches as the gospel. Nor do the priests themselves know any thing of conversion by their own experience."

After connecting herself with the church, Mrs. N——'s main concern seemed to be "to adorn the doctrine of God her Saviour in all things." She was not one of those who consider a mere creed or profession as the essence of religion. She believed that "faith without works is dead," and that unless a professor's "light shine," there is but poor evidence of his being really a Christian. Her regular and serious attendance upon the house of God was remarkable; indeed, she was so punctual here, that if ever absent from either the week or Sabbath service, it was at once inferred by her fellow-

members that she was sick. Nor was hers a mere attendance; there was spirit and earnestness and enjoyment in all her visits to the sanctuary. The writer has preached to many attentive and serious hearers; but he recollects never to have seen under his ministry a countenance so habitually animated and engaged as that of Mrs. N——. Religion with her was a reality; it was something to be felt, practised, and enjoyed.

Not long after the events here narrated, the health of the pastor failing, he was compelled to seek a milder climate and almost wholly to relinquish preaching. Under his brief pastorship in N——, the Lord had added many to the church “of such as should be saved.” Some of these he had already watched on their death-beds, and followed to the silent tomb. Many such, too, had given delightful evidence in the last agonies of nature, that they had built upon the Rock, and were soon to be admitted into a better world. But from all he was now compelled to part; and the parting-scenes were attended with weeping and sorrow. Of all that on this solemn occasion bade him farewell, no heart was more sensitive, and no hand more warm, than those of Mrs. N—— the converted Roman-catholic. She felt, even beyond others, that the ministry of her afflicted pastor had been to her, by the blessing of the Spirit, a means of incalculable good. She loved, she revered him; and the parting was severe.

Some four years afterwards he was permitted to visit N——. Among others he called on Mrs. N——, and spent an hour of the most delightful Christian intercourse with her that it has ever been his privilege to enjoy. Wishing to know more perfectly the entire history of her conversion, and also her present state of mind, he proposed such inquiries as led her to speak freely and fully on the subject. The result was highly satisfactory; she seemed to be a true believer, and one who had made much progress in the divine life. \

A pleasing evidence of this she furnished in the following incidents of her history. Hearing that her mother was lying dangerously ill in the city of C——, she paid her a visit. Mr. N—— could not accompany her, but committed her to a friend who was on a visit of business to that city. It so happened, that they arrived by stage at W—— on Saturday evening. The river being low, they were compelled to prosecute their journey still by stage. Her friend determined to go on the next day, the Sabbath. He proposed it to her; but she positively declined, saying, “I *cannot* travel on the Sabbath.” He urged her with many reasons, assuring her that she was over-scrupulous—that as for himself, he was resolved to go on, and that her mother might die before she could reach her. But all availed nothing; and she remained inflexible in her purpose not to violate the Lord’s day.

The next morning she parted with her guide and protector, being left a helpless female at a hotel, and entirely among strangers. But “she felt,” she said, “the fullest assurance possible that God would take care of her in a city of strangers, and that she would still have some one to be the guardian of her travels.” Soon she became acquainted with some ladies at the hotel who were pious. Through these she was conducted to church, where during the day she heard two sermons preached, much to her edification. It was to her a joyous Sabbath, and her soul drew near to God with holy boldness. She felt that she was in the line of duty, and the very sacrifices she had made only quickened her spiritual joys.

On Monday morning as she entered the stage, she addressed her fellow-passengers thus: “Gentlemen, I am a lone female, having been left in this place by my attendant on account of my unwillingness to travel on the Sabbath. If any of you are journeying to the city of C——, I should be happy to commit myself and baggage to your care.” Instantly a gentleman on the front seat replied, “I am going there, madam, and shall be very

happy to render you any service in my power." Upon further acquaintance, this gentleman was found to be a neighbor and friend of her father and his family. He accompanied her, upon their arrival at C——, to the family residence, having done every thing in his power during their journey to, make her comfortable; when she found that her mother had been buried three days.

Mrs. N—— remained with the afflicted family about a month, and then returned home, accompanied by one of her sisters. Not long after, she herself was taken sick. Her Roman-catholic friends now began to entertain hope of her restoration to their church. She had visited the family, had lost her mother, and was herself sick. Her sister was also with her, and that would be a good pretext. Many of them called to see her sister, and of course some were admitted to the sick-chamber. She treated them with great kindness. This encouraged hope, and very soon one of "the Sisters of Charity" made her appearance. Immediately Mrs. N——, discovering the snare, called her sister, and said to her, "I wish to know by whose invitation it is that 'the sister' below has called?" "Oh," said her sister, "she heard that you were sick, and has called as a matter of friendship." "Friendship!" exclaimed Mrs. N——; "you well know that no such feeling is felt towards me by the members of the Catholic church. They look upon me as an apostate and a stumbling-block, and have no good feeling towards me. No; all this is but a secret effort to get me back to their communion. This, sister, can *never* be. I am not simply a Protestant, but, as I trust, a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ; my faith being fixed not upon the word of man, but of God. I am what I am from thorough conviction; and please assure your friends of the fact. As to 'the sister' below, tell her that when I send for her she can see me; but not till then." Thus did this dear child of God repel, even **alone** upon a sick-bed, the efforts

of her former friends to bring her again under the yoke of spiritual bondage.

Such are the facts in the history of this interesting conversion. And what do they teach?

1. That the great body of those under the dominion of Rome are not only in pernicious, but *destructive* error. Had Mrs. N—— remained in that communion, the probability is, that through her whole life the true gospel would have been unknown to her. She would have known about confessionals, and masses, and saints, and penances; but “Christ, and him crucified,” she would never have known. And how could it be otherwise? With an unconverted priesthood, an interdicted Bible, a misrepresented gospel, perverted sacraments, and a host of traditional observances, how is it possible for the disciple of Popery to arrive at the knowledge of the truth? Those who expect it, expect the greatest moral improbabilities. God works by means; and the means appointed for converting men is a preached gospel. Take this away, and no gorgeous cathedrals or splendid ceremonial will be of any avail. Protestant Christians, therefore, should look upon Roman-catholics as they do upon all the world of the unconverted, as perishing sinners. So did Paul consider his brethren the Jews; and so must we consider our brethren the Roman-catholics.

2. This narrative also teaches that *the conversion of Roman-catholics* is not an impossibility. What is chiefly needed here is, to bring the gospel, as a system of grace, to bear directly upon their hearts and consciences as sinners. This can seldom be done by newspaper controversies, public lectures, abusive pamphlets, or any thing of this kind. Like all other men, Roman-catholics are to be won by kindness. Indeed, if there be any people that ought to be pitied more than others, it is they, especially the private members of that communion. Let Protestant Christians, then, exercise towards them a proper and wise sympathy; let them use the same means for their con-

version that they employ for the conversion of others; let them employ these means in places of business and in the domestic circle, and they will soon discover that the same gospel which triumphs over the enmity of the natural heart elsewhere, is "mighty through God to the pulling down of even the strong-holds" of Popery.

3. Another lesson to be learned from this narrative is, that one under religious concern should rest in nothing short of a *change of heart*. Regeneration is the soul's turning-point in its progress to eternity. Before it experiences this change, all its exercises are carnal and unprofitable. After that event its character is changed, and it becomes a "new creature." What if Mrs. N——, with no change of heart, had joined a Protestant church? She would have been in a reformed, instead of the Roman-catholic communion; but unless she had experienced the quickening of the Spirit, she would have perished as certainly in the one case as in the other. It is not union with a church that saves us, but union with Christ; it is not *repose* that our hearts need, but *renewal*. Before that point is reached, every man is still in his sins and exposed to the wrath of God.

4. We have here also an example of *Sabbath observance*. This convert from Romanism, a mere babe in Christ in many respects, felt that she could not in the most urgent circumstances travel on the Sabbath-day. *God had forbidden it*, and that to her was enough. She might lose her protector—might never see her mother, but this moved her not. Her mind was fixed, being stayed upon God. Let others be rebuked by this example. The travel of our country, indeed of the world, is greatly increasing; and if the Sabbath is not strictly observed by professing Christians, it will soon be trodden down and trampled under foot. Many who will not violate a *whole* Sabbath in this way, will yet desecrate a part of the day, by being found in the morning or evening train of cars. But the same rule that requires the Sab-

bath to be observed at all, requires the observance of the *whole day*. "Remember the *Sabbath-day*, to keep it holy." The command respects not one, but *every hour* of the entire day.

And now, dear reader, what think you of these things? *Have you been born again?* Your first, or natural birth connects you with Adam, and places you under the curse. You need a *second* birth to connect you with Christ, and bring you under the blessing. Yea, this second birth is as essential to your eternal happiness as the first was to your existence. Our Lord himself declares, "Ye *must* be born again." Now, this change is not a change of creed, or an amendment of life simply; nor is it effected by baptism or the Lord's supper. It is a *change of heart* wrought in us by the Holy Ghost. Have you experienced it; and can you say as did the blind man, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see?" Happy are you, if this be your condition. But if not—if like Nicodemus you ask, "How can these things be?"—let me assure you that your first concern should be to know the subject experimentally. A mere doctrinal knowledge of regeneration will not save you; you must have the *experience*. Your own eyes must be enlightened, your own ears unstopped, your own heart renewed. You are not to be the physician in your case, but the *patient*. It is not another that is diseased, but *yourself*. Oh lay it to heart. Let your soul's condition trouble you; and never desire to know rest until you find it in Christ, and in a sure hope of a blessed immortality.

THE HAPPY ESCAPE.

“MOTHER,” said a dying girl in Ireland, “it is a dreadful thing to die!”

“It is so, my darling,” the mother said, as she gazed with tearful eye upon the fading cheek of her child; “it is so, indeed. O that I could die in your stead! But you have confessed, and why are you still afraid?”

“Yes, I have confessed every sin I could remember, and I have got absolution, and I shall have the holy oil when I’m just at the last, mother; but then I must be in *the fires of purgatory* soon, and you are very poor, mother.”

The parent’s quick affection caught the meaning of the words and their painful connection. “Ah, sure, I see it now,” she said; “true for us, Mary, we are poor; but I’ll work these fingers to the bone, but I’ll get money for the masses and will hasten your passage to heaven. My own Mary, namesake of the blessed Virgin, do you think your poor lone mother could rest till your soul was safe in glory? No, she will work by day, and pray by night to the Queen of heaven and all the saints for the peace of your soul; so be easy, my darling, and don’t be troubled about the masses any more at all.”

“But it will be no peace to my soul to know that you have to work hard to get masses said, my own dear mother. That’s what makes it harder still to die.”

“Yes, but mayhap you’ll know nothing about it there, darling; leave that all to the priest now, and say the prayers to the Virgin he bade you. That’ll bring peace to your heart.”

"No, it is all dark. I want to know where I am going, and more, a great deal more, than the priest would tell me. Mother," she added quickly, "I am thinking often of the death-bed of cousin Kathleen. She had no absolution, no unction, no masses, but she died so happy."

"She was a heretic, Mary, and knew nothing at all; so she died in her sins. Better as you are, dying in the holy faith of the true church and all her blessed rites, even if you don't feel as happy as poor Kathleen."

"Some words she said come across me now, mother: 'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.' What did she mean? I have no comfort, no staff. I am trembling in the dark, and see only great fires beyond, and am full of fear. Kathleen did not believe in purgatory."

"Hush, Mary, dear; sickness and pain have turned your mind from the right way: go to sleep, and forget her, and trust in the blessed Virgin."

"Well, mother, I'll try; but I can't help thinking it must be a happier thing to go straight to heaven at once. I wish I could remember all Kathleen said about it."

"It's not for the like of us to go straight to heaven at once, Mary; we must go the way the church directs."

"But surely it's a hard way, mother dear. I often fear that some who get into the fires of purgatory may never get out again."

"Now don't be mistrustful of the masses, darling; but if the priest knew all you have been saying, it would go hard with me to pay for so many. So now just leave thinking about it at all; and here's Pat will sit by you a while, till I run to mother and back."

Pat had come in and overheard part of the conversation, and now sat down by his sister's side with a heavy heart, for the doctor said she could not recover, and he

had travelled from another part of the country to see her before her death.

“Mary,” said he when their mother had left them together, “what was that about cousin Kathleen?”

“Ah, Pat, I was wishing I could die as happy as she did, though it’s true she had neither absolution nor unction, and didn’t believe in purgatory, but thought she was going to heaven at once.”

“But you wouldn’t wish to die in error and sin, Mary?”

“No; but hush now, and I’ll tell you, Pat, that if ever there was an angel on earth, Kathleen was one; and I can’t believe that her soul is in hell just because”

“Because she believed in the blood and mercies of the Lord Jesus Christ?” exclaimed Pat; “no, Mary, for that’s just the reason she had no need to go there at all: and as for absolution, she had it; and as for unction, she had that too.”

“What’s this you’re telling me? Why, sure she was called a heretic, and had no blessing from the hands of the church.”

“No, but she got it in a quicker way, straight from the hand of the Lord himself. He spoke in her soul, Mary, and comforted her with assurance of his pardon and love. Do you think she needed any body else to tell her, after that? And she had the true ‘unction from the Holy One,’ and ‘knew all things’ that made her wise unto salvation; and what need of oils outside, after that?”

Mary stared upon her brother, with mingled feelings of fear and delight; at last exclaiming, “Sure, brother, you’ve turned heretic too.”

“Well, never mind that; I don’t care for nicknames, at all; but I’ve been reading the Bible, Mary, God’s own blessed book, full of such words to poor sinners as would melt your heart.”

“But how did you get it? Does the priest know?”

"I didn't stop to ask him, but I got it of a 'reader, as he called himself; and he said that in England every man might read the Bible, if he liked; and that the priests—no, not priests—the pastors of the church were always delighted to read to the people, out of a poor man's own Bible. And I said to myself, 'I'm a true loyal subject of the queen, and why may I not do as her other subjects do, and have a Bible of my own? I will have one.' And so I did. You know I was a bit of a scholar once, and I read and read; and some things were so pretty and went so quick to the heart, that now I can't help reading if I'm burned for it. But I hav'n't told mother yet."

"Poor mother, it will break her heart," said Mary with a sigh; "but now, Pat, I'm out of breath with listening to you, for longing to know what it is about purgatory you've read in the Bible."

"Why, just as much as you see in that empty platter, and that's nothing at all; and I've searched from one end to the other; so make your heart easy, Mary, for you can't go to a place that there isn't in God's creation. You shall go, and I'll promise you on the faith of the holy Scriptures, straight to heaven at once, if you'll only do one thing!"

"What is it, Pat? O, what is there I wouldn't do, if I could? Is it to make a 'station?'"

"No, no, not the like of such things as that: but if you'll listen, I'll read it in the beautiful words that they are;" and drawing from his pocket the precious little volume that had enlightened his own soul, the young Irishman read, "'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' 'He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him,

and with his stripes we are healed.' Mary, do you think the Lord only suffered by halves, and only heals by halves? 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.' Is it to 'abundantly pardon' to make us go and suffer torments in prison for a long, long time before giving it to us, Mary?"

"Oh, sure, all this is strange to my ear, Pat; but true enough they are beautiful words."

"Stop, I've got many a leaf turned down at the like; but it's about purgatory we are looking, and that brings us to the pith and marrow of it all. 'Wherefore when he cometh,' that is, when Christ cometh 'into the world, he saith, In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure; then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, *once for all*. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins, But this man, after he had offered *one sacrifice* for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God. For by *one offering* he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.'"

"Them that are sanctified, Pat; what's that? Isn't it to be sanctified that we go to purgatory?"

"No: 'For this is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.' 'Now, where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.' No offering for your own sufferings, my Mary; no masses for our mother to pay for. When the blessed Lord was going to be betrayed, before he was taken prisoner he prayed for all his people; and in his

prayer he said not a word of going through purgatory, nor getting sanctified in any way but one."

"And what was that?"

"He said, '*Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.*' St. Paul said, 'Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the word.' And again, 'How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.' And to the Lord's people at Thessalonica he said, 'We are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.' So, Mary, it's Christ's blood for us, and Christ's word in us; and that's salvation, out and out."

"Oh, brother, sure you're sent for a blessing to my dying-bed, to tell me these beautiful things; and all so easy and straight, and just as Kathleen used to say. But now, what's the thing I'm to do, Pat? You said if I'd do one thing."

"Why, then, it's just this: 'Having,' as the precious word says, 'a High-priest over the house of God,' that's the Lord Jesus, with the one offering of himself once offered, 'let us *draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.*' You must *believe* these beautiful things, and that will make them your own. 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,' now, at once; 'and being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;' and then you may rejoice in hope, as it says, 'of the glory of God,' for 'being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.' Oh, Mary, it's all of a piece; it's all like the word of God, worth loving and obeying for ever. Now, can you find it in your heart to trust what God says?"

“I’m only afraid it’s too good to be true.”

“No, it is true, for it’s in the Holy Bible, and God has said it. And the reason the priest doesn’t believe it, is clear too; for such words go clean to upset his popish patchwork of absolution, masses, and purgatory. But, Mary, just leave minding what he says, and turn to the Lord himself; ‘draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.’ It’s faith you must get, and not masses, Mary. The offering is made, the blood is shed, that must wash away all your sins; so that there is nothing to do but to believe in Christ alone.”

“Faith, faith! what is it? how shall I get it?”

“Oh, but this is a darling of a book, for it tells that too. ‘It is the gift of God.’ ‘Now, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.’ It’s just believing the Lord, that he says the truth and will do as he has promised, before you get the thing promised. Surely, Mary dear, you don’t think I’d tell you a lie.”

“No, that I do not, the kind brother that you’ve been to me; it’s the soul of truth you always were.”

“Then think still higher and better of Christ that died for you; believe what he says, at once. But stay, there’s a precious help yet: ‘For no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by *the Holy Spirit* ;’ and he can make you believe it all. Ask for him to teach you. ‘Ask, and ye shall receive;’ for the Saviour says, ‘If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.’ Oh, if God gives you his Holy Spirit—and he will, if you ask him right truly and earnestly—then you will see how it is that Jesus, his own self, ‘is all, and in all,’ ‘wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,’ to poor sinners; and how He who knew no sin, was made ‘to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.’ And

then, Mary dear, if indeed you must leave us, if you must not stay any longer here, you will pass without fear through the dark valley, having the staff of truth to lean upon; and your happy spirit, 'absent from the body,' shall be, for he says it, 'present with the Lord.'"

"Oh, Pat, Kathleen might well be happy to learn all this; but you must say it all over again when mother is not by, for it's taking the thorns from my dying pillow one by one, and I do think I'll be able to believe it all. But what will the priest say? Perhaps he will curse me for a heretic, Pat;" and she shuddered at the thought.

"Oh, but it'll do the most harm to himself then. Never fear. Be true, and hold fast by the Lord Jesus and his own words, and you need not fear what man can do."

"And our poor mother, who loves the church and the Virgin, and so many saints, and believes in them all."

"Ah, we must say something now and then out of the Bible, that will catch her ear and win her heart; and above all, we must pray to God to enlighten her with the Holy Spirit, that she may know her darling is safe in glory when we are left lonely by the grave-side. Surely it's a blessed religion to comfort us all, whether living or dying; and I only wish the sweet story was told from Bally-castle to Cape Clear, till every man and woman and child should know that Jesus died for them, and that for his sake God has mercy on them that believe. Oh, wouldn't Ireland be the happy land, then! It's the gospel we want; and then it's God's word and not mine that says, 'Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord.'

WHO WOULD NOT PRAY?

ONE Saturday evening a clergyman landed at Southampton, from the Cowes steam-packet. As the hour was late, he lost no time in inquiring for the public conveyances to Winchester, having engaged to preach for a friend in that city on the following morning. To his surprise the London night-coach was full; and although a stage would leave Southampton early in the morning, he was unwilling to travel on the Sabbath. After some consideration as to the best course to be pursued under these circumstances, he rang the bell for the waiter, and sent him for a gig.

In a short time the waiter reappeared, and announced that the vehicle was at the door. Accordingly the clergyman took his seat, and being weary, wrapped his cloak around him, and leaned back to compose himself to a quiet nap. They had not, however, advanced far on the London road, before this injunction of holy writ came powerfully on his mind, "Be instant in season, out of season."

This clergyman was here thrown into the company of a stranger, and that stranger a servant; he would only be in his society a few hours that evening, and then perhaps might never meet him again. It was strongly impressed on him, "Be instant in season, out of season." He might have thought that his proper season would be in the pulpit, on Sunday morning, for serving God and winning souls to Christ: but the work was not to be confined to the worship of a Sabbath morning; it might effectually be done in the journey of a Saturday night; and God

spoke quietly, yet forcibly, within his servant's mind, "Be instant in season, out of season." Accordingly the following conversation took place.

"What is your name, my good friend?"

"My name is John Butler, sir."

CLERGYMAN. Have you lived long at Southampton, John?

BUTLER. Yes, sir; I was born at Southampton, and never lived anywhere else.

C. And have you always been in this business?

B. Yes, sir, I was brought up in the stables.

C. Did you ever go to school, John?

B. Yes, sir; my mother sent me to the charity-school for a month or two; but I never took much to my book, and so she gave it up; and after that I went with my father into the stable and helped him a little.

C. I suppose you often read the Bible at school?

B. Why, sir, I never learned enough to read much, and I quite forget what it was we used to read out of.

C. But you have heard the Bible read in church, of course. Did you never read that book out of which the minister reads at church?

B. I can't say that I have, sir; for I don't often go there. I've too much to do for that. When a man has to get a bit of bread in these hard times, he has to work every day, and all the day. Why, sir, I am obliged to be out with my horse and chaise all day; though, to be sure, I can't always get hired. Now, when I get back to-night, I shall just be able to rub down my horse and give him a feed of corn, and then go to bed. And I must clean my harness and wash the chaise to-morrow morning; for perhaps somebody will want to go out with it, and I can't take people out in a dirty chaise; they would not like it, you know, sir.

C. Of course not, Butler; but you could leave the harness and chaise till Monday morning, and —

B. Oh no, sir; that would be impossible. Why, what would the people say if I should refuse to go out with them? They would say they would not have me any more, and then, sir, you know, I should lose all my custom; and what would become of my family then?

C. You had better offend your customers, than break God's commandment to keep holy the Sabbath-day, and do no work in it. If you were to refuse those who came to hire you, and were to go to church and learn to read your Bible, I am sure you would succeed much better in the week, and be a much happier man.

B. Ah, sir, it is very easy to talk about being religious and all that; but when a man has, as I say, to get his bread in these hard times, he cannot keep at home on Sundays.

C. But do you not know that you are sinning against God, and breaking one of his commandments, in taking no thought of his day, and neglecting his word? My good friend, you have a soul which must *very shortly* be either miserable for ever, or for ever happy; and if you are not careful — Do you ever *pray* to God?

B. Pray, sir! I don't know how to pray, or what to pray for; not but what they used to tell me I ought to pray.

C. Suppose, now, I were to give you a prayer, would you always offer it?

B. Really, sir, I cannot promise that; I've no time for saying prayers; I've always too much to do.

C. Oh, yes, you can; the prayer I shall give you, you can say at all times. When you are in the stable cleaning and feeding your horses; when you are waiting to be hired; and even when you are driving along the road, you can pray the prayer I shall teach you.

B. Well, sir, I cannot recollect prayers; I never had a wonderful memory. I am sure I shall not be able to say this prayer you talk about.

C. Oh, yes, you will; for I shall give you a very

short prayer. There are only ten words in it: "O God, for Christ's sake, give me thy Holy Spirit."

B. Well, sir, that is short enough, to be sure. Let me see; what is it, sir?

C. I shall divide it into three parts for you. Now say it after me. "O God."

B. "O God."

C. "For Christ's sake."

B. "For Christ's sake."

C. "Give me thy Holy Spirit."

B. "Give me thy Holy Spirit."

C. Now try if you can say the whole.

B. "O God, for Christ's sake, give me thy Holy Spirit."

C. Now do you know for what you are to pray? You are to say, "O God," because he made you, and gives you daily your food and clothes, and keeps you alive. If he chose, he could this instant take away your breath, and then you would immediately die. And he can make you happy, and deserves that you should love him, and has a right to your obedience. He will not only take care of your body, but will take care also of your soul; and because he loves your soul, he has written the Bible, that you might know what to do to be quite happy in this world and the next.

B. Was the Bible written, sir, to make us happy? I am sure I did not know that.

C. Yes, Butler, it certainly was; and the ten commandments, if you were to obey them, would make you perfectly happy.

B. Ah, sir, those ten commandments; I've not obeyed them, you say, and I'm sure no one ever could do all they bid us to do. Now I've heard one of those people who go to church always, and read their Bible, and make a great many prayers, say, that if we should only *wish* to do wrong, we have broken the commandments. Why, sir, it is impossible to keep them so.

C. The person who told you that was quite right ; and if you pray as I tell you, you will find that he is quite right.

B. Then I cannot see how we are to be saved, sir.

C. When God saw that man could not keep the commandments, he sent Christ into the world that men might be saved, not by the works of the law, for if we offend in one point, we are guilty of all ; and though we may think that we keep that law, and obey it perfectly, yet what is our obedience, our fancied righteousness, in the sight of a pure and holy God ? How, then, can we be saved ? Not by the works of the law, but by faith in Christ—by believing on him, coming to him ; for Christ died on the cross to save sinners, and if *we* believe on him *we* shall be saved. I wish you also to ask God for the Holy Spirit, because this Holy Spirit will teach you of Christ, and will show you how sinful you have been, and how necessary it is that you should flee to the cross of Christ for salvation ; for, remember, by Christ alone can we poor sinners be saved : “There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,” but the name of Jesus. This Holy Spirit, too, will help you to do what is good ; for, as I have told you, we are by nature so sinful that we can of ourselves do nothing good : it will also make you love your Bible, love prayer, and love all that is good.

B. Well, sir, and why do you say, “For Christ’s sake ?”

C. Because Jesus Christ told his disciples before he left this world, “Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do ; and all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer *believing*, ye shall receive.” God is displeased and angry with men on account of their sins ; so much so, that Christ said, “No man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” Christ is our Friend, and he is God’s Son ; if therefore we ask God in the name of his Son, he will, out of love to his Son, grant us that which we ask him for.

B. I am very much obliged to you, sir, and shall try

to say this prayer over and over again, as often as I think of it.

Having thus attempted to satisfy his conscience, the clergyman leaned back in the gig, and prayed earnestly that the seed he had been scattering in the heart of his companion might take deep root there, and bring forth abundant fruit to the glory of our Redeemer, and the salvation of an immortal soul. He knew that there lay in the path ten thousand obstacles—long and fixed habits of sin, deep ignorance, and the society of evil and ungodly men; but he knew that God's power had converted Paul from a persecutor of the church, to one of its boldest and most zealous defenders; and he had himself experienced the same power in changing his own heart, and giving him a love of Christ and repentance for sins and a desire of holiness, when he was a careless sinner. Besides, God's promise had been given; and his attribute was truth, and his nature was unchangeable. He besought him, therefore, by his own name, for his own Son's sake, in fulfilment of his promise, that this poor man's prayer might be answered, though he offered it almost in ignorance of the purport of its language. In these prayerful meditations, this servant of our Lord passed the rest of his journey.

Thus musing, they entered the city of Winchester, when John suddenly said,

“Do you know, sir, that prayer you gave me I've been saying a great many times, and I've got it now quite perfect; and I've been determining in my own mind, sir, to say it as often as I can.”

C. I am glad to hear you say so, John; and I have been praying for you that you may do so, and that God will hearken to your petition, and give you that which will make you a more useful, a happier, and a better man. He will not forget you, John, if you do not forget him. May He bless you.

With these words they parted.

Several years had passed since the night in which this conversation took place, when the clergyman had occasion once more to visit Southampton. Passing through one of the by-streets, he saw written in large letters over the door of a neat-looking house, "John Butler, licensed to let gigs, chaises, and saddle-horses." The conversation he had held with the driver, on the Winchester road, suddenly crossed his mind; and wondering whether this could be the same individual, he walked up to the house, and tapping at the door, inquired of a plainly dressed, but respectable looking woman, for John Butler.

"He is not at home, sir, but I think he may be in the stable. Johnny, go and see if your father is in the stable, and tell him a gentleman wants to speak to him directly: make haste, now, as fast as you can."

The little boy was just running out, in obedience to his mother's order, when John Butler came in; and gazing for a moment on the stranger, he then rushed forward, and seizing both his hands with most affectionate earnestness, exclaimed,

"God bless you, sir, are you not the gentleman I drove over to Winchester some time ago? You taught me, sir, that short but blessed prayer, 'O God, for Christ's sake, give me thy Holy Spirit.'"

The clergyman answered him,

"Yes, John, I am; and I hope you found that all I said was good, and all I foretold was true."

B. Oh yes, the Lord bless you, I have, through the grace of God. I am now a happy man, sir, and all my family, thank God, are happy too; and all through that good advice you gave me, and the prayer you taught me.

C. Well, I am glad of that. How did you first become really serious, and when did you begin to enjoy religion?

B. You shall hear all about it. I used to say this prayer over very often to myself, and said it as you told me,

while I was at work, and at all sorts of times. And so I went on for some time, till one Sunday it happened I was not hired. I was loitering near the church, and as I had nothing to do, I thought I would just go in and see what was going on. The prayers, sir, were just over; and the minister took this text, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." He proved to me how great a sinner I was, and that if I was not washed clean in Christ's blood, I never could be saved; and then I began to think a good deal about my soul. So next Sunday I went again, and persuaded my wife to go too; and ever since then we have always gone, and I never afterwards went out on a Sunday with any one. I have never found that I wanted for bread or clothes; and my wife will tell you how happy we have been ever since. We always read a Bible which we have bought, and pray every night with our dear children, and God has indeed blessed us, sir.

His wife joined with him in thanking the clergyman for his precious advice, and the sweet little prayer he had given her dear husband.

The clergyman blessed God for his faithfulness, and thanked him for his mercy, as the happy little family knelt around him, while he addressed the throne of grace on their behalf ere they parted.

Reader, pray this prayer; and may God grant you an answer for the sake of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

WHO WOULD NOT PRAY?

THE GRATEFUL CRIMINAL.

BY REV. JOHN SCUDDER,

MADRAS, INDIA.

It is related of the Rev. Dr. Doddridge, that "on one occasion he interested himself in behalf of a condemned criminal, and had great hope of obtaining his pardon. On entering the cell of the condemned man, he threw himself at the doctor's feet, and with streaming eyes exclaimed, 'O sir, every drop of my blood thanks you, for you have had mercy upon every drop of it. Wherever you go, I will be yours.'"

And are such the feelings which were exercised by this criminal towards one of his fellow-men for a temporal blessing conferred upon him—for obtaining a short prolongation of his forfeited life? Then what should be your feelings, my impenitent friend, towards the adorable Redeemer, who has died that you might obtain eternal life? It cost Dr. Doddridge little suffering to seek a reprieve of the condemned criminal; but to obtain your pardon, to deliver you from going down to that place of woe where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, "heaven was emptied of its best, I was almost ready to say, of its last gift." It was to save you that Christ came down from the world of glory, where thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. For your sake he became the babe of Bethlehem, and was cradled in a manger. It was for you that his life was made a life of sorrow; for you he agonized in the garden, and sweat as it were great drops of blood. For you he trod the valley of Gethsemane, and died on the cross. Nothing, nothing but the death of the Son of God could satisfy divine justice, as the purchase of your salvation.

From what I have now said, you may learn of what infinite value is your immortal soul. Would the Son of God have endured such sufferings, if the soul had not been of priceless worth? But that you may more clearly see its infinite value, let me point you to the misery which awaits you, should you be eternally lost. And what is it to be lost? "It is," as one has observed, "to have a home in wide perdition, as deep as wide, and desolate as deep; to have the sensibilities alive to racking pain, and know that this shall never cease; to wish annihilation, and yet live on, and on, for ever; to gaze eternally on the dark firmament of woe, 'and yet never see the star of hope arise;' to spend eternal ages in doleful lamentations, without a moment's intermission, and yet know that deliverance will never come; to be worn and vexed with keenest woe, and yet feel that the wrath in ages to come is infinitely more than has been endured in ages past. To perish? Oh, it is to try and wish, and ever try and wish to die, and yet live on and on, in infinite duration. It is to sigh, and groan, and weep, and to know that in the ages to come, there are sadder sighs, and deeper groans and hotter tears."

To deliver you from this awful, this everlasting torment, the Son of God gave up his life, his all for you. And if the poor criminal could say, with streaming tears, "O, sir, every drop of my blood thanks you, for you have had mercy upon every drop of it;" how much more should you exclaim, "O, my Saviour, every drop of my blood thanks thee, for thou hast had mercy upon every drop of it."

But let me make a supposition. Let me suppose that the criminal who expressed so much thankfulness for the kindness which had been shown to him, had expressed no thankfulness at all, or had even treated the tidings with lightness and contempt, would you not almost involuntarily have exclaimed, "What an ungrateful wretch?" You, my impenitent friend, have been told that the Saviour not only endured the most aggravated sufferings, but that he gave up his very life to procure you a release from eter-

nal burnings. And have you never entertained any feelings of thankfulness for such a favor? If you have not, might I not well exclaim, "What an ungrateful wretch are you, to treat your Saviour thus?" Could I use any milder language to express the enormity of such guilt?

The work of redemption is of all works the greatest which God ever performed. When contemplating it, even the angelic host have been lost in wonder and astonishment. "O how do all the miracles of Egypt and the marvellous acts in the field of Zoan, all that the Jewish annals have recorded, or the human ear heard, dwindle into trivial events, when compared with this mystery." And have the angels, who needed no redemption, been lost in wonder and astonishment at what Christ has done for your salvation? What then must be their feelings, when they see you as regardless of the Saviour as if he had never come into this world on the errand of mercy; as neglectful of securing an interest in him, as if there were no hell, no lake of fire and brimstone, into which you are moment by moment in danger of falling. And when those holy beings see the efforts which are also put forth from time to time for your salvation, but which are all resisted; especially when they see the ministers of the gospel running as it were between you and the awful abyss which lies before you, and hear how earnestly they entreat you not to destroy yourself, but entreat you to no purpose, to what a height must their wonder and astonishment rise.

And if you, *over whom so many even of the tears of the Redeemer have been shed*, should be lost, how mysterious will your conduct appear to yourself. When the prison of despair shall have closed its doors upon you, and when an eternity shall be given you for reflection, with what horror will you look back upon the maddening course which you pursued while in this world. How overwhelmingly awful will the thought be, that you waded down to destruction as it were through the very blood of the Son of God. Ah, it is this thought, the thought

that you dipped your unhallowed feet in the blood of the Lamb, which will then tear your heart in pieces, and make you cry out with wild amazement; and it is this thought that will be for ever furnishing new food to the worm which dieth not, and which will be adding fresh fuel to the fire which is never to be quenched. Alas, alas, that it should be so. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." O methinks, my impenitent friend, that if any thing on earth could melt your hard heart, it would be the sight of the Son of God in tears, the Son of God in tears for you. By these tears I entreat you; by the solemnities of your dying hour, which is just at hand; by the awful realities of the judgment-day, and of that eternity which is before you; by all the joys of heaven, and by all the agonies of the damned, I entreat you, that you will give up this vain world as your portion, repent of all your sins, and dedicate yourself to your Saviour in a covenant never to be broken.

And now, what will you do? Heaven and hell are before you—heaven with all its enjoyments, and hell with its lake of fire. Which will you choose? Will you "drop the world to catch at heaven," or will you go down to hell, and "wear out eternal ages in contending with the vengeance of an angry God?" Come to some conclusion, I entreat you, *at once*, as to what you will do. If you intend to choose heaven, choose it now. To-morrow you may not have the opportunity of making a choice. For aught you know, you may then be lifting up your eyes in torments, viewing heaven irrecoverably lost. Yea, even before to-morrow, your everlasting wail, your everlasting lament, may be begun.

TAMO, THE NESTORIAN PRISONER.

MORE than ten years ago, says Rev. Mr. Stoddard, a mountain Nestorian, a young man of decided talents, but passionate and self-willed, was made a teacher in the male seminary at Ooroomiah. He often disappointed our hopes, and occasioned us much anxiety, until the memorable revival of 1846, which was the dawn of a new and blessed period for the Nestorians. It had been some days in progress, and hardly any of our pupils were left unmoved, when I ventured to call Tamo to my study, and expostulate with him on his stupidity and recklessness. I was prepared for a repulse, and even *expected* it. But the time had come for the strong man to bow. The arrow of conviction pierced his soul, and he fell prostrate to the earth. It was affecting to look on that man of iron frame, for days together trembling like an aspen, and his knees smiting together, as he saw the curses of the law hanging over his head.

