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BELIEVING—OBEYING.

BY B. T. ROBERTS.

The Christian life is a life of faith. This faith implies not only a firm conviction of the truth of God as revealed in His word, but also a hearty acquiescence in the truth, and a firm determination of the will to live according to its requirements. Saving faith, then, has the cordial assent of the intellect, the affections, and the will.

Hence those who believe are commanded to obey.

St. Paul says: *Do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.*—Phil. ii, 15-16. The obedience here required is:

1. UNIVERSAL. The Gospel does not repeal the law. It teaches us how to obey it, and promises us the grace that will make obedience easy. Our Saviour says: *Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.*—Mat. v, 17. The law is still binding upon us in all its requirements. We may not select such commands as suit our inclinations, lay great stress upon them and neglect the rest. This was

the way the Pharisees did. They were very strict in some things, and loose in others. They were the champions of the church. Their orthodoxy was unquestioned. They gave for their religion by system. Yet our Saviour denounced them as the children of hell. *But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God.*—Luke xi, 42. They were very zealous; but their converts were like themselves. *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.*—Mat. xiii, 15. Their piety was distorted. Their zeal was overgrown, and their love was stunted.

A rigid observance of some of the commands of God is not of itself an evidence of saving grace. The Bible lays great stress upon honesty in business. No one who lacks it can, by any possibility, be in a state of salvation. Yet one may be rigidly honest without being a Christian. The commands of God are so broad that if they were all disregarded society could not be kept together. A person who never knew God may keep some of his commands from instinct, from interest, or from education. But this does not prove him to be a saint, any more than

the maternal instinct in the lioness proves it to be a lamb.

Among professed Christians, it is sometimes the fashion to observe one class of commands and sometimes another. At the present day many lay stress upon giving; but they pass over conformity to the world with as great silence as if the Bible said nothing respecting it. He who gambles for the support of a family is regarded as unworthy of Christian fellowship; while the church may, with the sanction of the preacher, get up gambling schemes to purchase an organ or replenish the library. Others make it a point of conscience to be plain in their dress, and to avoid the friendship of the world, as the Bible requires; but they are sadly wanting in that love for their brethren, and in that liberality in giving which the Bible enjoins. They go on *laying up for themselves treasures on earth*, while their preacher is scantily supported, or the ark of God is without a resting place. Or, perhaps, their conversation is made up largely of evil speaking, and they are so full of ill-will that they can scarcely pray or speak in public without giving some one a thrust.

This is not the obedience that is pleasing to God. It does not spring from love to Him. It does not recognize His authority as supreme. It is deceptive. It has the appearance of great piety when the foundation is wanting. He who is truly born of the Spirit, does nothing which God forbids; and neglects nothing which God commands. He owns no higher authority than "Thus saith the Lord."

2. THIS OBEDIENCE MUST BE CHEERFUL. Do all things *without murmur-*

ings. Christ is not a hard master. You cannot complain of His requirements without suffering loss. Murmuring was the bane of God's people of old. At the first trial they encountered after passing through the Red Sea they began to complain. God passed it over at first with a gentle reproof; but when they kept it up, it *displeased the Lord, and His anger was kindled; and the fire of the Lord 'burnt among them.*—Numb. xi, 1, 10, 33, 34. Again they murmured at the return of the spies whom they sent to view the promised land, and God condemned them to die in the wilderness (Numb. xiv, 27–30).

Again they were discouraged and complained because of the way, and God sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people and many of them died. (Numb. xxi, 46) *Neither murmur ye as some of them also murmured and were destroyed of the destroyer.*—1 Cor. x, 10.

If you are called to preach, give your whole soul to the work and thank God that you are counted worthy. If it is yours to support the ministry, do it with a free heart as unto the Lord. *He that giveth let him do it with simplicity; he that showeth mercy with cheerfulness*—Rom. xii, 8. If in the providence of God, it is yours to bring up children, do it for Him and do not complain as though it were a hardship. *Serve the Lord with gladness.*—Ps. c, 2. *For the joy of the Lord is your strength.*—Neh. viii, 10.

3. THIS OBEDIENCE MUST BE PEACEABLE. Do all things *without disputings*. If others cannot see their duty do not dispute with them about it. Because a man will not obey God, that is no

reason why you should quarrel with him. Your quiet obedience will exert a greater influence than all your arguments. Some are incapable of serving God in *their* way without stirring up a spirit of hostility in all with whom they come in contact. The opposition which their combativeness excites they call persecution! This quarrelsome obedience is not acceptable to God. Such men are greatly deceived. One who is always in a controversy is always wrong. Paul says, *He is proud, or as it reads in the margin, a fool, knowing nothing, but doting about questions, and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railing, evil surmising, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds.*—1 Tim. vi, 4, 5. Your opinion may be right; but your mode of maintaining it destroys your own spirituality and arrays others against the truth. *Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.*—James iii, 13, 14, 16. Contentions for the truth, if carried on too long, degenerate into struggles for victory.

If you thus obey God, you will be—

1. *Blameless.* God is not unrighteous. He never blames a man for doing the best he can. Satan is the accuser of the brethren. Jesus does not expect to reap where he has not sown. He requires no more at our hands than we are able to do.

2. *Harmless.* You will not be doing mischief wherever you go. Saints

will not dread your influence. You will not be stirring up strife among the people of God. Sinners will not stumble over your meddlesome, contentious manner and become, through you, prejudiced against Christianity itself. Where you cannot do good, you will avoid doing harm. You will minister grace to your hearers.

3. You will be *the sons of God without rebuke.* Not that your obedience will make you the sons of God; but it will afford indubitable evidence that you are the sons of God. It will be plain to others that you belong to God because you obey God. If you were of the world you would do as the world does. But now your cheerful, quiet, obedience to all the commands of God, proves that you are a faithful subject of His kingdom.

Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.—Rev. xxii, 14.

SALVATION.—By salvation, I mean, not barely, according to the vulgar notion, deliverance from hell, or going to heaven; but a present deliverance from sin, a restoration of the soul to its primitive health—its original purity; a recovery of the divine nature; the renewal of our souls after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, in justice, mercy and truth. This implies all holy and heavenly temples, and by consequence, all holiness of conversation.

Now, if by salvation we mean a present salvation from sin, we cannot say holiness is the condition of it; for it is the thing itself. Salvation, in this sense, and holiness, are synonymous terms. We must, therefore, say, "We are saved by faith." Faith is the sole condition of salvation. For without faith we cannot be thus saved.—*John Wesley.*

EXPERIENCE.

BY LIBBIE HOYT.

After living a number of years in sin and folly, seeking pleasure from the world and gay company (but finding no real pleasure), I was led by the Spirit of God, partly through the preaching and labors of the Rev. C. W. Haynes, and partly from having been brought near the gates of death, where all looked dark beyond, to see the very dangerous track which I was pursuing. My uncle and aunt (with whom I am living), both devoted followers of Jesus, have long tried to persuade me to give my heart to God. I long rebelled against all their entreaties, and against the Spirit of God, and almost grieved that Holy Spirit away.

The first meeting I attended aroused some feeling on the subject, but I soon succeeded in casting serious thoughts away. The next meeting was on Friday evening; the invitation was given to go forward for prayers. I refused to go. My uncle was so deeply impressed for my salvation, that he called on me and entreated me to come; I never had such feelings before in my life; and when meeting was closed, I again cast my serious thoughts aside, and thought I would go to meeting no more, for I felt worse than I did to stay at home all the time. We came home and my convictions returned, and never before did I feel half so miserable. I did not sleep very much. When I arose the next morning I tried to shake off my feelings, so no one should notice me. I tried to act as usual, and kept up appearances until prayer time, and then it seemed as if all the powers of darkness were upon me. After they were through, I felt as though I could not leave the place where I was sitting. Just then they began to sing, "The blood of Jesus cleanses me." That was all I needed. O how those words melted my heart! I could contain my feelings no longer. My aunt asked me if I was sick; I replied that I was not.

Said she, "Shall we pray for you?" I consented. They all prayed for me, and I yielded my heart to him who cleanseth from all sin. I felt that a great burden was removed, but still did not feel right, and I could not work, but went to my room and earnestly did I struggle for my soul. I felt that I could give up everything for Jesus; then he saved me; I felt very happy. I was very anxious to go to meeting after that. There had been a Free Methodist Church organized. I had thought nothing in particular about joining any church previous to this; but I saw plainly that this was the church that I must join. The enemy tried to persuade me otherwise, but I knew I must or lose my blessing. It was a trial to me at first to give up all adornments and be a plain pilgrim; but Jesus helped me. He has taken away all my pride for such things. The next Sunday (March 19th, 1876) I joined (with eight others). And now I love that Pilgrim band. I am willing to be plain for Jesus. I owe all to Him, for

"I was lost, but Jesus found me,
Taught my heart to seek his face;
From a wild and lonely desert,
Brought me to his fold of grace."

SINK YOUR WELL.

The easiest time to dig a well is in wet weather, but the best time to dig one is in a time of drouth. Many wells sunk in times of spring freshets or autumn rains, in a little while are dry, and then the well has to be taken up and sunk deeper. The best time to sink a well, and the only time when perpetual supply of water can be obtained, is in a time of drouth; then, as the well goes deeper and deeper, it passes beyond the region of surface water and strikes those hidden currents which feed it from unfailing fountains.

There are many souls whose only knowledge of the water of life is gained in times of freshets, in revivals, when everything seems afloat; when the windows of heaven seem opened, and

the earth beneath is saturated with the abundant showers. Then they know the blessedness of living water; but in the time of drouth, when comforts wither and joys depart, when all tokens of reviving have vanished, and when everything seems like barrenness and desolation, they, too, feel the blight of prevailing influences, and become like fountains that fail. Then is the time to sink such wells. Go deeper, learn something of the depths of the love of God. Go down through all this surface water, until you strike the divine reservoir which cannot fail. Then, as from an artesian fountain, there gushes up a stream which cannot fail; so in your heart the word that Christ has given shall be unto you a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. Sink your well. Do not wait for a freshet; do not wait for a revival; now, in your time of drouth and desolation, go to your Bible; go to your closet; go to your Saviour, go to your God. Do not forsake the fountain of living waters; do not hew out broken cisterns that hold no water. Dig deep. Taste the divine fullness. Dwell in God, and God shall dwell in you.

THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN.

There is nothing more deceitful than sin. To-day fair and faultless as a summer's dream, to-morrow it is as hideous as the very jaws of hell. No rainbow has hues so bright as this infernal charmer, when passion is strong and conscience is bewildered; and no reptile, wriggling in the slimy depths beneath, is more loathsome than sin, when desire is changed to satiety, and the helpless victim is clasped within its deadly coils.

"The deceitfulness of sin,"—how it hardens the conscience and blinds the mind with lies, with excuses, with subterfuges, with delusions.

"It is only a *little* sin," we think, but it proves to be the little end of a big sin, and when we get hold of a sin which is little, a big sin lays hold on us and will not let us go.

"It is only a *light* sin," we plead, but

it proves too heavy for us,—so heavy that it crushes the spirit, breaks the heart, blasts the life.

"It is only *once*," but that once is the first-born of an infernal brood, the beginning of a series, the first link in an ever-lengthening chain, which binds us to Satan's chariot wheels, and drags us as captives at his will.

"I can stop when I choose," is the self-deceiving plea; but before the choice is made, the will is paralyzed, the conscience benumbed, the intellect clouded, the man lost!

"The deceitfulness of sin!" Oh, it needs the sword of God to touch this false angel of light, as he stands before us in his deluding brightness, and rob him of the witching spell he casts, until he shrinks to earth, the vile, degrading reptile that he is.

Well has Dr. Guthrie said: "Look now at sin; pluck off that painted mask, and turn upon her face the lamp of the Bible. We start; it reveals a death's head. I stay not to quote texts descriptive of sin; it is a debt, a burden, a thief, a sickness, a leprosy, a plague, a poison, a serpent, a sting—everything that a man hates; it is a load of evils beneath whose most crushing, intolerable pressure the whole creation groaneth. Name me the evil that springs not from this root, the crime that lies not at this door. Who is the hoary sexton that digs man his grave? who painted the temptress that steals his virtue? who is the murderess that destroys his life? who is the sorceress that first deceives and then damns his soul? Sin. Who with icy breath, blights the sweet blossoms of youth? who breaks the hearts of parents? who brings gray hairs with sorrow to the grave? who, by a more hideous metamorphosis than Ovid ever fancied, changes sweet children into vipers, tender mothers into monsters, and their fathers into worse than Herods—the murderers of their own innocents? Sin. Who casts the apple of discord on home hearths? who lights the torch of war and carries it over happy lands? who by divisions in the

church, rends Christ's seamless robe? Sin. Who is this Delilah that sings the Nazarite asleep and delivers the strength of God into the hands of the uncircumcised? who, with smiles on her face and honeyed flattery on her tongue, stands in the door to offer the sacred rites of hospitality, and when suspicion sleeps pierces our temples with a nail? what Siren is this who seated on the rock by a deadly pool, smiles to deceive, sings to lure, kisses to betray, and flings her arm around our neck, to leap with us into perdition? Sin. What petrifies the soft and gentle heart, hurls reason from her throne, and impels sinners, mad as Gadarene swine, down the precipice into the lake of fire? Sin. Who, having brought the prisoner to the gallows, persuades him to refuse a pardon, and with his own hand to bar the door against the messenger of mercy? what witch of hell is it that thus bewitches us? Sin. Who nailed the Son of God to that bloody tree, and who, as if it were not a dove descending with the olive, but a vulture swooping down to devour the dying, vexes, grieves, thwarts, repels, drives off the Spirit of God? who is it that makes man in his heart and habits baser than a beast; and him who was once a little lower than an angel, but little higher than a devil? Sin, sin. Thou art an hateful and horrible thing, that abominable thing which God hates. And what wonder? Thou hast insulted his holy majesty; thou hast bereaved him of beloved children; thou hast crucified the Son of his infinite love; thou hast vexed his gracious Spirit; thou hast defied his power; thou hast despised his grace; and in the body and blood of Jesus, as if that were a common thing, thou hast trodden under foot his matchless mercy. Surely, brethren, the wonder of wonders is, that sin is not that abominable thing which we also hate."

The Son of God was "manifest to take away our sins;"—to "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." He unlocks the prison; he bursts the chain; he unbinds the burden; he pays

the debt; he breaks the spell; he unmasks the deceiver; he crushes the serpent; he cleanses the leper; he heals the diseased; he pardons the guilty; he ransoms the captive; he washes, purges, sanctifies, and saves. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin; and cleansed by his blood, with the washing of water by the word; and purged by the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost, we shall stand at last faultless in the presence of our King, not having spot or wrinkle, nor any such thing, but unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints (1 Thess. iii, 13.)

The great Physician is at hand. Are we sick of sin, weary of its deceitfulness, its misery, and of its chains?—the remedy is within our reach. Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. One cry for his mercy, and we are saved. One touch of the hem of his garment, and we are made whole. One glance at the brazen serpent, and the sting of death is gone. One trusting look unto Jesus and we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

"Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God,
Are saved from sin no more."

—Let me ask any of you who has ever taken one draught from the fountain of the waters of life—Are not the joys pure and rich above all other joys? You know they are. You can testify to this glorious truth. Does some one come to you and urge you to go into some vain amusement? You say, No! Are you told there is no harm in it—we shall have a good time? You answer—If you had known how I am permitted to sit amid the overshadowings of my Saviour's love, you would not ask me to abandon such joys for any thing your vain amusement can offer me.

—When a Christian goes into the world because he sees it in his *call*, yet while he feels it also his *cross*, it will not hurt him.

THE HUMILITY OF HOLINESS.

BY H. F. HILL, JR.

Holiness is the spirit of humility itself. It is a spirit of complete and humble dependence upon the merits of Jesus Christ. It is not consistent with the least degree of self-righteousness. When we look away from Christ, and trust in our own righteousness, we become unholy. When we begin to look with complacency upon ourselves, and admire our own holiness, we are at the farthest remove from holiness. Our righteousness is of God, and when we take the least degree of merit to ourselves, we become unholy, for we rob God of his glory.

The blessing of holiness is the gift of God, and is received in the heart by an entire resignation of ourselves to God, and in the exercise of faith. God does not give it to us because we are worthy of it, nor on account of our good works; but of his own grace, through us making use of his appointed means. It would be impossible to procure the blessing by our good works, though we were to work to all eternity. Yea, though we were to give "our bodies to be burned," or "bestow all our goods to feed the poor, it would profit us nothing." It is altogether through the unmerited favor of God. And when we have received the blessing of holiness, it does not make us any more worthy; we are just as undeserving as ever, and we feel our unworthiness more than we ever did; and though our lives henceforth become fruitful in good deeds, and though our minds bear the very impress of our blessed Master, yet we cannot look upon ourselves with self-complacency or admiration, but give all glory to Him who worketh in us, and covers us with his spotless robe.

"By the law of faith," therefore, all self-boasting is excluded, though God should do ever so much for us; for how can we boast anything of ourselves, while, at the same time, we exercise that humble, self-renouncing, depen-

dent faith, whereby we are made holy? It is impossible to do so. But we may make our boast in the Lord. We shall never arrive at such a height of holiness that we shall not need any longer to depend on God; but when we think we have strength sufficient to depend upon ourselves, and cease any longer to depend on God, we are altogether fallen from the grace of God. Hence a holy heart is always a humble heart.

If we have true holiness of heart, we shall not only be humble before God, but also in our bearing toward men. We shall not affect any superiority over others, but like the apostle Paul, count ourselves "less than the least of all the saints." We shall not despise any man, no matter how wicked he may be; for we know that if we are any better than others, it is by the grace of God. We are just as unworthy of this grace as any; therefore we cannot but feel that if the very chief of sinners would but come to Christ and make use of the means, that he would be accepted with God as well as we. So, instead of despising men on account of their sins, we feel more like entreating them as brethren, and pointing them to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.

LIFE'S LAST HOURS.

Life's last hours are grand testing hours. Death tries all our principles, and lays bare all our foundation. Many have acted the hypocrite in life, who were forced to be honest in the hour of death. Misgivings of the heart, that have been kept secret through life, have come out in death; many who seemed all right and fair for heaven, have had to declare that they had only been self-deceived.

A gentleman of renown was on his dying bed, when a friend, near at hand, spoke of the Saviour. "As to the Bible," he replied, "it may be true; I do not know." "What then are your prospects?" he was asked. He replied in whispers which were indeed thunders, "Very dark—very dark." "But

have you no light from the Sun of Righteousness? Have you done justice to the Bible?" "Perhaps not," he replied, "but it is now too late—too late!"

A mother, who had laughed at religion and religious people, was seen restless and miserable on her bed of death. She desired that her children should be called—they came; in broken accents she addressed them: "My children, I have been leading you in the wrong road all your life; I now find the broad road leads to destruction; I did not believe it before. Oh! seek to serve God, and try to find the gate to heaven, though you may never meet your mother there." Her lips were closed forever, and her spirit departed to its account, while the household looked on terror-struck. Mother! Father! would you die thus? Oh, no! Then point to heaven, and lead the way.

DOUBTING SOULS.

The general truths requisite for poor doubting souls, to be acquainted with, are these:

1. Every *appearance* of hypocrisy doth not presently prove the person in whom it is, to be a hypocrite. You must carefully distinguish between the appearance and the predominance of hypocrisy. There are remains of deceitfulness in converted hearts. David and Peter had sad experience of it; yet, the standing frame of their hearts being upright, it did not constitute them hypocrites.

2. We ought, as well, to hear what can be said *for us* as against us. It is the sin of upright hearts sometimes to use an overrigid and merciless severity against themselves; they do not impartially consider the case of their own souls. It is, in this case, as Solomon speaks in another: "There is that maketh himself rich, and yet hath nothing; and there is that maketh himself poor, and yet hath great riches." It is the damning sin of the self-flattering hypocrite, to make his condition better

than it is; and it is the sin and folly of some upright ones, to make their condition worse than indeed it is. Why should you be such an enemy to your own peace? Why read over the evidence of God's love to your soul, as a man doth a book which he intends to confute? Why do you study to find evasions, to turn off those comforts which are due to you? It is said of Joseph he was minded to put away his espoused Mary; not knowing that that holy thing which was conceived in her was by the Holy Ghost; and this may be your case.

