

THE EARNEST CHRISTIAN AND GOLDEN RULE.

VOL. XXXIII.

FEBRUARY, 1877.

No. 2

CONSCIENCE.

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To be good Christians, we must have a good conscience. Without it we shall be inconsistent in our lives and fluctuating in our enjoyment. Our influence for good will be crippled, and life will be a failure.

Conscience is that faculty by which we judge of the moral quality of actions, whether they are right or wrong. It impels us to that which we conceive to be right; it dissuades us from the wrong. When men are tempted to do some great crime to which they have been unaccustomed, there is a great conflict between inclination and conscience. Before they can go forward in crime with any ease, they are obliged to throw conscience away. Says one about to commit murder, "I'll not meddle with conscience; it is a dangerous thing; it makes a man a coward; a man cannot steal but it accuseth him; a man cannot swear but it checks him. 'Tis a blushing, shamefaced spirit, mutinies in a man's bosom; it fills one full of obstacles; it made me once restore a purse of gold, that, by chance, I found. It beggars any man that keeps it." It commends us when we do right; it condemns us

when we do wrong. *Their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.*—Rom. ii, 10.

It does not follow that because a man acts according to the dictates of his conscience that he does right. You go to the depot to take the train on important business. You are there in time according to your watch. But the train has gone. It does not save you from the disappointment because you went according to the best light you had. So we must not merely live according to our conscience; we must see to it that our conscience is right. Some of the most atrocious cruelties have been inflicted in the name of conscience. It was under its sanction that the fires of martyrdom were kindled, and the horrors of the inquisition enacted. It was after he had persecuted the saints that Paul said, *Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.*—Acts xxiii, 1. Yet he calls himself while he so lived the chief of sinners.—1 Tim. i, 15. "*I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which things I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave*

my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceeding mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities."—Acts xxvi, 9–11. But was he innocent while he so lived? On the contrary, he says: "I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief."—1 Tim. i, 14. You act conscientiously. This is right as far as it goes. But it is not far enough. You must have a conscience regulated by the word of God. If your conscience does not condemn what God, in his word condemns; if it does not prompt you to do what the Bible enjoins, then there is something the matter with your conscience. The mariner steers by the compass. But his compass must be often adjusted. If its testimony differs from that of the Heavenly bodies, then he knows that his compass is wrong. The Heavenly bodies are always right. So if your conscience does not agree with the Bible, then your conscience is wrong. You are in great danger.

The Bible speaks of several kinds of conscience. There is—

1. THE DEFECTIVE CONSCIENCE. It is scrupulous in some respects and loose in others. The Pharisees had this kind of conscience. They gave a tenth of all they received—even of the vegetables that grew in their gardens, but were covetous and unjust, proud, superstitious, and hypocritical. They were sanctimonious in their appearance, and strict in their observance of all the ceremonies of their religion. They fasted often, made long prayers, distributed much alms, and were orthodox in their belief, and loyal to the church. But all was vitiated by a spirit of pride

and ostentation, and self-will. This kind of conscience still prevails to a large extent. Many are strict in some things, but careless in others that stand upon precisely the same authority.

One class are liberal in giving; but they have no conscience about their style of living, and their associations. They have no scruples about *adorning themselves with gold, and pearls, and costly array*; and even ridicule those who are conscientious about such small things. They select their associates without any regard to the influence they may have upon their spiritual welfare; and pay no attention to the requirement, *Come out from among them, and be ye separate.*—2 Cor. vi, 17. With the knowledge within their reach that Freemasonry, as a religious system, is an enemy to Christianity, they pay their money to support the ministers of this false religion. This is called charity! A greater misnomer can hardly be conceived. If you will read your Bible carefully on this point you will find that it just as plainly forbids such a course as it forbids stealing. If you have no conscience about it, then your conscience is exceedingly defective. Others seek to be plain in their dress, and scriptural in the choice of their companions, but they make no conscience of speaking evil of others. Wherever they find a report against their neighbor—especially one from whom they differ—they take it up, and make the most of it. Their conscience gives them as little trouble about evil-speaking, as if the Bible were silent respecting it. Others have no conscience about meeting some of their obligations. They pay their merchant and their doctor, but are not particular

about paying their preacher or their subscriptions for the cause of God. They will borrow money or buy goods on credit without the slightest probability of paying, and still profess to enjoy a high state of grace!