One day he came to my room, bowed down under his burden. Covering his face with his hands, he remained some time unable to speak. At last, in agony of spirit, and his voice choked by emotion, he cried out, "Lost, *lost*, LOST." I never shall forget that scene. I pointed him to Calvary. I told him of a Saviour who would pardon all his sins, and love him with an everlasting love. He bent forward to listen. He caught the sound with joy. The struggle was over. New emotions were waked up in his soul. Light broke in upon him, and he became a follower of Jesus, an heir of glory. O how blessed was the change! He became a consistent, humble Christian, fervent in prayer, and incessant in labor. Often the midnight hour has found him on his knees, pleading like him who said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." We have had much occasion to rejoice over his labors with

our pupils in the seminary, especially in times of revival. It would have moved and melted any Christian's heart to see him begging those hardened in sin to come to the Saviour, watching over the lambs of the flock, and bringing any who had strayed, back again to the fold.

During the persecuting career of the Nestorian Patriarch in 1848, Tamo was called to suffer for the sake of Christ. He was fined and anathematized; but he bore all meekly, and had grace to pray for his bitterest enemy.

As a preacher, he has become much distinguished. We have a number of pious helpers, who wield with much effect the sword of the Spirit, but perhaps Tamo excels them all, especially when aroused during seasons of revival. While I was in America, Mr. Perkins, after dwelling in a letter to me on the very powerful work of grace in progress at that time, 1849, adds, "Tamo last night would have afforded a most affecting sight for the painter, the tears running down his cheeks, and he raising his voice so as to be heard amid the sobs, and often wiping the tears and the sweat from his face, while he poured forth a torrent of overpowering eloquence." This is the man who five years before was an outcast, begging his way along from Persia to Jerusalem. How wonderful the grace of God!

When the Gawar station was formed in the mountains, we consented to give up the services of Tamo in the seminary, that he might aid in that new enterprise. Being a native of Gawar, and having a perfect acquaintance with the habits and feelings of the people, it was thought by us all that he was peculiarly qualified to be a successful pioneer there. On his leaving, as I observed that he looked sad, and that he seemed to shrink from the trial of a removal from the seminary, I gave him a few words of encouragement, and bade him go "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." The idea that the field was a *new* one, that he was to "preach the gospel in the regions beyond," and that by the grace of God he might "magnify his office" there, and spread the blessed

light over all the mountains and through all the valleys of Koordistan, seemed to change his feelings from dependency to joy, and he bade us farewell with pleasant anticipations. How little did any of us realize that bonds and affliction so soon awaited him. All who are acquainted with our mission, have read the story of his outrageous seizure last summer by Turkish soldiers; of his being dragged a prisoner to Bashkallah; of his laboring there in chains, making bricks under a burning sun, and almost killed by cruel treatment; of Col. Williams' noble efforts to procure his release; of his removal from Bashkallah to Van, and of the firmness and meekness with which he has endured for eight months this distressing confinement. In a letter which I have recently received from him, he writes,

“That letter of yours in English has reached me. I read it very easily, and understood every thing that was written in it. The words were very comforting. You told me how pious men in former times received bonds and distresses; how Joseph, and Jeremiah, and Daniel, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and Paul, and Peter, and John, and also our beloved Saviour himself, received these afflictions. These words about the righteous men of old are very pleasant and comforting to me. But I am not worthy to receive them, for I have much offended Him that is just and true. But yet his great grace still receives and blesses those who have offended him. He has given a great price to deliver poor criminals from the sword of the executioner. He has bought them off from dreadful death by a ransom so large that no arithmetic can by any means measure it. He puts them with his sons at a table furnished with the food of kings, and he clothes them in shining garments, that glisten as the sun.

“I remember the day well when you and I, in that little upper room, prayed those prayers full of weeping and joy. I know well that they were accepted by Him who hears all the prayers of his servants, and brought a blessing on ignorant and worthless me; so that I could

lay hold of His hand who is our faithful Shepherd, with true heart and pure conscience, the hand of Him who is equal in glory with the Father." He proceeds to speak of doubts and fears that had agitated his mind, and the discipline that his heavenly Father had seen fit to lay upon him. He records that a soldier of the Sultan, sleeping before the door of his house, having been killed by thieves, he was seized as the murderer; was "delivered into the hands of merciless men, who put a chain on his neck, and a chain on his foot, and carried him first to Bashkallah and then to Van," where he was imprisoned, tormented, and beaten; and when life seemed almost expiring, he was seized with fever. He adds,

"In my misery I prayed thus: 'O God, thou hast afflicted me, and I am afflicted. I bless thee for this great distress. Thou didst see evil in me, and on that account thou hast brought me into these troubles. Thou seest, O Lord, that I have no friends, no relatives, no one to care for me except thee. O God, I am a prisoner. O God, I am a stranger. O God, I am sick. Have mercy on me, O King of kings. Turn from thy anger. Take away the rod of thy wrath. Be reconciled to me for His sake who sits at thy right hand.' Thus I prayed with many tears.

"Glory be to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, that he quickly heard me. He did not suffer my disease to continue long. After eighteen days I recovered entirely. He turned to me in mercy. He sent me skilful and merciful friends to do every thing I needed. It seems to me that all the Mussulmans around me have become my friends. I hope also the Pasha himself will become my friend. All this mercy is from God, who can do every thing he pleases. I am very grateful to all my friends who have cared for me. But more than all, I am grateful to God, who has treated me so kindly."

“IT IS TEN THOUSAND YEARS AGO.”

WHERE will you be when, in reference to the scenes of the present world, you will have to utter these words? “Ten thousand years!” how vast such a duration! So many years have not passed since our first parents were created. You have lived but a few short years, yet a period will come when you shall have lived thus long in bliss or woe.

Survey the present world. How brightly shines its sun. How fair and lovely are the bloom and verdure of spring, the richness of summer, and the abundance of autumn. How glorious the splendors of the noonday, and the softer splendors of a starlight night. What will all this be to you when you may say, “I saw that sun with pleasure, and that starry firmament. Spring, summer, and autumn I welcomed with delight; but it was ten thousand years ago, that, for the last time, I beheld earth, sun, and moon, and saw the changing seasons pass along.”

Think of the charms of domestic life, a mother’s fondness, and a father’s affection. Think of the marriage union, with all its tender anxieties, and all its pleasures; of the friendly fireside, of the social home, where the weary rested and comfort dwelt. All has long ago ended. Of every domestic delight and anxiety you may say, “It is ten thousand years since I left my long-loved home to enter it no more, since I formed one of an affectionate circle there, smiled when they smiled, and sorrowed when they wept. The last of those smiles was lighted up, and the last of those tears was dropped, ten thousand years ago.”

Think of the scenes of public agitation, the strife of parties, the tumult of nations. All will long have ceased, and events that now agitate millions will be faintly remem-

bered, and utterly disregarded, while of each it may be said, "It is ten thousand years ago."

Think of the day of death. You have to die. Your heart must throb for the last time, and your spirit struggle with the agonies of dissolving nature. After this you will lie a lifeless corpse, and soon, among the ruins and silence of the grave, be quite forgotten. Ages will roll along, but at length will come the period when you may say, "It is ten thousand years since I lay languishing in pain on the bed of death, since the last struggle came, and my spirit quitted its earthly tabernacle till the resurrection morning. That hour, so long dreaded, has long gone by; even my dying hour is now ten thousand years ago."

The solemnities of eternal judgment are now before you. "The Lord himself will descend from heaven." "The heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." Before the King "will be gathered all nations," and he will pronounce the final doom of all. At length that great day will close. Eternity will roll along till you will have to exclaim, even of the judgment-day, "It is ten thousand years ago. Ten thousand years ago I stood before the Judge's awful bar; I heard him welcome the blessed, and doom the lost to utter misery. I heard the triumphant anthems of the saved, and the shrieks and wailings of the condemned. Ten thousand years have passed since the Judge left his judgment-throne, and ascended with his saints to heaven, and since the dark prison of despair closed for ever on all his foes."

The sincere Christian may apply these solemn considerations to the trials of the spiritual pilgrimage. Is your heart right with God? Is your soul committed to the Saviour's care, and your heart unfeignedly consecrated to him? If so, you are a Christian, and doubtless are acquainted with a Christian's trials. But what will these appear at that solemn period to which your thoughts are

here directed? "Ten thousand years ago I was a wanderer in that world of my nativity. Amidst its snares and delusions I struggled after Christ. Many were my conflicts, many my doubts and fears, many were my sorrows, though many my comforts. Often did I mourn the imperfections I felt in all I was, and saw in all I did. Often did I deplore the evil I felt within, and sorrow for the ravages of sin I witnessed all around. But all has long since ceased. Ten thousand years have hasted by since I ended my last conflict, endured my last sorrow, and struggled with my latest foe. A hundred centuries have passed since I left the church below, but they have known no fear, no pain, no conflict. My latest grief, my latest toil, was ten thousand years ago."

If you are not a sincere disciple of the Saviour, if you love the world, it will leave you, and the period will come when you may look back upon it as the scene of your sin and folly ten thousand years before. Oh, what is the condition of a sinful and ruined, but immortal being, that has to exclaim, "I had sabbaths, but the last departed unimproved ten thousand years ago, and then ended the last of numerous privileges that might have led me to the Giver of immortal life. The Spirit long strove with me, but for ten thousand years has ceased to strive. The Father long pitied me, but the last rejected offer of his pity was ten thousand years ago. The Saviour had compassion on me, and proffered heavenly blessings to me, but the last proffer of his salvation I rejected, and the last has ended for ten thousand years. Christians prayed for me, though I prayed not, but the last prayer offered for me was ten thousand years ago, and even that was in vain."

When that solemn period comes, where will you have spent those ten thousand departed years? Will it have been amidst the brightness and blessedness of heavenly joy, or the gloom and darkness of despair? Will you long have praised redeeming love with the triumphant spirits

of the just? or long have bewailed and cursed the sin and madness of irreligion in the prison of the lost?

When the pains and pleasures of mortal life shall thus long have ended, when its losses and its riches shall have long passed away; when thus, if you are a child of God, ten thousand years of the unbroken calm of heaven shall have succeeded the feverish dream of life; or, if you are destitute of the Saviour's grace, ten thousand years of wailing and despair shall have followed your few vain moments of worldly pleasure, what will then be your prospects? Eternity is stamped upon them all, whatever be their nature. Eternity! Eternity! Life or death to eternity! heaven or hell to eternity! The love or the wrath of Jehovah to eternity! All the riches of salvation, or all the poverty of utter ruin, to eternity! And in eternity a period will arrive when the language on which we have meditated will be inexpressive; when ten thousand years will bear no more proportion to the immense duration that will have elapsed since you left the world, than a moment bears to all those years; when events that took place ten thousand years before, will seem but at the distance of the twinkling of an eye, compared with the mighty ages that you will have spent in bliss or woe. Then, instead of having to say, "It is ten thousand years since I left the world, since I felt my last sorrow, or enjoyed my last delight," you will have to exclaim, "Years, countless as the sands that formed the bed of earth's oceans, have departed since heaven became my home, and still eternal day fears no eclipse;" or, "Years, numberless as the drops that formed those oceans, have rolled away since hell became my prison, and still the gloom of eternal night admits no ray of cheering hope." O, this is no fiction, but solemn truth, for God's holy word affirms that eternal life or eternal punishment awaits every human being. Flee therefore to Jesus, and be blessed for ever.

THE

CHRISTIAN'S GREAT INTEREST.

BY REV. WILLIAM GUTHRIE, A. D. 1665.

QUEST. What is the great business a man has to do in the world ?

ANS. To make sure of a saving interest in Christ Jesus, and to walk suitably thereto.

Q. Have not all men in Christian lands a saving interest in Christ ?

A. No, verily ; yea, but few of them have it.

Q. How shall I know if I have a saving interest in Him ?

A. Ordinarily the Lord prepares his own way in the soul by a work of humiliation, and discovers a man's sin and misery to him, and exercises him so therewith, that he longs for the Physician Christ Jesus.

Q. How shall I know if I have a true discovery of my sin and misery ?

A. A true sight of it makes a man take salvation to heart above any thing in the world ; it makes him disclaim all relief in himself, even in his best things ; it makes Christ, who is the Redeemer, very precious to the soul ; it makes a man stand in awe of sin afterwards, and makes him willing to be saved on any terms God pleases.

Q. By what other ways may I discern a saving interest in Him ?

A. By the going out of my heart seriously and affectionately towards him as he is held out in the gospel ; and this is faith, or believing.

Q. How shall I know if my heart goes after him aright, and that my faith is true saving faith ?

A. Where the heart goes out aright after him in true and saving faith, the soul is pleased with Christ alone above all things, and is pleased with him to rule and instruct as well as to save, and is content to cleave to him, whatever inconveniences may follow.

Q. What other mark of a saving interest in Christ can you give me?

A. He that is in Christ savingly is a new creature, he is graciously changed and renewed in some measure—in the whole man and in all his ways pointing towards all the known commandments of God.

Q. But what if I find sin now and then prevailing over me?

A. Although every sin deserves everlasting vengeance, yet if you be afflicted for your failings, confess them with shame to God, resolve to strive against them honestly from henceforth, and flee to Christ for pardon, you shall obtain mercy, and your interest stands sure.

Q. What if I do not partake of those special communications of God, and actings and outgoings of his Spirit, of which gracious people are often speaking?

A. The promises of life and of peace with God are nowhere in Scripture made unto those special outpourings of the Spirit: the promises are made unto faith, followed by holiness; and it may be presumed that many heirs of glory do not in this life partake of some of these things, but are, "through fear of death, all their lifetime subject to bondage." We may seek after them, but God is free to give or withhold them.

Q. What shall the man do who cannot lay claim to Christ Jesus, nor any of those marks spoken of?

A. Let him not take rest until he make sure to himself a saving interest in Christ.

Q. In what way can a man make sure of an inter-

est in Christ, who never had a saving interest in him hitherto?

A. He must take his sins to heart, and his great hazard thereby; he must take to heart God's offer of pardon and peace through Christ Jesus, and heartily close with God's offer, by betaking himself to Christ the blessed refuge.

Q. What if my sins be singularly heinous and great?

A. Whatever thy sins be, if thou wilt close with Christ Jesus by faith, thou shalt never enter into condemnation.

Q. Is only faith in Christ required of men?

A. Faith is the only condition upon which God offers peace and pardon unto man; but be assured, faith, if it be true and saving, will not be alone in the soul, but will be attended with true repentance, and a thankful study of conformity to God's image.

Q. How shall I be sure my heart accepts God's offer, and doth close with Christ Jesus?

A. Go make a covenant expressly, and by word speak the thing to God.

Q. What way shall I do that?

A. Set apart some portion of time, and having considered your own lost estate and the remedy offered by Christ Jesus, seek to be pleased with, and close with that offer, and say unto God expressly that you do accept of that offer and of him to be your God in Christ, and do give up yourself to him to be saved in his way, without reservation or exception in any case, and that you henceforth will wait for salvation in the way he hath appointed. It is proper that men should, before the Lord, acknowledge their low state in themselves, and the relief that is by Christ; and that they declare that they accept of the same as it is offered in the gospel, and thankfully

rest satisfied with it, trusting themselves henceforth wholly unto God, to be saved in his way, for which they wait according to his faithfulness.

Q. What if I break with God afterwards?

A. You must resolve in his strength not to break with him, to watch over your own way, and put your heart in his hand to keep it; and if you break, you must confess it to God, and judge yourself for it, and flee to the Advocate for pardon, and resolve to do so no more; and this you must do as often as you fail.

Q. How shall I come to full assurance of my interest in Christ, so that it may be above controversy?

A. Learn to lay your weight upon the blood of Christ, study purity and holiness in all manner of conversation, and pray for the witness of God's Spirit, and his testimony added to these will establish you in the faith of an interest in Christ.

Q. What is the consequence of such closing with God in Christ by heart and mouth?

A. Union and communion with God, all good here, and his blessed fellowship in heaven for ever afterwards.

Q. What if I slight all these things, and do not lay them to heart to put them in practice?

A. The Lord cometh with his angels, in flaming fire to render vengeance to them who obey not this gospel; and thy judgment shall be greater than the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah; and so much the greater that thou hast read these pages, for they shall witness against thee in that day.

AM I CHRIST'S?

BY PRESIDENT EDWARDS.

“Ye shall know them by their fruits.” Matt. 7:16.

SOME godly persons may be ready to say, that if they judge themselves by their practice, or the fruits of their own life, they must condemn themselves, for they fail so much and so frequently, and are so often wandering out of the way, that at times it scarcely seems that they can be the children of God. To such I would say, that persons who try themselves by their practice, may find that they greatly fail every day, and are often wandering out of the way, and yet they may really see no just cause in their practice to condemn themselves as not true Christians. For when we speak of a life of Christian practice, and when the Scriptures speak of the course of life as Christian, the meaning is not, that the life is a perfect and sinless life. On the contrary, a Christian's life may be attended with many and exceeding great imperfections, and yet be a holy life, or a truly Christian life. It may be such a life as clearly and even necessarily to show that the grace which the individual has, is of the kind which has a tendency to holy practice. His fruits may be such as to be good evidence of the good nature of the tree, and his works such as to show his faith. And if you ask for still further light, then I would say, whatever your imperfections and failings may be, examine yourself whether you find the following evidences of your grace being of that kind which tends to holy practice.

1. Has your supposed grace such influence *as to render those things in which you have failed of holy practice loathsome, grievous, and humbling to you?* Has it such influence in your mind as to render your past sinful practices hateful in your eyes, and has it led you to mourn before God for them? And does it render those things in your conduct that since your supposed conversion have been contrary to Christian practice, odious in your eyes? And is it the great burden of your life, that your practice is no better? Is it really grievous to you that you have fallen, or do fall into sin; and are you ready, after the example of holy Job, to abhor yourself for it, and repent in dust and ashes, and like Paul to lament your wretchedness, and pray to be delivered from sin as you would from a body of death?

2. *Do you carry about with you habitually a dread of sin?* Do you not only mourn and humble yourself for sins that are past, but have you a dread of sin for the future? And do you dread it because in itself it is evil, and so hurtful to your own soul, and offensive to God? Do you dread it as a terrible enemy that you have often suffered by, and feel that it has been a grievous thing to you heretofore? And do you dread it as something that has hurt and wounded and stung you, so that you would see it no more? Do you stand on your watch against it, as a man would keep watch against something that he dreads with such a dread as led Joseph to say, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Gen. 39: 9.

3. *Are you sensible of the beauty and pleasantness of the ways of holy practice?* Do you see the beauty of holiness, and the loveliness of the ways of God and Christ? It is said in the text, that "charity rejoiceth in the truth;" and it is given as the character of the truly godly, that "he rejoiceth and worketh righteousness," which is the same as saying that "he rejoices to work righteousness." And how often does the psalmist speak

of the law of God as being his delight, and of his love to the divine commandments.

4. *Do you find that you do particularly esteem and delight in those practices that may, by way of eminence, be called Christian practices, in distinction from mere worldly morality?* By Christian practices are meant such as are implied in a meek, humble, prayerful, self-denying, self-renouncing, heavenly walk and behavior. Some of the heathen have been eminent for many of the moral virtues, and wrote excellently about them, as for example, of justice and generosity and fortitude; but they were far from a Christian poverty of spirit and lowliness of mind. They sought their own glory, and gloried exceedingly in their outward virtues, and seemed to know nothing of such a walk as the gospel commands, a walk of self-emptiness and poverty of spirit, and self-distrust and self-renunciation, and prayerful reliance on God. They were strangers to meekness, and did not allow or even dream that the forgiveness and love of enemies was a virtue. Such virtues as these are peculiarly Christian virtues, and Christian by way of distinction and eminence, and of these it is that I ask, if you hold them in special esteem for your Saviour's sake, and because they are fraught with his Spirit? If you are essentially distinguished and different in your spirit from the mere moralist, or the heathen sage or philosopher, you will have a spirit of special esteem for and delight in these virtues that especially belong to the gospel.

5. *Do you hunger and thirst after a holy practice?* Do you long to live a holy life, to be conformed to God, to have your conduct day by day better regulated, and more spiritual, more to God's glory, and more such as becometh a Christian? Is this what you love, and pray for, and long for, and live for? This is mentioned by Christ as belonging to the character of true Christians, that they "hunger and thirst after righteousness." Does this trait belong to you?

6. *Do you make a business of endeavoring to live holily, and as God would have you, in all respects?* Not only can you be said to endeavor after holiness, but do you make a *business* of endeavoring after it? Is it a matter that lies with weight upon your mind. A true and faithful Christian does not make holy living a mere incidental thing, but it is his great concern. As the business of the soldier is to fight, so the business of the Christian is to be like Christ, to be holy as he is holy. Christian practice is the great work that he is engaged in, just as the race was the great work of the racers. Is this so with you? And is it your great aim and love to keep *all* God's commandments, and so far as known, to neglect none? "Then," says the psalmist, "I shall not be ashamed when I have respect unto all thy commandments." Is this your serious, constant, and prayerful aim, that you may be faithful in every known duty? And once more,

7. *Do you greatly desire that you may know all that is your duty?* And do you desire to know it that you may do it? With the patriarch Job, can you and do you pray to the Almighty, "That which I see not, teach thou me;" adding, as he added, to the great Searcher of hearts, "If I have done iniquity, I will do no more?"

If you can honestly meet these tests, then you have the evidence that your grace is of the kind that tends to holy practice, and to growth in it. And though you may fall, through God's mercy you shall rise again. He that hath begun a good work in you, will carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ. Though you may be at times faint, yet if pursuing, you shall be borne on from strength to strength, and kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation.

From President Edwards' "Charity and its Fruits."

EXAMPLES AND ENCOURAGEMENTS
IN PRAYER,

FROM

THE HISTORY OF THE PAST, BEFORE THE
VAIL WAS ACTUALLY RENT.

FIRST DAY—ABRAHAM'S PRAYERS.

THE first full-length prayer recorded is Abraham's touching plea in behalf of Sodom, Gen. 18:22-33. See in it the characteristics of acceptable prayer.

A sinner feels he is "but dust and ashes," deserving "anger," not favor.

A sinner owns the sovereignty of God, and power of God, while appealing to his bowels of compassion.

The sinner stands before God, believing in the promised *Saviour*—no other warrant.

The sinner, full of *faith*, that is, resting wholly on Messiah, is "*the friend of God.*" God meets him, and stays to hear what he has to say.

This believing sinner yearns over perishing souls.

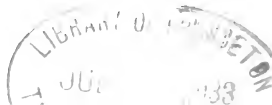
He perseveringly urges requests in behalf of the perishing.

Then we find, chapter 19:27-29, he looked after his prayers, and found results.

Men of faith, O be men of prayer. A world is perishing. Our country needs it. The churches of Christ need it. The Jews need it. The heathen need it. The victims of popery need it. Some at your very door need it. And surely there would be results.

SECOND DAY—JOB'S PRAYERS.

We find Job referred to by Ezekiel as a man of prayer. In Job 1:5, hear him praying at the atoning altar for



his family. And “thus did Job *continually.*” O, for such fathers. Our families need this.

Hear him in affliction, how he breathes out his submissive soul: “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” Job 1: 21. Let us pray for such a spirit to all who are afflicted.

Listen to his cry in 7: 20, 21: “I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou Preserver of men?” Is not his eye lifted up to the Lord the Saviour, asking to be shown why he has a controversy with him? Shall not we do so too? for success is sure.

His friend Bildad teaches us that earnest prayer has prosperous results: “Surely now he would awake for thee.” Job 8: 5-7. And Eliphaz reckons it no common sin to restrain prayer before God. Job 15: 4. Let us confess past sin in this respect.

Job would have used better than we our knowledge of the *God-man*, our Intercessor. “Oh,” says he, “that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbor.” Job 16: 21. He and his friends knew the profit of prayer. “He shall pray unto God, and He will be favorable unto him, and he shall see His face with joy.” Job 22: 23-30; 33: 26.

See how God had taught his praying servant: “I have heard of Thee with the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” Job 40: 4, 5; 42: 1-6. Lord, so teach us.

See how God heard him praying for others, Job 42: 8, 10. Lord, so remember our friends, and all we deal with.

THIRD DAY—MOSES' PRAYERS

From Ezek. 14: 14 we learn that Noah, yearning over men, abounded with prayers, though Moses has recorded none. Moses, however, himself is a glorious example.

In Exod. 17: 10-13, we find him on the hill praying, while Joshua fights. Let us be found so praying for our public men, ministers, rulers, and teachers.

In Exod. 32: 31, 32, we find his earnest intercession when Israel sinned: "And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now if thou wilt, forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." O for such zeal.

In Exod. 33: 12-23, see repeated prayer and repeated answers. Let us urge such for ourselves. "Show me thyself, thy loving-kindness, thy law, thy way."

See him again in Exod. 34: 9, when nearest God, when enjoying fellowship; and in Num. 11: 11, when in sad perplexity. So let us plead, and tell plainly all we feel. Pour out the heart.

In Num. 14: 13-20, behold his intense earnestness in prayer for others, and the result. O for such a heart; spreading before God our case, the case of the church, the case of the earth, the glory of his great name.

See in Deut. 3: 23-28, how even unanswered prayer becomes a blessing, the Lord satisfying our heart, giving us work, indulging us with comfortable views of the future.

O for such fully answered prayer as Deut. 33, the united prophecy, supplication, and blessing of this man of God, before his death. Lord, open the windows of heaven over us.

FOURTH DAY—JOSHUA'S PRAYERS.

Men of business, meet God before you go forth to the warfare of the day. See Joshua, amidst the bustle and business of an army and camp, meeting with the Lord in order to be armed for battle. Josh. 5: 13, 14.

See him in Josh. 7: 7-10, spreading hidden causes of wrath before the Lord—using arguments. "Alas, O Lord God, what shall I say when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies? And what wilt thou do unto thy great name?"

See him in Josh. 10: 12, able to pray amid tumult: "Then spake Joshua to the Lord, and he said in the sight

of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou, Moon, in the valley of Aijalon." Though short, how mighty. Who of us, in the busiest, most noisy scenes, cannot find time for brief prayer? Well *faith* may sling the stone. Sun-and-moon-arresting prayers may ascend in a moment of time.

This man of prayer fed upon the word, Josh. 1 : 8, and acted according to the revealed will of his God, Josh. 1 : 7. Man of prayer, attend to this.

FIFTH DAY—SAMUEL'S PRAYERS.

See him dwelling at the tabernacle, his soul full of the altar scenes, feeling the power of the blood.

Oh for such public prayers as his in the great assembly at Mizpah, while pouring forth Israel's need, and spreading their sins before God. 1 Sam. 7 : 5-9.

Hear him, in 1 Sam. 8 : 6-21, rehearsing in the ear of God the urgency of the people for a king to reign over them. In chap. 12 : 18, thunder answers him, and in verse 23, he tells them that he will never cease to pray ; for to cease, would be to sin.

Listen to his cries, and his long mourning for Saul, when the Lord had rejected him from being king : "And it grieved Samuel ; and he cried unto the Lord all night." 1 Sam. 15 : 11 ; 16 : 1. Let us so sigh and cry for the land, and for unconverted friends, and for backsliders.

We have the Lord's testimony to the prevailing power of his prayers, Jer. 15 : 1. A *Moses* or a *Samuel* could, in ordinary times, turn God's mind towards Israel. Why not now ? Is Samuel's God not alive ? Is Samuel's Saviour changed ? Awake, awake, arm of the Lord.

SIXTH DAY—DAVID'S PRAYERS.

David wrote for the church in all ages, and even Christ used his strong cries. Let us too cry in the words of Psalms 3 for help, "Lord, how are they increased that trouble me," and Psalm 6, for deliverance in times of chas-

tisement, "O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger." Let us pray for the hearing of prayer, as in Psa. 13, "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord?" and for the overthrow of the foes of God, Psa. 35, "Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me."

Let us go with such confession and crying as Psalms 38 and 51, "O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath;" "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness;" such desires for God's name on the earth, and earth's deliverance, as Psa. 67, "God be merciful unto us, and bless us;" such longing for revival as Psa. 75, "Lord, thou hast been favorable unto thy land;" such confidence in the Lord for blessing as Psa. 76, "Bow down thine ear, O Lord; hear me;" and for Zion's final glory, as Psa. 102, "Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come before thee. Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favor her, yea, the set time is come." Psa. 119, on the law of the Lord, will be a manual to us for every day.

But besides, in 1 Sam. 23:4, he asks and finds instructions respecting Keilah; and so in verses 10-12, and in 2 Sam. 2:1, he asks direction as to going to Keilah and Hebron, and is answered. Why not we too, in all our ways, and cares, and thoughts?

In 2 Sam. 15:31, see his short but earnest cry against the traitor: "O Lord, I pray thee turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness." Oh to be able thus to cry against antichrist, the errors of our day, the snares of the devil.

In 2 Sam. 24, see him avert the *pestilence* from Jerusalem. Is not this needed now?

Imitate his prayer for Solomon, in 1 Chron. 29:10-19, and for all who might do good to others. The young, schools, teachers, rulers, should be prayed for. Ask too a spirit of liberality and self-dedication.

Let us be as David in cries, confessions, praises, thanks, requests, beseeching calls, vehement desires; and

that for ourselves, our church, our land, our world. He that praised so well is also renowned for prayer.

SEVENTH DAY—ELIJAH'S PRAYERS

His was the prayer that shut and opened the heavens, James 5 : 17, 18 ; and the prayer for the dead son, 1 Kings, 17 : 20-22 : marvellous faith, and marvellous response. Study also the prayer for fire to consume his burnt-sacrifice, and the altar itself, 1 Kings, 18 : 36, 37 ; and the prayer for rain on Carmel, 1 Kings, 18 : 42-44 ; the prayer that consumed the two captains with their fifties, 2 Kings, 1 ; and the double portion of his Spirit given to Elisha at his request, 2 Kings, 2 : 9.

What are we ? Why are we getting grains and drops only ? Where is bold faith ? Where is heaven-opening and heaven-shutting prayer ?

An apostle exclaims, "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are." James 5 : 17. Why then do we despond ? It was not his merit, but the merit of his Saviour that prevailed. Let us stay on Carmel, looking seven times for the cloud.

EIGHTH DAY—HEZEKIAH'S CRIES.

Is ours the prayer of faith ? Do we pray really in Christ's name ?

Read 2 Chron. 29 : 26, 27, the king at the atoning altar, rejoicing in the voice from its four horns. Hence it is that soon after, his cry for the people is heard : "The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek God. And the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people." 2 Chron. 30 : 18-20.

In 2 Chron. 32 : 20, he and Isaiah pray for deliverance from the invading hosts of Assyria ; teaching us to tell God, apart and together, all our fears, cares, needs. And see what an answer, when the letter of the enemy is spread before God, 2 Kings, 19 : 14-20, 35.

Think upon his importunate prayer and his sore weep-

ing in his sickness, Isa. 38 : 3 ; and the answer, verse 5. Also upon the memorable "Undertake for me," verse 14 ; and the sun turned back for him ten degrees in the dial of Ahaz, verse 8.

Mighty and memorable prayers. And such too was that cry of his son Manasseh, when he was in affliction. 2 Chron. 33 : 12, 13, 19. When shall our rulers so call on God ? Lord, teach them, our statesmen, our senators, our legislators, our judges.

NINTH DAY—DANIEL'S PRAYERS.

Our Father "who seeth in secret," tells of Daniel's prayerfulness, with that of Noah and Job. Ezek. 14 : 14. In the palace with his three friends, what a prayer-meeting was held, while they desired mercies of the God of heaven concerning the king's dream, that Daniel and his fellows should not perish. Dan. 2 : 17-19. What steadfastness in prayer amid business, as well as in danger : "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." Dan. 6 : 10. And what deliverance : "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths that they have not hurt me," verse 22. In Dan. 9 : 3-21, what supplication, what vehement desire, what gracious answer. And this man of prayer is he that is told of the last days so fully, and who gets the promise of rest and happy resurrection. Dan. 12 : 13.

Lord, give us Daniels at court, men of prayer at the helm of government. Give us Daniels in business, who cry evening, morning, and at noon, with their face towards Calvary, their hearts fixed on Jesus.

O Lord, make us in our closets and in quiet, what Daniel was in Babylon.

TENTH DAY—EZRA'S AND NEHEMIAH'S PRAYERS.

Let us not walk prayerlessly in this bustling age.

Ezra built the altar ere ever he built one stone on

another of the city; showing thereby his soul's rest on the propitiation. Then, Ezra 7:27, we see how he spoke to his God continually, and, 8:23, fasted and besought him, "to seek of him a right way for us and for our little ones" home from captivity. More especially the whole of chap. 9 is an earnest, fervent, piercing cry for Israel. O for such cries for Israel and for us now. O for such mourners. O for such men to stand in the gap.

Nehemiah prays at the king's table, Neh. 2:4, as well as in his closet, Neh. 1:6-11; and then he acts. Often too does he look up and pray, after acting: "Nevertheless, we made our prayer unto our God." "Think upon me, my God, for good." Neh. 4:9; 5:19; 6:14; 13:29, 31.

What a spreading out of sins and mercies in chap. 9, to stir up their souls to praise and thankfulness and new obedience. Let us review the Lord's mercies, and abound in adoring thankfulness.

These were the days of which the Lord spoke to Malachi: "Then they that feared the Lord, spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Mal. 3:16, 17, 18. Who would not be as they? Who does not covet their blessed remembrance? Arise, and let us have a name with them in the royal register of heaven. Let us pray, let us meet for prayer, let us pray and never cease till the Hearer of prayer arises from his seat to make his enemies his footstool, and make up his jewels;

“I AM A POOR SINNER.”

A poor man named Tom — got his living by selling pies. In this way he used to visit the low public-houses and other wicked places, and there became the sport of the drunkard and the vile, drinking and swearing with them. As he was one day selling his pies, passing through the low and wretched alleys, he entered the room of a poor dying sailor, and heard him, as he entered, say,

“I am a poor sinner, and nothing at all;
But Jesus Christ is my all in all.”

The words struck him. He stood still, and listened again, and the same words were the only utterance of the poor sailor. They so deeply entered poor Tom’s heart, that as he went along he was constantly repeating to himself,

“I am a poor sinner, and nothing at all;
But Jesus Christ is my all in all.”

He wondered in what book they could be found, and was determined, if possible, to find them; and for this purpose, as it sounded like poetry, he borrowed a hymn-book from some Christians who had taken an interest in him; he searched and searched, but could not find them. He next took up the New Testament, and there, to his great astonishment, found the substance of what he sought; he was deeply moved by what he read, and it seems that it was here the Lord revealed himself to him.

In the course of his reading he came to the institution of the supper of our Lord, and found it was the command of Jesus that his disciples should observe it in remembrance of him who was their all in all. This rested in the bosom of this poor man, and he went to the Christian friends who had lent him the book, and told them his thoughts. They were so much struck with the earnest desire of the poor man to honor Christ by coming to his

table, that they requested a servant of the Lord to go and see him. He went, and had some conversation with poor Tom, who said he should like to do what Jesus said in the Testament "in remembrance of him;" but the other answered, that it was only for the Lord's people, and "you are aware," said he, "how well known your character is as a drunkard, a swearer, and one who keeps bad company." To this he had no other reply, but "'I am a poor sinner, and nothing at all; but Jesus Christ is my all in all,' and I should like to do what Jesus said we ought." So struck was the servant of Christ that there was more than nature working here, that he made strict inquiries about him, and found that he had not only left his vile practices, but had also ceased to sell pies, in order to get out of the way of temptation. They were most thankful to receive him as one who did know the Lord and loved him, feeling that the Lord would get great honor and glory to himself by such an one. He adorned his profession with a most consistent life and walk, enjoying much happiness and peace with God; so much so, that it was often marked by Christians, some of whom made the inquiry, "How is it, Tom, you always enjoy so much happiness? we are not so." "Oh," said Tom, "I suppose you want to be something; but 'I am a poor sinner, and nothing at all, and Jesus Christ is my all in all.'"

Dear reader, whoever and whatever your temporal condition in this world is, you are, as it regards your soul and God, either at peace with God and become his child, or without God, with a guilty accusing conscience, and at enmity with him. The one or the other is the condition of every man, woman, or child, in this world. You either are saved and made clean for God's presence and heaven, or you are not saved and uncleansed, exposed to hell and its everlasting torments.

If you are saved, it is because you have from your heart believed God to be true, and his word true, which

tells you of his love in the gift of his Son Jesus Christ to die for you, and that his blood cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John, 1:7. You have been made to see how suitable you are for Christ to save, and how suitable Christ is to you as a Saviour; for he only, and no other, makes you quite clean, and without spot, fit for the presence of a holy God. You see that you can bring nothing but sin to Jesus, and Jesus gives you his blood as that which alone, through the power of the Holy Spirit, cleanseth you from all sin; and this brings the peace of God which passeth all understanding, for it is God's only method of speaking peace to poor lost sinners, the one and only way of taking away sin, the wages of which is death. He cannot, he will not for a moment look upon any works but his Son's as giving a title to heaven and his presence.