3. Many a saint hath charged and condemned himself, for that *which God will never charge him with nor condemn him for*. "Why hast thou hardened our heart from thy fear!" saith the church. Isa. cxiii, 18; and yet the verse before manifests that their hearts were not so hardened. Godly Bradford wrote himself a hypocrite, a painted sepulchre; yet doubtless God acquitted him of that charge.

4. Every thing which is a ground of *grief* to the people of God, is not a sufficient ground of *questioning their sincerity*. There are many more things to trouble you, than there are to stumble you. If upon every slip and failing through infirmity, you should call in question all that ever was wrought upon you, your life would be made up of doubtings and fears; you could never attain a settled peace, nor live the life of praise and thankfulness which the Gospel enjoins.

5. The soul is *not at all times fit to pass judgment upon its own condition*. In the dark day of desertion, when the soul is benighted, and in the stormy day of temptation when the soul is in commotion, it is utterly unfit to judge its state. These are rather seasons for watching and resisting, than for judging and determining. "Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still."

6. Every breach of *peace with God* is a fatal breach of *covenant with God*. The wife may have many weaknesses and failings, and often grieve and dis-

please her husband, and yet in the main be faithful and truly love him. These failings may cause him to alter his deportment towards her, but not to withdraw his love or deny his relation: "Return, O backsliding Israel, for I am married unto you."

7. Whatever our sin or trouble be, it should rather drive us to God, than from God: "Pardon my sin, for it is great." Suppose it to be true that thou hast so and so sinned, and thou art thus long and sadly deserted, yet it is a false inference that therefore thou shouldst be discouraged, as if there were no help for thee in thy God.

TO BACKSLIDERS.

I will show how to escape from a state of declension.

1. You must admit the conviction that you are in a state of declension. One of the greatest difficulties with backsliders is to make them feel that they are backsliders. You continually hear them making excuses. They will not admit that they are in this sad state. When the condition of the backslider is described ever so plainly, they are exceedingly loth to admit that it means them. And until they admit this, there is no remedy.

2. Apply to yourself all that God says to backsliders, just as if you were the only individual in the world in that condition.

3. Find out the point where you began to decline. See what was the first cause of your backsliding, and give that up. You will often find this first cause where you did not expect it, in some things that you called a little matter, or that you tried to make yourself believe was not a sin. Multitudes have been kept down in this way, and perhaps have been trying hard for sanctification while holding on to some darling idol or some sensual indulgence. I knew a man who stood out in defending the use of tobacco, till it became a lust that eat out his spirit of prayer. Using some soft word, calling it a comfort or a medicine, or even baptizing it by a Christian name,

and calling it a blessing of Providence, will not answer. God does not call it so. How many keep themselves in a state of decline and pretend not to know why it is so: "O, no, I cannot tell why I should be so long in the dark;" when they are laying out God's money to indulge their own appetite or pride. God will always hold them at arm's length, and will frown upon them when they pray, unless they search out and remove the cause of their declension.

4. Give up your idols. Whatever you find occupies your thoughts, and calls you off from serving God, get rid of it, if you can. If it is any article of property, dispose of it in some way, give it away, sell it, burn it, away with it, rather than have it stand between you and God.

5. Be careful to apply afresh to the Lord Jesus Christ, for pardon and peace with God. Go to him just as you did at first, as a guilty, condemned sinner, more deserving of hell than ever. Apply to this fountain, which is set open in the house of David for sin and uncleanness. Confess your sins fully, and forsake them, and thus return to God, and he will have mercy on you, and will heal your backslidings, and remember your iniquities no more.—*Finney's Theology.*

—But let us never forget that death will come. Let us be plying in good earnest work of preparation. We are in danger of having only a name to live—of lulling ourselves asleep by the mere cadence of orthodoxy—of calling Christ Lord, while we follow him not as such—of being sunk in carnality and sloth, and that too while we recognize all the truths, and are present at all the ordinances.

—Many persons spend so much time in criticising and disputing about the Gospel, that they have none left for practising it. As if two sick men should quarrel about the phraseology of their physician's prescription, and forget to take the medicine.

WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

Is it a certain state of feeling into which we are to work ourselves before we believe? Surely not. It just means, as is now generally admitted, a turning round toward God. When Christ began to preach, he summed up the whole of his teaching in these two words: "Repent ye, and believe the Gospel." Mark i, 15. So the Apostle Paul, when he reminds the Ephesian elders of his labors among them, says: "I have taught you publicly, . . . repentance before God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts xx, 20-11. In other words, turn round toward God and take the gift of his love. The two things must go together.

Suppose I put a gift on this table for one of you who is sitting with his back to me—say the gentleman writing down there. Well, if he wants to have my gift, he must turn round and take it; it is not enough that he should hear my voice behind him and wish for the gift. But, on the other hand, if he does take the gift I will certainly not put the question to him. "Stop a moment; are you quite sure you have turned round?" Of course he has; the fact of his taking it is the evidence of his having turned round. So the gift is in God's hands, and the natural man turns his back upon God. God calls to him, and says: "Here is a gift for you." As long as a man will not listen to God, will not be dependent on God, he goes on running off from God. He neither repents nor believes. But, just as soon as a man believes the Word, and takes Christ for his Saviour, why, then he turns his face—I mean his heart and his life—toward God. Until he does this, he may talk as much as he pleases about believing, but he does not believe. He just goes on in a life of self-will, which is a life of disobedience and unbelief, though he may be thus walking to perdition with a Bible under his arm.

This, then, is the practical question: Will you take the gift? Will you turn round and take it? Will you, instead of looking forward to your own plans

and purposes, look into the eyes of the Father and tell him, "Here I am to receive thy gift, and to do thy will, O God?" If so, the gift is yours, and you may know to-day. There is a great difficulty about this sometimes. There are many who think that if they receive the gift, and say, "It is mine," there will be some wonderful glow of feeling; there will be something entirely new that will happen; some tongue of fire that will come down upon them at once. No such thing is promised. The gift of God is there for you. Claim it in prayer as yours, and use it at once. That is the way to know whether it is yours or not. For instance, some angry or disagreeable word is spoken to you to-day. Instead of saying, "I wish I had a better temper," remember you have a Saviour with you. Speak to him; count upon him, and you will find that, instead of an angry reply, or some of those worse than angry replies that taste of honey and vinegar, you will have a soft word and also a soft feeling, and you will wonder where that comes from. It comes from the Lord Jesus Christ. Then you will begin to think to yourself, "Well, he *is* mine, after all."

And then, all that he has is yours; his righteousness is yours, and you stand before God in Him a justified child. You have his strength, his patience, his light, his love, for your own, if you will but take him as the gift of God to your soul.—*Theodore Monod.*

—The inconsistent Christian is the teacher of the reckless unbeliever. The latter says: "If the Gospel cannot exact better obedience than this, it must be false." Or he goes even further, saying, "I am as good as he is; I will join the church too." Then the church is corrupted, as well as the truth despised.

—Let the society thou frequentest be like a company of bees gathered to make honey, and not of wasps, which do nothing but hum, devour and sting.

ARISTOCRACY IN THE CHURCH.

BY REV. ROBERT IBBOTSON.

This is an evil of ancient date, hence St. James says, "My brethren have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons," and warns them against preferring persons with "goodly apparel and gold rings" to the poor whom God hath chosen rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom. A well-authenticated anecdote strikingly illustrates this evil as existing in the church in the present day. The pastor and elders of a Presbyterian church were holding a session for the admission of members into the church. For some time they sat, and none applied. While they were bemoaning the deadness that existed, and mourning the lack of spiritual life and vigor, a knock was heard at the door. On opening it the aged sexton presented himself, and stated his wish to be admitted into the membership of the church. He was remarkable for punctual discharge of his duties, and was consequently greatly respected; but aristocracy was in the church, and though he was invited to a seat and talked with kindly, they had no idea of receiving him into the membership of the church, and the pastor finally told him the session did not think it best that he should be a member. The old man arose, cast on the session a look of sadness, and in gentle tones said, "Well, if you will not let me come to the communion, *I can at least serve God in my own poor way.*" This touched the heart of the pastor; he was called back again, invited to be seated, and, after a little questioning, it was unanimously voted that he should be admitted a member of the church, and the sexton's heart was made glad. Time rolled on, and the session sat again to receive members; and, as before, they waited long before any one applied. At length another knock was heard, and shortly a lawyer, who had been an avowed infidel, astonished the session by asking to be ad-

mitted a member. The hearts of the pastor and official members were made glad.

The lawyer was a man of position and influence; he would be quite an acquisition to the church. Their aristocratic feelings were gratified, and they welcomed him with great cordiality. He stated that he had seen himself to be a sinner, and had been to Jesus and had obtained pardon, and now sought union with the visible church of Christ. The session was very desirous to know if any sermon of the pastor, or any arguments of the officary or any other churchly appliance, had wrought this change, and he was requested to inform them what instrumentality had done the work. He said the pastor's sermons had not affected him, nor the reasoning of the official brethren; my infidel coat of mail was proof against all the artillery of the church. "But," said he, "there was one instrumentality that I could not brave. Every time I passed your old sexton he cast on me such a loving, pitying, compassionate look that it broke my heart, and drove me to the feet of Jesus; and that is the instrumentality that makes me ask admission to the church."

But is the Presbyterian church singular in this respect? By no means. Aristocracy stalks abroad in all the churches. Nor is this surprising, for as far back as Job, when the sons of God gathered, Satan came also. He is still going "to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it," and, depend upon it, he will not fail to visit the churches, sometimes in the drapery of an angel, and anon adorned with aristocratic robes. But if the churches resist him he will flee from them; and if clad in the whole armor of God, they may outwit his wiles and explode his devices. Let the churches watch and pray that they may enter not into temptation.