2. A DEFILED CONSCIENCE. It has become so perverted that it commends them for doing wrong and condemns them for doing right. I once knew a person who was greatly distressed over accidentally eating meat on Friday; but he could steal without any apparent compunction.

On the night of August 24th, 1572, by command of Catharine, Regent of France, seventy thousand Protestants, who had been promised protection by the government, were treacherously massacred in cold blood. The best families of the kingdom, men, women, and children were remorselessly murdered. Conscience had become so perverted, that the Pope celebrated the event by a procession to the church of St. Louis, a grand *Te Deum* and the proclamation of a year of jubilee. This is generally the characteristic of persecutors. *Even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.*—Tit. i, 16.

3. A SEARED CONSCIENCE. The less conscience is heeded the less it is heard. It may be brought to such a state that, no matter what enormity is committed, it ceases its reproaches. Said a man who had murdered fourteen men: "The first man I murdered seemed to haunt me by day and by night. I was so troubled that I could neither rest nor sleep. But by the time I had murdered three or four, I

could kill a man as easily as I could a snake. Into this fearful state do apostates finally come. *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.*—1 Tim. iv, 1-3.

4. A PURE CONSCIENCE. This is one that has been purified by the Holy Ghost, and so regulated that it always beats in harmony with the revealed will of God. *How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.*—Heb. ix, 14.

This is the kind of conscience that every believer needs. With it you cannot go wrong—without it you cannot go right. Such a conscience will be susceptible to the slightest approach of evil; it will give its warning of the act, or word, or look, or thought that is wrong. It will give you strength in the hour of trial, and under persecutions and reproaches it will uphold you with such a consciousness of rectitude that you would not part with it for any possible, earthly advantage.

Then examine yourself, not merely by your conscience, but examine your conscience by the revealed will of God; and if in anything it does not harmonize with that will, do not rest until it is purified by the blood of Christ. Seek until the Spirit dwells within you and makes your conscience beat in harmony with the word of God.

PRAYER.

Every one who knows anything of godliness knows the value of prayer, and, it may be thought, no plea need be put forth for its exercise. Yet it is possible to believe in the value of prayer, and at the same time not carry out that belief in our life. And is it a fact that many professing Christians are so regular in their habits of devotion, that the clock never ticks beyond a few minutes of the time unless they are engaged in prayer? We are accustomed to say, "Prayer is the Christian's vital breath." But if so, the lungs of some souls are very small, and they are not often thoroughly expanded. There is a great need to preach a new crusade through the Churches, and call upon all Christians to get down upon their knees. No man has ever done mighty things for God who has not spent much time in prayer. A few minutes only in this exercise daily may produce a pigmy, but will never make a saint. Yet dwarfs are not what the Church needs to-day. If ever she needed men of power it is now, and power can only come by means of prayer. How many of the heroes of ancient days followed the example of Jacob, and wrestled whole nights in prayer! But there is a great outcry against the severer exercise of devotion. This perhaps comes of our Protestantism; but it is by no means necessary that he who spends much time in devotion shall trust in such exercise for salvation. Extremes meet in grace as well as in physics; but this ought not to hinder us from following out to the fullest every holy impulse and every Christian duty.

We shall never know what true prayer means until we cease to measure it by clock-ticks. Five minutes, or fifty, on our knees, will not avail to teach us, if we only wish to spend so much time upon our knees, no more, no less. True prayer means communion with God; communion with God implies fervent love for him; and fer-

vent love for God will often forget the clock and everything else but him with whom we are holding communion in our approaches to the mercy seat.

There is a hymn often sung in which the lines occur,—

"With Thee conversing, we forget
All time, and toll, and care."¹⁷

That is true prayer. None can sing that in truth and be in a low state of grace. How often these lines are true of our earthly friendships! We have called on a dear friend, and after the warm greetings have been over, have entered into conversation. It has been deeply interesting. The charm of sympathetic oneness has drawn out our souls in such a manner that we forget everything but our interest in our much-loved friend. By-and-by our watch has been taken out; we have risen to go at once. "I had no idea it was so late," has been said. We have forgotten time because there was true oneness of spirit, and deep interest in each other. How when you go to God, my friend? Is there the same abandonment to the holy influence of his presence? Is it a lover's presence? Do you enter into sympathetic communion with your Father in heaven? Are you so wrapped up in God that everything else is forgotten, and when you rise from your knees you are astonished to find how rapidly the time has passed? True prayer is then represented. You will then know its meaning and also its power. But the skeleton prayers of some men, without flesh or sinew covering the dry, sapless bones, are utterly valueless. Every blast of temptation will go through them, and raise from hell its infernal laughter as it passes along. There is no strength in such, because no life. We must have robust prayers, full of blood and life, if we would be strong for God. It is true that we cannot every time we pray be thus forgetful of outside things. This, however, must be no excuse for us if we never reach such close and intimate communion with God.