It is a solemn delusion to try to cover our condition as sinners, or our sins, by our best actions, and the promises of future goodness or repentance, for our righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God; and what advantage will it be to us to cover our filthy condition as sinners by a filthy covering? What he requires he has provided, and he bids us receive and live upon his provision. Our daily knowledge of ourselves and God's word tells us the plain truth that we were born in sin, and that whatever we may attempt, if we reject Christ we can never change our character as sinners. God regards all our thoughts and actions as unclean, they are the products of an unclean heart; therefore we must be born again and made clean by the blood of the Lamb of God. And even after we are born again, the flesh defiles every thing; therefore we must be always using and living in the cleansing power of the blood of Christ, and the perfection of his righteousness. Will your tears, your sorrow for sin, or prayers, or promises satisfy the claims of God against you? Nothing but Christ's blood cancels the debt of sin. Heb. 9:22.

But his great love and mercy has provided a covering for our sins so perfect and complete, that he declares it perfectly hides sin from his own sight and takes it from his remembrance. Rom. 4:7, 8; Heb. 8:12. Mercy has met justice, proclaiming to every creature, that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 4:16. Jesus Christ the Son of God is indeed the sinner's friend, for he took man's nature in order to take man's punishment, that whosoever would look on and own him as the one whom God had given to be put to death for his sins, should be pardoned and cleansed from all his sins, because he confessed and owned the precious reality and truthfulness of God's one way of salvation, in getting rid of sin and saving the sinner; in being just to himself, and yet the justifier of every one who believeth on him.

Fellow-sinner, cry to God for light to show you what you are, and what Jesus is for you. Hearken not to Satan, or the unbelieving questionings of your own heart. As lost, vile, and helpless, cast yourself upon Jesus, the Saviour of lost sinners. None but God knows the anguish of that torment which never ceases; therefore does he continually warn and admonish you by his word, and in your conscience by his Spirit secretly remonstrate with you, "Why will you die?" Be not so mad and hardened as to reject Him; he will give you power to approach; "seek, and ye shall find." "Him that cometh to me," says the Saviour, "I will in no wise cast out." Believe the word of a God of love to you, and know the blessedness of joining in your heart with poor Tom upon earth and in heaven:

"I am a poor sinner, and nothing at all;
But Jesus Christ is my all in all."

HOW TO DO GOOD ;

OR,

WAYS OF CARING FOR THE SOULS OF OTHERS.

THESE pages are addressed to those who know the Lord, to beg them to do what they can for the souls of others. How many thousands there are around us who have no fear of God before their eyes, who are going on in the way to ruin, who know not their need of a Saviour, and who live as if there were no heaven nor hell. Ought we not to pity them, to warn them, to tell them of their danger, to tell them of the love of Jesus, and to beseech them to repent and to trust in him? Remember, that it is not only drunkards, swearers, sabbath-breakers, and such kinds of persons, that are in danger of hell, but all who have not given their hearts to God, all who are not living to him. We shall now suggest some ways in which you may do good.

1. You can *pray* for your families, friends, neighbors, and all the world. A pious woman had a son who did not love God; she prayed for him a long time, but God did not seem to hear her prayers. She went on praying; and at the end of seventeen years, her son's heart was changed, and he became a pious man. A little girl called Jane belonged to a very bad family. She was sent to a Sabbath-school, and got great good there. She was happy then, and longed that her relations should be happy too. She prayed for them and spoke to them about their souls. In a few months, her father and mother, four brothers, and a sister, were turned to God.

2. You can set a godly *example*, and show that religion makes you kind, gentle, good-tempered, and happy.

A mother saw that her daughter loved and read the Bible, prayed to God by herself, and was patient and cheerful when in pain. So she prayed that her child's God would be her God, and began to seek the Lord herself. "My first feelings of religion," says the Rev. Richard Cecil, "were made stronger by seeing that pious persons had some real happiness, which I felt the things of this world could not give." A poor man was told by his young master, to carry some coal on the Lord's day, and that if he did not do so, he would not give him any more work. The poor man would not break the Sabbath, even to please his master. His keeping the Lord's day, and a tract on the Sabbath which he gave to his young master, did him good, and he, and his father and mother, after a time, were walking in the way to heaven. A poor man's example may do much good.

3. You can *speak* to your families, friends, neighbors, and many others, about their souls. "I am very thankful to God, and to you," said a father, "for your Sabbath-school. My son, who had heard me cursing when drunk, said, 'O, father, my teacher told me that neither drunkards nor swearers could go to heaven.' This so touched me, that from that time, by the grace of God, I left off those wicked ways." A pious wife who had a wicked husband, said that she trembled for his state, because, if he were to die as he was, he must be lost for ever. Her husband felt it, and said, "Do you really think I should be miserable for ever? I thank you for the warning. By the grace of God, I will change my conduct." From that time he became a changed man. "A word spoken in due season, how good it is!" "What knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" 1 Cor. 7: 16.

4. When you see or hear people doing wrong, you can

often speak to them kindly, and *beg them not to do such things*. An Indian boy went with the Rev. Mr. Finley to a merchant's house. The merchant had some giddy young men for clerks. The boy had to sleep in the same room as the clerks. Before he got into bed, he knelt down to pray. The others began to disturb him, but he took no notice of it. They went on in this way for some time. At last, one night when they were very rude, he spoke to them, told them it was wicked to do so, and that they were worse than Indians, for they would be ashamed to do such things. This came home to the hearts of the young men. The reproof was made useful to them.

5. You can *read the Bible, and pray with your family*. Much good may be done by family worship. Make the prayers and reading very plain, that all may understand them. Let them not be too long. Make them pleasant. Where the husband is against prayer, the wife can take the children into her own room and pray with them. A pious tradesman, when he began business, had family prayer every morning and evening, and would not allow any of his family or apprentices to be absent. God blessed both his family and his business. When his business became extensive, he thought that he should not have time for family prayer, and at last gave it up; but his conscience smote him for this sin. One day he received a letter from a young man who had been his apprentice, and did not know that he had left off praying with his family. In this letter he thanked him very much for his kindness in letting him attend family worship. "It was there," said he, "that I first saw my lost state as a sinner; it was there that I first learned the way to heaven, and there that I found Christ precious to my soul. O sir, let me say, never give up family prayer; you have yet a family and apprentices. May your house be the

birthplace of their souls." This letter made the tradesman weep for his sin, and from that time he had family prayers again.

6. You can *lend or give tracts or books* to others. Colonel Gardiner's mother put a good book into his box when he went abroad. That book did him good. Ruth Clark, who was a pious servant, wished very much to do good to the souls of her friends. She kept on trying to do them good for above thirty years. Though her wages were not large, she used often to send good books, and letters of kind and earnest advice, to her sisters, brothers, and their children. She generally sent at the same time some little useful present, to make them take in good part the advice or books. A farmer in Norway, twenty-five years old, used to go about to many places with tracts, which he sold or gave to the people. These did much good, for fifty thousand poor persons began to seek after God about the time that they first knew this good man.

7. You can *read the Bible and good books to those who will listen*. A teacher once went into a wretched cottage. In it lay a dead body, and a poor woman was dying on a bed of straw. Near her were her two little girls; one of them, thirteen years old, had a Bible in her thin hands, and she was trying to comfort her mother out of it. These were Sabbath-school girls. They had had no food for some days. The next day the mother died very happy: her daughter had taught her about Jesus out of the Bible.

8. You can *teach others to read*. A poor man used to quarrel and fight, but when he heard a good sermon preached, his heart was changed. He then wished to learn to read, and his daughter taught him. A woman who was a slave had to work from sunrise to sunset; yet in the night she used to walk, two or three times a week, seven or eight miles, with a child on her back, to teach

those she loved, that they might be able to read the Bible themselves.

9. Some of you can *teach in Sabbath-schools*. Some of the young and poor do teach in them. One of the daughters of the poor dying woman just mentioned, has been a teacher in a school for some years. A great many who were once scholars have become teachers. The father of little Jane had been very much against her going to the Sabbath-school; but when God gave him a new heart, he went there himself to teach.

10. You can *give something* to societies for the spread of the gospel. A lady who collected for a missionary society, called on a poor widow who had five children to support. She told her that, as she was so poor, she did not expect her to give any thing. "Oh," said the poor widow, "I wish, poor as I am, to give a penny a week to help the cause of that Saviour who has given me the hope of heaven." A little girl sent two dollars to the missionary society. How much happier children and other persons must feel, when they give their money to send Bibles, tracts, and missionaries to teach the poor heathen about Jesus and the way to be saved, than when they spend it needlessly on themselves.

11. You can beg people to *go to God's house*. A poor colored man named Rozie, who had been a slave, heard a sermon, and became pious. Then he felt much for poor careless sinners, and watched for opportunities of speaking to them about their souls. He tried to get them to go with him to the house of God; and some will have to bless God for ever for his doing so. Another colored man, whom Rozie brought to the house of God, became, as there is good cause to believe, a new man in Christ Jesus.

12. When any are ill, you can see them, and get some good minister or other Christian to *visit them*. You can

also get them to visit those that are well. You can go and beg ministers to lay to heart the state of such and such persons. Or you can beg those persons to see some minister about their precious souls. A poor man thought that he was near death, and begged his wife to ask if any thing could be found to take away the trouble of mind which he felt at the thought of dying. His little girl, who went to a Sabbath-school, said, "Father, there is a good man who belongs to our school; he visits people and prays with them, and if he knew that you wanted him, he would come to you." "Run for him," said the man. The girl soon came back with a teacher, who read and explained very plainly some parts of the Testament. He came often to see him, and showed him clearly the way to heaven by the Lord Jesus.

13. You can send your children to a *Sabbath-school*, or beg other people to send theirs. Very much good has been done by Sabbath-schools to children, and to their parents and others. A mother of a family speaks thus: "Before my children went to the school, we were a wretched family; my husband was always quarrelling and swearing; he laughed at religion, and he and I never went to God's house. Now we are happy and contented, and find our chief delight in going to the Lord's house, and in trying to lead our children in his ways."

14. You can *speak to your companions*. Choose good times for speaking to them. It is better, perhaps, to speak to persons by themselves, than when they are with others who do not fear God. It has often done much good to tell a useful anecdote or story. A teacher asked a young man if he had got any good by going to a Sabbath-school, and hearing sermons. "Yes," he said, "I have; they made me think what I was about. Then I thought I should like if God would make me religious, for I believed I should be happier than I was: and I have found

it is so ; for now, one Sabbath is worth a dozen of such as I used to spend. " Why, how do you spend your Sabbaths now ?" " I go to God's house three times ; I read my Bible, and pray ; and my brothers go with me now." " How is it that your brothers like to go with you ?" " Why, God has helped me to persuade them. We also take as many of our companions as we can persuade to go with us."

15. You can beg people to *keep holy the Sabbath*, to pray and read the Bible every day, to keep out of bad company, to keep away from public-houses, to bring up their children rightly, and so on, and to leave off swearing, gambling, and other bad ways. Many persons have been persuaded to give up drunkenness and to go to God's house. A pious man once went into a cottage where every thing seemed most wretched. A long time after, he called again, and found every thing looking clean and nice. The reason was that the husband, who had once been a sad drunkard, had now given up drinking.

16. You can be kind to others, and then they will be more likely to mind what you say.

17. When you are going to the house of God, or any where else, you can often speak to those whom you see or hear sinning, whether you know them or not ; you can speak to children that you see quarrelling or doing wrong in any way on any day, or running or playing about on the Sabbath.

18. You can write letters to your friends, and try to do them good, and ask them to do good to others. Sometimes, when it is very hard to speak to a person, we can write him a letter.

19. In walking along the road, or anywhere else, you can drop a kind word. In shops, on coaches, in ships, steamers, and other places, you can often speak to others. A pious man was riding in a gig, and spoke

to the man who drove him. He found that he knew very little, and that he never prayed, read the Bible, or went to the house of God. He got him to promise to use this prayer, "O Lord, give me thy Holy Spirit, for Christ's sake." A long time after, he saw this man again, and found that he had used the prayer, God had heard it, and the man had become a real Christian.

20. When you have a few minutes to spare, you can visit some neighbors, and speak to them about their souls. Harlan Page was a man who loved to do good, and between the hours of his work he went and spoke to others about their souls. He was the means of turning more than a hundred persons to God, some of whom were ministers afterwards.

Remember, that it is not our prayers, or our words, or any thing that we can do, that can change the hearts of others. God only can do that. But we are to use the means, and look up to him to bless them. He can work by small means as well as by great. He has converted sinners by the words of children. Try then to do good to all that come in your way; pray to God to teach you what to say to them, to give you love to their souls, to keep you from being afraid to speak. Think how blessed it will be to meet many in heaven to whom your labors have been useful, many who will have to bless God that they ever saw you, that you told them of their danger, besought them to flee from the wrath to come, and spoke to them of that precious Saviour who died to save sinners from hell. "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death." Jas. 5: 19, 20. "They that turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars for ever and ever." Dan. 12: 3.

THE APPRENTICE-BOY.

IN the autumn of 1852, I was called in the providence of God to follow to the grave one of the most esteemed members of my church. The place of burial was at some distance from her residence, and I was conveyed thither in a light wagon by a lad of about sixteen or seventeen.

His youthful appearance, and the solemn transaction in which we were engaged, combined to draw me strongly to speak to him in reference to his eternal welfare. We had proceeded but a little on our way, however, before I saw that this would be no easy task. He seemed rather dull except when I began to speak of the Saviour, and then manifested a decided unwillingness to hear any thing of the kind. I soon desisted from any direct conversation in reference to serious things; and trusting to our return from the grave to give me an opportunity to speak plainly and pointedly, I contented myself with general conversation, and an occasional question which might afford me some avenue of influence by which I could reach his heart. His evident aversion to me tempted me to put our intercourse at an end; but there was so much that was deeply impressive in the circumstances that had brought us together, and something in the pertinacious unwillingness of so young a person to listen to a serious word, that excited at once my pity and my fervent resolution to make one earnest, affectionate appeal to him to seek betimes eternal life.

I have said that the circumstances that brought us together were impressive. We were carrying to the grave the mortal remains of a disciple of Jesus Christ, who, during an unusually long and wasting sickness, had attained a degree of spirituality which I have scarcely ever seen equalled. She was the wife of one of his employers, and he had known her long enough to know that she had lived and died a faithful follower of the Lamb.

As we turned to leave the place of burial, I directed his attention to the influence which the religion of Jesus

Christ had evidently had on her life and death, and conjured him, as he desired to be happy living and dying, to seek her Redeemer. This only provoked a contemptuous smile. Nor did any thing that I could say win a more hopeful reception, except when I alluded to his father and mother, who I had discovered from his talk were church-members, and suggested what joy it would give them to see him a disciple of Christ. Then for a moment his lip quivered, and rousing himself he seemed struck with a sudden resolution to bring this painful conversation to an end, for putting the whip to the horse, he dashed homeward at a breakneck pace, which I verily thought would have finished me and the conversation together.

So ended the first day of my acquaintance with the apprentice-boy—a day that left on my heart the painful impression that I had rarely met so young a man so utterly, coldly hardened against every thing good.

A few Sabbaths after this, my attention was called by one of the teachers of my Sabbath-school to a boy in his class, who was so deeply attentive to every word that was uttered as to excite in his teacher's heart the hope that he was anxious to know the way of salvation. I requested one of his fellow-scholars, who had, I trust, been himself led into that way, to bring him to my study the next evening, to a meeting which I was accustomed to hold with the boys for prayer. He did so, and I discovered that the boy was evidently under deep exercise of mind. He was invited to come on the following Sabbath to the meeting of inquirers after salvation held between the services. He came; and came again. His convictions of sin deepened. He sought the Lord with agony and tears; and, blessed be His name, he was enabled to cast himself and his load of sin at the feet of Jesus Christ, and humbly to hope for mercy through Him who died.

It was not until now that I thought of asking his name. When he gave it, it was a strange one to me, I had never heard it before. I asked him if he lived in the vicinity, and what was his business. He said he was an apprentice to R—— and M——. I looked at him a moment, and asked him with wonder, "Did you drive me when I attended Mrs. R——'s funeral?" "I did," said

he, lifting up his face with a smile. Then for the first moment I recognized him. His cap, on the day of our first meeting, was slouched over his eyes, and I had not had a good sight of his face; and until he avowed it to me that happy Sabbath noon, I did not know who it was in whose salvation we had been so deeply interested.

I learned afterwards that on his return from the funeral, he had made known the fact of my attempt to "talk religion" to him, and had chuckled over the expertness with which he had brought the conversation to a close. He did not want, he said, "to see that man's face again for a while." In fact, from that time he seemed more hardened than ever.

He had usually been quiet on the Sabbath, but the Sabbath after our encounter he strolled off to the wharf near by to follow a brutal fight that was going on. His conduct on this occasion drew from the kind lips that to the day of his death spoke to him with a mother's tenderness, the reproving words, that "of all the apprentices that had ever been under his employer's roof, he alone had violated so grossly the Sabbath-day."

In truth, his heart had been in a state of wild disquiet since the day of the funeral. The hardihood of his manner had been more than half assumed. His new and unusual disregard of the Sabbath was a fiercer struggle of his convicted soul to rid itself of its distressing thoughts of God and eternity—a struggle in which he was not suffered to succeed.

A Sabbath or two after, he went, at the hour of Sabbath-school, to a building near at hand, where a number of the Sabbath-school boys were waiting for the opening of the school. Thence he easily suffered himself to be half-jocosely drawn into the school; and there, shortly afterwards, my attention was directed to him.

From the time that he found the Saviour, his Christian character rapidly developed. I have the delightful testimony from his young companions, that he was unwearied in his efforts to persuade them to the Sabbath-school and to the house of God, and to the meeting for prayer, where he trusted that they might find, as he had, Jesus Christ. I have been told by the respected family with whom he dwelt, that he was faithful in his habit of

prayer ; that many a time in passing his room they could hear his voice in prayer to God. That when he returned at evening from his daily work, his way was, frequently, to go up to his room and sit with his Bible. And my heart must grow colder than it is now before I forget how steadfast he was in the services of public worship, and how often we have knelt together—my little troop of Christian boys and their minister—while the voice of this dear boy has led our petitions to our Father's throne.

He was not ashamed to confess the amazing change that had been wrought in him. The house in which I dwelt had formerly been occupied as a hotel, and the room which I then used for a study had been a bar-room. "How often I have spent my evenings in this very room for a far different purpose," he frequently said, when we had assembled to pray. If he hesitated to attempt to persuade some erring companion to the feet of Jesus Christ, as if he was hopelessly astray, I had but to remind him of the little fellow who once rode with me, who took such pains to make me feel that he was utterly careless of eternal things, and with a cheerful smile he would acknowledge his error and address himself to his duty.

His outward conduct was more and more exemplary. It had been my habit to say to my children in the gospel, that if they were truly Christ's they would show it by being better sons, better brothers, better workmen, more diligent and trustworthy than they had ever been before. I ventured one day to remind one of his employers that he had with him one of our Sabbath-school boys. "Yes," said he, "and a better boy I do not want." He then related to me a recent occurrence which he had himself witnessed, in which this dear boy had been strongly solicited by a fellow-apprentice to do wrong. "I waited," said he, "to see if he would resist ; and when I saw that he did, strenuously and to the last, I interfered, and forbade his fellow-apprentice ever to repeat the attempt ; and so gratified was I by D——'s fidelity, that I agreed with my partner that he should have every facility that was in our power to become a skilful workman."

But the most affecting instance of his fidelity to his Redeemer I have yet to give. Just at the Christmas holidays, he came one evening to my study, and sitting

down, said that in a few days he was going home. "Well," said I, "you are glad of that, I suppose; for you don't get home very often." To my great surprise—fine manly fellow as he was—he burst into tears. "Why, D——," said I, "are you so sorry to go home?" "I love to go home," said he; "I want to see my father and mother; but my associates there have been the very worst boys in the place, and I dread the thought of meeting them. When I think how they will set on me when they know that I am a Christian, I do not want to go home." "But," said I, "you must go, and for that very reason. They ought to know that you are a Christian; and you ought to act in such a way that they cannot help but know it." I spoke to him of the untold influence of his example—for good, if he was consistent; for evil, if he was unfaithful; and conjured him, as he loved his Saviour, to follow steadfastly the path of duty, and in the face of ridicule to refuse every solicitation to sin. I advised him to write the very next day to his parents of the change that had taken place in his feelings; and entreated him to go with one hand on his Bible and the other on his Saviour, to seek every day and hour his help and grace.

At the close of the week he went, and the next week returned with a cheerful face to say that—as I had hoped—his letter had prepared them to see in him a Christian, and that he had had far less trouble than he had expected. But I did not know until after he was dead how closely he had followed the advice given him. Then his mother told me, that when he made his appearance among his old companions on the Sabbath morning, they rushed around him with their boisterous mirth, and at once proposed that he should accompany them to a place that had been the usual scene of their play. When he refused to go, some one said, "D——'s a Christian." "Yes, I am a Christian," said he; "and I don't think that it is right to go to-day, and I am not going."

But after they had pressed him sorely, he seemed to waver, and finally consented to go. He went down with them to the place, and while they began to shout and run, he stood still. Then presently calling them to him, he said he wanted to say something to them, that he would not say unless they would sit quietly down. Curri

ous to hear, they sat down, and taking from his breast his pocket Testament, he began to read to them; and there beneath that Sabbath sun, that Christian boy stood reading the precious gospel to that strangely quiet throng, who had come down to violate the holy hours with tumultuous play.

So, growing every day in grace, and more than ever my comfort in the gospel, the spring and summer passed over him. Nothing had occurred peculiarly to direct my thoughts to him, beyond the happy hope that he was thus increasing in his Saviour's likeness, until I received, as I was entering the church for the afternoon service, the Sabbath before the last in August, the message that he was very ill. He had exposed himself to a summer shower, and from the chill which it gave him had taken cold. For a week he had exhibited no dangerous symptoms, but now his disorder had taken an unfavorable turn, and he was rapidly becoming worse.

I hastened to him at the close of the service. Alas, the moment my eye fell upon him I read the indications that his race was run. He was slightly delirious, and laboring under a severe congestion of the lungs, and his foot was swollen and inflamed from a violent erysipelas. What hope could I have in the face of such symptoms? and yet how calmly happy was my soul, as I stood by that poor boy. I could not help but feel, "If God suffers you to rise from this bed of sickness, it will be to live for your Redeemer; and if you never rise from it again, Jesus is with you, and you are his." Yes, the Master gave us the evidence of it. He was with him.

By the next day he had very much declined; his delirium was stronger: yet, when that poor heart of his had nothing to guide it, it was beyond measure affecting to see whither it went, helpless and alone. "Come to me," he said, as he drew me over to him and whispered in my ear, "at six o'clock"—the usual hour for closing his daily work—"and read to me in the Bible." He had been accustomed on his return at that hour from his work to read it, when he was in health. "I want to go home," he said piteously. "You are too ill to go now," I answered; "when you are better, you shall go; besides, your mother has been sent for, and will soon be here." "Oh, not there, not there!" said he; "I want to go

home to Jesus." Now it was a broken prayer on his fevered lip, and then some promise out of the gospel.

How shall I ever forget his last night of suffering! He was tossing wildly to and fro, tearing from his breast the applications that had been made to relieve his gasping breath, and raving in an uncontrollable delirium. The gentle means by which he had been kept quiet, utterly failed before this fierce madness of death.

I sat down by that dying boy, and bending over, said in a low tone the first words of the twenty-third psalm, "The Lord is my Shepherd." He turned to me in an instant, quiet, and with a pleasant smile answered, "I shall not want." "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures," I continued. "He leadeth me beside the still waters," he responded; and so on till we had repeated the whole of that blessed psalm.

Then pausing a moment, he began the first verse of the fifty-first psalm. All that psalm we repeated; and then said the twenty-third psalm as we had frequently sung it in the house of God:

"Jesus, my Lord, doth condescend
To be my Shepherd and my Friend:
I on his faithfulness rely—
His care shall all my wants supply."

And the sixty-third psalm:

"My God, permit my tongue
This joy, to call thee mine;
And let my early cries prevail
To taste thy love divine."

And that sweet hymn:

"When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies."

He repeated them all after me, and when he was done lay as quietly on his pillow as a child on its mother's bosom.

It did not please our Father that he should have one lucid interval, so long that in it he could declare his confidence in his Redeemer, and his sense of his presence. But what need had we of it? His life had testified it; his dying delirium declared it. Jesus was with him; we saw it in the long day of suffering, in the restless night of agony, when we counted the weary hours until it was day. To the last some unseen power held him up, and

left its seal of quiet rest upon his features when all was over. The strong hands and kind hearts of his fellow-workmen carried his sleeping body homeward over the same road on which he had heard of Jesus to his eternal life; and on the 25th of August, 1853, we laid him at rest amid the ashes of his kindred, until the resurrection of the just.

He was but an apprentice-boy, with all an apprentice-boy's trials and exposures, and with all his disadvantages for being a Christian. Yet he was a Christian, living and dying. Alone, afar from home, sometimes among companions who ridiculed and tempted him, he clung to his Redeemer; and when he came to die, Jesus held him fast, and through suffering and death led him to everlasting life. Your trials are no greater than his. The hinderances in the way of your following Jesus Christ not so sore as lay before him. Yet he won the crown. You too, by faith in Christ, though in the face of every obstacle, shall win heaven. The grace that in temptation and suffering never left him, will be as true to you.

What says my reader? The example of this youthful saint woos him to follow Jesus as *he* followed him, and like him to win eternal life. And from the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem, ten thousand lips of pilgrims, that like him have reached the crown, cry, "Come up hither." What answer does my reader give? Will he follow in their footsteps, until like them his feet have crossed the heavenly threshold, and he wears the imperishable crown?

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THE CHRISTIAN CATHOLIC.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

In a quiet village in France there formerly lived a good curate, surrounded by a flock of two or three hundred parishioners. One Sabbath-day, as he was going out of church after the performance of the mass, and reflecting how little benefit his hearers had probably derived from it, he found himself in the midst of a group of them who were conversing together in front of the church. Upon this it came into his mind that by a familiar conversation with these simple villagers he might do them more good, than by going and chanting the vespers to them in Latin. He therefore came to a stop in the centre of the circle, and seating himself on a stone bench, with his hands resting on the head of his cane, he began by saying, with a frank and friendly air,

“Tell me, John, are you a Christian?”

“Certainly, sir,” said John, greatly surprised at such a question.

“And how did you become a Christian?”

“Because—because—because you long ago baptized me, and made me a member of the true church, and therefore I am a Christian.”

“But do you think that the robber Mandrin, who was seized on the highway not a month since, and who is condemned to labor ten years in the galleys, for having robbed our notary of 20,000 francs, do you think he is a Christian?”

“Certainly not.”

“And yet he was baptized, just as you were. So you see it is not baptism that makes a man a Christian. And you, George, are you a Christian?”

“Yes, sir.”

“And why?”

“Because I have attended the holy communion.”

“True; but have you never heard of Cartouche?”

“Yes, frequently.”

“And was he a Christian?”

“No, he was a robber, like Mandrin.”

“Well, but Cartouche and Mandrin had both made their first communion. You see, therefore, that the communion does not make you a Christian.”

Here our good peasants looked in each other's faces with amazement, and were quite at a loss to know what their respected curate was aiming at. Meanwhile he continued thus:

“Mr. Preceptor, you no doubt will be able to tell me better what it is that makes you a Christian?”

The schoolmaster, persuaded that the curate had selected him to solve the difficulty to the satisfaction of all, felt complimented to hear himself thus addressed, and replied thus:

“I am a Christian, in the first place, because I attend mass every Sabbath; in the second place, because I go to confession regularly once a month; thirdly and lastly, because I perform all the penances imposed upon me—I recite my pater-nosters, I observe the fasts, Lent, and all the rest.”

“Your reply,” said the curate, “is longer than the preceding ones, but it is not a whit better; for you well know that many heretics whom the church condemns, and all the hypocrites who make a trade of religion, are men that attend mass, fast, recite their prayers, and perform their penances; and yet neither heretics nor hypocrites are Christians.”

The little group of listeners passed from one degree of surprise to another. Every one was afraid his own turn to be questioned would come next, except a lad of eight or ten years, who stood eagerly listening to the conversation; it was to him that the curate next addressed himself.

“Tell me, my little Joseph, what is necessary in order to be a Christian?”

“We must love our heavenly Father, sir, and be very good.”

“I thank thee, O Father,” exclaimed the curate, raising his eyes to heaven—“I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.’ Yes, my friends, it is the sentiments of the heart that constitute a Christian. He that has faith in Jesus Christ to pardon his sins, and who being thus pardoned loves God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself, that man is a Christian. In a word, religion does not consist in the ceremonies which our feet, our hands, or our lips perform, but in faith and love dwelling in our hearts.”

Here the curate finished his remarks and retired.

The new doctrine which had so much astonished our good peasants, will not appear so strange to our reader when he learns that the curate had been for some time much absorbed in reading a large volume recently inherited by him from the estate of an uncle; and that this reading, in which he might be seen engaged morning and night, preceding and following it by prayer, had more than once made him forget his breviary, and had begun to modify his religious opinions. He thought he saw in his church more than one thing that was not right, and yet, not being quite clear about it all, he continued for the present both to read his book and to say mass.

But on the occasion just referred to he had wounded the self-love of the schoolmaster, who in order to revenge himself mentioned the famous conversation to the vicar; he in his turn reported it to the bishop; and on the next Thursday the curate received the following letter from his superior, who was at the same time his uncle and friend:

“MY DEAR NEPHEW AND BROTHER IN JESUS CHRIST—
It has been reported to me that in your discourse at church

last Sabbath, you used language, the natural inference from which would be, the uselessness and folly of all the holy practices of our church, and which would put the salvation of souls wholly beyond the control of the priest. You are well aware how dangerous such doctrines would be, and I am persuaded that your language has not been rightly understood. You probably designed to say that all these practices ought to be accompanied by right feelings in the heart, but that the outward form and the inward affection are equally essential; that if faith and repentance on the part of the believer are necessary, it is no less indispensable to have the services of a priest in order to obtain that faith, to receive that repentance, and to perform duly the ceremonies of baptism, confirmation, extreme unction, etc., without which salvation is impossible. I hope, therefore, that you will reply to me in accordance with this view of the subject, and will also explain yourself in the same manner to your people in your next sermon.

“ With fraternal salutations, I am, etc.”

The curate perused and reperused this letter, and found in it something which awakened repugnance in both his understanding and his heart. And yet he hardly knew how to reply to it. He therefore delayed his answer, and during the time of this delay it was noticed that he shut himself up in his study still more frequently, for the purpose of prayer and to study his Bible, as could be seen from the central walks of his garden, upon which his window opened. At length, after some weeks of study, he wrote the following letter in reply:

“ SIR, AND DEAR UNCLE—I did say that all outward ceremonies cannot secure to us salvation; and to-day, after much prayer to God and study of his word, I still say the same.

“ There are only three theories possible: salvation is to be obtained either (1) by the *ceremonies alone*, and in this case the greatest criminals could be saved, even

though they should die impenitent, which you do not believe any more than I; or else (2) the outward ceremonies of religion and the sentiments of the heart are *equally indispensable*, which you believe to be true, but I will endeavor to show to be false; or (3) *true faith in Christ* will save us, even *without the ordinances* of the church.

“ If baptism, confirmation, fasting, the mass, extreme unction, etc., are essential to salvation, Mary Magdalene, whom Christ pardoned, the thief whom our Lord promised to receive into paradise, and St. Stephen who perished as a martyr, are not saved; for in the days of Mary Magdalene the mass was never said, the penitent thief had no time to be baptised, and St. Stephen could not receive extreme unction. If the forms of the church are necessary in order to salvation, Christian sailors thrown by shipwreck on a desert island, Christians carried captive into a heretical country, or savages converted by the simple reading of the Bible and remaining in their own country, far from priests and sacraments—all these men in spite of their right feelings, their faith, and their love, could not be saved, for lack of doing what they *could not* do. If our ceremonies were absolutely necessary to salvation, a bad priest, either through caprice or hatred, by refusing absolution to one of his dying parishioners, might secure his eternal ruin.

“ If you say these are only exceptions, and that in such cases one may be saved without our religious forms, I reply, Then these forms are not indispensable; a man may sometimes be saved without them; and if one can be saved without them, why not another? If the grace of God alone was enough for St. Stephen, why should it not be enough for me? If one can be saved without priestly absolution in a desert island, why not in my village? Is God less mighty in one century than in another, or in some countries than in others?

“ And, my dear uncle, what simple common-sense tells us, the word of God also declares. Listen to these words;

‘To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord; incense is an abomination unto me. Cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.’ Says king David, ‘Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.’ ‘The Lord looketh on the heart.’

“And yet, my lord, do not think that I desire to abolish all ceremonies; some of them I believe to have been established by Jesus Christ himself, and therefore to be good and useful. But it is one thing to say that a ceremony and a sacrament are useful, and another to say they are indispensable to salvation.

“But follow out to its consequences the unhappy principle adopted by our church, of the necessity of sacraments and priests to the salvation of believers, and you will be terrified at the abuses resulting from it. Our church has declared these ceremonies necessary, and the heart of man, naturally corrupt, has eagerly seized this principle and pushed it still further. The more men have regarded external forms as essential, the more they have thought it possible to dispense with right affections; so that each one, according to his taste, has been able to continue the sinful indulgence dearest to his heart, while imposing some additional tasks upon his body. For a man will readily consent to all other privations and sacrifices, provided you leave him free to cherish the idol of his heart; one man avarice, another pride, and another impurity. He will give you his time, his money, and his pains; he will submit to fasts, confessions, and penances; he will regard all this as good, useful, necessary, and indispensable to salvation; he will even attach to it more importance than you wish, that he may the more easily gratify his ruling passion. This, sir, is a truth of which I have witnessed a thousand illustrations in my church, and to which, I confess, my own experience enables me to tes-

tify. More than once have I observed that after attending mass in the morning, I have felt free to act with greater self-indulgence in the evening. More than once have I observed the fast with strictness, secretly purposing to make up for it afterwards. At other times, when tempted to sin, I have yielded the more readily from thinking I would soon confess and obtain absolution. After confession I have found myself more careless than before; it seemed to me that my conscience, being relieved of its load by priestly absolution, might now without any great danger burden itself with a fresh sin! O, sir, how deceitful and desperately wicked is the heart. One must study himself with care, in order to discover this; but surely, if any have not yet found it out in themselves, it is because they wish for nothing better than self-deceit.

“Let us therefore tell the people the whole truth. Let us teach them, that though ceremonies may be useful as expressive of the sentiments of the heart, after all they are nothing but symbols. Let us tell them that it is to the inner man the attention must be turned, and that by studying themselves they will learn the truth of the words of the gospel, that men are “filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud,” etc. And when these unhappy sinners become profoundly sensible of their spiritual misery, let us open to them the treasure of salvation—let us teach them that an expiatory victim has died for them, that Christ has “borne our sins in his own body upon the tree;” that his blood has been shed for the remission of the sins of many—let us assure them that God bestows upon them a heaven they have not merited; and if they dare not believe in so great a blessing, let us open the Bible to them that they may read for themselves these precious words so long concealed, ‘By grace ye are saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.’ ‘Therefore being justified

by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' May God grant, my dear uncle, that these promises of the Bible may rejoice your heart as they have cheered mine.

“Receive, etc.”

Three days from this time the bishop sent a substitute to take the place of our curate, who was at the same time invited to go and pass several weeks at the residence of his superior. The bishop was a venerable man, characterized by sincerity and good faith. He had never indulged the least doubt as to the authority of his “holy mother church.” Like a respectful and submissive son, he devoted himself to her most minute observances, so that his health had suffered thereby. Seeking continually an inward peace which he could not find, and feeling an urgent necessity of some assurance of salvation, he followed up his fasts with pilgrimages, and his pilgrimages with haircloths, etc. All this greatly exhausted his body, but brought little tranquillity to his soul. He was always demanding of himself whether he had yet done enough to gain heaven, and trembling in himself at the thought that he was near to its gate, perhaps but a few steps distant, and yet still liable to fall into hell. New inflictions, new fears; and thus his life rolled away, divided between bodily sufferings and mental anguish. It is easy to see from this, with what design he had summoned to his presence the poor curate; he hoped to do a good work in reclaiming him to opinions more in accordance with those of his church, from which he saw him rapidly falling away.

The curate presented himself at the residence of the bishop according to his request. The latter received him kindly, and at first said nothing of this matter. On the morrow he invited his nephew to walk with him in the park for the sake of privacy, and there, with no witnesses but three or four children who were watching a flock near by, he at length introduced the great subject.

“Tell me, my dear nephew, whence come these new doctrines, so contrary to those of the church. Is it not Satan who has suggested them to you?”

“No, sir; it is the Bible.”

“This, then, is the reason why you have distributed, as I understand, one hundred copies of this book among your people.”

“I could not think I was doing amiss in laying before the eyes of my people the words God has addressed to us all.”

“But are you not aware that the common people can not understand this book, which ought to be read and explained only by priests?”