—A wise man looks upon men as he does upon horses, and considers their caparisons of title, wealth, and place, but as harness.

SUFFICIENT GRACE.

BY PRESIDENT FINNEY.

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."—2 Cor. xii, 9.

These are the words of Jesus Christ to Paul. Paul had been favored with many wonderful revelations of heavenly things, and tells us that, lest he should thereby be exalted above measure, there was given him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet him. It is useless for us to speculate beyond what is written in respect to this thorn. Suffice it that we know God's design in sending it—namely, to keep his servant from being exalted unduly, to guard him against self-reliance, and to keep alive in his heart his sense of dependence on God. The thorn being uncomfortable, Paul prays that it may depart from him. Christ had a different plan in mind. He lets it remain, but promises abundant grace to meet the exigency. When Paul comes to understand the plan, he accepts it with joy.

The principle of the Divine plan is this: Christ would destroy the spirit of self-dependence—the great and most besetting temptation of his children. They are continually prone to trust in themselves rather than in Christ. This must be counteracted and cured.

The case of Paul illustrates Christ's manner of dealing with his saints. He must first give them thorns, and make them feel their weakness and wants; then he shuts them up to rely on himself alone, leading them to die to all dependence on themselves, and to enter with the fullest committal upon dependence on Christ alone. This is needful in the end that they may avail themselves of his strength and may discard their own.

"My grace is sufficient for thee," said Christ to Paul; and if we may believe what Paul says of his sinful ways,

this must be a very strong case. Paul said he was the chief of sinners. He had been a Pharisee of the strictest sect; in his mad zeal against the friends of Christ, he had persecuted them even unto strange cities; and manifestly, taking into view all the circumstances of the case, he had some reasons for magnifying the grace that could reach such an one as Saul of Tarsus. If Christ could pardon him, it was safe to conclude he could pardon anybody. If grace could humble a soul as self-righteous as his had been, what could it not do? If a man so tempted on every side, once standing high in public favor, but now accounted as "the filth and offscouring of all things," could yet find grace sufficient to bear all for Christ's sake joyfully, then nobody need doubt the all-sufficiency of this grace.

Grace, as here used, implies favor in place of frowns—forgiveness where punishment is richly deserved. So much for the past. For the present and the future, it implies the bestowal of all that direction, support, and consolation which is needed. Christ meant to assure Paul that his grace was ample to pardon all the past, and to give strength for every trial and exigency in the present and in the future. This grace is given, not to hamper but to help; adequate to all emergencies; adapted to meet all present circumstances; evermore sufficient for all his need. Jesus would stand by him as one worthy to save. He would provide for all his wants, and in every strait, open a way of escape. Inasmuch as Paul felt painfully his great responsibility in going forth to the battles of the Lord in his ministerial work, Jesus sought to meet precisely this want in the promise—"My grace is sufficient for thee." "Let the thorn remain," he would say, "let the burden rest on your shoulders, but be assured my grace shall suffice for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. I have laid on you these burdens on purpose that in you I might illustrate the riches of my grace."

Hence each Christian may apply to himself these precious words—"My grace is sufficient for thee." Even to Paul, Jesus said—"My grace is sufficient for thee" to meet all thy responsibilities and discharge all thy duties.

This is true of all the relations of life. Are you parents? Under all your trials and amid all your wants, the grace of Jesus is sufficient for you. Are you magistrates? You may expect the same. In no extremes of trial need you suppose your case to be so peculiar as to lie outside the pale of this exceedingly great promise. For Christ's strength, nothing is too hard. In all states of health, the promise holds good. Are you extremely nervous? And while weakened by this infirmity, does there come on you great and apparently crushing responsibilities? You need not pray Christ to deliver you from these circumstances, but only to give you sufficient grace. This is all you need. You may be brought into peculiar relations to the bad temper of others, and these may be really thorns in your flesh; but even so, Christ's grace is sufficient for you, and you have but to ask and receive. These things are to you the thorn in the flesh. If Christ has manifestly brought you into these circumstances and created these conditions of your state, then these are thorns of his sending.

Are you in feeble health? This is your thorn. Are your neighbors, or your wife, or your children, a trial to you? You may go to Jesus for grace. You need not try to tear yourself away from the thorn, or to tear it out of your flesh; the Lord wishes you to come to him for patience and wisdom to bear and to act the Christian part. You may be sure that if Christ has put you there, he has counted well the cost, and knows how much grace you need, and whether he shall be able to supply you. He has not placed you there to make these things a snare and a curse to you, but to empty you of self and really to save you with a great salvation.

His grace is sufficient to enable you to maintain the Christian life with hon-

or to the Gospel and with peace to yourself. You may rely on this under all circumstances. When you who are students go from this place to your homes, and under all circumstances so peculiar, you fear you shall fall; know ye that this promise is good for all circumstances in which you have a right to be. If you are in yourself unable to bear, all the better is your case, for then so much the more will Christ's strength be made perfect in your weakness. You have a right to believe that you shall be all you ought to be in all the circumstances in which Christ may place you. You may expect of him all he has promised. You may remind him of this—that he has called you to trust his grace; that you have no other ground on which to stand—he has shut you up to the necessity of launching forth upon his faithful word. You may say—Lord, have I not broken away from all other help and cast myself absolutely upon thee? Say—"O Jesus, I expect thy grace will be sufficient for me; and may I not confide in thee? I have now before me this present temptation and trial; but, Lord, I expect to lead a Christian life, and be a faithful man to thee—may I not?" Yes, remember, his grace is all-sufficient, and he can not withhold it from those who trust him for it. In all the appropriate circumstances of your life, in all lawful business, you may have grace to help. But if you engage in anything unlawful, you shut yourself off from this promise. In the very act of going into unlawful business or circumstances, you virtually say to your Divine Master—"Of course I must expect to go here alone, for it were simple madness to expect thy presence with me here." Turning thus from Christ is more than mere unbelief; it is self-sufficiency, and rebellion towards God.

Most branches of worldly business are essential to our earthly life, and therefore you need not give them up merely because they involve labor and care, for you can perform them in the strength of your Lord. You must not

say—I can not do any worldly business and be a Christian; nor on the other hand should you assume that you can do all sorts of business well by mere grace. You should first inquire if the Lord calls you to that business, for he calls each to the kind to which he is fitted. But mark, let every man have a single eye, and truly aim in all things to please the Lord. Suppose it to be your duty to preach the Gospel, and the Lord lays the conviction of it upon your conscience; yet you say—“O Lord, let me do something else, anything else, rather than this.” Not so, my brother—you must follow the leading of the Lord and be found in the path of your duty—else no grace in the universe can be sufficient for you.

Let us next inquire into the manner in which we may avail ourselves of this grace of Christ. What are its conditions?

Paul had the utmost confidence in what Christ said. He constantly expected this promised grace to be at hand and ample. He knew and felt his entire weakness, but rejoiced, rather than mourned, for this. “Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” “I take pleasure in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in reproaches, in distresses, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong.” The promise of Christ entirely relieved all his anxieties.

We are glad that Christ’s grace could sustain such a man. He went everywhere declaring the grace of Christ. His own case was a living illustration of this precious truth. I am telling you, he would say, of Jesus Christ. You all see what a temptation I have in my flesh. All this, Jesus helps me to bear by his grace. All the churches knew of his thorn, and saw how he endured and joyfully overcame through all-sufficient grace. They knew how vile a persecutor he had been and how much had been forgiven him. They saw also now that his bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible

(in the eyes of the world); and they were glad of this, for now they saw what Christ could do for his children. They saw he came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, as some of the Grecian philosophers claimed to do, but came simply as a saved sinner, full of grace. I remember the case of a poor man who could not pay his rent. While he was sitting in my study, he learned that his landlord threatened to turn him into the street. Now, said he, I shall see the glory of God, for it was always so—in my emergency, God comes near. When I am shut up to God, then he always appears. This simple faith was really edifying to me.

Paul is no longer bowed down in sadness. He knows his responsibilities are great and his burdens heavy; but he also knows who has said—“My grace is sufficient for thee.” Oh, indeed, he knows Jesus Christ! He has seen him and heard his voice. Now you may see Paul go on calmly and joyfully, taking pleasure in infirmities, and full of triumphant faith. “Ah!” he says, “the power of Christ will rest on me, and I may therefore glory in all these things before all the churches and all the world.” Now, therefore, where ever he goes, Christ shows in him the fullness of the Gospel he preaches. Christ in him preached it; Christ in him lived it; and thus, in the mouth of these two witnesses, every word is established.

Again; we must be satisfied with grace for the day. We must have faith to live by the day and by the hour. Suppose these young men, fitting for the ministry, should insist that before they go out to their work, they must have an ocean of grace, so as to need no more little daily rills—just as if they could not trust Jesus beyond this day, or were going where there is no Jesus. This is wrong.

This grace is like the ancient manna, falling and to be gathered each day for each day’s wants. If you gather more, because you are afraid God will not send to-morrow, it rots in your vessel. So of this grace, you need it fresh each

day—grace to preach at the hour; grace to rest and sleep in its time. Sometimes God calls for no labor—for nothing but peaceful rest. As the mother said to her sick child, "You are too weak to pray loud; but not too weak to trust." So of the wearied body; it is fit only to hang on the Lord and trust. This does not require much strength.

Another condition is to commit yourself fully to his faithfulness. Without this, all else avails nothing. As singers who strike their notes timidly, hanging back or letting down, murder all harmony in music; or as those who lead in public prayer can do nothing unless they commit themselves to prayer and lead off, trusting in God; or as in preaching, men can do nothing save as they commit themselves to God and to their work, and lead off in humble faith—so must every Christian in all his Christian life. Paul said in his heart—I know that this promised grace is sufficient for me; then, so trusting, he fled off and labored with unfaltering step. Only so, could that grace have availed for all his wants.