Do not think that such exercises will

endanger your health. For one who has been hurt through much devotion, ten thousand have been injured for ever by too little. There is no danger whatever. You need not remain in one posture for hours. A change in posture will not imply the lapse of interest, and one day spent with God would not only make many more powerful in his cause, but would so raise the tone of their spirits that their bodies would partake of the benefit.

Brothers, the hosts of darkness are marching on. They keep close in their ranks. Infidelity, licentiousness, worldly conformity, unbelief, spiritualism, have all joined hands and are marching against Jesus. We must meet them on our knees. We must be trained to overcome them on our knees. In rapt devotion we must wait for the baptism of power, and here learn the secret and the success of prayer. Every power of heart goes with the words, whilst I say to our readers, *Let us pray!*
—Rev W. G. Pascoe.

IMPRESSIONS.—Across the upland, to the south, a pyramid arises to the memory of the Confederate dead. In the street, on the river to the north of the city, a brick building has on it still a fading sign, marked “Libby Prison.” Though it is used as a tobacco and sumac factory, this forbidding title remains. Its three stories, strong, low, and spacious to ordinary companies, how full of memories to those who crowded there in the not long ago. It is said that Newman Hall, (I think it was,) when he visited this country, sought to confirm an incident that anybody but Tyndall—and such men of science, falsely so called—would pronounce providential. Mrs. Dr. Walker told him that when standing near the opening on the third story she felt an irresistible impulse to step back. She had no sooner done so than a bullet flew up through the floor right where she was standing. He sought the spot and found the hole.—*Bishop Gilbert Haven.*

MOODY ON SECRET SOCIETIES.

President Blanchard gives in the *Cynosure* the following report of the outspoken utterances of the great evangelist on secret societies:

In his Bible reading in Farwell Hall, Chicago, December 14th, Mr. Moody took for his theme, “Walking with God.” As one of the conditions of this state he mentioned separation from the ungodly, quoting Paul, “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.” These words, he said, must mean something, and he made three distinct applications of them: as forbidding business partnerships with unbelievers, entering the marriage relation with an unbeliever, and joining secret lodges. On the last topic he said: I expect I will be treading on some one’s toes, perhaps some of these ministers; but *out with it*. I do not see how any Christian, most of all a Christian minister can go into these secret lodges with unbelievers. They say they can have more influence for good, but I say they can have more influence for good by staying out of them, and then reproving their evil deeds. Abraham had more influence for good in Sodom than Lot had. If twenty-five Christians go into a secret lodge with fifty who are not Christians, the fifty can vote anything they please, and the twenty-five will be partakers of their sins. *They are unequally yoked together with unbelievers.* “But,” says some one, “what do you say about these secret, temperance orders?” I say the same thing. Do no evil that good may come. You never can reform anything by unequally yoking yourself with ungodly men. It is time reformers separate themselves from the world. “But,” you say, “you had one of them in your church.” So I did, but when I found out what it was I cleaned it out like a cage of unclean birds. They drew in a lot of young men of the church, in the name of temperance, and then they got up a dance

and kept them out till after twelve at night. I was a partaker of their sins because I let them get into the church; but they *were cleaned out*, and they *never came back*. This idea of promoting temperance by yoking oneself up in that way with ungodly men is abominable. The most *abominable* meeting I ever attended was a temperance meeting in England. It was full of secret societies and there was no Christianity about it. I felt as though I had got into Sodom and got out as soon as I could. A man rescued from intemperance by a society not working on Gospel principles gets filled with pride and boasts about reforming himself. Such a man is harder to save than a drunkard. "But, Mr. Moody," some say, "if you talk that way you will drive all the members of secret societies out of your meetings and out of your churches." But what if I do? Better men will take their places. Give them the truth anyway, and if they would rather leave their churches than their lodges the sooner they get out of the churches the better. I would rather have ten members who are separated from the world than a thousand such members. Come out from the lodge. Better one with God than a thousand without him. We must walk with God and if only one or two go with us it is all right. Do not let down the standard to suit men who love their secret lodges or have some darling sin they will not give up.