“No, sir, I am not convinced of this; I find, on the contrary, that God has judged that ALL could understand it, since he has directed all to read it. Thus Jesus said to the Jews, ‘Search the Scriptures.’ The psalmist says, ‘The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul, making wise the simple.’ Moses directs the king to read the book of the law ‘all the days of his life;’ and says to all the people, ‘Lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand; write them upon the door-posts of thy house.’ Luke approves the men of Berea for comparing the preaching of Paul with the word of God. Paul, writing his epistles to various churches, does not address himself to the priests alone, but says, ‘To all that be at Rome;’ ‘To all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ,’ etc. Now if all the Israelites in Moses’ days, all the Jews in the time of Christ, and all the inhabitants of Rome and of Achaia could read the Bible, I see not why all Christians in our days may not also read it.”

“But do you not know,” replied the bishop, “that the Bible is obscure, and cannot be understood by all?”

The curate smiled as he answered, “You shall judge for yourself.” At the same time he beckoned to the children who were tending sheep near by, to come to him;

and when our little urchins of ten or a dozen years age were there in a semicircle before the bishop, the curate said to the youngest, "My child, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.' Do you understand me?"

"Oh yes, sir; we all ought to love our heavenly Father very, *very* much."

"And you," said he to the next, "listen to me. 'There is none righteous; there is none that doeth good; no, not one.' Do you understand what I say?"

The boy dropped his eyes; he understood the words very well, for his conscience had instantly applied them to himself; and as he had just been striking one of his comrades, as the winding up of a little dispute between them, he replied, "It was he that begun it; and he kicked me too."

"It was not I," said the other, "it was you."

"No," said a little girl, "they were both of them to blame."

"And you, my little friend," said the curate, "listen. Christ has 'died for our sins;' and 'there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.' 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' What does that mean, my child?"

"That means, sir, that God forgives our sins, if we love Jesus Christ."

"And you," said he to the fourth, "listen. 'If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally.' 'Pray without ceasing.' What do these words mean?"

"That we must beg our heavenly Father to make us very wise and good."

"Very well, my children; do not quarrel any more; love Jesus Christ who died to obtain the pardon of your sins, and pray to God to make you very good, and you shall go to heaven." The children thanked him, and ran back to their flock.

"Well, sir," said the curate to his bishop, "it seems

that these children have understood my words well enough."

"No wonder," replied he, "they were so simple."

"Yes; but these simple words were exactly the language of the Bible; and if these children understand them, I see not why their fathers and mothers may not understand them also."

"But all the passages of the Bible are not so clear as those you have repeated."

"I acknowledge that; but even if the humble believer should understand only these four passages, in all the Bible, would it not be well worth reading? Besides, experience and good sense agree in saying, that after reading the Bible for some time with prayer, the simplest believer will soon find many clear passages that aid him to understand others less clear: what he has well learned will help him to learn yet more, and most of the obscure places will become plain. When a friend sends us a letter, in which a few words here and there are not easily read, we do not throw the letter away, but read it again and again, until we make out the illegible words by the aid of those which precede and follow them."

"But," said the bishop, somewhat embarrassed, "in order to remove all these difficulties, is it not best to submit the Scriptures to the interpretation of councils, whose decisions are controlled by the Holy Spirit according to promise?"

"And why," said the curate, "may not the Holy Spirit, who is able to direct whole councils, also guide aright the mind of the simple believer who shall humbly implore his aid? That promise of the Saviour was not made to councils only, but to all whom the Lord our God shall call."

"But then, if every body may read and interpret the Bible, you will have as many creeds as there are individuals; while by submitting the Bible to the interpretation of councils, you will secure one uniform faith."

“I do not think so; for, how should uniformity come any better from the decrees of councils, than from the reading of the Scriptures? Will it be easier to understand the Latin of the council of Trent, than the Latin of the Bible?”

“No; but the priest is there, to explain to the simple believer the decrees of the council.”

“But then, will it be easier for the believer to understand the French of his curate speaking from the desk, than the French of De Sacy speaking in his translation of the Bible? I would rather read the text than the comment; the Bible is worth more than the explanations, unless indeed it be pretended, that when God speaks, men know better than he does what he means to say, and can make themselves understood better than he can.”

“Well,” said the bishop impatiently, “what do you wish to conclude from all this?”

“I conclude from this, that since the Bible is the word of God, every man is bound to go to it and draw from it his rule of faith and practice, without any one’s having a right to impose any other rule upon him; and that if the plain believer ought to give heed to his pastor, it is only so long as his instructions accord with the Scriptures. Then, the faith of the Christian will be an enlightened faith; and the more enlightened, the firmer. Then the Christian will be able to say in his conscience that he obeys God and not men, since he goes for direction to that book which all Christian communions are bound to acknowledge as the source of all religion—as the very word of God. Is not the water of a stream most limpid nearest to the fountain? And does not every mile of its course through the meadow lands render it less pure? Just so with religion. It is purest at its source, the very mouth of God. And all the turns it makes in passing from lip to lip among men, do they not tend to corrupt it? Let us, therefore, give the Bible to all; and then they will understand that is not by vain ceremonies

that the sinner is saved, but by the blood of Christ, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost."

The curate spoke with an earnestness which convinced the bishop that mere persuasion would never make him abandon his new sentiments. He therefore brought to bear upon him in turn, the fear of injuring his prospects of promotion, threats of excommunication from Rome, etc. But all was in vain; the curate always came back to this reply: "Show me from the Bible, that I am in error, and then I am ready to submit." He returned to the duties of his charge, and endured with resignation all the little persecutions that were raised against him.

Some months after this, the bishop was attacked with a serious illness, which gained upon him every day. The fear, or rather the certainty of approaching death added double terrors to his doubts of salvation. He endeavored to gain some assurance of safety, and was distressed to find his labor useless. In vain did he say to himself, that few holy men had subjected themselves to austerities so numerous and severe as his; conscience continually reminded him of his sins, and made him fear he had not yet performed penances enough to expiate his guilt, in the view of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. In this troubled state of mind, he recollected the calmness and peace which the curate had seemed to enjoy during his stay with him; and he could not but ask himself whether this serenity of soul was not the fruit of his new religious sentiments, and whether there might not be in them something good and true. In the dying hour, one is not so careful to keep up appearances with the world, as in full health. The bishop at once sent for his nephew, saying that he wished to converse with him on serious subjects.

The curate hastened to the side of the dying man "You are welcome here," said the bishop on seeing him enter; "take a seat by my bed, and let us be alone for a

few moments." When all had retired, the dying bishop with a sad and solemn voice thus began:

"My dear friend, I have no time to lose, and come at once to what I wish to say. You are acquainted with my manner of life, and know how scrupulously I have performed my religious duties; and yet I confess to you that in this solemn moment, even after receiving for the last time the holy communion, I tremble at the thought of appearing before my Judge. Something I cannot resist tells me I am not prepared to stand before Him; and I am conscious that I do not, in my last hours, enjoy that Christian peace that can look on death with joy, or even without dread and terror. This precious serenity of soul I have seen in you, my dear brother; and even while persecuting you for your doctrines, I was struck with the peace they shed abroad in your heart. Tell me quickly, I beseech you, how you attained it."

"In this manner," replied the curate: "I was once in the same state of mind in which I now find you. In studying my life from day to day, I found new and greater defects. The more I strove to live holily, the heavier did sin weigh on my conscience. If I did an action the world called good, I knew it was evil in the sight of God, because vanity or pride always had some part in it. If I strove to form a purpose with the glory of God in view, even while deciding to do right I found some selfish motive also influencing me, and thus polluting the fountain. In fine, I came even to abhor myself. I had a horror of my life; and what yet more enhanced my terror was, that in reading my Bible I often met declarations like these: 'The wages of sin is death.' 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.' 'Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.' One day, almost in despair, I fell upon my knees, smiting my breast and crying, 'Lord, have mercy upon me a sinner. What must I do, what must I do to be saved?' On rising

from my knees and opening the Bible, my eye soon fell on the very words I had just spoken, 'What must I do to be saved?' I hastened on to the words that followed, which were an exact answer to my question. They were these: 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' *Believe and be saved*, said I to myself; what, is it sufficient for me to believe? Thinking I had not understood aright, I read the passage again, and found it the same: 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' To understand this better I turned to other passages treating of the same subject, and referred to in the margin. Of these I found a great many, the meaning of which always was, Believe in Jesus Christ, and you shall receive the forgiveness of your sins and eternal life. I confess, however, that this faith which was required of me, and this salvation which was offered to me gratuitously, were at first only in my head without sinking into my heart; until one day, the word *grace*, 'By grace ye are saved,' fell into my soul like a beam of light. 'Grace! ah, now I comprehend it,' said I. 'I am condemned to hell, as the murderer is to the scaffold; and just as I am about to perish, the King sends me a pardon. I owe my Master an enormous debt, by my sins, and he remits it all—he shows me this *grace*. Ah, now I comprehend that word. How sweet it sounds. How powerful it is to chase from my heart every fear. Now, living or dying, I am saved. What love my God has shown for me; and now that I am saved, how can I love him as I ought! How sweet will it be to me to do his will. How gladly will I deny myself for his service, and for the good of those who know not yet the meaning of the grace, the pardon, the love of God.' *Grace!* that one word had kindled my whole soul; and from that moment an ever-growing peace was shed abroad in my heart. I have proved the fulness of the Saviour's promise, 'My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you; let not your heart be troubled,

neither let it be afraid.' Since that day, I feel an urgent desire to make known this good news to my brethren; and am unspeakably happy when my words fall upon a heart which the Lord has opened, and I see one soul more escape from hell and turn unto the Lord."

"But, my dear brother," said the bishop, greatly moved by these earnest words, "what guarantee have you that this assurance of salvation you think you feel, is indeed a reality ratified in heaven by God himself, and not merely a work of your imagination?"

"My guarantee is the authority of God's word, and the witness of the Holy Spirit in my heart, the same which made St. Paul say that the Spirit of God witnessed with his spirit that God had adopted him. Yes, my dear uncle, it is not to yourself that you must look for your salvation; your good works, always imperfect, will never give you security. You need an almighty, a perfect, a holy Saviour. You need Jesus Christ the Son of God, God manifested in flesh. Never, till you have such a support, will you cease to fear falling. Never, till you have such an Advocate before God, will you be sure of not being condemned."

During subsequent days, the two friends had many conversations together. The bishop's bodily health became worse and worse, but his soul gained daily new light and strength. He listened much more than he spoke. He had various portions of the New Testament read to him by his nephew, and among others, the epistle to the Romans, and that to the Galatians. At length, on Sabbath evening, while his nephew was ending a prayer at his bedside with these words: "Oh Lord, we rely not upon ourselves, nor upon our works, in order to be saved, but *solely upon Jesus Christ*," the bishop raised his eyes to heaven, and breathed forth with his last sigh the words "AMEN, LORD, AMEN."

PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON.

BY THE LATE REV. MATTHEW HENRY.



“A CERTAIN man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him. And when he came to

himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." Luke 15: 11-24.

The intention of this parable is to show how pleasing to God is the conversion of sinners, even of great sinners; and how ready he is to receive them upon their repentance. It sets forth the riches of gospel grace, and while the world stands will be of unspeakable use to poor sinners, both to direct and encourage them to repent and return to God.

I. We have the PRODIGAL'S REQUEST: "He said to his father," proudly and pertly enough, "Father, give me." He might have said, If you please, give me; but he makes an imperious demand, "Give me the portion of goods that falleth to me"—not so much as you think fit to allot me, but that which falls to me as my due. And why did the prodigal desire to have his portion in his own hands? Was it that he might apply himself to business, and trade with it, and so make it more? No, he had no thought of that; he was weary of his father's government, of the good order and discipline of his father's family; and was fond of liberty falsely so called, a liberty to sin. See the folly of many young men, who

are religiously educated, but are impatient of the confinement of their education, and never think themselves their own masters till they have broken all God's bands in sunder, and cast away his cords from them: binding themselves with the cords of their own lusts. Here is the origin of the apostasy of sinners from God. They will not submit to the rules of God's government; they would be as gods, knowing no other good than that which pleases themselves.

The condition of the prodigal upon his departure from his father's house, represents to us the sinful and miserable state into which man is fallen.

1. A sinful state is a state of *departure and distance from God*. "He took his journey into a far country." It is the sinfulness of sin that it is an apostasy from God: sinners have fled from God; they say unto God, "Depart;" and they get as far from him as they can. It is the misery of sinners that they are afar off from God, afar from Him who is the fountain of all good, and that they are going farther and farther from him. What is hell itself but being afar off from God?

2. A sinful state is a *spending state*. "He wasted his substance with riotous living; devoured it with harlots;" and in a little time "he had spent all." He bought fine clothes, spent a great deal in meat and drink, treated high, and associated with those who helped to make an end of what he had in a little time.

3. A sinful state is a *wanting state*. "When he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want." "Wilful waste brings woful want." This represents the misery of sinners, who have thrown away their own mercies, the favor of God, the strivings of the Spirit, and the admonitions of conscience. They are like a land where famine reigns, "a mighty famine;" for the heaven is as brass, the dews of God's favor and blessing are withheld, and the earth becomes as iron; the sinner's heart, which should bring forth good

things, is dry and barren, and has not any good in it. Such sinners are wretchedly and miserably poor, and that which aggravates it is, that they brought themselves into that condition, and keep themselves in it, by refusing the offered supplies.

4. A sinful state is a *vile, servile state*. When this young man's riot had brought him to want, his want brought him to servitude. "He went, and joined himself to a citizen of that country." The same wicked life which was before represented by riotous living, is here represented by servile living, for sinners are slaves. The devil is the "citizen of that country:" sinners join themselves to him, and hire themselves into his service to do his work. The business of his servants is "to make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof," which is no better than feeding swine.

5. A sinful state is a state of *perpetual dissatisfaction*. "He would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat." That which sinners, when they depart from God, promise themselves satisfaction in, will certainly disappoint them; "they are laboring for that which satisfieth not." Isa. 55: 2.

6. A sinful state is a state of *death*. "This my son was dead." A sinner is not only dead in law, as he is under a sentence of death, he is dead in trespasses and sins, destitute of spiritual life; has no union with Christ; no spiritual senses exercised; does not live to God; and is therefore dead.

7. A sinful state is a *lost state*. "This my son was lost"—lost to every thing good—lost to all virtue and honor—lost to his father's house; they had no joy of him. Souls which are separated from God, are lost souls—lost as a traveller who is out of his way; and if infinite mercy prevent not, will soon be lost, lost irrecoverably, as a ship which sinks at sea.

II. We have HIS PENITENT RETURN. When we find the insufficiency of the world to make us happy, and have

tried all other ways of relief for our poor souls in vain ; when we see what miserable comforters, what physicians of no value, all are, but Christ, for a soul which groans under the guilt and power of sin, then we apply ourselves to Him.

1. The preparative to this return was *consideration*. "He said within himself," that is, he reasoned within himself, when he recovered his right mind, "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough, and to spare." Consideration is the first step towards conversion. To consider is to retire into ourselves, to reflect upon ourselves, to compare one thing with another, and to determine wisely.

He considered how bad his condition was : "I perish with hunger"—not only, I am hungry, but, I perish with hunger. Sinners will not come to the service of Christ, till they are brought to see themselves just ready to perish in the service of sin and Satan ; and the consideration of that should drive us to Christ : "Master, save us ; we perish." And though we be thus driven to Christ, he will not therefore reject us, nor think himself dishonored by our being forced to him, but rather honored by his being applied to in a desperate case.

He considered how much better it might be if he would return : "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough, and to spare." In our heavenly Father's house, there is bread for all his family. There is enough, and to spare.

2. We have the purpose of the prodigal : "I will *arise, and go to my father.*" He will not take any longer time to consider of it, but will forthwith arise and go. Though he is in a far country, a great way off from his father's house, yet, far as it is, he will return.

He would confess his fault and folly : "I have sinned." If we plead "not guilty," we put ourselves upon a trial by the covenant of innocency, which will certainly condemn us : if we plead guilty, with a contrite, penitent,

and obedient heart, we refer ourselves to the covenant of grace, which offers forgiveness to those who confess and forsake their sins.

He would not lessen or excuse his transgression: "I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee." Sin is an affront to the Majesty of heaven; it is a forfeiture of the glories and joys of heaven, and an opposition to the designs of the kingdom of heaven. Sin is committed in contempt of God's eye upon us, than which there cannot be a greater affront to him.

He would judge and condemn himself for it: "I am no more worthy to be called thy son." It becomes sinners to acknowledge themselves unworthy to receive any favor from God, and to humble and abase themselves before him.

He would nevertheless sue for admission into the family, though it were into the meanest post there: "Make me as one of thy hired servants." True penitents have a high value for God's house, and the privileges of it, and will be glad of any place, so that they may but be in it, though it be only as "a door-keeper." Those who return to God, from whom they have revolted, cannot but be desirous in some way to be employed for him, and to be put into a capacity of serving and honoring him.

In all this he would have an eye to his father, as a father: "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father." Viewing God as a Father, and as our Father, will be of great use in our repentance, and on our return to him. It will make our sorrow for sin genuine, our resolutions against it strong, and will also encourage us to hope for pardon. God delights to be called Father, both by penitents and petitioners.

3. We have the performance of this purpose: "He arose, and *came to his father.*" His good resolve he put into execution without delay, and did not adjourn his intention till some more convenient season. It is our interest to close with convictions speedily. Have we said,

“We will arise, and go?” Let us immediately arise, and go to our heavenly Father.

III. We have HIS RECEPTION AND ENTERTAINMENT with his father. “He came to his father;” but was he welcome? Yes, heartily welcome. By the way, it is an example to parents whose children have been foolish and disobedient, if they repent and submit themselves, not to be harsh and severe with them. But it is chiefly designed to set forth the grace and mercy of God to poor sinners who repent and return to him, and to show his readiness to forgive them.

1. We have here *the great love* and affection wherewith the father received his son. “When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him.” He expressed his kindness before the son expressed his repentance; God prevents us with the blessings of his goodness: ever before we call, he answers; for he knows what is within our hearts.

Here were feet of mercy: “he ran.” This intimates how swift God is to show mercy. The prodigal comes slowly under a burden of shame and fear; but the tender father ran to meet him with encouragement. “He fell on his neck, and kissed him.” This kiss not only assured him of his welcome, but sealed his pardon. And does not this show how ready and free and forward the Lord Jesus is to receive and entertain poor returning, repenting sinners?

2. We have *the splendid provision* which this kind father made for the returning prodigal. He came home in rags, and his father not only clothed him, but adorned him. He said to his servants, “Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him.” The righteousness of Christ is the robe in which sinners are clothed; they “put on the Lord Jesus Christ.” Gal. 3: 27. This is the robe of righteousness, this is the garment of salvation. Isa. 61: 10. And “put a ring on his hand,” in token of his being owned as a branch of the family; as the earnest of the

Spirit is given to those who are sealed to the day of redemption.

He came home barefoot; his feet perhaps were sore with travelling, and his father "put shoes on his feet." He came home hungry, and his father said, "Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it." There is excellent food provided by our heavenly Father for all those who arise and come to him. Christ himself is the Bread of life; his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed: in him there is a feast for souls, "a feast of fat things." It was a great change with the prodigal, who but a short time ago would fain have filled his belly with husks. How sweet must the supplies of the new covenant be, and the relish of its comfort to those who have been laboring in vain for satisfaction in temporal things.

3. We have the great joy and rejoicing which there was for his return: "Let us eat, and be merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." The conversion of a soul from sin to God, is the raising of that soul from death to life, and the finding of that which seemed to be lost. It is a great and wonderful and happy change. That which was in itself dead, is made alive; that which was lost to God and his church, is found; and that which was unprofitable, becomes profitable. The conversion of sinners is greatly pleasing to the God of heaven, and to all that belong to his family. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." And if there is joy among the angels in heaven, there ought also to be joy among the saints on earth. We should be glad of the repentance of sinners, because it accomplishes God's designs: it is the bringing of those to Christ whom the Father had given to him, and in whom he will be for ever glorified.

LIVING, OR DEAD?

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“You hath he quickened, who were dead.” Ephes. 2 : 1.

BELOVED FRIENDS AND BRETHEREN—Look at the words before your eyes, and ponder them well. Search your own hearts, and do not lay down this paper without solemn self-inquiry. I meet you this day with one simple question: Are you among the living, or among the dead?

Listen to me while I try to help you to an answer. Give me your attention, while I unfold this matter, and show you what God has said about it in the Scriptures. If I say hard things, it is not because I do not love you. I write as I do because I desire your salvation. He is your best friend who tells you the truth.

I. First then, *let me tell you what we all are by nature—we are DEAD.*

“Dead” is a strong word, but it is not my own coining and invention. I did not choose it. The Holy Ghost told Paul to write it down about the Ephesians: “You hath he quickened, who were *dead.*” Eph. 2 : 1. The Lord Jesus Christ made use of it in the parable of the prodigal son: “This my son was *dead*, and is alive again.” Luke 15 : 24, 32. You will read it also in the epistle to the Corinthians: “One died for all, then were all *dead.*” 2 Cor. 5 : 14. Shall a mortal man be wise above that which is written? Must I not take heed to speak that which I find in the Bible, and neither less nor more?

“Dead” is an awful idea, and one that man is most unwilling to receive. He does not like to allow the whole extent of his soul’s disease. He shuts his eyes to the real amount of his danger. Many a one will allow me to say that naturally most people “are not quite what they ought to be: they are thoughtless—they are unsteady—they are gay—they are wild—they are not serious enough.” But dead? O no; I must not mention it. It is going too far to say that. The idea is a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence.*

My dear friends, what we like in religion is of very little consequence. The only question is, What is written? What saith the Lord? God’s thoughts are not man’s thoughts, and God’s words are not man’s words. God says of every living person who is not a decided Christian, be he high or low, rich or poor, old or young, *he is dead*.

In this, as in every thing else, God’s words are right. Nothing could be said more correct, nothing more accurate, nothing more faithful, nothing more true. Stay a little, and let me reason this out with you. Come and see.

What should you have said, if you had seen Joseph weeping over his father Jacob? “He fell upon his face, and wept upon him, and kissed him.” Gen. 50:1. But there was no reply to his affection. All about that aged countenance was unmoved, silent, and still. Doubtless you would have understood the reason. Jacob was dead.

What should you have thought, if you had seen the Amalekite stripping Saul of his royal ornaments in mount Gilboa? He “took from him the crown that was upon

* “That is the reason we are no better, because our disease is not perfectly known: that is the reason we are no better, because we know not how bad we are.” Archbishop Usher’s Sermons, preached at Oxford, 1650.

his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm." 2 Sam. 1: 10. There was no resistance. Not a muscle moved in that proud face. Not a finger was raised to prevent him. And why? Saul was dead.

What should you have thought if you had met the widow's son in the gate of Nain, lying on a bier, wrapped about with grave-clothes, followed by his weeping mother, carried slowly towards the tomb? Luke 7: 12. Doubtless it would have been all clear to you. It would have needed no explanation. The young man was dead.

Now, I say this is the condition of every man by nature in the matter of his soul. I say this is the state of the vast majority of people around us in spiritual things. God calls to them continually, by mercies, by afflictions, by ministers, by his word; but they do not hear his voice. The Lord Jesus Christ mourns over them, pleads with them, sends them gracious invitations, knocks at the door of their hearts; but they do not regard it. The crown and glory of their being, that precious jewel their immortal soul, is being seized, plundered, and taken away; and they are utterly unconcerned. The devil is carrying them away, day after day, along the broad road that leads to destruction; and they allow him to make them his captives without a struggle. And this is going on everywhere—all around you, among all classes—through the length and breadth of the land. You know it in your own consciences while you read this paper. You must be aware of it. You cannot deny it. And what then, I ask you, can be said more perfectly true, than that which God says, we are all by nature spiritually *dead*?

Yes; when a man's heart is cold and unconcerned about religion—when his hands are never employed in doing God's work—when his feet are not familiar with God's ways—when his tongue is seldom or never used in prayer and praise—when his ears are deaf to the voice of Christ in the gospel—when his eyes are blind

to the beauty of the kingdom of heaven—when his mind is full of the world, and has no room for spiritual things: when these marks are to be found in a man, the word of the Bible is the right word to use about him, and that word is, “dead.”

We may not like this, perhaps. We may shut our eyes both to facts in the world, and texts in the word. But God’s truth must be spoken, and to keep it back does positive harm. Truth must be spoken, however condemning it may be. So long as a man does not serve God with body, soul, and spirit, he is not really alive. So long as he puts the first things last and the last first, buries his talent like an unprofitable servant, and brings the Lord no revenue of honor, so long in God’s sight he is dead. He is not filling the place in creation for which he was intended. He is not using his powers and faculties as God meant them to be used. The poet’s words are strictly true,

“He only lives who lives to God,
And all are dead beside.”

This is the true explanation of sin not felt, and sermons not believed, and good advice not followed, and the gospel not embraced, and the world not forsaken, and the cross not taken up, and self-will not mortified, and evil habits not laid aside, and the Bible seldom read, and the knee never bent in prayer. Why is all this on every side? The answer is simple: *Men are dead.*

This is the true account of that host of excuses which so many make with one consent. Some have no learning, and some have no time. Some are oppressed with business, and some with poverty. Some have difficulties in their own families, and some in their own health. Some have peculiar obstacles in their calling, which others, we are told, cannot understand; and others have peculiar drawbacks at home, and they wait to have them removed. But God has a shorter word in the Bible,

which describes all these people at once. He says, *they are dead*.

This is the true explanation of many things which wring a faithful minister's heart. Many around him never attend a place of worship at all. Many attend so irregularly, that it is clear they think it of no importance. Many attend once on a Sunday who might just as easily attend twice. Many never come to the Lord's table, never appear at a week-day means of grace of any kind. And why is all this? Often, far too often, there can only be one reply about these people: *they are dead*.

See now, dear brethren, how all professing Christians should examine themselves and try their own state. It is not in churchyards alone where the dead are to be found. There are too many inside our churches, and close to our pulpits. The land is like the valley in Ezekiel's vision, full of bones, and those very dry. There are dead souls in all our parishes, and dead souls in all our streets. There is hardly a family in which all live to God. There is hardly a house in which there is not some one dead. Oh, search and look at home. Prove your own selves.

See too how sad is the condition of all who have gone through no spiritual change, whose hearts are still the same as in the day they were born. There is a mountain of division between them and heaven. They have yet to pass from death to life. Oh, that they did but see and know their danger. Alas, it is one fearful mark of spiritual death, that, like natural death, it is not felt. We lay our beloved ones tenderly and gently in their narrow beds, but they feel nothing of what we do. "The dead," says the wise man, "know not any thing." Ecc! 9: 5. And this is the case with dead souls.

See too what reason ministers have to be anxious about their congregations. We feel that time is short and life is uncertain. We know that death spiritual is

the high road that leads to death eternal. We fear lest any of you should die in your sins, unprepared, unrenewed, impenitent, unchanged. Oh, marvel not if we often speak strongly and plead with you warmly. We dare not give you flattering titles, amuse you with trifles, say smooth things, and cry peace, peace, when life and death are at stake, and nothing less. The plague is among you. We feel that we stand between the living and the dead. We must and will use great plainness of speech. "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle?" 1 Cor. 14 : 8.

II. Let me tell you, WHAT EVERY MAN NEEDS *who would be saved—he must be quickened and made alive.*

Life is the mightiest of all possessions. From death to life is the mightiest of all changes. And no change short of this will ever avail to fit man's soul for heaven.

Yes; it is not a little mending and alteration, a little cleansing and purifying, a little painting and patching, a little turning over a new leaf, and putting on a new outside, that is wanted. It is the bringing in of something altogether new, the planting within us a new nature, a new being, a new principle, a new heart: this alone, and nothing less than this, will ever meet the necessities of man's soul.*

To hew a block of marble from the quarry and carve it into a noble statue—to break up a waste wilderness and turn it into a garden of flowers—to melt a lump of iron-stone and forge it into watch-springs—all these are mighty changes; yet they all come short of the change which every child of Adam requires, for they are merely the same thing in a new form, the same substance in a new shape. But man requires the grafting in of that

* "It is not a little reforming will save the man, no, nor all the morality in the world, nor all the common graces of God's Spirit, nor the outward change of the life: they will not do, unless we are quickened, and have a new life wrought in us." Usher's Sermons.

which he had not before. He needs a change as great as a resurrection from the dead. He must become a new creature. Old things must pass away, and all things must become new. He must be born again, born from above, born of God. The natural birth is not a whit more necessary to the life of the body, than is the spiritual birth to the life of the soul.

I know well this is a hard saying. I know well the children of this world dislike to hear that they must be born again. It pricks their consciences. It makes them feel they are further off from heaven than they are willing to allow. It seems like a narrow door which they have not yet stooped to enter, and they would fain make the door wider, or climb in some other way. But I dare not give place by subjection in this matter. I will not foster a delusion, and tell people they only need repent a little, and stir up a gift they have within them, in order to become real Christians. I dare not use any other language than that of the Bible. And I say in the words which are written for our learning, we all need to be born again, we are all naturally dead and must be made alive.

If you had seen Manasseh king of Judah at one time filling Jerusalem with idols, and murdering his children in honor of false gods, at another purifying the temple, putting down idolatry and living a godly life—if you had seen Zaccheus the publican of Jericho at one time cheating, plundering, and covetous, at another following Christ, and giving half his goods to the poor—if you had seen the servants of Nero's household at one time conforming to their master's profligate ways, at another of one heart and mind with the apostle Paul—if you had seen the ancient father Augustine at one time living in fornication, at another walking closely with God—it you had seen our own reformer Latimer at one time preaching earnestly against the truth as it is in Jesus, at

another spending and being spent even to death in its cause—if you had seen the New Zealanders, or Tinnelly Hindoos, at one time blood-thirsty, immoral, and sunk in abominable superstitions, at another holy, pure, and believing Christians—if you had seen these wonderful changes, or any of them, I ask you what you would have said? Would you have been content to call them nothing more than amendments and alterations? Would you have been satisfied with saying that Augustine had reformed his ways, and Latimer turned over a new leaf? Verily, if you said no more than this, the very stones would cry out. I tell you in all these cases there was nothing less than a new birth, a resurrection of human nature, a quickening of the dead. These are the right words to use. All other language is weak, poor, beggarly, unscriptural, and short of the truth.

Now I will not shrink from saying plainly, we all need the same kind of change, if we are to be saved. The difference between us and any of those I have just named is far less than it appears. Take off the outward crust, and you will find the same nature beneath in us and them, an evil nature, requiring a complete change. The face of the earth is very different in different climates, but the heart of the earth, I am told, is everywhere the same: go where you will from one end to the other, the granite rock is always beneath your feet, if you bore down deep enough. And it is so with men's hearts. Their customs and their colors, their ways and their laws, may all be unlike, but the inner man is the same: their hearts are alike at the bottom, all stony, all hard, all ungodly, all needing to be thoroughly renewed. The Englishman and the New Zealander stand on the same level in this matter. Both are naturally dead, and both need to be made alive. Both are children of the same father Adam who fell by sin, and both need to be born again and made children of God.

Whatever part of the globe we live in, our *eyes* need to be opened: naturally we never see our sinfulness, guilt, and danger. Whatever nation we belong to, our *understandings* need to be enlightened:* naturally we know little or nothing of the plan of salvation; like the Babel-builders, we think to get to heaven our own way. Whatever church we may belong to, our *wills* need to be bent in the right direction; naturally we should never choose the things which are for our peace, we should never come to Christ. Whatever be our rank in life, our *affections* need to be turned to things above; naturally we only set them on things below, earthly, sensual, short-lived, and vain. Pride must give place to humility, self-righteousness to self-abasement, carelessness to seriousness, worldliness to holiness, unbelief to faith. Satan's dominion must be put down within us, and the kingdom of God set up. Self must be crucified, and Christ must reign. Till these things come to pass, we are dead as stones. When these things begin to take place, and not till then, we are alive.

I dare say this sounds like foolishness to some, but many a living man could stand up this day and testify that it is true. Many a one could tell you that he knows it all by experience, and that he does indeed feel himself a new man. He loves the things that once he hated, and hates the things that once he loved. He has new habits, new companions, new ways, new tastes, new feelings, new opinions, new sorrows, new joys, new anxieties, new pleasures, new hopes, and new fears.† In short, the

* "Man's understanding is so darkened that he can see nothing of God in God, nothing of holiness in holiness, nothing of good in good, nothing of evil in evil, nor any thing of sinfulness in sin. Nay, it is so darkened that he fancies himself to see good in evil, and evil in good, happiness in sin, and misery in holiness." Bishop Beveridge.

† "How wonderfully doth the new-born soul differ from his former self. He liveth a new life, he walketh in a new way, he steereth his course by a new compass and towards a new coast. His principle is

whole bias and current of his being is changed. Ask his nearest relations and friends, and they would bear witness to it. Whether they liked it or not, they would be obliged to confess he was no longer the same.

Many a one could tell you that once he did not think himself such a very great transgressor. At any rate, he fancied he was no worse than others. Now he would say with the apostle Paul, he feels himself the chief of sinners.*

Once he did not consider he had a bad heart. He might have his faults, and be led away by bad company and temptations, but he thought he had a good heart at the bottom. Now, he would tell you he knows no heart to bad as his own. He finds it deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.

Once he did not suppose it was a very hard matter to get to heaven. He thought he had only to repent and say a few prayers and do what he could, and Christ would make up what was wanting. Now he believes the way is narrow and few find it. He is convinced he could

new, his pattern is new, his practices are new, his projects are new, all is new. He ravel out all he had wove before, and employeth himself wholly about another work." George Swinnocke, 1660.

* "I cannot pray, but I sin; I cannot hear, or preach a sermon, but I sin; I cannot give an alms, or receive the Lord's supper, but I sin; nay, I cannot so much as confess my sins, but my confessions are still aggravations of them. My repentance needs to be repented of, my tears want washing, and the very washing of my tears needs still to be washed over again with the blood of my Redeemer." Bishop Beveridge.

"Woe is me, that men should think there is any thing in me. He is my witness, before whom I am as crystal, that the secret house-devils that bear me too often company, that the corruption which I find within, make me go with low sails." Rutherford's Letters, 1637.

"I am sick of all I do, and stand astonished that the Redeemer still continues to make use of and bless me. Surely I am more foolish than any man; no one receives so much, and does so little." Whitefield's Letters.

never have made his own peace with God. He is persuaded that nothing but the blood of Christ could wash away his sins. His only hope is to be justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Once he could see no beauty and excellence in the Lord Jesus Christ. He could not understand some ministers speaking so much about Him. Now he would tell you He is the pearl above all price, the chiefest among ten thousand—his Redeemer, his Advocate, his Priest, his King, his Physician, his Shepherd, his all.

Once he thought lightly of sin. He could not see the necessity of being so particular about it. He could not think a man's words and thoughts and actions were of such importance, and required such watchfulness. Now he would tell you, sin is the abominable thing which he hates, the sorrow and burden of his life. He longs to be more holy. He can enter thoroughly into Whitefield's desire, "I want to go where I shall neither sin myself, nor see others sin any more."

Once he found no pleasure in means of grace. The Bible was neglected. His prayers, if he had any, were a mere form. Sermons were a weariness. Now all is altered. These things are the food, the comfort, the delight of his soul.

Once he disliked earnest-minded Christians. He shunned them as melancholy, low-spirited, weak people. Now they are the excellent of the earth, of whom he cannot see too much. He is never so happy as he is in their company. He feels, if all men and women were saints, it would be heaven upon earth.

Once he cared only for this world, its pleasures, its business, its occupations, its rewards. Now he looks upon it as an empty, unsatisfying place—an inn, a lodging, a training-school for the life to come. His treasure is in heaven. His home is beyond the grave.

I ask you, once more, what is all this but a new life ?

Such a change as I have described is no vision and fancy. It is a real actual thing, which not a few in this world have known or felt. It is not a picture of my own imagining. It is a true thing which some of you could find at this moment hard by your own doors. But wherever such a change does take place, there you see the thing of which I am now speaking—you see the dead made alive, a new man, a new creature, a soul born again.

I would to God that changes such as this were more common. I would to God there were not such multitudes, of whom we must say even weeping, they know nothing about the matter. But common or not, one thing I say plainly, this is the kind of change we all need. I do not hold that all must have exactly the same experience. I allow most fully that the change is different, in degree, extent, and intensity, in different persons. Grace may be weak, and yet true; life may be feeble, and yet real. But I do confidently affirm, we must all go through something of this kind, if ever we are saved. Till this sort of change has taken place, there is no life in us at all. We may be living churchmen, but we are dead Christians.*

Take it home, every man or woman that reads this paper, take it home to your own conscience and look at it well. Some time or other, between the cradle and the grave, all who would be saved must be made alive. The words which good old Berridge had graven on his tombstone are faithful and true: "Reader, art thou born again? Remember, no salvation without a new birth."