When you have committed yourself thus to Christ, this fact becomes a valid argument under all circumstances for you to plead before the Lord. "Lord, thou hast given me thy faithful word and I have believed it. Thou hast led me to believe; thou hast called me where I am; now, Lord, I have no recourse left but to trust in thee. I have committed myself to a Christian profession before the world; now, Lord, I must insist on the grace thou hast promised, so that I may not dishonor thee. I have left all to follow thee—have turned away from my home, from lucrative business, from prospects of fame—everything for my sake, and now I have no dependence save in thee; let me now be made strong in thee."

Never shrink from responsibility through unbelief. Never say—I can't. God's children should at least learn what we try to teach our children. When they say, I cannot, we answer, don't say that, but say, I'll try. Par-

ents may be unreasonable and ask too much of their children, but God never asks too much. The very requisition is evidence that all is right.

REMARKS.

1. In the connection of our text, we have a case in which prayer is answered to the spirit and not to the letter. Paul prayed to God to take away the thorn. This was the letter. The ultimate thing he sought as a Christian was, that it might not impair his usefulness, but might glorify God. This he cared for most of all; and to this, Christ answered—I will take care of that; it shall greatly glorify God and promote your usefulness.

2. When God answers our prayers in this way, we are in danger of overlooking the fact of an answer. We pray for the ultimate end of the glory of God. This God sees, and to this he answers. In Paul's case, if God had removed the thorn, his evidence that God heard his prayer could not have been so vivid as it was without the removal and with the sufficient grace. But sometimes men are too blind to see such answers. This is often a stumbling-block. You wonder why God does not answer your prayer. He does answer it, better than you had thought. You may not see it as Paul saw, that God has high and useful ends to answer in giving you the thorn in your flesh. He means to illustrate the power of his grace. Often have I seen persons in sore trials. God had led them into wonderfully trying circumstances; and after they have wondered and questioned long, and have finally turned their hearts to prayer, then they see, and they cry out—There! there! now all is plain to me. I said with Jacob, "All these things are against me. Joseph is not, Simeon is not; and ye will take Benjamin too;" and what shall I do for my children? Ah! good Jacob, you are for once mistaken! All these things are for you, not against you; your eyes shall yet behold your Joseph, and your Simeon and your Benjamin also; and through all coming ages, men shall study these things and

glorify God for them. So some of you may be saying—All these things are against me; all this bad health—this great trial—all is against me. No, no; not one of them! You say—When shall these things end? God will take care of that. Ah, but you say, I am going down among the breakers. I have lost my faith! Indeed, but you must not lose your faith!

3. When we have thoroughly renounced our self-dependence and are emptied of pride, it is impossible that we should not accept Christ and sympathize with his promise of help, saying, "Most gladly will I rather glory in my weakness, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." When one is really crucified to self, it is easy to commit all to Christ and become lost in him. Then you will rejoice in his promise and rest in his strength. No longer chafed with restless fears, you sit calmly trustful in his power to save. If the winds blow, let out more cable. So the mariners do. They know when the wind is high, it raises the vessel, and she lifts her anchor and loosens its hold. Then they let on more cable and let the anchor sink down deeper among the rocks, and give the ship no chance to lift it from its hold. So let your faith go down deeper and grasp the rock of the promises more firmly. But do you cry out—The shore is near!—I am afraid! No, no; never fear. Let out your cable! Give Providence a chance. Let the Lord have room to come in his glory for your relief.

4. In promoting revivals of religion, do not fret yourself. Give the Lord a chance to work. See to it that you are doing what he can bless. Don't shut him up to the present moment, but pray and hold on! Trust him and wait till he shall come in his power. Wait, I say, but not in the way of doing nothing. Do all that his providence and Spirit may seem to indicate. So doing, you must trust him to come in his glorious power in the best possible time.

You cannot possibly be too confident that his grace is sufficient for all you need. You need not fear any where,

if you do your part well, that Christ will not do his part equally well. He will give you success and help you to honor his name. O young man! are you afraid to commit yourself to the work of the ministry lest your strength fail you? Remember him who has said—"My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

O sinner! his grace is sufficient also for you. Are you ready to commit yourself to his care? Oh, but you say, I am not a Christian; what right have I to believe that his grace will avail for me? Come and believe; come now, forsaking the way of sin—so shall you find his promise is to you in all its perfect fullness. Have you a want? Come with your heart all empty—come, bring empty vessels not a few; his grace shall richly fill them all. Don't say, My circumstances are so peculiar—no matter what they are; no matter if such a case never was before; will it therefore lie beyond his power to meet it? Nay, verily, not while his name his Jesus; not while he proclaims of himself—"I, that speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

OUR TITLE.

BY WILLIAM FELL.

A clear title does not admit of any doubt. There is no room for doubt. The Word declares that, "He that doubteth is damned." I think so, guess so, or hope so, are the devil's mortgages; and he claims every soul that has these incumbrances hanging upon him. God never leaves his children in doubt. He gives them the evidence of their acceptance with him clear as the sun; they are his and they know it. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." "And hereby we know," says the apostle, "that he abideth in us by the Spirit which he hath given us." Many a professor of religion would be glad to have a clear title; but then it costs something to get a search, and

they are afraid to make the attempt. When they begin to look over the record of their lives, the prospect seems very discouraging. They are covered all over with mortgages, and find they are totally bankrupt. They see what they must do to get right. Their past life comes up, and individuals they have hated in their hearts, come before them; and before the blood of Christ can wash them, they must be perfectly willing to go and make a frank confession, and ask forgiveness. They can see nothing but a life of disobedience and they feel that wrongs must be made right. A soul that is really in earnest to get a clear title, will go to the bottom, he will welcome the light and walk in it; there is no cross too heavy to bear, nor sacrifice too great to make. It is the height of wisdom to know just how the matter stands this side of the judgment, and to make all wrongs right.

A FAITHFUL CHRISTIAN.

BY JOSEPH GOODWIN TERRILL.

It was communion day. The service over, the congregation passed quickly out. With an invalid, at her house, I was seated at a window watching the passers-by from various churches and Sunday-schools. Soon Brother — appeared with a basket on his arm, bearing the elements and linen of the service.

"There are few men like Brother —," the invalid remarked. "I have been a member of the church with him for over fifteen years, and I have never known him to flinch from duty."

The brother spoken of is a hard-working man, in the employ of others, and has known much of affliction and poverty. He has often been severely criticised for going slow religiously, by those who have gone so fast in their own way as soon to outrun the church, Christianity, and even good character; but he has kept plodding on in the good old way. He has also sometimes been considered too zealous by the more

conservative, and has had to bear his share of reproach on that account. The wild and fanatical have sometimes exchanged places with the extremely conservative, yet he has held on in his way unmoved. The society to which he belongs has sometimes been sorely rent by these discordant elements, and mistakes of administration in the endeavor to correct them; and discouragement has sometimes settled down so dark and thick that some have despairingly given up the contest, but Brother — has remained the same active, devoted, Christian worker.

Through all, it is readily perceived, that he not merely holds his own, but that he grows in grace. His Christian influence in the church, and in the world, has strengthened with every trial. He is ripening fast. His Christian maturity outstrips the whitening of his locks. With his family dependent upon his hands; no home of their own, and the bony skeleton, Death, constantly hovering over his loved ones, the peace of God so fills his breast that you would scarcely think he knew a care.

He is always ready for work. Summer or winter, in heat or cold, in times of revival or declension, in the midst of discouragement or encouragement, he is ready for work. Wherever the board or the society places him, he takes hold with a ready hand and heart and does his best. Never down in his experience, he is ready to pray, sing, or witness for Jesus.

He never pouts. Whether he is leader or not, steward or not, delegate or not, he never pouts. He reverences the opinion of his brethren sufficiently to submit cheerfully in everything where conscience is not involved. He thus retains the respect and confidence of his brethren.

He never flinches. In the management of societies, there are duties often that are difficult and disagreeable. These demand courage and fidelity. He has had such to perform; but he does not flinch. With his eyes on "the recompense of the reward," the judgment-day, and the best interests of the

kingdom of Christ, what his hand finds to do, he does it with all his might. Would to God there were more of such in the church. An army of them is needed in the world.

"SAVED, AS BY FIRE."

T. P. JARNAGAN.

I was born in McMinn Co., Tenn., June 29th, 1856. My parents were members of the Christian church known, as Campbellites. Father taught us to *do right, "though the heavens fall,"* but of the real way of faith I never had the slightest conception. At the age of twelve I was convicted of sin, and would linger behind when coming from school and weep because of my sins. In 1868, I united with the Christian church, and was baptized. They have no "mercy seat," and I heard nothing said of genuine repentance and *receiving* remission of sins. They ridicule the Methodists and their "mercy seat"—thus prejudicing ignorant souls, and keeping them *from* repentance—the only way to find God. To persons desiring to unite with them, they ask: "Do you believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God?" Answering affirmatively, they are baptized and taken into the church. *See the danger of being deceived by simply an intellectual belief in the doctrine and divinity of Christ, accounting this to be faith! and being left in sin!* Here is where I was left. I tried to live better, but O! I had the same wicked, deceitful, rebellious heart. But being in the church, I clung to a profession, with a terrible load on my conscience, and every wrong act adding to the burden, for God followed me, bless his dear name! I was under constant, conscious condemnation, not knowing I could receive forgiveness here, but *hoped* Jesus would receive me at death; yet it was a fearful looking-for of judgment; I felt my guilt so deeply.

In August 1871, I went to Sedalia, Mo. Here the flood-gates of hell were let loose, as it were. Secret sins were

undermining me, soul and body. At times I stole small sums of money from my employer's drawer, not because I needed it, but vice had so vitiated my appetites, they had the mastery; and I was lured on, forgetting God and burying conscience. I was covetous, dishonest, unfaithful, a liar, polluted from head to foot with sin; yet all the time a member of the church and partaking of the Lord's supper. At times the Spirit of God would reprove me. I remember how the words contained in Tim. vi, 9, 10, pierced my heart at one time. God's eye alone can penetrate the depths of iniquity and moral defilement in which I was sunken.

Amidst broken business engagements, unfilled promises, with a racked mind and guilty conscience, I left Mo., came to Buffalo, N. Y., and engaged with my brother in circulating a paper filled with pictures and fiction produced by wicked hearts, who, for money, pamper to the popular literary lusts of ignorant, degraded souls. Many who stand high in society—even mothers, fathers, and professors of religion! who should be awake to this evil literature which is filling the hearts of the rising generation with corruption—are its patrons. O what shame! Worse of all, these papers come partially under a false guise, claiming to teach great morals by leading souls through false tales of every fancied phase of life which corrupt minds can figure; and some popular ministers of the Gospel write for their columns.

Before leaving Buffalo, I called at the house of Wm. Fell, with the paper. But this man was not ashamed of the cross; did not say, O that's a wicked boy, and if I say anything to him it will only be lost; but said, "You cannot circulate this to the glory of God." Said he "could not take it to the glory of God, and that he did all things with an eye single to please him." He related some of his experience, and asked if I was ever a Christian? I did not answer, for I knew I was guilty, and as in sorrow for my sins I wanted to go. He asked me to

wait and have a season of prayer. He prayed earnestly for me; gave me some tracts; advised me in love, to renounce the paper and sin, and I left in tears, deeply affected. O! that those who profess to be Christians, and have the light, would deal faithfully with individuals in a loving, kind manner. Those who do, little realize how much good they are doing, for the influence they are exerting will last forever.

The Spirit of God followed me, convincing me of sin. I went to Rochester, N. Y., thence to Cleveland, O. While in the latter place I quit the paper, and, though I had no idea of returning to Buffalo, a way opened in music. The Lord used this means to lead me to the Free Methodist church. Being convinced, by the light received, that a shallow profession will not answer in the Great Day, I was led to seek God for mercy, April 25th, 1875. I wrote a letter of confession to my employer when West, asking his forgiveness, and promising to make restitution. Here God blessed me. All hatred ever cherished toward any one, anger and prejudice, passed away. From this change I thought I had found the Lord; but the pilgrims saw I was mistaken. I was blind to it for a time, but God soon showed me works could not save, no matter how well they fulfill the law. How to find this *Saviour*, was the next thing. I was in doubt how one could know when he is saved. But here were *witnesses*, who had the *evidence*, and I saw their joy and the *glory in their faces*, bespeaking "what a dear Saviour they had found."

The evidence was too clear. Yet I met with many obstacles. When I told the pastor of the Christian, or Disciple church in Buffalo, (which I had just joined by letter,) that my life had only been one of blank profession, and desired him to erase my name, he spoke against the Methodists; said there was no such thing as conversion, that it was only "animal magnetism," a human influence, and tried to explain the philosophy of it. This affected me somewhat, but I did not believe what he

said. God have mercy on this pastor and show him his folly. 1 Tim. vi, 20-21 is my prayer. Prof. Fowler had also marked me "weak" in *faith*, and here was another hold for Satan, who made me think I had *no faith at all*, could *never be saved*, and tempted me to cut my throat. But God ordered otherwise.

After more than seven months of earnest seeking, mingled with discouragement at times, God was pleased to save me. In a meeting, Dec. 3d, 1875, the presence of the Lord was manifest in a special manner. Others were getting free, the Spirit overshadowed me, encouraged me to pray, and while they were singing:

"His grace can full assistance lend,
And on that grace I dare depend,"

I was enabled to exercise faith on the Son of God, and then and there received the pardon of my sins. Jesus was my Saviour! He had been a "stone of stumbling;" but *now* he was *precious*! I will praise Thee, O God, forever! Thou didst wash away my sins.

"My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed thee."

At once, when I was justified, the blessed Spirit led me to pray for complete deliverance from *inbred sin*. I did not obtain the witness, but kept seeking earnestly—asked the Lord to show me what to do to get the cleansing blood applied, and he gave me these words: "*Casting down imaginations, (or reasonings,) and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.* (2 Cor. x, 5.) *Let us draw near, with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*"—Heb. x, 22. These words were the medicine. I had been full of evil reasoning, or might have been justified sooner. Phrenology led to evil reasoning, displeasing to the Lord, and I had to give it up. I consecrated every power of my being to be used to the glory of God; cast

away unbelief, and threw myself on the atoning merits of Jesus for cleansing. My heart had been "sprinkled from an evil conscience" by justification, and my body "washed with pure water." I had done as God directed. Presently the "animal magnetism" point came up as a flash of lightning. I saw I had grieved the Spirit by this evil reasoning, with doubts, and that "*Whosoever shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come,*" (Matt. xii, 32.) O! what moments of terror these were to my soul! I saw, oh! what it is to be lost! and what "eternal horrors hang around that second death!" Had a foretaste of hell! I cannot describe. My prayer to God, "*Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth,*" is that no one who reads this article may lose heaven by neglect. May God write these terrors on unseen hearts; teach them to shun that awful death, for Jesus sake. Amen.

While the Lord was revealing these terrors to me, it seemed the very fires of hell were compassing me. The Spirit pulled me to my feet in an instant; I cried mightily unto God to pardon me for grieving His Spirit through ignorance—promising I would "believe it was his Spirit, never doubt it, confess it down to death and write about it." Then he gave me the witness that the work of sanctification was wrought, and I had to exclaim I was "Saved, as by fire." The blood cleanses to-day as I write. I have forgotten all about "weak faith." He saves independent of organization. Here is the evil of phrenology, which leads to head instead of heart work; leads to try to improve our natures instead of getting saved from all these things, (Gal. v, 19-21.) Get the heart washed and the head will be all right, (Gal. v, 22-24.) He cleanses me from "all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," self-righteousness, conceit, and gives me pure love and clean thoughts. Glory to God forever! I find we can glorify God in our minds. O! what a com-

plete work! Praise God forever! It takes in everything. I am the Lord's, soul, body and spirit, consecrated to his will, and can say:

"Thine will I live, thine will I die,
Be thine, through all eternity."

God accepts the offering. I realize the solemnity of the seal. Five months have passed since the Lord sanctified my soul, and it has been a warfare of victories since. He calls me to work in his vineyard. Since the Lord has given me victory I realize a complete cutting lose from everything. I am glad the Lord ever led me among the Free Methodists. They dealt faithfully with me, and the Lord has healed my heart fully. He has enabled me to make confessions, and restore money to individuals whom I have defrauded. I have done a great deal of this work of confession and restitution, and have more to do. I believe in being thoroughly honest with God and my own soul. It will not do to profess religion over a mess of corruption. As soon as a man is saved, God sets him at making wrongs of his past life right, by confession and restitution. An honest soul will do this work.

In conclusion, I beseech every one who names the name of Christ to do your full duty in a loving, true and uncompromising spirit, to every individual who comes to your house, that may be providentially thrown in your way. Souls may be reached in this way, that never could be in any other way. No one ever dealt with me personally about my soul until I was providentially thrown among the Free Methodists. I shall ever remember those pilgrims who dealt so faithfully and kindly with me. What is needed in this nineteenth century more than anything else is just this kind of work. This was the secret of the grand success of the apostles and early Christians. May God help us for Jesus sake. Amen.

—Much depends on the way we come into trouble. Paul and Jonah were both in a storm, but in very different circumstances.

GOOD WORKS

"Thy voice is sweet and thine aspect beautiful," says Solomon. The voice is knowledge, and the aspect, good works. He who only studies sacred things, derives no benefit from his study. In a certain school of theology it was once discussed at great length which of the two was most valuable—knowledge of God or good works. Some gave the precedence to knowledge, others to good works. After a long discussion this decision: "That is the best knowledge which leads to action."

God hath promised a reward, not to those who study his precepts, but to those who obey them.

He who only hath the knowledge of the law is even as one who hath no God.

Against those who possess great knowledge without bringing forth good works, a wise doctor was in the habit of saying:—"Woe unto him who hath no house, and yet builds himself a large porch. Whoso hath the knowledge of God without the *fear* of God, is like one who only possesses the keys by which a house may be locked and unlocked from within, and who cannot, therefore, gain an entrance *into* the house."

The wise Eleazar saith:—"He that rather possesses knowledge than doth good works, is like to a plant which possesses large and leafy branches, but no root. A light wind will throw it down. He who hath little knowledge, but doeth good works, is like unto a plant which hath few branches, but a strong root, and which cannot, therefore, be shaken out of its place by the most impetuous wind."

We are here reminded of our Lord's words in the Sermon on the Mount, respecting the foolish man who heard his sayings and did them *not*, and who, consequently, built upon the sand; and the wise man, who, doing as well as hearing, built on the rock.

Rana says:—"Repentance and good works are the true end of knowledge.

Of what benefit is it to have great learning, if at the same time we have not obedience? A blessing is not so much promised to him who *studies*, as to him who *labors* for the glory of God. But as to him who labors for his *own* glory, better for him would it have been had he never been born."

There was once a prince who possessed a vast garden, rich in flowers, and filled with an immense variety of fruit-bearing trees. Hither he sent many of his servants, that they might dress the garden, cultivate it, and keep it. When the work was done he gave to each of his servants some proof of his favor, so much larger as the part of the garden which that servant had tilled was the more valuable to him; but he would not inform them beforehand which portion he cared for most, because he knew that to obtain a reward each one would have thrown himself upon that portion, and have neglected the rest of the garden. For the same reason the Lord has not made known to us in the Law which precepts are the most important, for then the law would have been but partially observed. We are here again reminded of our Lord's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, respecting "breaking" and "doing" "the least commandments." But his doctrine, as unfolded in the parable of the vineyard laborers, who *all* received a penny a day, is infinitely superior to that of the merit-weighting Rabbins.—*From the Jewish Rabbins.*

JOY.