See now, my dear friends, what an amazing gulf there

* "If we be still our old selves, no changelings at all, the same men that we came into the world, without defalcation of our corruptions, without addition of grace and sanctification, surely we must seek us another father, we are not yet the sons of God." Bishop Hall, 1652.

"If thou hast any thing less than regeneration, believe me, thou canst never see heaven. There is no hope of heaven till then—till thou art born again." Archbishop Usher's Sermons.

is between the Christian in name and form, and the Christian in deed and truth. It is not the difference of one being a little better, and the other a little worse than his neighbor; it is the difference between a state of life and a state of death. The meanest blade of grass that grows upon a Highland mountain, is a more noble object than the fairest wax flower that was ever formed; for it has that which no science of man can impart, it has *life*. The most splendid marble statue in Greece or Italy, is nothing by the side of the poor sickly child that crawls over the cottage floor; for with all its beauty it is *dead*. And the weakest member of the family of Christ is far higher and more precious in God's eyes, than the most gifted man of the world. The one lives unto God, and shall live for ever; the other with all his intellect is still dead in sins.

O you that have passed from death to life, you have reason indeed to be thankful. Remember what you once were by nature—dead. Think what you are now by grace—alive. Look at the dry bones thrown up from the graves. Such were ye; and who has made you to differ? Go and fall low before the footstool of your God. Bless him for his grace, his free distinguishing grace. Say to him often, “Who am I, Lord, that thou hast brought me hitherto? Why me; why hast thou been merciful unto me?”

III. Let me tell you, in the third place, IN WHAT WAY ALONE THIS QUICKENING CAN BE BROUGHT ABOUT—*by what means a dead soul can be made alive.*

Surely, if I did not tell you this, it would be cruelty to write what I have written. Surely, it would be leading you into a dreary wilderness, and then leaving you without bread and water; it would be like marching you down to the Red sea, and then bidding you walk over; it would be commanding you to make brick like Pharaoh, and yet refusing to provide you with straw, it

would be like tying your hands and feet, and then desiring you to war a good warfare, and so run as to obtain the prize. I will not do so. I will not leave you, till I have pointed out the wicket-gate towards which you must run. By God's help, I will set before you the full provision there is made for dead souls. Listen to me a little longer, and I will once more show you what is written in the Scripture of truth.

One thing is very clear, we cannot work this mighty change ourselves. It is not in us. We have no strength or power to do it. We may change our sins, but we cannot change our hearts. We may take up a new way, but not a new nature. We may make considerable reforms and alterations. We may lay aside many outward bad habits, and begin many outward duties. But we cannot create a new principle within us. We cannot bring something out of nothing. The Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the leopard his spots; no more can we put life into our own souls.* Jer. 13 : 23.

Another thing is equally clear, no man can do it for us. Ministers may preach to you, and pray with you, admit you to the Lord's table, and give you the bread and wine; but they cannot bestow spiritual life. They may bring in regularity in the place of disorder, and outward decency in the place of open sin. But they cannot go below the surface. They cannot reach your hearts.

* "There is not one good duty which the natural man can do. If it should be said to him, Think but one good thought, and for it thou shalt go to heaven, he could not think it. Till God raise him from the sink of sin, as he did Lazarus from the grave, he cannot do any thing that is well-pleasing to God. He may do the works of a moral man, but to do the works of a man quickened and enlightened, it is beyond his power." Usher's Sermons.

"Nature can no more cast out nature, than Satan can cast out Satan." Thomas Watson, 1653.

"Nature cannot raise itself to this, any more than a man can give natural being to himself." Archbishop Leighton.

Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God alone can give the increase. 1 Cor. 3 : 6.

Who then can make a dead soul alive? No one can do it but God. He only who breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life, can ever make a dead sinner a living Christian. He only who formed the world out of nothing in the day of creation, can make man a new creature. He only who said, "Let there be light, and there was light," can cause spiritual light to shine into man's heart. He only who formed man out of the dust and gave life to his body, can ever give life to his soul: his is the special office to do it by his Spirit, and his also is the power.*

The glorious gospel contains provision for your spiritual, as well as your eternal life. The Lord Jesus is a complete Saviour. That mighty living Head has no dead members. His people are not only justified and pardoned, but quickened together with him, and made partakers of his resurrection. To Him the Spirit joins the sinner, and raises him by that union from death to life. In Him the sinner lives, after he has believed. The spring of all his vitality is the union between Christ and his soul, which the Spirit begins and keeps up. Christ is the appointed fountain of all spiritual life, and the Holy Ghost the appointed agent who conveys that life to our souls.†

Come to the Lord Jesus Christ, if you would have

* "To create or bring something out of nothing, is beyond the power of the strongest creature. It is above the strength of all men and angels to create the least blade of grass; God challengeth this as his prerogative royal. Isaiah 40 : 26. Augustine said truly, To convert the little world man, is more than to create the great world." George Swinnocke, 1660.

† "Then do we begin to live, when we begin to have union with Christ the Fountain of life, by his Spirit communicated to us: from this time we are to reckon our life." Flavel, 1670.

"Christ is an universal principle of all life." Sibbs, 1635.

life. He will not cast you out. He has gifts, even for the rebellious. The moment the dead man touched the body of Elisha, he revived and stood upon his feet. 2 Kings, 13 : 21. The moment you touch the Lord Jesus with the hand of faith, you are alive unto God, as well as forgiven all trespasses. Come, and your soul shall live.

I never despair of any one becoming a decided Christian, whatever he may have been in days gone by. I know something of the greatness of the change from death to life. I know the mountains of division that seem to stand between some of you and heaven. I know the hardness, the prejudices, the desperate sinfulness of the natural heart. But I remember that God the Father made the glorious world out of nothing. I remember the voice of the Lord Jesus could reach Lazarus when four days dead, and recall him even from the grave. I remember the amazing victories the Spirit of God has won in every nation under heaven. I remember all this, and feel that I never need despair. Yes, those among you who now seem most utterly dead in sins, may yet be raised to a new being, and walk before God in newness of life.

Why should it not be so? The Holy Spirit is a merciful and loving Spirit. He turns away from no man because of his vileness. He passes by no one, because his sins are black and scarlet.

There was nothing in the Corinthians that He should come down and quicken them. Paul reports of them that they were "fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners." "And such," he says, "were some of you." Yet even them the Spirit made alive. "Ye are washed," he writes, "ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." 1 Cor. 6 : 9-11.

There was nothing in the Colossians, that He should visit their hearts. Paul tells us that "they walked in

fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry." Yet them also the Spirit quickened. He made them "put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." Col. 3 : 5-9, 10.

There was nothing in Mary Magdalene that the Spirit should make her soul alive. Once she had been possessed with seven devils. Yet even her the Spirit made a new creature, separated her from her sins, brought her to Christ, made her last at the cross, and first at the tomb.

Never, never will the Spirit turn away from a soul because of its corruption. He never has done so; he never will. It is his glory that he has purified the minds of the most impure, and made them temples for his own abode. He may yet take the worst of you, and make you a vessel of grace.

Why indeed should it not be so? The Spirit is an almighty Spirit. He can change the stony heart into a heart of flesh. He can break the strongest bad habits, like tow before the fire. He can make the most difficult things seem easy, and the mightiest objections melt away like snow in spring. He can cut the bars of brass, and throw the gates of prejudice wide open. He can fill up every valley, and make every rough place smooth. He has done it often, and he can do it again.*

The Spirit can take a Jew, the bitterest enemy of Christianity, the fiercest persecutor of true believers, the strongest stickler for pharisaical notions, the most prejudiced opposer of gospel doctrine, and turn that man into an earnest preacher of the very faith he once destroyed. He has done it already. He did it with the apostle Paul.

* "Such is the power of the Holy Ghost to regenerate men, and as it were to bring them forth anew, so that they shall be nothing like the men they were before." Homily for Whit-sunday

The Spirit can take a Roman-catholic monk, brought up in the midst of Romish superstition, trained from his infancy to believe false doctrine and obey the Pope, steeped to the eyes in error, and make that man the clearest upholder of justification by faith the world ever saw. He has done so already. He did it with Martin Luther.

The Spirit can take an English tinker, without learning, patronage, or money—a man at one time notorious for nothing so much as blasphemy and swearing—and make that man write a religious book, which shall stand unrivalled and unequalled in its way by any since the time of the apostles. He has done so already. He did it with John Bunyan, the author of "Pilgrim's Progress."

The Spirit can take a sailor, drenched in worldliness and sin, a profligate captain of a slave ship, and make that man a most successful minister of the gospel, a writer of letters which are a storehouse of experimental religion, and of hymns which are known and sung wherever English is spoken. He has done it already. He did it with John Newton.

All this the Spirit has done, and much more, of which I cannot speak particularly. And the arm of the Spirit is not shortened. His power is not decayed. He is like the Lord Jesus, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. He is still doing wonders, and will do to the very end.

Once more then, I say, I never despair of any man's soul being made alive. I should, if it depended on man himself. Some seem so hardened, I should have no hope. I should, if it depended on the work of ministers. Alas, the very best of us are poor weak creatures. But I cannot despair, when I remember that God the Spirit is the agent who conveys life to the soul; for I know and am persuaded that with him nothing is impossible.

I should not be surprised to hear, even in this life, that the hardest among you had become softened, and the

proudest taken his place at the feet of Jesus as a weaned child.

I shall not be surprised to meet many on the right hand in the day of judgment, whom I shall leave, when I die, travelling in the broad way. I shall not start, and say, "What, you here?" I shall only remind them, "Was not this my word, when I was yet among you? nothing is impossible with Him that quickeneth the dead."

Brethren, does any one of you desire to help the church of Christ? Then pray for a great outpouring of the Spirit. He alone can give edge to sermons, and point to advice, and power to rebukes, and cast down the high walls of sinful hearts. It is not better preaching, and finer writing that is wanted in this day, but more of the presence of the Holy Ghost.

Does any one of you feel the slightest drawing towards God, the smallest concern about his immortal soul? Then flee to that open fountain of living waters the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall receive the Holy Ghost. John 7:39. Pray earnestly and heartily for the Holy Spirit. Think not you are shut up and cut off from hope. The Holy Ghost is promised to them that ask him. His very name is the Spirit of promise and the Spirit of life. Give him no rest till he comes down and makes you a new heart. Cry mightily unto the Lord: say unto him, "Bless me, even me also; quicken me, and make me alive."

And now let me close with a few words of special application. I have told you what I believe to be the truth as it is in Jesus. Let me try, by God's blessing, to bring it home to your hearts.

1. First, let me put this question to every soul who reads this paper, "*Are you living, or are you dead?*"

Suffer me, as an ambassador for Christ, to press the inquiry on every conscience. There are only two ways to walk in, the narrow and the broad—two companies in the day of judgment, those on the right hand and those

on the left—two classes of people in the professing church of Christ; and to one of them you must belong. Where are you? What are you? Are you among the living, or among the dead?

I speak to you yourselves who read this paper, and to none else: not to your neighbor, but to you—not to Africans or New Zealanders, but to you. I do not ask whether you are angels, or whether you have the mind of David or Paul; but I do ask whether you have a well-founded hope that you are new creatures in Christ Jesus; I do ask whether you have reason to believe you have put off the old man and put on the new—whether you are conscious of ever having gone through a real spiritual change of heart—whether, in one word, you are dead or alive.*

Think not to put me off by saying, you “were admitted into the church, and received grace and the Spirit in the sacrament of baptism—you are alive.” It shall not avail you. The Lord Jesus Christ himself says of the church in Sardis, “Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art *dead*.” Rev. 3:1. The life you talk of is nothing if it cannot be seen. Show it to me, if I am to believe its existence. Grace is light, and light will be discerned. Grace is salt, and salt will be tasted. An indwelling of the Spirit that does not show itself by outward fruits, and a grace that men’s eyes cannot discover, are both to be viewed with the utmost suspicion. Believe me, if you

* “All hangs upon this hinge. If this be not done, ye are undone—undone eternally. All your profession, civility, privileges, gifts, duties, are cyphers, and signify nothing, unless regeneration be the figure put before them.” Swinnocke, 1660.

“Believe me, whatsoever thou art, thou shalt never be saved for being a lord or a knight, a gentleman or a rich man, a learned man or a well-spoken eloquent man; nor yet for being a Calvinist, or a Lutheran, an Arminian, a Baptist, a Presbyterian, an Independent, or a Protestant, formally and merely as such; much less for being a Papist, or of any such grossly deluded sect; but as a regenerate Christian it is that thou must be saved, or thou canst have no hope.” Richard Baxter, 1659.

have no other proof of spiritual life but your baptism, you are yet a dead soul.

Think not to tell me "it is a question that cannot be decided, and you call it presumptuous to give an opinion in such a matter." This is a vain refuge and a false humility. Spiritual life is no such dim and doubtful thing as you seem to fancy. There are marks and evidences by which its presence may be discerned by those who know the Bible. "We know," says John, "that we have passed from death unto life." 1 John, 3:14. The exact time and season of that passage may often be hidden from a man. The fact and reality of it will seldom be entirely an uncertain thing. It was a true and beautiful saying of a Scotch girl to Whitefield, when asked if her heart was changed, "Something was changed, she knew; it might be the world, it might be her own heart; but there was a great change somewhere, she was quite sure, for every thing seemed different from what it once did." Oh cease to evade the inquiry. Anoint your eyes with eye-salve, that you may see. Are you dead, or alive?

Think not to reply, "you do not know; you allow it is a matter of importance; you hope to know some time before you die; you mean to give your mind to it when you have a convenient season; but at present you do not know."

You do not know! Yet heaven or hell is wrapped up in this question. An eternity of happiness or misery hinges upon your answer. You do not leave your worldly affairs so unsettled. You do not manage your earthly business so loosely. You look far forward. You provide against every possible contingency. You insure life and property. Oh why not deal in the same way with your immortal soul?

You do not know! Yet all around you is uncertainty. You are a poor frail worm—your body fearfully and wonderfully made—your health liable to be put out of order

in a thousand ways. The next time the daisies bloom, it may be over your grave. All before you is dark. You know not what a day might bring forth, much less a year. Oh why not bring your soul's business to a point without delay?

Begin the great business of self-examination. Rest not till you know the length and breadth of your own state in God's sight. Backwardness in this matter is an evil sign. It springs from an uneasy conscience. It shows that a man thinks ill of his own case. He feels, like a dishonest tradesman, that his accounts will not bear inquiry. He dreads the light.

Make sure work. Take nothing for granted. Do not measure your condition by that of others. Bring everything to the measure of God's word. A mistake about your soul is a mistake for eternity. "Surely," says Leighton, "they that are not born again, shall one day wish they had never been born."

Sit down this day and think. Commune with your own heart, and be still. Go to your own room, and consider. Enter into your own closet, or at any rate contrive to be alone with God. Look the question fairly, fully, honestly in the face. How does it touch you? Are you among the living, or among the dead?*

2. Let me speak in all affection to *those who are dead*.

What shall I say to you? What can I say? What words of mine are likely to have any effect on your hearts?

This I will say, I mourn over your souls. I do most unfeignedly mourn. You may be thoughtless and unconcerned. You may care little for what I am saying. You may scarcely run your eye over this paper, and after

* "If your state be good, searching into it will give you the comfort of it. If your state be bad, searching into it cannot make it worse; nay, it is the only way to make it better, for conversion begins with conviction." Bishop Hopkins, 1680.

reading it, despise it and return to the world; but you cannot prevent my feeling for you, however little you may feel for yourselves.

Do I mourn when I see a young man sapping the foundation of his bodily health by indulging his lusts and passions, sowing bitterness for himself in his old age? Much more then will I mourn over your souls.

Do I mourn when I see men squandering away their inheritance, and wasting their property on trifles and follies? Much more then will I mourn over your souls.

Do I mourn when I hear of one drinking slow poisons because they are pleasant, as the Chinese take opium—putting forward the clock of his life, as if it did not go fast enough; inch by inch digging his own grave? Much more then will I mourn over your souls.

I mourn to think of golden opportunities thrown away, of Christ rejected; of the blood of atonement trampled under foot; of the Spirit resisted, the Bible neglected, heaven despised, and the world put in the place of God.

I mourn to think of the present happiness you are missing, the peace and consolation you are thrusting from you, the misery you are laying up in store for yourselves, and the bitter waking which is yet to come.

Yes, I must mourn; I cannot help it. Others may think it enough to mourn over dead bodies. For my part, I think there is far more cause to mourn over dead souls. The children of this world find fault with us for being so grave. Truly, when I look at the world, I marvel we can ever smile at all.

Beloved friends, why will you die? Are the wages of sin so sweet and good that you cannot give them up? Is the world so satisfying that you cannot forsake it? Is the service of Satan so pleasant that you and he are never to be parted? Is heaven so poor a thing that it is not worth seeking? Is your soul of so little consequence that it is not worth a struggle to be saved? Oh, turn ye, turn ye

before it be too late. God is not willing that you should perish. "As I live," he says, "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." Jesus loves you, and grieves to see your folly. He wept over wicked Jerusalem, saying, "How often would I have gathered thee, but thou wouldst not." Surely, if lost, your blood will be upon your own heads. "Awake, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light."

Believe me, believe me, true repentance is that one step that no man ever repented. Thousands have said at their latter end, they "had served God too little:" no child of Adam ever said, as he left this world, that he had cared for his soul too much. The way of life is a narrow path, but the footsteps in it are all in one direction; not one has ever come back and said it was a delusion. The way of the world is a broad way, but millions on millions have forsaken it, and borne their testimony that it was a way of sorrow.

O that this year might be a year of life to your souls; O that the Spirit might come down upon your hearts and make you new men. I ask it of the Lord, as the prophet did of old: "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." Ezek. 37:9.

3. Let me speak to those among you *who are living*.

Are you indeed alive unto God? Can you say with truth, I was dead, and am alive again; I was blind, but now I see? Then suffer the word of exhortation, and incline your hearts unto wisdom.

Are you alive? Then see that you prove it *by your actions*. Be a consistent witness. Let your words and works and ways and temper all tell the same story. Let not your life be a poor torpid life, like that of a tortoise or a sloth; let it rather be an energetic stirring life, like that of a deer or bird. Let your grace shine forth from all the windows of your conversation, that

those who live near you may see that the Spirit is abiding in your hearts. Let your light not be a dim, flickering, uncertain flame; let it burn steadily like the eternal fire on the altar, and never become low. Let the savor of your religion, like Mary's precious ointment, fill all the house where you dwell. Be an epistle of Christ so clearly written, penned in such large bold characters, that he who runs may read it. Let your Christianity be so unmistakable, your eye so single, your heart so whole, your walk so straightforward, that all who see you may have no doubt whose you are, and whom you serve. O, dear brethren, if we are quickened by the Spirit, no one ought to be able to doubt it. Our conversation should declare plainly that we seek a country. It ought not to be necessary to tell people, as in the case of a badly painted picture, "This is a Christian." We ought not to be so sluggish and still that men shall be obliged to come close and look hard, and say, "Is he dead, or alive?"

Are you alive? Then see that you prove it *by your growth*. Let the great change within become every year more evident. Let your light be an increasing light—not like Joshua's sun in the valley of Aijalon, standing still, nor like Hezekiah's sun, going back, but ever shining more and more to the very end of your days. Let the image of your Lord wherein you are renewed grow clearer and sharper every month. Let it not be like the image and superscription on a coin, more indistinct and defaced the longer it is used. Let it rather become more plain the older it is, and the likeness of your King stand out more fully. I have no confidence in a standing-still religion. I do not think a Christian was meant to be like an animal, to grow to a certain age and then stop growing. I believe, rather, he was meant to be like a tree, and to increase more and more in strength and vigor all his days. Remember the words of the apostle Peter, "Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge,

an' to knowledge temperance, and to temperance brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity." 2 Pet. 1:5, 6, 7. This is the way to be a useful Christian. Men will believe you are in earnest when they see constant improvement, and perhaps be drawn to go with you.* This is one way to obtain comfortable assurance. "So an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly." 2 Pet. 1:11. Oh as ever you would be useful and happy in your religion, let your motto be, "Forward, forward," to your very last day.

Brethren believers, I speak to myself as well as to you. I say the spiritual life in Christians ought to be more evident. Our lamps want trimming; they ought not to burn so dim. Our separation from the world should be more distinct, our walk with God more decided. Too many of us are like Lot, lingerers; or like Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, borderers; or like the Jews in Ezra's time, so mixed up with strangers, that our spiritual pedigree cannot be made out. It ought not so to be. Let us be up and doing. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. If we really have life, let us make it known.

The state of the world demands it. The latter days have fallen upon us. The kingdoms of the earth are shaking, falling, crashing, and crumbling away. Isaiah 24:1, etc. The glorious kingdom that will never be removed is drawing nigh. The King himself is close at hand. The children of this world are looking round to see what the saints are doing. God, in his wonderful providences, is calling to us, "Who is on my side? Who?" Surely we ought to be, like Abraham, very ready with our answer, "Here am I."

"Ah," you may say, "these are ancient things, these are brave words. We know it all. But we are weak,

* "Men who are prejudiced, observe actions a great deal more than words" Leighton.

we have no power to think a good thought; we can do nothing, we must sit still." Hearken, my brethren. What is the cause of your weakness? Is it not because the fountain of life is little used? Is it not because you are resting on old experiences, and not daily gathering new manna, daily drawing new strength from Christ? He has left you the promise of the Comforter. He giveth more grace,⁶ grace upon grace to all who ask it. He came that you might have life, and have it more abundantly. "Open thy mouth wide," he says this day, "and I will fill it."

Brethren believers, if you want your spiritual life to be more healthy and vigorous, you must come more boldly to the throne of grace. You must give up this hanging-back spirit, this hesitation about taking the Lord at his own word. Doubtless you are "poor sinners, and nothing at all." The Lord knows it, and has provided a store of strength for you. But you do not draw upon the store he has provided; you have not, because you ask not. The secret of your weakness is your little faith, and little prayer. The fountain is unsealed, but you only sip a few drops. The bread of life is before you, yet you only eat a few crumbs. The treasury of heaven is open, but you only take a few pence. O ye of little faith, wherefore do ye doubt?

Awake to know your privileges; awake, and sleep no longer. Tell me not of spiritual hunger and thirst and poverty, so long as the throne of grace is before you. Say rather, that you are proud, and will not come to it as poor sinners. Say rather, you are slothful, and will not take pains to get more.

Cast aside the grave-clothes of pride that still hang around you. Throw off that Egyptian garment of indolence, which ought not to have been brought through the Red sea. Away with that unbelief which ties and paralyzes your tongue. You are not straitened in God, but in yourselves. Come boldly to the throne of grace, where

the Father is ever waiting to give, and Jesus ever stands by him to intercede. Come boldly, for you may, all sinful as you are, if you come in the name of the great High-priest. Come boldly, and ask largely, and you shall have abundant answers—mercy like a river, and grace and strength like a mighty stream. Come boldly, and you shall have supplies exceeding all you can ask or think. Hitherto you have asked nothing. Ask and receive, that your joy may be full.

Brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Lord Jesus Christ. While you live, may you live unto the Lord. When you die, may you die the death of the righteous. And when the Lord Jesus comes, may you be found ready, and “not be ashamed before him at his coming.”

I remain your affectionate friend,

J. C. RYLE

HELMINGHAM, Stoneham, Suffolk, December, 1848.

OLD MOSES.

Mr. B—— was a merchant in Baltimore, and did a very heavy business, especially in grain. One morning, as he was passing over the vessels at the wharf, he stepped upon the deck of one, at the stern of which he saw a negro man sitting, whose dejected countenance gave sure indication of distress ; and he accosted him with :

“Hey, my man, what is the matter with you this morning?” The negro lifted his eyes, and looking at Mr. B——, replied, “Ah, massa, I ’se in great trouble.” “What about?” “Kase I ’se fatched up here to be sold.” “What for? What have you been doing? Have you been stealing? or did you run away? or what?” “No, no, massa, none o’ dat ; it ’s becuse I did n’t mind the audes.” “What kind of orders?” “Well, massa, I tell you. Mass Willum werry strick man, and werry nice man too, and ebrybody on de place got to mine him ; and I break trew de rule ; but I did n’t tend to break de rule ; I forgot mesef, an I got too high.” “It is for getting drunk, then, is it?” “O no, sah, not dat nother.” “I can get no satisfaction from you. Tell me what you are to be sold for.” “For prayin, sah.” “For praying! that is a strange tale indeed. Will your master not permit you to pray?” “O yes, sah, he let me pray easy; but I hollers too loud.” “And why did you halloo so in your prayer?” “Kase de Sperit comes on me, and I gets happy fore I knows it; den I gone; can’t trol mesef den; den I knows nuthin bout massa’s rule; den I holler if ole Sattin hissef come, wid all de rules of de ’quisition.” “And do you suppose your master will really sell you for that?” “O yes, no help for me now; all de men in de world could n’t help me now; kase wen Mass Wilum say one ting, he no do anoder.”

“What is your name?” “Moses, sah.” “What is your master’s name?” “Massa name Colonel Willum C——.” “Where does he live?” “Down on the Easin Shoah.” “Is he a good master? does he treat you well?” “O yes; Massa Willum good; no better massa in de world.” “Where is he?” “Yander he is, jis coming to de warf.”

As Mr. B—— started for the shore, he heard Moses give a heavy sigh, followed by a deep groan. Moses was not at all pleased with the present phase of affairs. He was strongly impressed with the idea that B—— was a trader and intended to buy him. Mr. B—— introduced himself to Colonel C——, and said, "I understand you wish to sell that negro man yonder on board the schooner." Colonel C—— replied that he did. "What do you ask for him?" "I expect to get seven hundred dollars." "How old is he?" "About thirty." "Is he a good hand?" "Yes, sir, he is the best hand on my place. He is steady, honest, and industrious. He has been my foreman for the last ten years, and a more trusty negro I never knew." "Why do you wish to sell him?"

"Because he disobeyed my orders. I built his quarter within a hundred yards of my own house; and I have never rung the bell, night or morning, that his horn did not answer in five minutes. But two years ago he got religion, and commenced what he termed family prayer; that is, prayer in his quarter every night and morning; and when he began his prayer, it was impossible to tell when he would stop, especially if, as he termed it, he got happy. Then he would sing and pray and halloo for an hour or two together, so that you might hear him a mile off. And he would pray for me and my wife and children, and all my brothers and sisters and their children; and sometimes when we would have visitors, Moses' prayers would interrupt the conversation, and destroy the enjoyment of the whole company. Even after I had retired I could not sleep. I bore it as long as I could, and then forbade his praying so loud any more. Moses promised obedience, but he soon transgressed; and my rule is never to whip, but when a negro proves incorrigible, I sell him. I pardoned Moses twice for disobedience in praying so loud, but the third time I knew I must sell him, or every negro on the farm would disregard my orders."

"You spoke of Moses' quarter; I suppose from that he has a family." "Yes, he has a woman and three children—or *wife*, I suppose he calls her now, for soon after he got religion, he asked me if they might be married, and I presume they were." "What will you take for her and the children?" "If you want them for your own

use, I will take seven hundred dollars ; but I shall not sell Moses nor them to go out of the state." "I wish them all for my own use, and will give you the fourteen hundred dollars."

Mr. B—— and Colonel C—— then went to B——'s store, drew up the writings, and closed the sale, after which they returned to the vessel; and Mr. B——, approaching the negro, who sat with his eyes fixed upon the deck, seemingly with the most awful forebodings, said, "Well, Moses, I have bought you." Moses made a very low bow, and every muscle of his face worked with emotion as he replied, "Is you, massa? Where is I gwine, massa? Is I gwine to Georgy?" "No," said Mr. B——, "I am a merchant here in the city; yonder is my store. I want you to attend on the store; and have purchased your wife and children too, that you may not be separated." "Bress God for dat. And, massa, kin I go to meetin sometimes?" "Yes, Moses, you can go to church three times on the Sabbath, and every night in the week; and you can pray as often as you choose, and as loud as you choose, and as long as you choose, and get as happy as you choose; and every time you pray, I want you to pray for me, my wife, and all my children: if you are a good man, your prayers will do us no harm, and we need them very much; and if you wish to, you may pray for everybody of the name of B—— in the state of Maryland. It will not injure them."

While Mr. B—— was dealing out these privileges to Moses, the negro's eyes danced in their sockets, and his full heart laughed outright for gladness, exposing two rows of as even, clean ivories as any African can boast; and his heart's response was, "Bress God, bress God all de time, and bress you too, massa! Moses neber tinks bout he gwine to have all dese commondationers; dis make me tink bout Joseph in de Egypt." And after Moses had poured a few blessings on Colonel C——, and bidding him a warm adieu, and requesting him to give his love and farewell to his mistress, the children, and all the servants, he followed B—— to the store, to enter upon the duties of his new office. The return of the schooner brought to Moses his wife and children.

Early the next spring, as Mr. B—— was one day standing at the store door, he saw a man leap upon the wharf

from the deck of a vessel, and walk hurriedly towards the store. He soon recognized him as Colonel C—. They exchanged salutations, and to the colonel's inquiry after Moses, Mr. B— replied that he was up stairs measuring grain, and invited him to walk up and see him. Soon Mr. B—'s attention was arrested by a very confused noise above. He listened, and heard an unusual shuffling of feet, some one sobbing violently, and some one talking very hurriedly; and he determined to go up and see what was going on. When he reached the head of the stairs, he was startled by seeing Moses in the middle of the floor, down upon one knee, with his arms around the colonel's waist, and talking rapidly, while the colonel stood weeping. So soon as the colonel could sufficiently control his feelings, he told Mr. B— that he had never been able to free himself from the influence of Moses' prayers, and that during the past year he and his wife and all his children had been converted to God.

Moses responded, "Bress God, massa C—; dough I way up hea, I neber forgit you in my prayers; I ollers puts de ole massa side de new one. Bress God! dis make Moses tink about Joseph in de Egypt agin."

The colonel then stated to Mr. B— that his object in coming to Baltimore was to buy Moses and his family back again. But Mr. B— assured him that that was out of the question, for he could not part with him; and he intended to manumit Moses and his wife at forty, and his children at thirty-five years of age.

Moses was not far wrong in his reference to Joseph. For when Joseph was sold into Egypt, God overruled it to his good, and he obtained blessings that were far beyond his expectations; so with Moses. Joseph eventually proved the instrument of saving the lives of those who sold him; Moses proved the instrument in God's hands of saving the man's soul who sold him.

Old Moses is still living, and doing well. He long since obtained his freedom, and at present occupies a comfortable house of his own; and I suppose sings and prays and shouts to his heart's content.

LOOKING TO JESUS.

BY REV. JOHN WILLISON,

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NONE have right to Christ but those who first come to him in the way of faith. The multitude and heinousness of your sins, for which you ought to be humbled and mourn, may serve to show your great need of Christ to deliver you from them. Think not that your repentance, confessions, or tears for sin can satisfy the justice of God, or merit acceptance or pardon. This were to put these things in Christ's room, that are only means to lead you to him; and to take up with a righteousness of your own, instead of His that can atone the justice of God for sinners. O then, see that ye look beyond all to Christ alone for atonement, righteousness, pardon, and salvation, and count all things but loss, that you may win him.

Now, since the gospel offers Christ to all that hear it, and the call and command to receive and embrace Christ as a Saviour, is given to all and every one, even to the vilest of sinners; you have a full warrant to lay hold on him for pardon, and flee to him for mercy, and you heinously sin against God and your own soul, if you neglect to do it. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation," and slight so great a Saviour?

I shall therefore present some MOTIVES to press poor perishing sinners to flee from sin and wrath to Jesus Christ the only Saviour, and to receive and rest upon him for life and salvation.

1. Take a view of the *misery* of a natural and Christless condition; and O, that God would open thine eyes to let thee see it, and convince thee that while thou art in this state, thou art a rebel to thy God, a prodigal to thy

father, a slave to thy lusts, and an alien to the commonwealth of Israel. If thou comest not to Christ with thy burdens, the whole burden of unpardoned sin lies upon thee, and this is a burden that will sink thee lower than the grave; nay, it will press thee to the lowest hell, and keep thee eternally sinking there. Consider also how vile thou and all thy actions, whether natural, civil, or religious, are in the sight of a holy God, while thou art out of Christ: thy soul is naked and defiled with sin, and thou hast neither a garment to cover thee, nor a fountain to wash thee; the leprosy of sin spreads over all, so that from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot there is nothing but bruises and putrefying sores; there is no mire so unclean as thou art in thy Christless state, in the eyes of a holy God who cannot look upon iniquity but with abhorrence. Again, consider thou art a slave to Satan, the worst of tyrants; he rules and works in your heart as a workman doth in his shop. Eph. 2:2. He uses your powers, faculties, senses, and members according to his pleasure. He says, Go, and you go; do this, and you do it. Your bondage is worse than the Israelites, under Pharaoh, for they groaned under theirs, but you, alas, are not sensible of yours, neither will you believe it: the devil knows that if you perceived your slavery, you would seek to make your escape from him; therefore, to make sure work, he deals with you as the Philistines did with Samson—puts out your eyes, that you may not see your chains, nor look to Christ for liberty. O that God would open them, and cause you to groan under your fetters and look to Christ for relief.

Moreover, while thou art in thy Christless state, God's wrath is still burning against thee, the flaming sword of justice is always over thy neck. "God is angry with the wicked every day," every day of the week, and every hour of the day; when thou goest out and comest in, risest up or liest down, God is still angry with thee; yea, 'He hath bent his bow and made ready his arrows," they

will pierce thee to the very soul, and who will heal that wound? What a dangerous state is this.

And further, all the curses of the law are against thee, and a just God is engaged by his oath to punish thee if thou abidest in this state: "To whom sware he, that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?" Should not the thoughts of this make thee tremble? Were it but the oath of a man or a company of men to procure thy death, as of those forty men that bound themselves with an oath they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul, it would bereave thee of thy night's rest and quiet till they were made friends with thee. And will the oath of the great God have no effect upon thee, nor move thee to flee to Christ for protection and reconciliation? Who can help thee if Christ be neglected? With what face canst thou look to him, or cry for mercy from him, when he comes to judge thee at the last day? If thou remain Christless now, thou wilt be speechless, helpless, and hopeless then. O think what pale faces, quivering lips, fainting hearts, and trembling consciences will be among Christless sinners then. How will their heads hang down, and knees smite together, and how will they cry, Alas for the day! They can look nowhere for comfort; for the Judge frowns on them, their own friends upbraid them, devils scoff at them, the heavens thunder against them, the earth flames about them, and hell groans for them, and down they go for ever.

O Christless soul, how canst thou think to lie in that dark dungeon for ever, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, and utter darkness, but never the least sight of the light of God's favor to all eternity? How wilt thou live in that pit where there is no water; not a drop of comfort or refreshment to the thirsty prisoners, no, not so much as one drop to cool their tongue. O poor Christless soul, thou art as it were apprehended by justice for thy debt, and brought to this prison door, and

there are hundreds of diseases and devils waiting for a warrant to open the door to let thee in ; and wilt thou not employ a surety, nor seek for a ransom when justice is waiting a while to see if thou wilt do it ; and Christ is earnestly offering himself to be thy Saviour, and his blood to ransom thee from this pit, and no other thing will do it? See Zech. 9:11.

2. As it is God's command that you should receive and believe on his Son Jesus Christ, so he declares that it is a work above all others most pleasing to him, John 6:29; it is emphatically called his *commandment*, 1 John, 3:23, being a command he values more than all other commands in the Bible. And so upon the other hand, there is no sin so provoking to God as unbelief and rejecting of Christ; yea, he is more offended with it than with the breaking of all his other commands. See Heb. 10:28, 29. Put all your other sins in one scale, and unbelief in another, and you will find that unbelief weighs down all the rest, for it is a slighting of the whole work of redemption, which is the masterpiece of all God's works, being that which his heart is most set upon. 1 John, 4:9. O be persuaded then to do the work that is most acceptable to God, and obey *his great command to believe upon the name of his Son*. The whole creation obeys his commands: he commands the sun to run its daily course, and it obeys him; he commands the sea to ebb and flow, and it obeys; he commands the angels and all the hosts of heaven, and they obey him; and will you only be disobedient to him, and that to his beloved command, when he hath done more for you than for the whole creation?

3. Consider what an unspeakable mercy and happiness it is to you, to enjoy *the free offers* of Jesus Christ, and to have God commanding you to receive him. How would the fallen angels value such a mercy. They would not be loath to leave their dungeon and accept of a Saviour, as you are; but their state is eternally hopeless

and desperate, there is no remedy for their misery. O do not put yourselves in the same case with them by slighting the offered remedy. How would lost souls prize such an offer. The least news and remotest hope of it would make them leap in their chains, and sing in the flames. O how glad would they be to lift up their hands to take hold of the cords of love and mercy, if they could be let down to them in that dark dungeon. Why then should you wilfully put yourselves into the same hopeless condition with them by your unbelief? Nay, your neglecting so many offers will sink you far deeper in that lake of fire and brimstone, and increase your flames to more vehemency than those of others who have not been so privileged. O how will devils, Jews, and Pagans upbraid you there for your inexcusable folly in slighting your mercy, and destroying your souls. Be wise then in time, prize your privilege, and consider the things that belong to your peace, before they be hid from your eyes.