Joy is for all men. It does not depend on circumstance or condition; if it did, it could only be for the few. It is not the fruit of good luck, or of fortune, or even of outward success which all men cannot have. It is of the soul, or the soul's character; it is the wealth of the soul's own being when it is filled with the spirit of Jesus, which is the spirit of eternal love. If you want therefore to know who of mankind can have the gift of joy, you have only to ask who of them have souls; for every

soul is made to be a well-spring of eternal blessedness, and will be, if only it permits the waters of eternal love to rise within. It can have right thoughts and true, and be set in everlasting harmony with itself. It can love, and so without going about to find what shall bless it—it has all the material of blessing in itself; resources in its own immortal nature, as a creature dwelling in the light of God, which cannot fail or be exhausted;—all men are for joy, and joy for all. It is equally evident that the reason why they do not have it, is that they do seek it where it is—in the receiving of Christ and the spirit of life. They go after it in things without, not in character within; they have all faith in fortune, none in character. So they build palaces and accumulate splendors about them, and keep a desert within; and then, since the desert within cannot be made to rejoice in the gew-gaws and vanities without, they sigh; they are very melancholy—the world is a hard world; vanity of vanities, all is vanity. Let them cease thus whimpering about the vanities and come to Christ; let them receive his joy, and there is an end to the hunger. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, and ye shall find rest to your souls. There is nothing hard in what I require. When I call you to renounce all and take up your cross and follow me, I only seek to withdraw you from the chase after happiness, that I may fill you with joy. My yoke is easy, therefore, and my burden light. Ah! how many have found it to be exactly so! What surprise have they felt in the drawing of this Christian joy. They seem about to lose everything and found themselves instead, possessing all things.—*Horace Bushnell.*

—He who always receives and never gives, acquires, as a matter of course, a narrow, contracted, selfish character. His soul has no expansion, no benevolent impulses, no elevation of aim. He learns to feel and think and care only for himself.

PRAYER.

It is by prayer that we maintain that communion with Jesus Christ which will render us capable of doing what he did, and being what he was; but it is by the prayer of faith—persevering, ardent prayer, which takes no refusal, but *will* enjoy all that the Father has promised in his *Word*, and will not be silent—by prayer upon our knees, which wrestles on through blood and tears till it has obtained what it asked. Oh! what would not then be our strength and joy, unchanged and independent of all the sufferings of this miserable body, perhaps already half destroyed, but which is the temple of the Holy Spirit now, and which to-morrow will be transformed into a glorious and spiritual body—that is to say, will be filled with the Holy Spirit, like the body of Jesus Christ himself; what would not be our joy—I do not say if we had the means, for we have them—but if we so used the means that we have so, as to enable us to rise even above the trials and struggles of the flesh, and penetrate into the heart of our heavenly Father, realizing the joy of our Saviour and the power of the Holy Spirit. Meditate, I entreat you, upon the Holy Spirit! Read and read over again the discourses of Jesus Christ in the last chapter of St. John's Gospel; read also the seventh and following chapters of Romans, and learn what strength and consolation we have in the Holy Spirit; who is not less than God himself. Yes, my God, thou thyself coming to dwell in the body of thy poor child, a miserable sinner, destroyed by suffering and sin, but saved by grace, and washed in the blood of the Lamb without blemish. Having such promises, why should we stop half way? Why should we sigh over our hunger and thirst when we are before a well-spread table, towards which we have only to stretch out our hand of faith to be fully satisfied and to have life in abundance. Ah! if but a handful of Christians now assembled here could make up their minds to be quite happy—

to pray earnestly (literally, to pray in praying), like Elias; if they could resolve to overcome their natural apathy, their spiritual indolence, their incredulity—of what should we not be capable if we were to go throughout the world as the twelve apostles did? We might draw after us all our brothers and sisters, whose hearts would be touched by seeing the Gospel realized in our life! O God, this is our profound misery, that having such promises we should do so little.—*Monod.*

TOBACCO.

BY REV. J. E. BRISTOL.

We give six reasons why Christians cannot use tobacco:

1. It is a filthiness of the flesh. This fact is acknowledged by its honest, but self-condemned votaries. As followers of Christ we are taught by the Word, to "Cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." 2. Cor. vii. 1.

2. It cannot be used, habitually, to the glory of God. The works of all Bible Christians must begin and end with this object only, the glory of God. Can such as are now in bondage to that filthy habit truthfully say, "I began, and continue to use tobacco, with the single purpose of pleasing the Lord?" On the contrary, was it not with great difficulty that the natural repugnance to the weed was overcome either through a desire to secure rank with others in a foolish custom, or in the anticipation of future self-pleasing, after an appetite was formed? And is not this contrary to that self-denial enjoined upon the true disciples of Christ? We assume that it is, and irreconcilable, also, with the precept, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1. Cor. x. 31.

3. It cannot be used, without blasphemy, in the name of the Lord Jesus. What devotee of tobacco ever thought of calling upon God, through Christ, for a blessing upon it, or upon himself, as he

complacently stuffed his fingers into the favorite 'pouch' for a chew, or lighted his idolized 'meerschäum,' or 'brier root' for a smoke. This is a species of blasphemy too glaring, even for non-professors to indulge. Let those, then, that bear his name, beware lest they attempt to make Christ the minister of sin by their unholy example, and by their filthy practices. "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." Col. iii. 17.

4. It cannot be used in faith. As Christ is the Author and Finisher of scriptural and saving faith; and as "Without (such) faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. xi, 6; the desires and the practices of all true believers must accord with the nature and the character of him, of whom it is written; "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." If it is absurd to suppose that he inspires in the hearts of his followers a desire for tobacco; it is equally absurd for those who profess to be his disciples, to be found reeking with the disgusting filth of tobacco, and thereby to declare to the world through their pernicious example, "That they have been with Jesus and have learned of him." "For whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Romans xiv, 23.

5. It injures the mind and destroys the body. This is a fact demonstrated by the experience of its victims, and the abundant testimony of undisputable, medical authority. It is estimated that 20,000 persons, mostly young men, are hurried to their graves annually, in our country alone, as the result of its excessive use. The disorders that it produces and develops in the system, are legion. Insanity, paralysis, consumption, heart disease, dyspepsia, loss of memory, with a mental indisposition adverse to spiritual advancement and intellectual effort. These are a few of its injurious effects. In the light of such facts, is it not utterly inconsistent for believers to indulge in, or countenance its use? If, as the Bible teaches,

we are to "present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God," Rom. xii, 1; and to "glorify God in our bodies, and in our spirits which are his," 1. Cor. vi., 20; surely we shall not be guiltless, if we yield ourselves to the destructive influences of this poisonous narcotic.

6. It is a sinful waste of time and means. The time employed and the money expended in the cultivation, manufacture, sale and the use of tobacco—the destitution, misery and ignorance on all sides calling for prompt relief and expansive Christian effort; the lack of Gospel teaching in many parts of the world, and the avenues thereto remaining closed because of the lack of funds to carry on the work of the Lord—all these must present to the heart of the true Christian, a convincing proof that he cannot spend the Lord's time and the Lord's money, of which he is only a steward, to gratify an appetite, and to encourage a traffic fraught with so much that is evil and degrading, without incurring guilt, and bringing condemnation upon his soul.

FLETCHER'S EXPERIENCE.

"Leeds, August 24, 1781. — That dear man of God, Mr. Fletcher, came with Miss Bosanquet (now Mrs. Fletcher) to dine at Mr. Smith's in Park Row, and also to meet the select society. After dinner, I took an opportunity to beg he would explain an expression he once used to Miss Losedale, in a letter, viz: 'That on all who are renewed in love, God bestows the gift of prophecy.' He called for the Bible, then read and sweetly explained the 2d chapter of the Acts, observing, to prophecy, in the sense he meant, was to magnify God with the new heart of love and the new tongue of praise, as they did who, on the day of Pentecost, were filled with the Holy Ghost! And he insisted that believers are now called to make the same confession, seeing we may all prove the same baptismal fire. He showed that the day of Pentecost was only the opening of the dispensa-

tion of the Holy Ghost—the great promise of the Father; and that 'the latter day glory,' which he believed was near at hand, should far exceed the first effusion of the Spirit. Therefore, seeing they then bore witness to the grace of our Lord, so should we, and, like them, spread the flame of love! Then, after singing a hymn, he cried, 'O, to be filled with the Holy Ghost! I want to be filled! O, my friends, let us wrestle for a more abundant outpouring of the Spirit!' To me he said, 'Come my sister, will you covenant with me this day to pray for the fullness of the Spirit? Will you be a witness for Jesus?' I answered with flowing tears, 'In the strength of Jesus, I will!' He cried, 'Glory, glory, glory be to God! Lord strengthen thy handmaid to keep this covenant even unto death.' He then said, 'My dear brethren and sisters, God is here; I feel him in this place. But I would hide my face in the dust, because I have been ashamed to declare what he hath done for me. For years I have grieved his Spirit; but I am deeply humbled, and he has again restored my soul.' Last Wednesday he spoke to me by these words, 'Reckon yourselves, therefore, to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. I obeyed the voice of God I now obey it; and tell you all to the praise of His love, I am free from sin! Yes, I rejoice to declare it, and to bear witness to the glory of his grace, that 'I am dead unto sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ,' who is my Lord and my King. I received this blessing four or five times before; but I lost it by not observing the order of God, who hath told us, 'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.' But the enemy offered his bait under various colors, to keep me from a public declaration of what my Lord had wrought.

"When I first received his grace, Satan bade me wait awhile, till I saw more of the fruits. I resolved to do so, but I soon began to doubt of his

witness which before I had felt in my heart, and was, in a little time, sensible I had lost both. A second time, after receiving this salvation, (with shame I confess it,) I was kept from being a witness for my Lord by the suggestion, 'Thou art a public character; the eyes of all are upon thee; and if as before, by any means thou lovest the blessing, it will be a dishonor to the doctrine of heart holiness,' etc. I held my peace and again forfeited the gift of God. At another time I was prevailed upon to hide it by reasoning, 'How few, even of the children of God, will receive this testimony, many of them supposing every transgression of the Adamic law is sin; and, therefore, if I profess myself to be free from sin, all these will give my profession the lie, because I am not free in their sense—I am not free from ignorance, mistakes and various infirmities. I will therefore enjoy what God has wrought in me, but I will not say I am perfect in love.' Alas! I soon found again, 'He that hideth his Lord's talent and improveth it not, from that unprofitable servant shall be taken away even that he hath.'