4. Consider what *an excellent and suitable* help Christ is for fallen sinners: he is well-furnished and qualified for your case; he hath gold for your poverty, eye-salve for your blindness, balm for your wounds, bread for your hunger, white raiment for your nakedness, a fountain for your pollution, and a ransom for your debt and bondage. In a word, he hath a deep fountain for your deep guilt; he is the chief of Saviours for the chief of sinners. Behold how one deep calls to another, the depth of thy misery for the depths of his mercy. Are your sins and miseries very extensive? then view the large dimensions of his mercy. Who can fathom the height, the depth, the breadth, or length of it? It is high as heaven, and surmounts the highest mountains of guilt; it is so deep that it can bury the greatest of your sins; it is as broad as the east is from the west, and it is from everlasting to everlasting, so that it fully answers all your wants and miseries. In Christ there is all you need or can desire. O sinner, here is blood to justify thee, and water to cleanse;

here the water of life, O believer, that will restore thy soul again, renew thy youth as the eagles, cure all thy diseases, and heal all thy pains. In a word, you have in Christ all that can make you good, all that can make you great, and all that can make you happy.

5. Consider *how near you are* to Christ and mercy: the remedy is prepared and salvation is brought to your very door; so that you need not say, Who will ascend to heaven to bring me down the water of life? for it is brought to earth to thy hand. You need not say, Who will roll me away the stone from the well's mouth? for Christ hath done it for thee, and it is now a fountain opened and running by your door. O it would be sad to be so near Christ and yet eternally miss him, to perish like the thief on the cross with a Saviour at your side, to be within a step of him and yet never touch him, yea, to sink into hell between the outstretched arms of his mercy, and with his sweet calls sounding in your ears. What a heart-stinging consideration will this be to you in that place of torment for ever. O then, stir up yourselves to take hold of Christ when he is so near, and in your offer. Strive earnestly while there is an ark prepared, and a window opened in the side of it, and the hand of mercy put forth to pull in shelterless doves that can find no rest elsewhere; I say, strive to come near by the wings of faith, make your nest at least beside the hole's mouth; be not found hovering without, lest the flood wash you off from the sides of the ark, and you perish miserably. If you be so foolish you will wish eternally that you had never heard of Christ, or that you had been born among heathen or Mahometans, that never heard a sermon.

6. Consider how *importunate* Christ is in his offers, and how much he presseth you to receive him: "Wisdom crieth in the streets." Prov. 1. Christ makes loud and open proclamation of himself, and oft repeats his calls "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come."

Isa. 55 : 1 Behold how earnest he is with sinners, that he bids them come to him three times in one verse—Come, come, come. What alluring methods hath he taken to gain your hearts. How tenderly and affectionately doth he call and court backward souls. “Hearken unto me, my people ; give ear unto me, O my nation.” What melting expressions are these : My people, my nation.

But if calls do not prevail, he comes himself to seek and save that which was lost. He came personally in the days of his flesh, and now he comes by his Spirit in his word and ordinances. The three wise men came from the East a long journey, to seek Christ ; but now Christ hath come from heaven to earth, a long journey, yea, come to every one of you to seek you ; and are you not willing to be found of him ?

Nay, he follows you when you run away from him, and pursues you with his gracious offers. As the rock followed the Israelites in the wilderness with its running streams of water, so Christ our spiritual rock follows you now with the streams of his mercy and blood, to wash and save you. O sinner, if you will not hear the words of his mouth, hearken to the calls of his wounds, which are opened as so many mouths to plead with you. He hath suffered his blessed side to be opened that ye might look into his bleeding heart, and see it panting with love. Will not this prevail ? Then behold him by faith on the cross, weighed down with your sins and the curses of a broken law, following you and calling after you. Hear him knocking with his pierced hands at the door of your heart, saying, “Open to me, poor perishing sinner ; give me a place in thy heart ; behold what I have suffered from heaven, earth, and hell for thee ; look what justice hath done ; look what the devil, the Romans, the Jews, and my own disciples have done. View my head, my side, my hands and my feet, my wounded body, and my bruised soul.” O canst thou find in thy heart to keep

Christ at the door, when thus wounded, bleeding, and mangled for thee? Wilt thou let him stand all the day long when he hath put on his dyed garments and red apparel to court thy backward heart, and when he is saying, "O sinner, if thou wilt not believe, reach hither thy hand and feel the print of the nails, yea, thrust it into my pierced side and feel my warm bleeding heart, and see if I love you not?" Wilt thou deny Him access, who hath done so much for thee?

Will not this prevail? Then behold him displaying his glorious beauty and excellency before thine eyes in a preached gospel to win thy heart. Will not ministers' commendations of him move thee? Then hear how he commends himself: "I am the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the valley; I am the true Vine; I am the good Shepherd," etc. And will you not believe his own report who cannot lie? Surely he is in good earnest with you when he takes this course.

Will not this do? Then hearken how passionately he mourns your folly in rejecting him. He sighs when he mentions it: "O that my people had hearkened unto me!" He bitterly laments it: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not!" He doubles the name to show his tender affection, as David when he mourns for his son Absalom, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son!" "How often would I have gathered you under my wings!" How many an affectionate sermon, call, and invitation have I given you, but all to no purpose. Shall I go through a sea of wrath and blood to save you, and will you not accept of me when I have done it? Shall I shed my blood in vain? Shall I bear the wrath of God, the scorn of men, the terror of death, and the curse of the law to no effect? Will you still prefer your sins before me, and hear Satan's knocks sooner than mine?

Hear that compassionate complaint, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." As if he had

said, "Why run ye so fast from your Saviour? Why come ye not to me, who am come from heaven to seek and save you? It is not an enemy, but a friend ye run from. Ye will go without much pressing to the devil to get death and eternal damnation, but ye will not come to me to get life and eternal salvation. O, what inexpressible madness are ye guilty of!

Behold how he wept for self-destroying Jerusalem rejecting his offers, Luke 19:41. When he sat down to consider their case, his bowels yearned with pity, his tongue broke forth in lamentation, and his eyes gushed out with tears; so that his weeping even interrupted his voice, and made him utter short and abrupt expressions: "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day," etc., where he seems to pause at every other word, and drop first a word and then a tear. What a moving sight was this, to see the Son of God in such a pang of grief and flood of tears for lost sinners! Had he been inquired of by his disciples, "Blessed Lord, what seekest thou? why weepest thou?" his answer readily would have been, "I seek not myself, I weep not for myself, for I shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord though sinners be not gathered; but I weep to see sinners so mad as to reject their Saviour and salvation; it is my grief to see them rather cast themselves headlong into the devil's arms, than throw themselves into my arms of mercy, or embrace me in the arms of their faith." O, did Christ weep for you, poor sinners, and will ye not weep for yourselves? Did his heart melt with pity for you, and will not yours melt with desire towards him?

Can he do more to win your hearts than this? Yea if this do not, he is pleased to expostulate the matter with you, and lay your danger before you: "Turn ye turn ye; for why will ye die?" Yea, he condescends to reason the matter with you in a familiar way: "Come, let us reason together." "O my people, what have I done unto thee? What iniquity have ye found in me?" What

want or unsuitableness have ye seen in me? "Have I been a barren wilderness to you? Are not my ways equal?" Thus he seeks to draw you with the cords of a man, and with the bands of love. Hos. 11:4.

And if there arise OBJECTIONS in your heart against coming to Christ and receiving him for your Saviour, see how carefully in his word he answers them all; for he well foresaw every one of them: "Produce your cause," saith the Lord, "bring forth your strong reasons:" I am ready to hear and answer all your scruples.

"O," says some poor humbled soul, "I have no right to come to Christ, for I am a great sinner." O, saith Christ, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

"But I am the chief of sinners; my sins are red as crimson." O, saith Christ, I can make them white as wool. Nay, it was my errand into the world, to save such as thou art. 1 Tim. 1:15.

"But I am sick and wounded; what will Christ have to do with me?" O, saith Christ, it is my proper employment to be taken up with you; for the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. Matt. 9. Am not I the good Samaritan who am come to pour oil into thy sores, and tenderly bind up thy wounds? Psalm 147:3.

"But I have no ground to hope, for I am a lost wretch." O, saith Christ, I came for this very errand, to seek and save that which was lost, Luke 19:10; many a lost sheep have I sought and found.

"But I am past cure, for I am quite dead and in the grave of sin." O, saith Christ, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. John 11:25. And again he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. Eph. 5:14.

"But I am a slave to sin and Satan, and a prisoner to justice." O, saith Christ, I am come to proclaim liberty to

the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. Isa. 61 : 1. Yea, I have the key of David, that opens and none can shut; I have the blood of the covenant that brings prisoners out of the pit. Turn ye to the strong-hold, ye prisoners of hope. Zech. 9 : 11, 12.

“But I have heavy burdens that weigh me down.” O, saith Christ, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

“But my hand is withered; I cannot receive Christ or any thing from him.” Then do as the man who had the withered hand; obey Christ’s call, and he will enable thee to stretch out thy hand.

“But I am lame, and cannot walk in Christ’s way.” O, saith Christ, I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes. Ezek. 36.

“But what if Christ withdraw his Spirit and grace from me.” No, saith Christ, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. Heb. 13.

“But I shall be overcome by strong temptations.” No, saith Christ, my grace shall be sufficient for thee.

OBJECTION. But, saith some poor sinner, alas, my case is not yet touched, for it is singular; my sins are heinous and peculiar; they are against light, love, conscience, vows, and a thousand obligations. There is none that knows what a sinner I have been, but God and my own conscience. Will Christ ever accept of such a wretch as I?

ANSWER. Art thou worse than a devilish Manasseh, or a persecuting Paul, whom Christ pitied and saved? Art thou worse than Mary Magdalene? yet seven devils could not keep Christ out of her heart. Nay, though thy heart were as foul and black as hell, and thy life did swarm with the most abominable sins, yet Christ is both able and willing to save thee, if thou come to him. Are you worse than those in that black catalogue, 1 Cor. 6 : 9, 10? Read and see what a sad roll is there; and yet the apostle saith to the believing Corinthians, verse 2, “Such were some of you; but ye are washed,” etc. The blood

of Christ is a powerful fountain, and is able to wash away the greatest sins that ever were committed. God gave full proof of this, in that the worst sin we read of was cleansed by his blood after it was shed, even the murder of the Son of God. Acts 2: 36, 38. This was the most prodigious wickedness that ever the sun saw; yea, the sun fainted at the sight, as afraid to look on it; for suppose a man were able to pull heaven and earth to pieces, destroy the angels, and murder all mankind, he would not contract so monstrous a guilt as those did in crucifying the Son of God, whose person was infinitely superior to the whole creation. Yet thousands that were actors in this black tragedy were washed by his blood, to give us a convincing proof of its infinite value and virtue, and that no sin or guilt whatsoever was too strong for it. "The blood of Christ," saith John, "cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John, 1: 7.

OBJECTION. But though Christ's blood be sufficient, yet I have no right to it.

ANSWER. Be you what you may, you have a full and sufficient warrant from the gospel call to flee to it. See what Christ enjoins his apostles to do: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16: 15. "Make offer of my blood to all without distinction, even to the worst of sinners, be they never so wicked; yea, though they have sinned themselves into the likeness of beasts or devils, yet, offer my blood, my mercy, and merits to them; invite and press them to come unto me, and him that cometh I will in no wise cast out." O sinner, accept of the gospel offer, and whatever you have been, you shall find there is mercy enough in God to pity you, merit enough in Christ's blood to purchase a pardon for you, and prevalency enough in his intercession to procure and apply it to you.

OBJECTION. But I have often slighted the gospel offer, and trampled on this precious blood; with what confidence can I claim it?

ANSWER. Since Christ doth not exclude you, you ought not to exclude yourself; but should reckon that you have the greater need to hasten to this blood, the more heinous your sins be; yea, you have a peculiar ground to plead for pardon by it. See how David pleads it, Psalm 25:2: "Pardon my iniquity;" why? "for it is great." This would be a strange argument with men, pardon my crime, for it is great; but it is a strong argument with God: Lord, it is great, and so I have the more need of pardon; it is great, and so thou wilt have the greater honor in pardoning me, even as a physician hath in curing a desperate disease. The sinning against Christ's blood, or slighting it, is indeed a very heinous sin; but the more so it is, the more need you have to hasten to this blood as the only fountain that can wash away the guilt of trampling on it; and this indeed can do it effectually. Nay, though you had actually shed this blood, as the Jews did, yet, if you be humbled for it, you are welcome to come to it for mercy. Observe that commission which Christ gave his apostles, Luke 24:46, 47, where he orders them to preach repentance and remission in his name to all nations; and begin, saith he, at Jerusalem. O, might they say, why at Jerusalem? To be sure it is not our part to begin there, where they mocked, pierced, and crucified the Lord of glory. Nay, says he, begin there, for these miserable wretches have most need of my blood to wash them. If any thing could alienate Christ's heart from sinners, the consideration of their crucifying him, and using him so despitefully might have done it; yet, says he, go make offer of my blood and mercy to these my murderers; and accordingly it was done by Peter, Acts 2, and many of them had this blood applied to them.

OBJECTION. But as my sins are grievous in their nature, so they are vast in their number; they are even like the sand by the seashore, both weighty and without number.

ANSWER. Remember the merit of Christ's blood is in-

finite, but the number of thy sins is not so; nay, though they were ten thousand times more than they are, they could not stop the current of this ever-flowing and overflowing fountain; though thy sins be very numerous and extensive, yet the sea of Christ's blood can cover them all, and hide them from the sight of God, so that they shall never again appear or rise up against you in judgment.

OBJECTION. But my sins are not only grievous in their nature, and vast in their number, but they are of very long continuance. I am an old sinner, long have lain in the grave of sin; surely Christ will never accept of me.

ANSWER. Your sins may be old, yet they are not so old as Christ's mercies, which are from everlasting. It is not the first old disease that Christ hath cured: he raised Lazarus with a word, who had lain four days in the grave; he stopped a bloody issue that had run twelve years, with the hem of his garment; he loosed a poor woman that Satan had bound eighteen years; he cured an impotent man that had had an infirmity thirty-eight years; and can he not as easily cure all your old soul-diseases? He received those that came in at the eleventh hour, yea, saved some at the last hour, particularly the thief on the cross, whom the devil thought he was sure of, having drawn him to the mouth of hell, just ready to cast him in; yet even then, upon his looking to Christ, did the arms of mercy catch hold of him.

What more canst thou object, O sinner? Hath not Christ provided answers to all thou canst say, either against thyself or him? Hath he not given unanswerable demonstrations of his ability, fulness, fitness, and willingness to be thy Saviour? Hath he not given full proof of his earnest desire to save thee, by the many methods he takes to prevail with sinners to accept of him? Will not all the pains he hath hitherto taken prevail with thy obstinate heart? What more would you have Christ do for unwilling sinners? There is yet one step further he makes, and that is a very low one; he even, as it were,

turns a humble supplicant to thee, and beseeches thee to be reconciled to him: read 2 Cor. 5:20, "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." O, wonderful condescension; behold divine mercy importuning the sinner to receive his Saviour, accept of his pardon, save his soul, and be reconciled to God in Christ. Be astonished, O heavens! Shall the sovereign Creator turn supplicant to the vile traitor, and follow him with his remission? Or, the loving father to the prodigal child, and follow him with entreaties? And, O sinner, will thy stubborn heart be able to refuse peace, or slight the blessed peacemaker Jesus Christ, after all this pains? If all his arguments prevail nothing, yet one would think that the humble entreaties of the great God will certainly do it; how can you resist these?

OBJECTION. I have no strength to come to Christ; I cannot believe of myself; I have a dead and hard heart, and I cannot help it.

ANSWER 1. Canst thou say in good earnest that thou art willing and desirous to embrace a Saviour, if thou wert able? Alas, it is here that it sticks; whatever you pretend, you are not truly willing: it is our unwillingness that ruins us; it is not so much for want of power as want of will, that sinners want Christ; were you once willing, strength would not be wanting. O to get the will conquered and made to surrender to Christ, then the day were won. O for one gift more of omnipotent grace, to make you willing in the day of God's power.

2. Labor for a deep sense of thy own impotency; take your dead heart and lay it before God, and plead for pity. It is true, God is not bound to hear your prayer, but you may expect he will do it out of his great goodness and mercy. He hears the ravens when they cry; O then, cry to him in a deep sense of want; be as earnest seeking faith, as your daily bread; cry as fervently for the life of your souls, as you would for the life of your bodies if about

to shine forth; so neither will it be to thee to show thy power and mercy; a look or touch from thee will do it. A little thing will save a drowning man; Lord, suffer me not to perish, when it is so easy for thee to prevent it. Lord, grant a hungry beggar alms out of the ocean of thy bounty. As the sun, the more it shines, displays its glory the more; so thou wilt gain glory by putting forth thy power to help such a helpless creature as I am."

OBJECTION. I have often looked and cried to him for help; but alas, I am such a grievous sinner he doth not answer me, unless it be with a frown.

ANSWER 1. It may be there is some idol or sin still harbored, that thou art not willing to part with. This may be the Achan in the camp, that causeth the Lord to hide his face; search for it, and cast out the accursed thing; let not thine eye pity it, neither do thou spare it. If thou canst not find it, go humbly to God, and cry, Show me, Lord, wherefore thou contendest with me.

2. It may be thou art not in earnest. God keeps the door bolted, that you may be provoked to knock the harder: "Ask, and it shall be given; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Mat. 7:7. In that one verse you have three calls to fervency: not only ask, but seek; not only seek, but knock. The woman of Canaan readily took up the meaning of Christ's refusing to answer her; she turns the more fervent and importunate, and so gets all her will.

3. Resolve, whatever discouragement you meet with, you will never quit the throne of grace, but will always lay yourself in Christ's way, and never look to another for help; yea, that you will die waiting on him. Remember the psalmist's experience: "I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined his ear, and heard my cry." Psalm 40:1. Never any yet that waited on him, had cause to be ashamed. You may meet with many discouragements and temptations, and be put to very bad thoughts, but you must be resolute in looking to Christ for help,

come what will. In imitation of the four lepers at the siege of Samaria, reason with yourself, If I live at a distance from Christ, I shall infallibly perish, there is no hope for me: if Christ pity me not when I am waiting on him, I shall but perish; yet there is hope he will have pity; therefore if I perish, I'll perish at Christ's footstool, looking to him, where never one yet perished, and he will not let me be the first.

4. Make use of arguments in pleading with him.

1. Plead the freeness of his mercy; it needs no motive and expects no worth, but, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." It runs freely, so that mountains cannot stop the current of it. Indeed, Lord, "if sin and unworthiness could stop mercy, I might despair, for I am as unworthy a creature as ever the sun shone upon; but blessed be God, grace is grace."

2. Plead Christ's commission, Isa. 61:1. He was sent "to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound." Lord, hear a poor prisoner, a frozen, locked, bound-up heart; loose me, knock off my fetters, and bring my soul out of prison. Thou hast all fulness dwelling in thee, and thou hast it to bestow on such miserable objects as I am; Lord, here's a naked body for thee to cover, an empty soul for thee to fill, a wounded soul for thee to cure. Lord, thou camest to seek and save that which was lost, and wilt thou not be found of a lost sinner that is seeking thee?

3. Plead the communicativeness of his mercy to others: he had compassion upon men's bodies while he was upon earth, even the bodies of wicked men, such as the unthankful lepers, he let none of them go without healing that came to him; say, Lord, didst thou show so much compassion to diseased bodies, and wilt thou not have pity on my dying soul? Plead the compassion he hath shown to the worst of sinners, such as Manasseh, Mary Magdalene, Paul, and those who murdered him. Plead his compassion towards the finally obstinate and impenitent, such

as Jerusalem, over which he wept, Luke 19. Lord, did thy heart melt with pity to such, and wilt thou not pity a humbled sinner, that confesseth sin, and would fain be reconciled to God; is not mercy the work thou delightest in? Mic. 7:18.

4. Labor for a sense of the misery of a Christless state, of your great need of Christ, and of the happiness of being found in him; and in a sense thereof, look to Christ and make a trial to take hold of him; stir up yourself to it, and rest your soul on him, and God will help you and communicate strength. "Who is this that engageth his heart to approach unto me?" Jer. 30:21. He will pity and help such. If you cannot apply Christ to yourself and say, He is mine, yet apply yourself to Christ and say, I fain would be thine; yea, I am resolved to be thine. Go to Christ, and say with the poor man, "Lord. I believe; help thou my unbelief."

WHAT SHALL I DO FOR JESUS?

FIRST ask, *Did I ever do any thing for Jesus?* There are many things done in the church, and by professors in the world, which are not done for Jesus. There is some other object in view. The eye is not single. The heart is not true. The motive is not pure. Did you ever give yourself to the Lord? This is the first thing to be done. Jesus will not accept any thing from you until you have given him yourself. His first claim is, "My son, give me thy heart." Withhold from him the heart, and you withhold from him all. He will approve of nothing that you do. He will receive nothing from your hands. You are his enemy. You are in rebellion against him. You refuse to acknowledge his claims. You withhold his just rights. You grieve his loving heart. If you have not consecrated yourself to him, let me beseech you to go to his throne, present yourself before him as a humble suppliant, offer him your heart just as it is, saying,

"Take my poor heart just as it is,
Set up therein thy throne;
So shall I love thee above all,
And live to thee alone."

Having given him yourself, you may ask with Saul of Tarsus, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And be sure that he has something for you to do, and something that no one will do so well as you—something that no one ought to do but you. He will say, "Son, go work to-day in my vineyard." What *can* you do? This you can never tell until you try. What are you *willing* to do? This you may soon ascertain.

There is the Sabbath-school. Can you do any thing for Jesus there? Can you take a class? If not, can you go

round the neighborhood and collect the children who are still untaught, that others may teach them?

There is the house of prayer. Can you do any thing there? Is it full? If so, can you not look out for young persons who attend, unnoticed by any in the congregation, and notice them, trying to get from them whether they feel the power of the word, and can you not follow up the preacher's appeals by a word in private? Great good may be done in this way, if the people of God are alive to its importance, and will do it for Jesus.

Is the congregation thin? Cannot you increase it? Did you ever set about trying in good earnest? Is there no *one* that you could influence to attend? *What, not me?* If you could influence one, that one may influence another; and in this way our churches would soon be filled.

There is the minister. Can you do nothing for him? Do you regularly contribute for his support, *according to your means*, not making the subscription of any one else your rule, but giving as God has prospered you—doing it for Jesus? Do you set apart a certain portion of time every week, that you may pray for him? Are you regular in your attendance on his ministry and always early, that you may pray for him as you see him enter his pulpit? Do you take inquirers to him, encouraging them to go and open their hearts to him when concerned for the salvation of their souls?

There are the sick. Do you ever visit them? Jesus takes the visits paid to his sick saints as paid to himself. He says, "I was sick, and ye visited me." "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." How often do the Lord's sick lie and long to see a fellow-worshipper or a fellow-member come in, to read a portion of God's holy word, to offer up the prayer of faith, or to speak a word to him of Jesus. How many fears may be banished, how many temptations may be removed, how many sufferers may be cheered, how

many sorrowful believers may be comforted, if their fellow-believers, instead of indulging self, should visit them for Jesus, and speak to them of Jesus.

There are the poor. Will you relieve them? The poor saints, more especially. Jesus takes what is given to them as given to himself, and promises a reward. Hear his words, believe them, try to realize the truth and importance of them, that you may be influenced by them: "Who-soever shall give to drink unto *one of these little ones* a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, *verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.*" Mat. 10:42. You see, if you relieve the least saint with the smallest gratuity, not being able to do more, and do it for Jesus, he pledges his word that you shall on no account lose your reward. And how striking is the language of the Holy Spirit by the apostle James: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Jas. 1:27. Tried by this standard, *how much pure religion have you?* Some church-members have very little. When did you dry the widow's tears, and satisfy the orphan's wants—going *to them*, and not waiting for them to come to you? Will you do this for Jesus?

There are the enemies of Christ, as all careless sinners are. You may speak to them, offer special prayer for them, and try to *win them* to his cause. "He that winneth souls is wise." But if we would win, we must be winning. Love is the key of the human heart. Once get it in, and you may soon open the door. Love will use gold, silver, kind words, and winning deeds, and thus gain access to the heart that was locked against truth and against God. Did you ever attempt to do this for Jesus?

Once more, there is the heathen world. Men and money are wanted; you may help to provide them. The power of the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary; you may help to bring down that. There is plenty to do, and no

time to be lost; for while we trifle or delay, Satan is working, time is flying, souls are perishing, saints are suffering, the cause of God is languishing, infidelity is spreading, and we are missing the mark.

Let every Christian man, let every Christian woman, then, put the question to the heart—WHAT CAN I DO FOR JESUS? What *more* can I do than I have done? What *more* can I give than I have given? Consider what he has done for you, what he is now doing for you, what he has already given you, what he has promised you, what he deserves from you, what he expects at your hands, the honor he has put upon you, the trust he has committed to you, the charge he has given you, the account he will demand of you, the rule by which he will reward you, and then ask, *What can I do for Jesus?* And if there be any faith in his blood, if there be any love to his name, if there be any reverence for his authority, if there be any concern for his cause, if there be any zeal for his glory, if there be any pity for sinners, if there be any regard for his word, ask, and be honest in asking, *What can I do for Jesus?* Reader, there is much needs doing, there is much that you may do, and if you stand idle now, you must regret it by and by; rouse, therefore—

“Rouse to some work of high and holy love,
And thou an angel’s happiness shalt know—
Shalt bless the world while in the world above:
The good begun by thee shall onward flow,
In many a branching stream, and wider grow;
The seed that in these few and fleeting hours
Thy hands unsparing and unwearied sow,
Shall deck thy grave with amaranthine flowers,
And yield thee fruits divine in heaven’s immortal bowers.”

THE
PREËMINENCE OF CHRIST.

THERE is but *One* to whom the *preëminence* belongs, God has determined that no mere creature should bear that honor, “that no flesh should glory in his presence.” On his dear Son, as is most meet, he has bestowed it; on his head he has placed the universal crown of glory—to his hand he has given the sceptre of universal peace, and seated him on the throne of universal dominion, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come; and hath put *all* things under his feet, and made him to be the Head over *all* things to the church—“that in ALL things he might have the preëminence.” Eph. 1: 20, 22; Col. 1: 18.

Let us see how He has the preëminence in the estimation of the Deity—in the testimony of Scripture—in the glory of his works—in the hearts of believers—and in the worship and acclamations of heaven.

1. Christ has the preëminence in the estimation of THE DEITY.

On whom does God the Father concentrate his love and delight? Jehovah calls him, “his own Son,” his “dear Son,” his “beloved Son,” his “elect,” his “chosen,” his “precious one,” his “beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased.” St. John uses an expression implying a love the depths of which no human intellect has ever fathomed:

the Only Begotten, which is *in the bosom of the Father*, that is, in his dear and intimate love, in his secret counsels and fondest embraces. And ere he had formed a star, or a river, or a mountain, or a plant, he gave him glory and honor: "the glory which I had with thee before the world was." John 1:18; John 17:5.

When he brought him into the world, he said, "Let all the angels of God worship him." Then the morning stars sang together for him, and for him the sons of God shouted for joy. At his baptism a voice from the excellent glory announced, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." At his transfiguration, he clad him in robes of light, made his face shine as the sun, and again proclaimed, "This is my beloved Son; hear him." Just before his agony, the Saviour prayed, "Father, glorify thy name;" and a voice said, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." When his sufferings were ended, sin put away, atonement made, and everlasting righteousness brought in, then Jehovah smelled a sweet savor from his oblation, and smiled with divine benignity on his victorious Son, because in that work he had frustrated hellish schemes, accomplished heavenly counsels, fulfilled inspired prophecies, glorified divine attributes, and saved immortal souls. He sent an angel to roll away the stone, loosed the prisoner from his bands, and "raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory" and "highly exalted him, and gave him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Heb. 1:6; Mat. 3:17; Luke 9:35; John 12:28; 1 Pet. 1:21; Phil. 2:9, 11.

And the same preëminence is given to him by the Holy Spirit. "He anointed him with the oil of gladness

above his fellows ;” he shed his influence upon him without measure ; he descended on his head like a dove at the day of his baptism ; and he, in the multitude of his thoughts within him, made God’s comforts to delight his soul. Psa. 45 : 7 ; John 3 : 34 ; Mat. 3 : 17 ; Psa. 94 : 19 ; 23 : 1.

And of whom does He speak—whom does he exalt in the hearts of his people ? “ He,” says Jesus, “ shall glorify *me*, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.” “ He shall testify of me.” Christ is the object to which the finger of the Spirit constantly points, and the fountain whence he draws all consolation to bleeding hearts. Oh, when the Spirit exalts his person, our souls are enamoured with his beauty. Oh, when he testifies of his works, how readily we say, “ My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.” Oh, when he exhibits his fulness to our famished spirits, we cannot but exclaim, “ The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.” Oh, when he sheds abroad the love of our incarnate God, we cannot but “ love Him who first loved us.” Brethren, in the estimation of Deity, “ in all things he has the præminence.” John 15 : 26 ; 1 John, 4 : 19.

2. Christ has the præminence in THE TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE.

Whom among the inhabitants of heaven do the Scriptures compare unto the Lord ? whom among the sons of the mighty do they compare unto Christ ? “ Search the Scriptures,” said Jesus, “ for they are they which testify of *me*.” The books of Moses, the Psalms, and the prophets, have writings concerning me. His name is like precious ointment, poured forth on the pages of Scripture, which gives fragrance and unction to every portion of the volume. The lines of both Testaments meet in him as in one common centre. In the testimonies of the Bible concerning

the glory, grace, and work of Christ, the Old Testament confirms the New, and the New Testament illustrates the Old. The New Testament tells me that I am to see him in Adam as my covenant Head ; in Noah, as my Rest ; in Joseph, as my Saviour ; in Judah, as my Surety ; in Aaron, as my Priest ; in Moses, as my Mediator ; in Joshua, as my Commander ; in David, as my King ; in Solomon, as my Wisdom ; in Jonah, as my Resurrection ; in the ark, as my Refuge ; in the mercy-seat, as my Propitiation ; in the temple, as my Flesh ; in the passover, as my Deliverer ; in the brazen serpent, as my Medicine ; in the red heifer, as my Sanctification ; in the feasts, as my Joy . in the cloud, as my Guide ; in the manna, as my Food ; in the rock, as my spiritual Drink ; in his presence, as my Glory. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy;" that is, the cream, the essence, the substance, the aim and end of all prophecy. Without the preëminence of Christ, like Samson shorn of his locks, they become like other writings ; but admit this, and then there is but one gospel under all dispensations—but one Saviour for all sinners. And whoever are the speakers or writers, whether patriarchs, or prophets, or kings, or angels, or poets, or apostles, or disciples, each vies with the other to give Christ the preëminence. The glories of heaven and the wonders of the earth ; the honors of offices, or the happiness of relations ; the attractions of beauty or the authority of dignity, are chosen as metaphors to set forth the preëminent excellence of Christ. John 5 : 39 ; Luke 24 : 44 ; Rom. 5 : 14 ; Gen. 5 : 29 ; 1 Pet. 3 : 21 ; Acts 7 : 9 ; Heb. 7 : 14 ; 5 : 4 ; 3 : 2 ; 4 : 8 ; Mark 11 : 10 ; Mat. 12 : 42 ; 12 : 40 ; Heb. 6 : 18 ; Rom. 3 : 25 ; John 2 : 21 ; 1 Cor. 5 : 7 ; John 3 : 14 ; Heb. 9 : 13 ; 1 Cor. 5 : 8 ; 10 : 1 ; John 6 : 51 ; 1 Cor. 10 : 4 ; Jude 24 ; Rev. 19 : 10.

Sometimes the church is compared to a building, and then He is the only and sure Foundation ; the Corner-stone,

precious and tried; the Door into the heavenly edifice, and the Top-stone, who bears the glory. 1 Pet. 2:5; Isa. 28:16; John 10:9; Zech. 6:13.

Sometimes believers are represented as an army inferior in number and discipline to the mighty army by which they are opposed, and then he is exhibited as the Captain of the Lord's host; the Deliverer of Israel; the Forerunner who has attained the citadel, crowned with the laurels of his victory and the trophies of his war. At other times, if in straits or difficulties, we are bid to engage Him on our behalf who is the Wonderful, Counsellor, the Advocate with the Father, the Defender and Pleader of the cause of the widow and the orphan, the Judge of quick and dead. Josh. 5:14; Rom. 11:26; Heb. 6:20; Isa. 9:6; 1 John, 2:1; Isa. 1:17; Acts 10:42.

When our relations are dead, or unkind, or unable to assist us, we are referred to Him who unites in himself all relations. He is a Brother born for adversity, a Friend that loveth at all times; the everlasting Father, who pities his children; the Bridegroom, in whose presence the bride cannot mourn; the good Master, who rewards his servants with the best wages; and the Servant who undertook to come from heaven to save us. Prov. 17:17; 18:24; Isa. 9:6; Mat. 9:15; 23:8; Phil. 2:7.

He is the true Vine, the Branch of righteousness, the tender Plant, the plant of Renown, the Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the valley, the Tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God. Jer. 33:15; Isa. 53:2; Ezek. 34:29; Sol. Song 2:1; Rev. 2:7.

All created good has no glory and beauty, by reason of his beauty and glory which excelleth; for He is the beauty of the Lord, the Brightness of his Father's glory and the express Image of his person, the Diadem of beauty, the Crown of glory, the Desire of all nations. Psa. 27:4; Heb. 1:3; Isa. 62:3; Hag. 2:7.

He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, who for his courage and strength is worthy to take the book, and to unloose the seals thereof. He is the Lamb of God, who, by his patience, purity, and blood-shedding, taketh away the sin of the world. Rev. 5 : 5 ; John 1 : 29.

He is the Sun of righteousness, the centre of the system of mercy to fallen man, the Light of the world, the bright and morning Star, the Dayspring from on high which has visited us. Mat. 4 : 2 ; John 8 : 12 ; Rev. 22 : 16 ; Luke 1 : 78.

Are any of you discouraged because of the way, and oppressed with difficulties ? Ascend higher than the material heavens. Within the veil he sits, the Angel of God's presence, the Heir of all things, the Lord of hosts, the King of saints, the Lord of glory. Heb. 9 : 12 ; Isa. 63 : 9 ; Heb. 1 : 2 ; Isa. 54 : 5 ; Rev. 15 : 3 ; 1 Cor. 2 : 8.

See the offices and characters your Lord sustains, and be comforted, beloved. These are all characters in which he has no equal ; offices which he executes with unrivalled majesty and blessedness. He is the good Shepherd who gave his life for you, the Bishop of your souls, the Prophet mighty to save you, the Priest after the order of Melchisedek, the Saviour of the world, the Refiner and Purifier of the sons of Levi, the Mediator of the new covenant, the Minister of the sanctuary, the Physician of souls, the Word of God, the Resurrection, the Propitiation, the Fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, the living Bread, the Way, the Truth, the Life, our Hope, our Peace, our Wisdom, our Righteousness, our Sanctification, our Redemption, the Author and Finisher of our faith. John 10 : 11 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 25 ; Luke 24 : 19 ; Heb. 5 : 6 ; John 4 : 42 ; Mat. 3 : 3 ; Heb. 12 : 24 ; 8 : 2 ; Mat. 9 : 12, 13 ; Rev. 19 : 13 ; John 11 : 25 ; 1 John, 2 : 2 ; Zech. 13 : 1 ; John 6 : 51 ; 14 : 8 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 1 ; Eph. 2 : 14 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 24 ; 1 : 30 ; Heb. 12 : 2.

The Scriptures style him Jehovah-jireh, (the Lord will provide;) Jehovah-nissi, (the Lord my banner;) Jehovah-shalom, (the Lord send peace;) Jehovah-rophi, (the Lord that healeth thee;) Jehovah-tsidkenu, (the Lord our righteousness;) Jehovah-shammah, (the Lord is there;) the Prince of peace; the Prince of life; the King of Zion; the King of righteousness; the King of the Jews; Emmanuel, God with us; the living God; the true God; the only wise God; the God over the whole earth; the mighty God; God over all, blessed for evermore; Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, or can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen." Gen. 22:14; Exod. 17:15; Judges 6:24; Exod. 15:26; Jer. 23:6; Ezek. 48:35; Isa. 9:6; Acts 3:15; Mat. 21:5; Heb. 7:2; Mat. 2:2; 1:23; 1 Tim. 4:10; 1 John, 5:20; Jude 25; Isa. 54:5; 9:6; Rom. 5; Rev. 22:13; Heb. 13:8; 1 Tim. 6:14, 15.

3. Christ has the præminence in THE GLORY OF HIS WORKS.

"By him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Col. 1:16.

Nor is his work of providence less glorious than his work of creation. "All power is given unto him in heaven and in earth;" he upholdeth all things by the word of his power; the government is upon his shoulder. And what must this be! The government of your little family often crushes you beneath its weight; the government of one little spot on the earth has broken many a heart, and sent many a noble patriot to an untimely grave; but the

reins of universal government are in his hands; by him kings reign, and princes decree justice; the eyes of all wait upon him, and he giveth them their meat in due season. The helpless, the widow, the fatherless, the needy, he provides for and protects; while every event in the life of an individual, in the existence of a family, in the history of a nation, in the government of the world, he overrules for his own glory and the final triumph of his church, that in all things he might have the preëminence. Mat. 28:18; Heb. 1:3; Isa. 9:6; Prov. 8:15; Psalm 145:15.

And is not his work of redemption a glorious work? What can equal it in nobleness of design? "glory to God in the highest;" in the blessing it brings? "peace on earth;" in the aspect it bears? "good-will towards men." Sin had slain us all; the curses of a broken law tied and bound our souls; justice called aloud to us bankrupts, "Pay me that thou owest," and nothing but the prison of hell stood before us as our portion. But Jesus bowed himself to the burden, and the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all; he was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. By himself he purged our sins; his own arm brought salvation; he loved us, and gave himself for us. And think, Oh think what this work does. Which of all the works of men or of angels can procure such benefits? Because Christ has by his atonement magnified the divine law, satisfied inflexible justice, and honored all the divine attributes, God can, without any sacrifice of his holiness, or any impeachment of his veracity, pardon the vilest penitent, and save the most abandoned sinner. He is just, while he justifies the ungodly. Where sin abounded, grace, in this work of our adorable Saviour, does much more abound. It brings freely to

man all the blessings he needs, to render him innocent before God, happy in his own soul, a blessing to his neighbor, and meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Isa. 53 : 6 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 21 ; Gal. 3 : 13 ; Heb. 1 : 3 ; Isa. 63 : 5 ; Eph. 5 : 25 ; Rom. 4 : 5 ; 3 : 26 ; 5 : 20.

Beloved, hearken, all you who are guilty, "His blood cleanseth us from all sin;" all you who are condemned, "His righteousness is unto all, and upon all them that believe;" all you who have long scores of transgressions, "Through him is preached unto you forgiveness of sins;" all you who sit down in despair, and say there is no hope, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out;" yea, he stands before you full of power, majesty, and love, saying, "Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." Surely in all things that relate to the redemption of man, Christ has the preëminence. 1 John, 1 : 7 ; Rom. 3 : 22 ; Acts 13 : 38 ; John 6 : 37 ; Isa. 14 : 22.

4. Christ has the preëminence in THE HEARTS OF BELIEVERS.

There are many very dear to the saints, many who have walked to the house of God in company with them, their fellow-pilgrims to the hill of Zion—their dear Jonathans, dear as their own souls: then they have their precious husbands—their precious wives—their precious children—their precious health—their precious property—their precious life; but in their hearts who has the preëminence, who is welcomed to take the throne? Every voice of every redeemed spirit in his family would say, Christ, none but Christ. "Unto you which believe he is precious:" the word in the original is *preciousness*, that is, preciousness itself—preciousness in the abstract—all preciousness. 1 Pet. 2 : 7.

And although Christians are split into a thousand various sects, dissevered from one another by non-essential

distinctions, and scattered over the whole globe, yet, find one of any sect that has embraced Christ and believes in him, of any color, any clime, and language, and ask him, What think you of Christ? And his answer will be, "He is the chiefest among ten thousand, the altogether lovely." Gather them all together, and though they have fought many a battle for a feather, and triumphed over each other where the victory was not worth having, and ask them to join in a hymn of praise to Christ; and with all harmonious human tongues, and in melodies which would charm an angel, and in hallelujahs which would make the pillars of heaven tremble, they would sing, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen." Many of them have proved it by their actions. Abram left his kindred, his country, and his father's house, for Christ; he rejoiced to see Christ's day; he saw it, and was glad. Moses, though he stood fair for the throne, esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. Paul counted his birthright honors, prospects, gains, but dung, that he might win Christ. Stephen cheerfully submitted to be stoned for him; the apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And the blessed martyrs were stoned, were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword, and would not accept deliverance at the price of denying him. Rev. 1 : 5 ; John 8 : 56 ; Heb. 11 : 26 ; Phil. 3 : 8 ; Acts 7 : 60 ; 5 : 41.

And no wonder; who should be preëminent in their esteem, if Christ is not? He laid aside his robes of glory and took their flesh, to become their kinsman; he redeemed them from slavery, not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with his own precious blood; he clothed them with the garments of salvation, and covered* them

with the robe of righteousness; he has opened the gates of paradise, and removed the flaming sword out of the way, for their free access to glory; he has gone to prepare mansions for them, and he will give them a throne, a crown, a white robe, a palm of victory, the vision of his glory, and everlasting rest. Oh, should not he be preëminent in their esteem? A thousand lives, if each had them, would be a small sacrifice for such love. The sweetest praise from the warmest heart must be cold and poor, compared with the immeasurable obligations under which his grace has laid them. Blessed Jesus, we beseech thee show us thy glory, that in our hearts thou mayest ever maintain the preëminence.

5. Jesus Christ has the preëminence in the happiness and acclamations of HEAVEN.

Whence springs all the happiness of heaven? It will be some part of that happiness, that the holy angels are there, who have attended us, ministered to us, and assisted us in a variety of ways, in all our afflictions and dangers. Oh, to be associated with those beings that never fell from their first estate, never sinned, and always do the will of their Father in heaven; surely this will be bliss. And it will add no small portion, to find the saints there, all the holy people the earth ever bore, gathered together to Christ, to be our companions for ever. Will you not rejoice, mother, to see your son there—your once rebellious, but in later years converted, and now glorified child, for whom you spent so many prayers, tears, and wrestlings? And will you not be happy, father, to find your daughter there, who aforetime was your cross, but regenerated and made a “chaste virgin to Christ?” And ye grandfathers and grandmothers, will not that be bliss, to see your sons’ sons and your daughters’ daughters there, “walking with Christ in white?” And you ministers, to see the children for whom you travailed in birth, and sometimes stood in

doubt, now crowned with glory? And ye friends, to see your fellow-laborers in the kingdom and patience of Christ—who prayed with you, heard with you, wept with you—now before the throne? And will not you be happy to find *yourself* there, after all your fears, dangers, and predictions to the contrary, without sin, and in glory unspeakable? Oh yes; but in all things in heaven, He must have the preëminence. This is heaven. “Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.” Oh, to be with Christ! with him as my Redeemer, my portion, my all! And to see his glory, not, as I did here, veiled with clouds of doubts and sin, but without a veil. Oh, to see that face, once more marred than any man’s, now brighter than ten thousand suns—that head, once crowned with thorns, crowned with many crowns—those wounded hands, more brilliant than the topaz of Ethiopia. Oh, this is heaven! Methinks when a soul disimprisoned from the body ascends to glory, he stays not to look at Gabriel or Michael, as Dr. Watts intimates. No; Abraham and Moses and Elijah have no attractions for him, but he presses onwards through the ranks of redeemed spirits to the great white throne, fixes his longing eyes on Emmanuel, and casts his crown before him, saying, “My Lord and my God,”

“Lost in wonder, love, and praise.”

And who has the preëminence in all the acclamations and worship of heaven? Do angels and saints think of praising one another? Do they laud Abraham, or Moses, or Elijah, or Isaiah, or Daniel? Oh, no: what they were, Christ made them; what they have, Christ gave them; where they are, Christ brought them; and to praise them, would be to praise the work instead of the workman, the building instead of the architect. “This people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise.” In

heaven there shall be "as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Draw aside the veil, and take a glance at that blessed company. "I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen." And yet the chorus swells, and still the thunder rolls, and still the strain waxes louder and louder. "I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that is in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever." Rev. 19:6; 7:9-12; 5:11-13.

And now, beloved, let me entreat you,

1. Give him the preëminence in your *hearts*. How few hearts are Christ's temple; in how small a number has he the preëminence! Sin, pleasure, gain, have the preëminence. How many of you labor for these, welcome these! And will you harbor such a crew, that are robbing your soul of its peace now, and of its salvation here-

after? What, not let Christ in, who by warnings, afflictions, sermons, threatenings, has been knocking so long? What, not let Christ in, the Saviour of the lost, and the comforter of the miserable? What, not let Christ in, who brings with him pardon, peace, joy, heaven? Lift up your heads, O ye gates of indifference and sloth; I demand of you, in the name of my Master, be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors of unbelief and impenitence, and let the King of glory in. I repeat, Lift up your heads, O ye gates of indifference and sloth; I demand of you, in the name of my Master, be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors of unbelief and impenitence, and let the King of glory in.

If any doubt whether the salvation of Christ can extend to such a state of exceeding sinfulness as theirs, let them know, that the intent of the gospel is to proclaim the preëminent mercy and grace of the Lord Jesus. He pardons not like man, but as God. His forgiveness extends not to a few sins, but to all iniquities, though crimson and scarlet in their glowing colors. None were ever rejected by him because they were too great sinners. Let no man's heart fail him, then, concerning his mercy. If sin be eminent, grace is preëminent; "where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound." Rom. 5:20.

But if you rebel, if you will not *give* him the preëminence by submission, he shall *gain* it by conquest. Who art thou, O sinner—canst thou contend with him? Canst thou conquer Omnipotence? Go, uproot the everlasting mountains; go, command the tide not to flow, or the sun not to shine: they shall sooner obey thee, than thou shalt escape his detection, or screen thyself from his power. In the day of his preëminent glory, where wilt thou flee when his lips shall utter this command to his angels? "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me."

And you, O Christians, who have received Christ Jesus

the Lord, which of you can say you love him as you ought, serve him as he deserves, that he has the entire preëminence, that you live for him, give for him, think of him preëminently? What, not love Christ our King supremely?

“Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
 Prone to leave the God I love;
 Here 's my heart, O take and seal it,
 Seal it from thy courts above.”

2. Give Christ the preëminence in your *houses*. In the days of his flesh, there was no room for him in the inn; so now there is so much other company, that you have no room for him in your house. And why shut him out? Oh, was there ever such a guest? Does he not repay those who entertain him? Did he not repay Zaccheus for welcoming him to his abode? The first step he set on the threshold of his door, he exclaimed, “Zaccheus, this day is salvation come to this house.” So that when Christ is welcomed to any habitation, salvation comes with him. O blessed guest! O happy they who receive him joyfully! Was not Martha blessed for receiving him, her faith strengthened, and her brother raised to life? Did she repent then of having opened her house for Christ? O give Christ the preëminence in your houses, set up an altar for Christ, speak about Christ, teach your children and servants about Christ, govern them by the laws of Christ, and say, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

3. Labor that he may have the preëminence in *the whole world*. That preëminence he shall have, though his enemies oppose it. His Father has given him this patrimony: “I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.” Psa. 2:8. His Father has sworn it: “As I live, saith the Lord, all the earth shall be filled with my glory.” Presently the kingdoms of this world shall become the

kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. "He shall build the temple of the Lord, even he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne."

And who would not labor, like Samuel and Elijah and Isaiah and Daniel and Peter and Paul, to give him the preëminence? Brethren, ye that "make mention of the Lord, give him no rest till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth:" brethren, make wings for your riches, and bid them carry the glad tidings to the remotest river: brethren, ye who preach Christ, O preach him more, "exalt him and extol him, and make him very high"—higher and higher and higher in every sermon. And I, if I forget thee, O Jesus, let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee, O my Master and Lord, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Christ above my chief joy.

CHARACTERS

OF

A BELIEVING CHRISTIAN,

IN PARADOXES AND SEEMING CONTRADICTIONS.

BY THE CELEBRATED LORD BACON, WHO DIED IN 1626.

1. A CHRISTIAN is one that believes things he cannot comprehend; he hopes for things which neither he nor any man alive ever saw; yet in the issue, his belief appears not to be false; his hope makes him not ashamed.

2. He believes a virgin to be a mother of a son; and that very son of hers to be her maker. He believes HIM to have been shut up in a narrow room, whom heaven and earth could not contain. He believes him to have been born in time, who was and is from everlasting. He believes him to have been a weak child, carried in arms, who is the Almighty; and him once to have died, who only hath life and immortality.

3. He believes a most just God to have justified him, though a most ungodly sinner. He believes himself freely pardoned, and yet a sufficient satisfaction was made for him.

4. He believes himself to be precious in God's sight, and yet loathes himself in his own. He dares not justify himself even in those things wherein he can find no fault with himself, and yet believes God accepts him in those services wherein he is able to find many faults.

5. He praises God for his justice, and yet fears him for his merey. He is so ashamed that he dares not open his mouth before God; and yet he comes with boldness to God, and asks him any thing he needs. He is so humble as to acknowledge himself to deserve nothing but evil; and yet believes that God means him all good. He is one that fears always, yet is as bold as a lion. He is often sorrowful, yet always

rejoicing ; many times complaining, yet always giving thanks. He is the most lowly-minded, yet the greatest aspirer ; most contented, yet ever craving.

6. He bears a lofty spirit in a mean condition ; when he is ablest, he thinks meanest of himself. He is rich in poverty, and poor in the midst of riches. He believes all the world to be his, yet he dares take nothing without special leave from God. He covenants with God for nothing, yet looks for a great reward. He loses his life, and gains by it ; and while he loses it he saves it.

7. He lives not to himself, yet of all others he is most wise for himself. He denies himself often, yet no man loves himself so well as he. He is most reproached, yet most honored. He has most afflictions, and most comforts.

8. The more injury his enemies do him, the more advantages he gains by them. The more he forsakes worldly things, the more he enjoys them.

9. He believes the angels to be more excellent than himself, and yet accounts them his servants. He believes that he receives many good things by their means, and yet he neither prays to them for their assistance, nor offers them thanks, which he does not disdain to do to the meanest Christian.

10. He believes himself to be a king, how mean soever he be : and how great soever he be, yet he thinks himself not too good to be a servant to the poorest saint.

11. He is often in prison, yet always at liberty ; a free man, though a servant. He loves not honor among men, yet highly prizes a good name.

12. He would lay down his life to save the soul of his enemy, yet will not adventure upon one sin to save the life of him who saved his.

13. He swears to his own hinderance, and changeth not ; yet knows that his oath cannot tie him to sin.

14. He believes Christ to have no need of any thing he does, yet makes account that he relieves Christ in all his acts of charity. He knows he can do nothing of himself, yet labors to work out his own salvation. He professes he can do nothing, yet as truly professes he can do all things : he knows

that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, yet believes he shall go to heaven both body and soul.

15. He trembles at God's word, yet counts it sweeter to him than honey and the honey-comb, and dearer than thousands of gold and silver.

16. He believes that God will never damn him, and yet fears God for being able to cast him into hell. He knows he shall not be saved by, nor for his good works, yet he does all the good works he can.

17. He knows God's providence is in all things, yet is as diligent in his calling and business, as if he were to provide for his own happiness. He believes beforehand that God has purposed what he shall be, and that nothing can make him alter his purpose; yet prays and endeavors, as if he would force God to save him for ever.

18. He prays and labors for that which he is confident God means to give; and the more assured he is, the more earnest he prays. He believes his prayers are heard, even when they are denied, and gives thanks for that which he prays against.

19. He has within him both flesh and spirit, yet he is not a double-minded man; he is often led captive by the law of sin, yet it never gets dominion over him; he cannot sin, yet he can do nothing without sin. He does nothing against his will, yet maintains he does what he would not. He wavers and doubts, yet obtains.

20. He is often tossed and shaken, yet is as mount Zion. He is sometimes so troubled, that he thinks nothing to be true in religion; yet if he did think so, he could not at all be troubled. He thinks sometimes that God has no mercy for him, yet resolves to die in the pursuit of it. He believes, like Abraham, against hope, and though he cannot answer God's logic, yet, with the woman of Canaan, he hopes to prevail with the rhetoric of importunity.

21. He wrestles, and yet prevails; and though yielding himself unworthy of the least blessing he enjoys, yet, Jacob-like, he will not let him go without a new blessing. He sometimes thinks himself to have no grace at all, and yet how poor

and afflicted soever he be besides, he would not change conditions with the most prosperous man under heaven, that is a manifest worldling.

22. He thinks sometimes that the ordinances of God do him no good, yet he would rather part with his life than be deprived of them.

23. He was born dead; yet so that it had been murder for any to have taken his life away. After he began to live, he was ever dying.

24. And though he has an eternal life begun in him, yet he makes account he has a death to pass through.

25. He counts self-murder a heinous sin, yet is ever busied in crucifying the flesh, and in putting to death his earthly members: not doubting but there will come a time of glory, when he shall be esteemed precious in the sight of the great God of heaven and earth, appearing with boldness at his throne, and asking any thing he needs; being endued with humility, by acknowledging his great crimes and offences, and that he deserves nothing but severe punishment.

26. He believes his soul and body shall be as full of glory as them that have more; and no more full than theirs that have less.

27. His death makes not an end of him. His soul which was put into his body, is not to be perfected without his body; yet his soul is more happy when it is separated from his body, than when it was joined unto it: and his body, though torn in pieces, burnt to ashes, ground to powder, turned to rottenness, shall be no loser.

28. His Advocate, his Surety, shall be his Judge; his mortal part shall become immortal; and what was sown in corruption and defilement shall be raised in incorruption and glory; and a finite creature shall possess an infinite happiness. Glory be to God.

NOTE. These Paradoxes are inserted in several editions of Lord Bacon's works, but have recently been ascribed to Rev. Herbert Palmer, a leading member of the Westminster Assembly of Divines.

THE FULNESS OF CHRIST.

“IN HIM,” says the apostle Paul to the Colossians, “dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; and ye are complete in Him.” The inspired oracles abundantly show that our glorious Redeemer was not only man, but truly God; “able to save to the uttermost” all them that trust in Him.

I. The holy Scriptures ascribe to the Lord Jesus Christ all the peculiar and distinguishing NAMES of the supreme God.

JEHOVAH is a name peculiar to God—a name by which he is distinguished from all other beings. “I am the Lord [JEHOVAH] thy God.” “I am the Lord, [JEHOVAH,] that is my name.” “The Lord [JEHOVAH] is greater than all gods.” “The Lord [JEHOVAH] is the true God; he is the living God, and an everlasting King.” “Whose name alone is JEHOVAH.” This name is peculiarly descriptive of the divine nature, and altogether inapplicable to any created being. But it is repeatedly and emphatically ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ. After predicting his incarnation the prophet Isaiah exclaims, “Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength.” Again, “The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, [JEHOVAH,] make straight in the desert a highway for our God.” The prophet Jeremiah has called Christ Jehovah in the following remarkable prediction: “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD [JEHOVAH] OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” The Hebrew word which in these passages is translated Lord, is Yehovah—JEHOVAH. Exod. 20 : 2; Lev. 11 : 44; 18 : 30; 19 : 3; 20 : 7; 23 : 22; Isa. 42 : 8; Exod. 18 : 11; Jer. 10 : 10; Psa. 83 : 18; Isa. 26 : 4; 40 : 3; Matt 3 : 3; Mark 1 : 3; Luke 3 : 4; Jer. 23 : 5, 6.

Christ is frequently called *God*. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." That by the *Word* in this passage is intended *Jesus Christ*, appears from the fourteenth verse of the same chapter: "And the *Word* was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." "Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, *God* blessed for ever." "Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: *God* was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." John 1 : 1 ; Rom. 9 : 5 ; Heb. 1 : 8 ; 1 Tim. 3 : 16.

He is called the *mighty God*. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder ; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the *mighty God*, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace." Isa. 9 : 6.

He is called the *living God*. "That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." That Christ is here intended by the living God, is evident from the next verse: "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." 1 Tim. 3 : 15, 16.

He is called the *Son of God*, and the *true God*. "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.' "Truly this was the Son of God." 1 John 5 : 5, 10, 20 : Matt. 27 : 54.

He is called the *King of kings, and Lord of lords*. "Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." He whose "name is called The Word of God," "hath on his vesture, and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 19:13, 16.

He is called the *Holy One*. "Thou wilt not suffer thy Holy One to see corruption." "I know thee who thou art, the Holy One." "But ye denied the Holy One." Psa. 16:10; Acts 2:27; 13:35; Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34; Acts 3:14.

He is called the *Lord of hosts*. "Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and rock of offence to both houses of Israel." "Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." St. John assures us that Esaias said these things when he saw Christ's glory and spoke of him. Isa. 8:13, 14; 6:5; John 12:41.

He is called the *Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end, the Almighty*. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." "I am Alpha and Omega," the beginning and the end, "the first and the last." "I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore." Rev. 1:8, 11, 17, 18.

He is called *Saviour*. "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." "For unto you is born, this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." "That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." "We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." Luke 1:46, 47; 2:11; Tit. 2:10; Phil. 3:20.

He is called *Emmanuel*, which is, *God with us*, or God in our nature. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their

sins. And they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." Matt. 1 : 21-23.

These names are all expressly ascribed, in the holy Scriptures, to the Lord Jesus Christ. But they are the peculiar and distinguishing names of the supreme, infinite, and eternal first cause of universal existence. Jesus Christ is, then, the supreme, infinite, and eternal Jehovah.

II. DIVINE PERFECTIONS are, in the holy Scriptures, ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The uncreated, independent, and self-existent Jehovah is clothed with attributes which are essential to his nature; which cannot be ascribed to any being whose existence is derived and dependent; and which eminently distinguish the supreme Deity from all other beings. According to the Scriptures, he is omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, eternal, unchangeable, and infinitely holy, and righteous, and just, and merciful, and "long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth." All these perfections are also ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ is *omnipotent*. The apostle declares that "He is able to subdue all things to himself." Christ has said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the *Almighty*." Phil. 3 : 21; Matt. 28 : 18; Rev. 1 : 8.

Christ is *omnipresent and omniscient*. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." "Jesus knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man." "All the churches," said Christ, "shall know that I am he who searches the reins and hearts." Matt. 28 : 20; John 2 : 24, 25; Rev. 2 : 23.

Christ is *eternal and unchangeable*. He is from everlasting to everlasting. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." The great apostle, in writing to the Hebrews, applies to him the following passage from the one hundred and second Psalm. "And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the

works of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest ; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment ; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed ; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." Christ is "the King eternal and immortal." "Having neither beginning of days nor end of life." His "goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." He is expressly called the "everlasting Father." The voice of inspiration declares that "He liveth for ever and ever." Heb. 1:10 ; Psa. 102:25-27 ; Heb. 1:10-12 ; 1 Tim. 1:17 ; Heb. 7:3 ; Micah 5:2 ; Isa. 9:6 ; Rev. 4:9, 10 ; 5:14 ; 10:6.

Holiness and *justice*, and all other moral perfections are, in the Scriptures, ascribed to God, in an absolute and appropriate sense, in such a manner as to distinguish him from every created being. "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts." In this appropriate and distinguishing sense, and in the most forcible and unequivocal language, the same perfections are ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is emphatically called the Holy One, and the Just One. "Thou wilt not suffer thy Holy One to see corruption." "But ye denied the Holy One and the Just." "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust." Isa. 6:3 ; Psa. 16:10 ; Acts 2:27 ; 13:35 ; 3:14 ; 1 Pet. 3:18.

Indeed, every perfection which is essential to the supreme Deity, belongs equally, and in the same degree, to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." That is, the divine nature, with all its essential perfections and attributes, dwelleth in Christ, in the most full, perfect, and complete manner. The Godhead is the divine nature ; and the fulness of the Godhead implies every divine perfection. The fulness and all the fulness of the Godhead, are as strong expressions as the apostle could have used in proclaiming the Deity of Christ.

III. DIVINE WORKS are, in the holy Scriptures, ascribed to Jesus Christ.

We are taught, in the Scriptures, that Jehovah *created* the world. "I am the Lord that maketh all things, that

stretcheth forth the heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself." "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion." But the creation of the world is clearly and repeatedly ascribed to Jesus Christ. "All things," said John, when speaking of Christ—"all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; all things were created by him, and for him." Christ created the heavens and the earth, and all things that are therein. He created the spiritual and intelligent, as well as the material world. He created angels and men; the invisible world of glory; all the hosts of heaven; all created beings, and all worlds. For "without him was not any thing made that was made." Isa. 44 : 24 ; Jer. 10 : 12 ; 51 : 15 ; John 1 : 3 ; Colos. 1 : 16.

Christ is the great *preserver* of all created things. "By him all things consist." "Being the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power." But this is mentioned by the prophet as a work peculiar to the infinite Jehovah. "Thou, even thou, art Lord alone. Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth and all things that are therein, the seas and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all." "In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind." Colos. 1 : 17 ; Heb. 1 : 3 ; Neh. 9 : 6 ; Job 12 : 10.

The *government* of the world is a distinguishing work of God, and a work which evidently displays his infinite perfections. But Christ is the supreme Governor of the world. He is elevated far above all thrones and dominions, and made head over all things. All events are subject to his control. All created existence is at his disposal. He holds the reins of universal government in his own hands. "The government shall be upon his shoulder." "His dominion shall be from

sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth." "Far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things to the church." Isa. 9:6; Zach. 9:10; Eph. 1:21, 22.

Christ is the supreme *Judge* of all created intelligences. He judgeth all nations and all worlds; all men and angels; and will pass the final sentence on all his rational creatures at the judgment of the great day. For "the Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." John 5:22.

The work of *salvation* is a divine work. It is the work of the infinite Jehovah. "I, even I, am the Lord [JEHOVAH]; and beside me there is no Saviour." "I am the Lord [JEHOVAH] thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour." "And thou shalt know that I the Lord [JEHOVAH] am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob." But Christ is the Saviour, and the only Saviour of men. This is expressly asserted in many passages. "For we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them who obey him." "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Isa. 43:11; 43:3; 60:16; John 4:42; Heb. 5:9; Acts 4:12.

The *redemption* of sinners is called a spiritual creation. This is the new heavens and new earth mentioned by the prophet Isaiah; and which is represented as being a greater work than the creation of all things at the beginning. "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." To create 'Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy,' or, in other

words, to redeem any part of the moral world from bondage, sin, and destruction, and restore it to freedom, glory, and happiness, is a work so much greater than the creation of all things at the beginning of the world, that no comparison can be made between them. The work of redemption, then, is the most glorious manifestation that can be made of the perfections of the one only supreme and unchangeable Jehovah. But this precious work is repeatedly and explicitly ascribed to Jesus Christ. He is "the Redeemer who shall come to Zion;" the great "High-priest," who alone is able to atone for the transgressions of men; the only "Mediator" between heaven and earth. To redeem men from the bondage of sin and the dominion of Satan, to deliver them from the blackness of everlasting darkness, and to restore them to the liberty and felicity of God's children, were the great objects for which he came into the world, and which, as inspiration assures us, he faithfully accomplished. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Isa. 65 : 17, 18 ; 59 : 20 ; Heb. 2 : 17 ; 3 : 1 ; 4 : 14 ; 7 : 26 ; 1 Tim. 2 : 5 ; Heb. 8 : 6 ; 9 : 15 ; 12 : 24 ; Gal. 3 : 13.

Christ alone communicates to believers that *saving knowledge* of God which is essential to salvation. "No man knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." He is the author of all spiritual illumination. He is emphatically called, "The light of the world; and the light of life." "The true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Matt. 11 : 27 ; John 8 : 12 ; 9 : 5 ; 1 : 9.

Christ *changes the heart* of stone into a heart of flesh, administers the washing of regeneration, and sanctifies and cleanses the souls of believers. "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." "He washes away, in his own precious blood, the sins of believers; delivers them from the condemning sentence of the divine law; clothes them with his own spotless righteousness; and admits them to all the benefits of justifi-

cation, adoption, and sanctification." Colos. 3 : 10 ; 2 Cor. 4 : 16 ; Tit. 3 : 5 ; Eph. 5 : 25-27 ; 2 Cor. 3 : 18.

Christ grants *forgiveness of sins*. When a man sick of the palsy was brought to him, "Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee." And when the scribes were ready to accuse him of blasphemy for thus claiming divine power, he replied, "Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee ; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man *hath power on earth to forgive sins*, then saith he to the sick of the palsy, Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house." Matt. 9 : 2-6.

It is the work of Christ to *overcome Satan*, to bruise the serpent's head, and to "destroy," and bring to naught, "the works of the devil." He will cast the devil and all his angels, and all his followers, into the regions of eternal perdition. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." Rom. 16 : 20 ; Gen. 3 : 15 ; John 3 : 8 ; Matt. 25 : 41 ; Rev. 20 : 10.

Christ will *raise the dead*. "We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." "The hour is coming, in the which all who are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth : they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." At his command "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat ; the earth also, and the works which are therein, shall be burned up." Phil. 3 : 20, 21 ; John 5 : 28, 29 ; 2 Pet. 3 : 10.

He will conduct his redeemed family to the realms of immortal glory—to pleasures, riches, and honors which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the

heart of man." He will give to the church "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." He will create, support, and illumine the holy city, the new Jerusalem. And he will crown all humble believers with eternal glory, and make them "kings and priests unto God." Matt. 25 : 34 ; 1 Cor. 2 : 9 ; 2 Pet. 3 : 13 ; John 14 : 2, 3 ; Rev. 3 : 12 ; 21 : 2, 6, 10, 23 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 11 ; Rev. 1 : 6 ; 5 : 10.

Such are the works of our Lord Jesus Christ. And such, reason, common-sense, and divine revelation unitedly declare, are the peculiar and distinguishing works of the supreme, eternal, independent, and self-existent Jehovah.

IV. The Lord Jesus Christ is represented, in the holy Scriptures, as an object of RELIGIOUS WORSHIP. He is worthy to receive the supreme homage and adoration of all on earth, and all in heaven. All intelligent creatures are commanded to worship him as God. "That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." "And let all the angels of God worship Him." But we are expressly taught that the supreme God alone may be worshipped. "It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him *only* shalt thou serve." John 5 : 23 ; Heb. 1 : 6 ; Matt. 4 : 10 ; Luke 4 : 8 ; Deut. 6 : 13 ; 1 Sam. 7 : 3.

When Christ came, idolatry had extended its dominion over almost the whole world. One great end of his coming in the flesh was to destroy its dominion, and substitute in its stead the worship of the living God. But if he were not God, instead of destroying idolatry he must have taught the practice of it ; for he taught mankind to worship himself. In a prophecy of the incarnation and ministry of Christ, we read that "the Lord alone shall be exalted ; and the idols he shall utterly abolish." Isa. 2 : 17, 18.

None will contend, that if Christ were a mere creature he ought to be worshipped in the same manner as the infinite God. Supreme worship is due only to the supreme Jehovah. But the Scriptures declare that the same worship shall be rendered to God the Father, and to Jesus Christ, without any distinction. "That all men should honor the Son, even as

they honor the Father." "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto *Him* that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the *Lamb*, for ever and ever." No difference was made either in the nature or degree of the worship which was given to Him who sitteth on the throne, and that which was given to the Lamb. Each received blessing, and glory, and honor, and power; and each will receive them for ever and ever. The Father and the Son will jointly and equally and eternally participate in the same undivided worship, from all the holy angels, and from the redeemed of mankind. John 5 : 23; Rev. 5 : 12, 13.

It cannot, for a moment, be believed that the infinite and eternal God will permit a mere creature to share equally and eternally with himself, in receiving the supreme worship of his children. It cannot be believed, that God would give to mankind, as a perfect rule of life, a revelation which teaches, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," Matt. 4 : 10; and which, at the same time, makes it the indispensable duty of men to worship a mere creature. The word of God condemns, and utterly forbids the worshipping of any created being; and the word of God commands all men and angels to worship the Lord Jesus Christ. The only consequence that can flow from these facts is, that Christ is God; and this consequence is irresistible, it flows by absolute necessity.

While Christ was on earth he was worshipped by the wise men from the east, and by all who became his true disciples. After his ascension to glory, Stephen, the first Christian martyr, expired under the hand of persecution, worshipping Christ, acknowledging him to be God, and earnestly praying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." The inspired apostles worshipped him as God. Guided by the inspiration of the almighty God, they connected Christ with the Father and the

Holy Ghost in the ordinance of baptism, "baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And also in pronouncing the blessing of heaven on the churches : "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." And in every age of the Christian church, from the days of the apostles down to the present hour, the humble followers of the Lamb, the meek and lowly disciples of Christ have rendered unto him supreme homage and adoration. In doing this, they have been guided by the almighty and irresistible operations of the Holy Spirit. And the sure word of prophecy attests that, aided by the same Spirit, all the hosts of heaven shall continue to offer equal and undivided praise to Him who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb ; to God the Father, and to his Son Jesus Christ, for ever and ever." Matt. 2 : 11 ; Acts 7 : 59 ; Matt. 28 : 19 ; 2 Cor. 13 : 14 ; Rev. 5 : 13.

The Lord Jesus Christ is, in the holy Scriptures, represented as being in heaven, sitting on a throne, at the right hand of his Father, with whom he is continually interceding for believing sinners, he is represented as searching the hearts and trying the reins of the children of men ; as being everywhere present with his faithful disciples, even unto the ends of the earth ; as coming to, and making his abode with all who love him ; and wherever and whenever two or three are gathered together in his name, he is said to be in the midst of them. Acts 7 : 55, 56 ; Matt. 19 : 28 ; Rev. 3 : 21 ; Heb. 8 : 1 ; Mark 16 : 19 ; Rom. 8 : 34 ; Colos. 3 : 1 ; Heb. 7 : 25 ; Rev. 2 : 23 ; Matt. 28 : 20 ; John 14 : 23 ; Matt. 18 : 20.

The Being who sustains this character ; who can comprehend, in one intuitive view, the whole compass of universal nature ; who can be in heaven, making intercession for his children, and on the earth, making his abode with them ; who can at once search all the hearts, and know all the thoughts and words and actions of men throughout the boundless extent of creation ; and who can hear all the prayers, and praises, and holy aspirations of millions of souls scattered over

the whole face of the earth, and who can do all this at the same instant, must be the eternal, uncreated, and omnipresent God.

Such is the nature of some part of the testimony which the holy Scriptures afford, to prove the absolute and supreme divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This view of the subject is supported by almost all the doctrines of the gospel; by the miracles which Christ wrought in his own name, and with his own power, John 11 : 43 ; Acts 16 : 18 ; 3 : 6 ; Matthew 10 : 1, etc. ; by the unlimited and personal authority with which he predicted future events ; and by a cloud of witnesses and floods of evidence, at which I have not here even glanced. Who can open the volume of inspiration and honestly examine those witnesses and that evidence, and not pour out his soul to Christ, in the affecting language of Thomas, "My Lord and my God!"

The subject suggests some practical inferences of momentous import.

1. If Christ be truly God, then *sin is exceedingly vile, and sinners are unspeakably criminal in the sight of God.*

If the plan of redemption adopted by heaven required the interposition of a divine Mediator, then an infinite sacrifice was absolutely and essentially necessary to redeem man from eternal perdition. If sin were not vile in its nature, and destructive to the good of the universe in its tendency ; if the sinfulness of man could have been removed, and his salvation effected at a cheaper rate ; if reconciliation between the holy God and sinful men could have been produced, and the honor of the divine law supported, without the interposition of a divine Redeemer, God would never have given his own Son : Christ would never have left the realms of glory, assumed human nature, obeyed the law in our stead, endured the penalty of our disobedience, and suffered the most painful death on the cross.

2. If Christ be God, then God has displayed *infinite benevolence* in the great and precious work of redemption.

When man had destroyed himself, in the God of Jacob was his help. When by their own wicked rebellion mankind

had forfeited the favor of God, and exposed themselves to eternal misery ; when no plan of redemption could be devised by the invention of man ; when no created eye could pity, nor any created arm could bring salvation, then the eye of heaven was full of compassion, and the strong arm of Jehovah brought salvation. The infinite Emmanuel interposed. Having wrought everlasting righteousness, and made an infinite atonement, he delivers believing and penitent sinners from eternal perdition, and restores them to perfect and consummate bliss. Of his own self-moving goodness he devised, and is accomplishing the glorious plan of redemption. How wonderful, how boundless, how truly infinite is the benevolence of our almighty Redeemer ! Let believers render unfeigned gratitude to God for benevolence so great, so divine, so infinitely glorious.

3. Christ is able to save *all* who accept of him on the terms of the gospel.

If Christ be God, he has unquestionably offered, for sin, an infinite sacrifice. He has brought in everlasting righteousness. He has made an atonement of boundless merit. He has opened the way for the everlasting felicity of all true believers. He is infinitely "able to save them to the uttermost, who come unto God by Him." The righteousness which he wrought, and the sufferings which he endured, received infinite merit from the union of Deity with the suffering humanity. Being God as well as man, his ability to save cannot be limited. It is truly infinite. None, therefore, who truly seek an interest in the great salvation of Christ, need despair on account of either the multitude or the magnitude of their sins. Although their sins be as scarlet, he can make them as white as snow ; and though they be red like crimson, he can make them as wool. Whosoever will, may come, and take the water of life freely. All who, truly humbling themselves before God, feel their extreme unworthiness and moral impotence ; receive Christ as their prophet, priest, and king ; acknowledge his divinity, obey his precepts, and rely on his atonement for the pardon of their sins, and on his righteousness for the justification of their souls, shall be saved, however

numerous, however aggravated may have been their past transgressions.