"Now my brethren, you see my folly: I have confessed it in your presence, and now I resolve, before you all to confess my Master. I will confess him to all the world! And I declare unto you, in the presence of God, the Holy Trinity, I am now 'dead indeed unto sin.' I do not say, 'I am crucified with Christ,' because some of our well meaning brethren say, 'By this can only be meant a gradual dying.' But I profess unto you, 'I am dead unto sin and alive unto God.' And remember, all this 'through Jesus Christ our Lord.' He is my prophet, priest, and King! my indwelling holiness! my all in all! I wait for the fulfilment of that prayer, 'That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, and that they may be one even as we are one.' O for that pure baptismal flame! O for the fullness of a dispensation of the Holy Ghost! Pray, pray, pray for this! This shall make us all

of one heart and one soul. Pray for gifts—for the gift of utterance, and confess your royal Master. A saint without gifts is like a king in disguise, he appears as a subject only. You are kings and priests unto God. Put on, therefore, your robes, and wear, on your garter, holiness to the Lord."—*Hester Ann Rogers.*

THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD.

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say than to you he hath said—

You, who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?

In every condition, in sickness and health,
In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth,
At home and abroad, on the land, on the sea,
As thy days may demand, shall thy strength ever be.

Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dismayed,
For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;

I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

When through the deep waters I call thee to go
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

When, through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace all sufficient shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not burn thee, I only design,
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

Even down to old age, all my people shall prove,
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne.

The soul that on Jesus doth lean for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never,—no, never,—no, never forsake.

EDITORIAL.

IMPRESSIONS.

One of our most intelligent and conscientious friends writes us for advice as to what course to take in reference to impressions.

It is a subject of great importance and of great difficulty.

To deny that God makes impressions on our hearts is to make religion a mere matter of education and discipline, and to do away with many plain passages of the Bible. *When He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth.*—John xvi, 13. *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*—Rom. viii, 14. *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God.*—Rom. viii, 16. Each of these passages implies that the Spirit of God makes impressions upon our minds. Christianity is pre-eminently a spiritual religion. This is its most striking characteristic. Without we have the Spirit, an observance of the forms of Christianity will never save us. But the Spirit of God does not address itself to those senses by which we gain a knowledge of the external world. We do not see it as we see a friend. We do not hear it with our outward ear. The companions of Saul heard a voice, but saw no man. Acts xiv, 7. So if the Spirit of God does not influence us through our external senses, it must be by inward impressions. There is no other avenue to the mind.

But to assume because we are honest, and sincere Christians, that all apparently good impressions made upon our minds are from God, is to lay ourselves open to the most dangerous delusions. It was to saints that John wrote: *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God.*—1 John iv, 1. The first effort of Satan is to lead us to pay no attention to the influences of the Spirit of God. He would have us filled with a sense of our own greatness, and our own independence. Failing in this, he seeks to make the ministry of the Spirit con-

temptible. If He cannot make us pay homage to our own reason, he seeks to fill us with spiritual pride. If he cannot keep us from doing our duty, he endeavors to make us think that it is our duty to do the most unreasonable things; or to do things that in themselves are proper, at the most unseasonable times, and in the most unseemly places. Thus, for a long time, John Bunyan could not eat without the suggestion being constantly made to his mind that if he cared anything for Christ and was in earnest to save his soul, he would, instead of eating, go away and pray, and read his Bible.

That it is difficult to lay down rules by which to determine when an impression is of God, all who have any knowledge of spiritual things must readily admit. Yet one thing is certain. If we use proper diligence and humility, God will not permit us to be deceived. *If any one will do His will he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.*—Jno. vii, 17.

We cannot determine that an impression is of God, because it is made in Scriptural language. Impostors always seek the best disguise. Satan is an arch impostor. He comes, clad in the garments of an angel of light, and clothes his plausible suggestions in the drapery of the Bible. He appeared thus to our Saviour. But Scripture, rightly understood, does not contradict Scripture. So if, to any quotation made to encourage us to engage in some desperate venture, we can answer, as our Saviour did, "It is written again," that should put us upon the most careful scrutiny. A few more tests will give us conclusive results; and if the enemy has been seeking to lead us astray, we shall feel clear to say, *Get thee hence Satan.*—Mat. xii, 10.

2. The impressions of God's Spirit are always in season. God is never in a hurry. While He would have us obey promptly, he gives us ample time to settle any questions that may properly arise. Satan urges to precipitation. God says, *Stand in the ways, and see.*—Jer. vi, 16. Do not go ahead until you know that you are going right. But the enemy would rush us forward without giving us time to think. A

hasty spirit is always wrong. If God would have you go to any place, He will let you know in time. But when it is too late, Satan, to rob you of present peace and unfit you for doing good where you are, will tell you that you ought to be somewhere else.

He will, if possible, make you restless and impatient, and ready to condemn yourself for not doing differently; when you did the best you could under the circumstances. He is the accuser of the brethren. God is not a hard master.

3. The impressions of God's Spirit are always in harmony with his written word. There are many particulars in our every day life respecting which the Bible is silent. It could not be otherwise. But it lays down principles from which we are never to swerve. It gives us precepts and prohibitions which no inward impulse should ever lead us to disregard. *Thy word hast Thou magnified above all Thy name.*—Ps. cxxxiii, 5. So that we must bring all our impressions to this unerring standard. This is the crucible in which we must try everything that would pass for gold. To this test every impulse prompting to action should be subjected. Anything that does not harmonize with the plain, evident, common sense meaning of the Bible, must be rejected.

4. Impressions which are from God do not contradict the enlightened reason of a man of God. Reason is a noble faculty. It has been degraded by the fall; but in the regenerate it is sanctified, as the affections and the will are sanctified. *The meek he will guide in judgment.*

But the spiritually proud, and the self-willed Satan guides by impulses and impressions. If you are in doubt, consult Christians of deep experience and of solid judgment. If we find that, in the judgment of unselfish, sound followers of Christ we are going wrong, then it is time to halt. When God says, Go forward, it will be plainly evident.

5. When God leads in an extraordinary way we may look for uncommon results. He does not stop a prophet when he is going on his mission. He does not send us to a warfare at our own charges. If we

find that, after we have done the best we could, we are still headed off, we should have the humility to admit that we have been mistaken. Give yourself to Him to do His will in all lowliness, and you will not be led astray.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.—Rom. xii, 1.

THE SABBATH.

If you would prosper in the divine life, you must observe the Sabbath. Laxity in its observance will bring leanness to the soul. It is a dam that God has thrown across the stream of worldliness every seven miles to check the rapidity of the current and make it navigable. Break down the dam and you rush to ruin. Where the pressure is great, small leaks are dangerous. Unless closed, a breach will follow.

Many who intend to observe the Sabbath, violate its sanctity in particulars so small, and on pretexts so plausible, that they are not conscious of having done anything wrong.

Some do unnecessary work. The cattle are left to be salted, or the boots to be blacked on Sabbath morning. Or they make the Sabbath too short. They take an hour or two from the morning and add it to Saturday night. Others make or receive visits. They go and come on the Sabbath. The day set apart for religious worship, instruction and meditation, is made a day of recreation.

Others indulge in worldly conversation and in secular reading. But we cannot particularize farther. There are so many ways of breaking the Sabbath without seeming to do it, that no one whose heart is not in its observance can keep it properly. Sabbath-breaking is a symptom rather than a disease. It shows that, no matter what the profession may be, the heart goes after the world. It is of but little use to prescribe for symptoms while the disease remains. You may be more careful in particulars that attract atten-

tion, and the spirit of worldliness still remain. This shows that you are either unregenerate, or backslidden from God. In either case your state is dangerous. What you need is not simply to resolve upon greater strictness. This is right in itself; but it is not enough. You must go to the bottom. Break down before God and confess to Him your worldly, unsanctified spirit. Plead for forgiveness until the Spirit seals your pardon. Ask for the renewing of the Holy Ghost until you are so changed that you can call the Sabbath a delight. If you make the most of every Sabbath, you will find when the day of eternity dawns upon you, that you have not had one Sabbath too many.

THE NEXT VOLUME.

We commence a new volume with the July number. We ought to have a large increase in our list of subscribers. The truths we advocate should have a wider hearing. The world never needed them more than at present. Our uncompromising stand against all wrong, provokes bitter hostility, but that should only make our friends the more zealous to scatter these truths, broadcast.

If your subscription expires with this number, please renew promptly; and get as many new subscribers as possible. If it does not, still see if you cannot send on new names to commence with the July number.

If you are indebted to us in ever so small an amount, we would be glad to receive it as soon as possible. If all that is due us were paid, it would relieve us from troublesome embarrassment. We trust you will not only deal justly with us but generously in this time of need.

BURDENS.

The apostle says, *Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.* There is a heavy financial burden resting upon us, in connection with our Seminary, in which many others ought to share. We are compelled to make brick without straw—to meet bills for work and materials, when we have no money with which

to meet them. Our subscriptions are not yet all paid; and when they are, we shall still need about four or five thousand dollars to pay off present indebtedness and complete the building.

A brother who knows about the good the school is doing, proposes to be one of forty to give a hundred dollars each. Three others have joined with him, making one-tenth of the required amount. Will you be one of the number? If so, send us on your names and the money as soon as possible. There are those who ought to contribute for this purpose a much larger amount. Do not attempt to hold on to that which you should dedicate to the cause of God. *Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven*, instead of laying them up on earth for the lawyers to divide among them when you are gone. Do not let this appeal go unheeded. Act in this matter, according to the ability which God has given you.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LOVE FEAST.

Mrs. M. M. YOUNG.—“The Lord is my light and my salvation? whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” For the few past months the Lord has been revealing himself unto me more gloriously than ever before. I have felt for some time past such a constant abiding in Christ. Jesus permits me to drink freely of the water of life. I know that it is the believer's privilege to have our life hid with Christ in God. O that I could express the wonderful workings of God even in my poor heart. I have placed all that I have and am in his hands, and I love to do his will. Glory be to his holy name forever and ever! Oh! that I could persuade every one that professes to love God to live very near to him. Trials will only make you stronger if you hold on to God. I have proved his grace sufficient in every time of need. I claim God's promises as mine, and rejoice amidst them all. “Hereby we know that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.”

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