4. If Christ be God, then all who die in an unbelieving and impenitent state, and of course without an interest in the merits of Christ, *must be eternally miserable* beyond the grave.

Unbelievers can have no part nor lot in the salvation of Christ. None who reject the offers of mercy, who obstinately persevere in a course of rebellion against God, and who finally go down to the grave without faith, repentance, and holy obedience, can derive any future benefit from the meritorious life, sufferings, and death of Christ. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Without repentance there can be no remission of sins; and "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." The condition of hypocrites and unbelievers will be more dreadful in eternity than it would have been had no Saviour been provided. Having lived under the light of the gospel, to have despised and rejected the almighty Redeemer, will complete the measure of their guilt, and draw down upon their heads the curses of the divine law. "He that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." And if he persist in his unbelief until summoned to the judgment-seat of Christ, he must atone for his own sins, by enduring, in his own person, the "wrath and curse of God." He must be cast off into the "blackness of darkness for ever." No hope of pardon can, for a moment, be indulged. An interest in the righteousness and atonement of Christ will never more be offered. Having sinned away his day of grace, there will "remain no more sacrifice for sin." The divine law will for ever demand perfect and sinless obedience. The condemned sinner, having finally rejected the perfect righteousness of Christ, will never be able to meet the demand of the law; and consequently must eternally endure its threatened penalty. The miseries of the damned must be eternal.

Christ is an infinite Saviour. He is "Emmanuel, God with us." He is "the chief among ten thousand," the one "altogether lovely." He is infinitely worthy of all your love,

fear, faith, trust, and hope. And he alone can save you from "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish." Go then, I beseech you, to Christ. Place your affections supremely upon him. Trust in his merits. Exercise "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." No longer persevere in a state of "enmity against God." No longer despise the almighty Saviour. No longer reject the offered mercy. Let it not be your everlasting "condemnation, that light is come into the world, and you have loved darkness rather than light, because your deeds were evil." The precious light of the gospel is now shining upon you. The glad tidings of redeeming love are sounding in your ears. You are invited, warned, and entreated to flee from "the wrath to come." If you continue to reject the almighty Redeemer, and waste the remnant of your days in the practice of unrighteousness and impiety, you must "be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." But if you now humble yourselves before God, repent of all your sins, believe in Emmanuel, consecrate what yet remains of life to his service, and rely on his obedience and sufferings alone for salvation, you shall become everlasting trophies of redeeming love. You shall be adopted into the family of God. And hereafter, standing on mount Zion, you shall mingle your praises with "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever." Amen.

Perpetuated by the liberality of the author, REV. ISAAC LEWIS, D. D., of New York, in the donation of one hundred dollars, just before his death, which occurred, September 23, 1854, in the 82d year of his age

DENNIS AND THE PRIEST.

A DIALOGUE.

“Good-morning, Dennis.” “Good-morning, your reverence.”

“What is this they say of you, Dennis? I am told you have been to hear the preachers.” “You have been told the truth, sir,” answered Dennis.

“And how could you dare to listen to heretics?” “God is not a heretic,” said Dennis, “and it is the word of God, the Bible, that they read.”

“Aye, the Bible explained by a minister.” “The Bible explained by itself,” said Dennis; “when it is allowed to speak, it explains itself without assistance from any other quarter; and in the very act of reading it, we allow it to speak.”

“But, after all, the minister preaches; and he insists on your believing what he preaches.” “The preacher,” replied Dennis, “tells us, when we go home to take the Bible and examine whether it contradicts or confirms what he has said from the pulpit.”

“But, don’t you see that this is a mere sham; and that you, the common people, cannot examine the holy Scriptures, so as to judge whether they confirm or contradict what the preacher says?” “At that rate,” said Dennis, “St. Luke made fools of the common people; for the preacher pointed out to us a passage in the Bible which mentions that the Bereans compared the preaching of the apostle Paul with the holy Scriptures; and more than that, St. Luke commends them for doing so.” Acts 17 : 11.

“Admirable! master Dennis; you are quite a doctor in divinity. You know as much as a whole synod of bishops. Your decisions will be equal to those of a general council.” “I make no pretensions to judge for other persons,” replied Dennis, “but take the liberty of judging for myself. God inspired the Bible, and I read his inspired word.”

“But you are not able to understand it.” “The best proof that I can is, that I really do understand it,” said Dennis. “Why should I not understand the Bible, which has

God for its author? Cannot God express what he means as well as a mere mortal? Besides, the Bible, speaking of itself, says that it is 'a light.'" Psalms 119 : 105.

"Dennis, you are obstinate and conceited." "If he is an obstinate man who never changes his opinion," said Dennis, "it is you who are obstinate ; but as for me, I found myself in a bad road and changed for a better, that is all. I have never pretended to be infallible."

"You are very conceited to think that you know so much more than others." "Others," replied Dennis, "are not very humble in thinking that they know more than God ; but it is to God and not to my fellow-men that I hold myself responsible."

"I must tell you that if you go on reasoning in this way, I shall not admit you to confession." "I confess myself," replied Dennis.

"Not to me, at all events." "No ; but to God."

"To God?" "Yes," said Dennis, "to God, who declares in the Bible, that 'if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.'" 1 John 1 : 9.

"The church will not marry you." "I will get married elsewhere."

"The church will not bury you." "I shall not trouble myself about my dead body, if I save my soul."

"You will be excommunicated." "No matter, if I am received by God."

"No prayers shall be offered for you." "I shall pray for myself."

"No masses will be said for you to release you from purgatory." "They would be of no use," said Dennis, "for I reckon on going to paradise."

"To paradise, do you?" "Yes ; to paradise."

"How do you know that?" "Why," said Dennis, "I read in the Bible that one of the thieves who were crucified with Jesus, after having confessed his sins to Jesus Christ, who is God, said to him, 'Lord, remember me.' 'And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.' Luke 23 : 41-43. If, then, a penitent malefactor could be pardoned by believing on Jesus Christ, I cannot see why, if I repent and trust in the same Saviour, I may not obtain salvation ; and the proof that my hope is well founded lies in what I have read in the same blessed book,

that 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' John 3 : 16. If I believe, I shall be saved."

"But while you are waiting to go to paradise, you must live in this world, and I tell you plainly, that you will lose your livelihood by joining these heretics. No one will have any thing to do with you." "I trust in Him who gives us 'day by day our daily bread,'" said Dennis, "and if God be for me, what can all those do who are against me?"

"You will be a laughing-stock to every body." "And was not Jesus Christ mocked and set at naught?"

"Every body will shut their doors against you." "Jesus Christ had not where to lay his head."

"You will be called an apostate." "Was not St. Paul thought to be the greatest of apostates at his conversion?"

"Every body will take pleasure in refusing to do you a kindness." "The world persecuted the Master, and may persecute his disciples; the more I am persecuted for my faith, the more I shall feel that I am truly a disciple of Christ."

"Well, we shall see how long you will hold out. First of all, no one will give you any work." "And what next?"

"No one will admit you under their roof." "And what next?"

"No one will have any thing to do with you either in buying or selling." "And what next?"

"No one will receive you into their society." "So then the whole world will conspire against me?"

"Certainly." "And who will be at the head of the conspiracy?"

"Who! who! what does that signify?" "At all events," replied Dennis, "whoever he may be, you may tell him that he is not a Christian, for Christ commands us to forgive offences, while this man indulges revenge. Jesus commands men to love one another, and this man appears quite disposed to hate me. Should he happen to be a priest, you may tell him of the Sanhedrim, who, through hatred, condemned Jesus to death. Should he be a Jesuit, you may tell him that I am astonished at nothing done by him and by those who invented the inquisition. Christ said, 'Forgive,' and the inquisitors and priests take vengeance. Christ said, 'Teach all nations,' and you refuse even to let them read the Bible. Christ said,

'Freely ye have received, freely give,' Matt. 10 : 8 ; and you sell—not, indeed, the gospel, for that you conceal—but you sell your masses, your prayers, your dispensations, your rosaries, your tapers, your indulgences, your baptisms, your interments ; but as for me, I can make shift to do without any of your wares, while I apply to that God who gives heaven gratuitously."

"Gratuitously !" "Yes," said Dennis, "God gives, and you sell. God pardons, and you punish. God loves, and you hate. How can you expect that we should not go to God, or wonder that we do not come to you? But act towards me as you please ; I have learnt not to fear those who can kill the body, but to fear Him who can destroy the soul."

"You are an insolent fellow." "I have the courage to speak the truth," said Dennis.

"You are impious." "I was so," he replied, "while bending the knee before images of wood or stone, but I have believed in the living God, and trusted only in my Saviour."

"You are a miserable wretch." "Yes, a miserable sinner ; but a penitent and humble sinner, I trust, whom God has pardoned."

"You will always be a ——." "What I *shall* be," said Dennis, "I do not know, but I know what I *wish* to be. I wish to live a godly life, because it was my sins that crucified the Saviour. I wish to be sincere, just, and charitable, because Jesus has been so good as to give me every thing, even more than I have words to express. He has granted me pardon, and heaven, and eternity. Thus my heart bounds with joy, and I am ready to do all that God requires of me ; but what he requires of me is most delightful. It is to love him and love my brethren, to love even you, reverend sir."

"I do not want your love." "I shall not the less pray for you," replied Dennis.

"I do not want your prayers." "See the difference between us," said Dennis, "I love you, and you hate me. I offer you my prayers, and you refuse me yours. But Jesus Christ has said, 'By their fruits ye shall know them ;' and I wish to be an humble disciple of Jesus Christ."

SAYINGS OF JESUS.

ALL the words of Jesus were full of truth and love. He taught great truths in such a way that the people heard him gladly. They soon saw that he was meek and lowly in heart, and was a friend to the poor. Many of his words are to be found in the Bible. They are there for *our* sake. If we attend to them they will make us truly wise. They will bring peace to our hearts, and point out the way to heaven.

Only a few of the sayings of Jesus will be here given; but if you read them with care they will, with God's blessing, do you good, as they have done to many before you.

1. *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* John 3 : 3.

Jesus spoke these words to a wise and rich man, but they apply to all men. To be "born again," or "born from above," means to have a great change take place in our hearts and lives. All who are born into this world bring with them a sinful nature. You feel that your own heart is evil. Your eyes and ears tell you that there is much sin in the world. The Bible speaks of men being "dead in sins." Eph. 2 : 1. Men are alive, awake, and active for the things which belong to this short life. But they have no sense for the better things of God and the soul. We read that "there is none that doeth good, no, not one," Rom. 3 : 12; and that "the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." Ezek. 11 : 19.

Man was made to love and obey God; but he does not do so. He lives as if there were no God. He does not see, or feel, or desire what is good. He loves what

God hates, and hates what God loves. His heart is like a stone, Eccl. 8 : 11 ; it is hard, cold, heavy, and barren in regard to what is good. So long as he is in this state, God is angry with him every day. Psa. 7 : 11.

Now can you think that a sinful man is fit to dwell for ever with God? Can any one who all his life long goes on in an evil way, be ready to join the holy angels and happy spirits in heaven? Can a man who has on him only filthy rags, be in a state to sit down in a king's presence? No ; it is plain that a great change must first take place in him. A new life must be begun, so that he is made like to a new man. Then he will feel and think in a way that a wicked heart does not. He will do the will of God with a loving mind.

This change can only be made by the power of God the Holy Spirit. What is wrong in the heart and life can only be made right by him. A bad tree cannot bring forth good fruit. But if the tree be made good, then the fruit will be made good also. Matt. 12 : 33. If you make a spring of water pure, then the stream will be pure too.

But do you ask, How may I hope to have the Holy Spirit come to my heart? Listen to what Jesus said :

2. *If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* Luke 11 : 13.

We are here taught to go to God as to our Father, and to ask him for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Even sinful men will hear the cries of their children when they ask for bread. And will not God, who is love, listen to us when we pray to him for the Holy Spirit? Yes ; he will do "much more" than any parent can do.

The Spirit is now the best gift of God to us. He brings light into our dark minds. His power is like a fire, and like a hammer, to melt and break our hard hearts. If he

is given to us, he will teach us that sin is a great evil. He will make us humble and sorry for it. He will lead us to see how great was the love of God that he should send his Son to die for us. And then he will make us happy in the hope that we have found pardon.

To enjoy this gift you must ASK for it. For so again we hear Jesus speak :

3. *Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.* Matt. 7 : 7.

In these words you are taught that God will hear your prayer. Every wish and word and tear will be known to him. Ask then like a beggar who seeks for bread, or as a man who wishes to know the right road. Seek, as for a thing of value which has been lost. Knock, like him who wants to enter the door, and find shelter from a storm.

God will give to you not only like a king, but with the love of a father. But do you say you do not know what to ask for? The Bible has some short prayers that will suit you. "God be merciful to me a sinner." Luke 18 : 13. "Lord, help me." Matt. 15 : 25. "O Lord, hear me ; for I am poor and needy." Psa. 86 : 1. "Turn me, O Lord, and I shall be turned." Lam. 5 : 21. "Hide thy face from my sins." Psa. 51 : 9. "Create in me a clean heart, O God." Psa. 51 : 10. "Lord, save : I perish." Matt. 8 : 25. There are many more such prayers in the word of God. They suit the man who works in the field, or in the factory, as well as the prince who lives in a palace. They are short and plain. These prayers have been often heard by God ; and he will hear them again, if you ask in faith.

To pray in faith, is to pray believing that God is true to his word ; and that, for Christ's sake, he will bless us. A long prayer without faith will gain nothing. A short prayer with faith will move God to help us.

Now attend to some more sayings of Jesus.

4. *The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.* Luke 19 : 10.

Jesus has told us of the love of God as a Father, and of the work of the Holy Spirit on our hearts ; he here speaks of his own work in saving the lost. We were like lost sheep, that have broken over a fence, and have gone in a wrong way. Jesus came to lead us back to the fold of God. He saw that we were lost, and he came to save us. The way to heaven was closed by our sins, and he opened it by dying for us. We were in danger of hell, and he held out his hand for our help.

Jesus did not come into the world because it is a happy place ; for he knew it was full of evil. He did not come to enjoy it, but to save men. Though he was in the form of God, and was equal with God, yet he was among men as a servant. He came into the world as a babe ; he lived in it as a poor man ; he died in it a death of shame and pain. In his life he kept the law which we had broken. The blood he shed on the cross takes away the sins of those who believe on him.

Jesus now seeks in order that he may save. But you ask, Will he save me ? Hear him :

5. *Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Matt. 11 : 28.

Who but the Son of God could invite all to come ? He only can supply the wants of the world. No man, nor angel, can do that. He speaks to all who have a burden. Have you a load of care and sorrow ? Have you not found rest in the world ? Do you weep and groan because you feel your sins hang heavy upon you ? He speaks, then, to you.

But do you ask, How am I to go ? Just as you are

now. Though you are full of guilt and misery, you may draw nigh to him. The worse you are, the more ready you should be to take him at his word.

If Jesus were now on earth, you could go to him as the poor and sick once went to him. You could look upon him with your eyes, and hear the words of his own lips. But this might not be so easy for you as you think. How could you get to a land far away? Where could you find time and money? How could you cross wide seas, and travel over strange parts of the earth? It is your mercy to know that Jesus is in heaven; yet, as God, one with the Father and the Holy Spirit, he is in every place. The way to go to him now is with the heart. It is the coming of the soul to him that he desires. The man who feels his sin and danger may come to him by faith; that is, by believing and trusting in him. We may come to him in any place, and at any time. When in your own room, in the shop, in the field, or in the house of God, you may come to him there. You will find that if you believe his words, if you call upon his name, if you look to him in love and hope, it is the way to come to him. Those who thus seek, will be sure to find him. And in this way they find rest for their souls.

But do you still fear that what has been said does not apply to you? Attend then to another of the sayings of Jesus :

6. *Whom that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.* John 6 : 37.

You may fear that he will cast you out. You feel that you deserve to be turned away. But take him at his word, and you shall know that he means what he says. He will not cast you out on account of your age. You cannot be too young, nor too old. If you are young he has said, "Those that seek me early shall find me." Prov. 8 : 17.

If you are aged, he will not forsake you when your strength faileth. Psa. 71 : 9.

He will not reject you on account of your condition in life. He can make the poor rich in faith. Those who can read but little, may be made truly wise in the truths of the Bible. The light of that holy book can shine into a mind that is quite dark. He will not receive you because you are better than others ; he will not cast you out because you are worse than others. He saves none because their sins are few and small, nor sends any away that come to him because their sins are many and great. He knew what sinners there were in the world when he spoke these words. He knew there would be such a sinner as you are. He knows the worst about you—all your secret sins. And yet he says, "I will in no wise cast out."

Take, then, these words as spoken to you. Look to him for pardon, and every mercy you want. But if you do not attend to them, you will have no excuse. You will not be able to say that Jesus did not bid you to come to him. You will not say that you died in your sins because there was no hope for you.

The words which we have now given are the gospel—good news for sinners—glad tidings of great joy for all people. As we read them we may almost say, They are too good to be true. But we must not, for they are the words of the Lord Jesus, who would not raise our hopes in vain. But these are not all. Once again he speaks :

7. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. John 14 : 3.

Jesus is now in his glory. He has made heaven a place for all who love him. A time will come when he will call them from their graves. Then he will say to them, "Come, ye blessed—enter ye into the joy of your

Lord." Matt. 25 : 21, 34. O, happy state ! There they shall know no sorrow nor pain, for they shall know no sin. All tears will be wiped from their eyes, for there will be no grief nor care. They shall be like to the angels, and they shall serve God for ever. Then shall they know how much they owe to Jesus for his great love to them. Then shall they sing this song to his praise, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father ; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Rev. 1 : 5, 6.

Do you wish to go to heaven when you die ? We hope you do. Then turn again to the great truths which have been set before you in plain words. You must be born from above. The Holy Spirit must change your heart. You must seek his grace by prayer. You must have faith in Jesus for the pardon of your sins. If you seek him, he will not cast you out ; and if you trust in him, and love and serve him *now*, you will be with him for ever. Think of these things ; and may God bless them to your souls.

We said we would give you some of the sayings of Jesus. We have done so. Are they not good and plain—true and loving words ? Do they not meet the case of every sinner ? Do they not suit you ? If so, find out others like them in the Bible. But how great will be your folly and sin, if you do not attend to them. You must then perish—be lost for ever. "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Heb. 3 : 7, 8.

COMING TO CHRIST.

“Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.” JOHN 6:37.

Just as I am—without one plea,
 But that thy blood was shed for me,
 And that thou bid'st me come to thee—
 O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—and waiting not
 To rid my soul of one dark blot—
 To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
 O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—though tossed about
 With many a conflict, many a doubt,
 Fightings within, and fears without—
 O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—poor, wretched, blind;
 Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
 Yea, all I need in thee to find—
 O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—thou wilt receive,
 Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
 Because thy promise I believe—
 O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—thy love unknown
 Has broken every barrier down;
 Now, to be thine, yea, thine alone,
 O Lamb of God, I come!

JAMES NEWHALL;
OR,
GODLINESS EXEMPLIFIED.

BY REV. PARSONS COOKE, D. D.

THAT Christianity is now alive, and productive of the same results as in its first ages, is seen at least in here and there an example. One of these examples recently appeared, in James Newhall, of Lynn, Massachusetts, who died in August, 1854, aged eighty years. As religion is wont to reveal itself with peculiar strength in cases of extreme suffering—like a flower, that gives its richest fragrance when it is crushed—so the highest manifestations of divine life in him were during the last of his years, in which he was brought down to death by the lingering ravages of a cancer in his face. The writer, his pastor, was especially moved to give to the public some sketch of his experience, by observing what was the leading aspiration of his mind during his whole sickness. He was ever, in every form, expressing the desire, that he might *do something to manifest to others the excellence of religion*. Naturally ardent, he expressed nothing with so much ardor and frequency as this. When I reminded him that his life and active service were nearly spent, and that what was now required of him was, to *suffer* according to the will of God, and illustrate the power of religion by its supports under suffering, I little realized how effectually he was to do that part of his work.

Soon after the cancer of which he died appeared on his mouth, and foretold what a terrible scene was before him, he had a severe attack of influenza, which at his age of eighty years, seemed to make his death certain. Neither he nor his friends dared to ask for his recovery, thinking he was to be mercifully released from evil to come. Yet

contrary to all expectation he recovered, and to the surprise of all, he rejoiced in his recovery. Not that he doubted his preparation for death, nor that the longings to be with Christ, which in his sickness he had expressed, were abated. But he said it was strongly impressed on his mind, that God had brought him back from the grave because he had yet some important work for him to do, "in manifesting" the excellence of religion. He delighted in the prospect of doing something more for the glory of Christ. His heart was so warmed with this theme, and his mind was so full of it, that his common course of rapid utterance seemed insufficient for him. I often sat in mute astonishment, wondering that one on the threshold of heaven, ten years beyond the limits of human life, having the actual imprint of death on his lips, should speak of doing yet a great work for Christ on the earth. But now I am convinced that that impression came of the Spirit of God. After that time, he did indeed "manifest something." In the last year of his life he was instrumental of a more practical demonstration of the power of godliness than in any ten years before, and on many minds he made impressions that will never be forgotten. Cut off from the ordinary ways of Christian labor, his fervent spirit labored, and his tongue told of his desire for manifesting something for Christ, yea, and did manifest it till his tongue was literally consumed, and ceased to articulate.

Mr. Newhall entered upon life during the agitations immediately preceding the war of the revolution. He was an infant at the time of the battle of Bunker hill, and amid the alarms occasioned by the marches of British troops he was carried in the arms of a sister from home to a place of seclusion. The first impressions of his childhood were received when the common mind was inflamed with all that is malignant and demoralizing in war. The religious state of those around him was at that time at the lowest degree of depression. But there were a few persons even then sustaining the life of religion, and shining as lights in

a dark place ; and one of these was his mother, who was faithful in her endeavors to bring him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. But the good impressions of his childhood passed away.

What his character was till middle life or after, was described to me most faithfully by himself. I spoke to him of making his history a source of instruction to others ; and in a spirit far enough from a desire for posthumous fame, he expressed his gratification on the ground that his case was a wonderful instance of the grace of God, which would be likely to make a good impression. I remarked to him, that in order to set forth what God had done for him, I must plainly tell what his life was before his conversion. He replied, "By all means do it ;" and then attempted to give me some information about it in a way to show his intense abhorrence of it.

After his death, Rev. Otis Rockwood, who was his pastor at the time of his conversion, at my request kindly furnished me some materials of his history. His conversion took place when he was past the age of fifty, and after he had been for many years confirmed in habits of the free use of intoxicating drinks, and was bound to them not only by the fetters of his own custom, but by strong associations with a club of kindred spirits.

His mind was first aroused when he was sick of a fever. He seemed to be sensible of his great sinfulness, acknowledged his condemnation by the law of God, and was fearful that he should not live. He was instructed as his case required, and after his fever subsided, continued anxious, and seemed to have some right views of the way of salvation by grace ; but without satisfactory evidence of a saving change.

At this point Mr. Rockwood said to him, "There seems to be something that obstructs your spiritual progress. For several weeks you have seemed to be anxious to obtain salvation ; I have endeavored to open to you the way of life, and have thought that you had generally a correct un-

derstanding of the nature of repentance and faith in Christ, and of your duty. You know that Christ is willing to receive even the chief of sinners, and yet you remain where you were weeks ago. There must be some obstacle which you are unwilling to remove; some sin, I fear, which you are unwilling to abandon. Now, Mr. Newhall, I wish to know if you have not begun to use ardent spirits again?" "As I paused," says Mr. Rockwood, "tears started in his eyes, and he replied, 'I must acknowledge that I have. After my fever left me, the doctor directed me to take a little wine. And after I began to work I felt weak, and as I could not afford wine, I have for a few days taken spirits once or twice a day, thinking that I needed it.'" His pastor reminded him that this was the direct way to grieve the Spirit of God, and fall back again into his old besetting sin, and he confessed with tears the truth of what was said.

"A week after this he said, 'I do n't think I am a Christian; but I have left off the use of spirits. I saw that I was going to destruction. *I resolved that I would drink no more. I have not tasted a drop since, and, God helping me, I never will.*'

A fortnight after, he was calm and cheerful, expressed great delight in reading the Bible and in prayer, spoke of the wonderful love of Christ, and of his desire to make some grateful returns for it. At length he sought admission to the church, but was advised to delay in consideration that his habits had been such that it was prudent to take a longer time to test the reality of his experience. In a confiding spirit he replied, 'I will do as you think best; I do n't want to bring any wound upon religion.' His connection with the church was delayed nearly a year, but he continued to grow in grace."

Probably no one who knew him both before and after his conversion, doubted its reality. Whatever uncandid judgments they might form of other Christians, ungodly men were forced to confess that *here* was an Israelite indeed. The contrast between what he was and what he

had become was so striking, that his example was a standing rebuke to infidelity.

The wisdom of God was apparent in the choice of him as a vessel of his mercy. All the difficulties of his position, his being enslaved to ruinous habits, banded with corrupting associates, broken in body and mind, and apparently past hope of redemption, magnified the glory of the grace of God in him. Out of that club of inebriates and gamblers did God take one to be an example of his long-suffering, and a preacher of righteousness to the rest. Admonitions such as he was wont to give, coming from one of their own number, had upon them the force and solemnity of a voice divine. He vividly illustrated Christ's principle, that one who had been forgiven much would love much. He ever felt that his debt of gratitude was immense, that he had been the chief of sinners, that his recovery was a wonder of mercy, and that he was bound to show forth the praises of Him who had called him out of darkness into marvellous light. He was careful to improve every opportunity to speak a word for Christ. And yet I could never learn that any person, saint or sinner, took offence at his endeavors. There went along with his words such evidence of his sincerity, such assurance that what he said came from the heart, and withal such expressions of kindness, as to disarm both prejudice and malignity. Those who knew his history, saw in him that which it was impossible to despise.

Prayer was the element of his life. The places of social prayer seemed to be to him heavenly places. He gave the best proofs that his heart was in them. Distant as he lived from the place of worship, he was always there—and that even after age had laid its heavy burdens upon him, and he had begun his descent to the grave. When he was leading the devotions in the prayer-meeting, it was plainly seen that he was there to some purpose. Such outflowings of heart, in simplicity and godly sincerity, are rarely seen. Humble as his natural endowments were, I

have heard from him, in his prayers, as true and effective eloquence as I ever heard from human lips ; and it was the simple outflow of a heart in its fulness going forth to God. His prayers, neither in thought nor phrase, followed a beaten track. He made little use of the commonplaces of expression, but in words prompted by present feeling, he gave to his petitions a freshness and force rarely attained by men of greater natural powers. On such occasions, the thought often forced itself on my mind, That man is what religion has made him ; in him the natural endowments have humbled themselves that the supernatural might be magnified, and that out of weakness God might bring forth strength. He was what religion had made him, and had received elements of greatness that might well be envied.

His attachment to the house and ordinances of God was what might have been expected of one who lived so near to God. Few of the congregation lived at such a distance from the house of God, yet few were absent so rarely. He was never absent on the Sabbath, when it was possible for him to be present. Some two or three winters ago we had a striking illustration in this particular. The Sabbath brought with it a driving storm of snow ; the snow had fallen to the depth of a foot, and was still falling and badly drifting by a strong wind, so that few of the congregation living nearest to the church thought it possible for them to attend. I think there were not over twenty persons present, whether old or young. And yet here was a man of near eighty winters, tottering with age, and through all that distance facing the storm and wading the drifts, through a road peculiarly exposed to drifts, to take his place in the sanctuary. So hazardous was the walk, that on his return some of his friends felt it necessary to watch him, lest he should perish in the snow. One friend expostulated with him, and told him that he was too old a man to be out on such a day. He replied, that his age was the reason why he did it. He knew that he should

be able to go to the house of God but a few times more, and he wished to improve every opportunity that he had.

To him the Sabbath-school had an interest scarcely inferior to that of the sanctuary. Loving the word of God and rejoicing in it as in great riches, every occasion that brought his mind in contact with that word was entertained with delight, and to the latest periods of his life, even after the fatal disease had made decided progress, he was found in his place reciting the lessons of the Sabbath-school, and giving a practical proof that a man of fourscore years is not too old to be taught in the everlasting gospel. His love for the Sabbath-school consisted, in no small part, in his love for children and his zeal to promote their salvation. His own experience as a wanderer from Christ for more than fifty years, and the dangers which he incurred in that wandering, the very scorching as if from the flames of hell which he received, had taught him how important it is that the heart be secured by being bound to Christ in youth.

Another trait in Mr. Newhall's character was an exemplary cheerfulness. He always seemed to be, for some cause, remarkably happy ; and certainly the earthly sources of his happiness were not abundant. Many, placed in his circumstances, would have been found repining at the allotments of Providence ; but he seemed to feel that his blessings were multiplied, and his occasions for gratitude were his constant theme. The ordinary gifts of friends or of Providence were noticed by him with special pleasure. After his disease had begun to increase upon him, I once asked him if he could still read the Bible. He said that his sight had of late so failed him, that he was troubled to read in the fine print of his Bible ; and then he added, as though he had found a pearl of great price, "Do n't you think that Mr. ——," meaning a friend that had been especially kind to him—"do n't you think he came the other day and brought me a fine large Bible, with great large print, and now I can read as well as I ever could." If one had given him a princely fortune, he could not have expressed

more happiness than he did at this gift. In short, he so saw the hand of God in all events, that every thing seemed to come just right. He had nothing to complain of, nothing to make him unhappy. With narrow means, he was happier than most who had abundance. He envied no one, as he had no occasion to envy any, because he had a treasure in the heavens which no earthly good could equal.

Indeed, submission to the will of God, or rather, an absorption of his own will in the will of God, was one of his most prominent traits. That was a time of great trial, when he foresaw that he must die by inches; that at his advanced age, a cancer was no trifle; that months, if not years of consuming agony were before him. He was fully aware of all this, yet as cheerful and hopeful as if nothing had happened. I asked him if he did not consider it an afflictive and mysterious appointment of God that he should have such a prospect of suffering before him. To all questions of this kind he had but one reply, that God's will and appointment was best. It was his satisfaction to know that God's will was to be done. After his disease had far advanced, and his sufferings had reached their highest point, he continued of the same mind. I said to him, "You feel so sure of heaven, and you are here in so much pain, would it not be a great relief if you might be dismissed at once?" His reply was, "Not as I will, but as God wills." I asked him if he had any doubts or any fears of death, that should make him willing to linger here. He assured me that he had long ago done with doubts, and heaven was full and clear in his prospect, but if God saw fit to hold him longer here in suffering, there was a good reason for it; that he was willing to suffer, and thereby be reminded of the sufferings of Christ, and of the sins that had caused his sufferings; that God best knew when it was best for him to go, and he would gladly wait his time.

I once told him his case presented to some minds a difficulty. "Here is Mr. Newhall," they say, "who has appeared to be a very good man. But now when he comes to die,

God appoints to him a most painful form of death. Does not this show that God has no special regard for Christians?" He replied with energy, "Tell them that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth; and that others are receiving their portion in this life." He said that however it might seem to others, it was no mystery to him that he suffered so much; and that he never had such a rich consciousness of the love of God, and such satisfaction in the thought that he was in the hands of God, as he then had. At that time his pain was constant and extreme, day and night, and one side of his face had been nearly consumed, so that an intelligible utterance was made with difficulty.

He was now a source of valuable Christian instruction to the many that were attracted to his bedside, and he seemed to be living to a higher purpose than ever before. The contrast between the spectacle of great unremitted bodily suffering, and the bright gleams of eternal glory resting upon his soul, could not fail to make an impression upon all that came near him; and Christian friends were so much attracted to him, and such was the estimation in which he was held by many, that he suffered, and testified for Christ in his sufferings, before many witnesses. He seemed to attach an extravagant value to the visits of his pastor, even to the extent of making me ashamed by the expressions of his gratitude; for I was there more to receive than to give instruction, more to rejoice than to impart consolation. I was somewhat struck with his salutation at one of my visits. He said, "There, I knew you would come to-day; I told my daughter so: I have been praying that you might come." It was in the middle of one of the hottest days of the season, when it suddenly occurred to me that his sufferings must be great; that if my presence and sympathy could alleviate a tedious hour, he was entitled to it, and that my walk in the heat of the sun would be a trifle compared with what he was suffering. This incident may illustrate his state of mind in relation to providential occurrences.

His attachment to his friends seemed to advance with the approaches of death. He showed it by pressing them more urgently to make their visits frequent, and by the height of his enjoyment of their visits. Nor would he allow the thought of his death to carry with it that of a separation from them. As ever that thought intruded, he would say, "I shall meet you in heaven." This reply, on one occasion, had an impressive appropriateness. One of his nearest friends, but two or three days before he died, on taking leave of him in what proved to be his last visit, said, "I will call and see you often." Instead of pressing him to do so, as usual, he simply said, "I will meet you in heaven."

While he was able to command his organs of speech he was wont, in all our visits, to give expression to the abundance of his joy and consolation. I often returned with the thought that in him the extremes of pain and of rejoicing had met. Whoever conversed with him on that bed of death, saw religion in the hour of its triumph—its triumph over all that is to be dreaded in pain, and all that is terrible in death. The presence of a consuming disease was not more manifest upon his body than were the rejoicings of a heaven begun in his mind. And in the fact that this scene had many witnesses, his desire to do something to manifest the power of religion, for the honor of Christ, seems to have been remarkably answered. What a rich and rare opportunity had he to set forth the sustaining power of godliness and the triumphant energies of faith. And how nobly did he improve it. It was not in vain that he had come back from the grave at the time before alluded to, to fill out another year in sufferings.

At that time he said that he felt as sure as if he had had a revelation, that he had come back for an important purpose, to *manifest something* for Christ. And he formed his plans of the way in which he would execute the purpose—little thinking what different plans God had formed. He said on his recovery from that sickness, that as soon

as he recovered strength enough, he intended to visit every family and every person in the congregation, and exhort them to become partakers of the grace of God.

To what effect he lived the last year of his life, and gave forth from that dying bed—that scene of his and his Redeemer's triumph—his testimony, his living demonstration of the power of religion, we shall better know another day. But who can doubt that it was the most fruitful of all his years, and that all his sufferings were a hundred-fold compensated in the good impressions then made on other minds.

The influence of such a man in the church may be little thought of. Yet where is the man that has contributed more than he to sustain the life of religion in the church, and to aid the impression of religion which she should make on other minds? If those who live nearest to God and draw most from the living fountains, those who pray most and communicate most of the sympathies of the divine life, do most to keep the church active and strong, where is the person that has done more than he? Besides, his experience and example were a living argument which the adversary could not gainsay nor resist. The word preached is powerfully enforced, when we can appeal to such examples of the servants of sin made servants of righteousness, having their fruit unto holiness. For more than twenty years, while the gospel was uttered, there sat the man who had so luminously proved the gospel's power, and while the preacher spoke of the power of the Holy Ghost in the regeneration of sinners, men's consciences felt that instance of the power of the Holy Ghost confirming the word.

The good which such men have done will be but poorly apprehended until that day when God makes up his jewels. But I cannot here forbear to relate an incident which was reported to me by another: On one of the public occasions connected with the origin of the Central church in Lynn, one person was congratulating another who had had a leading instrumentality in the work. The person thus

congratulated pointed to Mr. Newhall, who was sitting by in silence, and said, "There is the person who has done more than any other towards building this church." He, in astonishment, said that he had done nothing; and wondered what he meant. The other replied that it was greatly owing to that man's prayers that this work had been undertaken and done. In whatever sense this was supposed to be true, it shows that at least one has felt the value of the influence that went out from him.

If any one is in doubt as to the reality and power of religion, here is an instance of Christian character that challenges his scrutiny. This man, *by the grace of God*, was what he was. Say, if you please, that a large portion of Christian professors are hypocrites; but here is an instance of godliness unquestioned—enough to prove the reality of religion. And I lodge the appeal with the conscience of any candid man that knew the deceased, whether there were not in him indubitable proofs of regenerate character—of something which no man, not regenerate, ever had. Yea, where is the man who knew him well who will not say, Let me die his death, and let my last end be like his.

He has gone before us in a way to show that death in its most terrible forms may be met with joy and triumph. It is a reproach to the profession of those who have life and immortality brought to light, who have a fountain of life in their union with Christ, if through fear of death they are all their lifetime subject to bondage, so that they suffer many deaths in the fear of one. To have such a degree of faith and hope that we can die without regret, is counted a great attainment. But we have before us an example in which one has met the worst that death can do, in one of its most frightful forms, and met it with songs of triumph. His example teaches an important lesson—teaches how we may make the gates of death as a triumphal arch, conducting us to heaven over a prostrated and vanquished foe.