—Christ's people are a willing people. They come willingly, with all their heart and soul. Not only do they flee willingly to Jesus Christ; they choose to be saved by him rather than in any other way. If there were ten thousand other saviours, they would still choose Christ; for he is "the chiefest among ten thousand," and they feel it sweetest and best to be nothing and have nothing, that Christ may be all in all.

—He knoweth God aright, who knoweth him in all things alike.

A LIVING SACRIFICE.

When, in the ancient days, the Jew brought his offering to the priest in the temple, and it was laid upon the altar of God, that offering was henceforth and forever beyond the jurisdiction of the one who presented it. If the offering were a lamb or bullock, the man who offered it had no just ground to claim a hair or hoof of it, after it touched the altar of God. From that moment it was the Lord's and His alone, and every part must therefore be disposed of according to the expressed will of God.

The offering we make of ourselves to God is not unlike the Jew's offering, except in one particular. The gift of the Hebrew could not be disposed of according to the will of God, until it was dead. Our offering is a living sacrifice, yet in point of proprietorship, it is as fully and as completely subject to the will of God, as was that of the Jew. If it be presented to God, it is His wholly and unreservedly. The hands are His to do that which is most pleasing in His sight. The feet are His to walk in the way of His commandments. The lips are His to speak forth His praise.

The man who gives himself honestly to God, and afterwards uses the hands or feet or lips to accomplish his own will, without regard to the will of God, is guilty of sacrilege. He is like the Jew who offered the lamb to God, and afterwards with violence, took from the altar for his own use, in violation of the law of God, such part as he coveted. He was a robber. He robbed God, because he appropriated to his own use what belonged to God. He is not less a robber who gives himself to God a living sacrifice, and afterwards uses his time or talents, his powers of body or mind, for purposes of self-aggrandizement, or self gratification, without the will of God. The Lord says: "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and spirit which are His.

Whether therefore ye eat or drink or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

The Lord said of the Jews, "Ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." When we look abroad in this nineteenth century of this Christian era, and see the rage for wealth and honor, and the slavery of the world to fashion, and to popular applause; and how much is accomplished for selfish purposes, and how little, in every circle of society, men ask what is the will of God, is there not reason to fear that this whole nation is robbing God? We give Him our time in the most solemn manner, and then use our time without regard to His will. Perhaps twenty times a day we ask, "What can we make of it?" Twenty times a day we question what will our friends think? but scarcely once ask, "What will God think." We study to have everything pleasant to ourselves, and as far as may be without too great a sacrifice of selfish interests, we will please others, but the idea of doing nothing but what pleases God, is scarcely entertained by one in a thousand. Yet this is the covenant we all make with God. Can we continuously commit this horrid sin with impunity? Dear reader, be persuaded to examine this matter without prejudice. If the thought we have expressed be truthful, it behooveth every man not only to covenant with God in holy baptism, but to observe the covenant, and to live a holy life in everything conformed to the will of God. Nothing short of this will insure us a place at the right hand of God.—*Lay Evangelist.*

—If a king cast his favor on a mean subject or slave, and prefer him to a great and honorable office, yet he cannot change his nature, and give him fitness for that place. But God doth not only give a kingdom to his saints, but inwardly adapts and fits them for that kingdom. God hath gloriously, wonderfully, miraculously separated to himself the godly man.

SOMETHING WANTING.

How many are looking for something they do not find? Not only out there in the world, where the feverish multitudes are rushing to theatres, operas, seaside, mountain top parks, and foreign lands, seeking what they never grasp, but in the palace of Zion, and in the vineyard where Eshcol grapes are looked for, are there many who are not satisfied.

Something is looked for in sermons that often is not found.

"The minister preached well to day."

"Yes, grandly, but I was disappointed. I cannot suggest an amendment to the sermon; yet somehow, my heart was not satisfied. I was looking for a dish that did not seem to be on the table, or else it had not just the right flavor."

"How do you like our new pastor?"

"Well, he is a capital preacher; learned, critical, logical, witty, and quite earnest, too,—very earnest, I notice, on temperance, and tremendously so when he speaks against the infallibility of the Pope; on the whole, I don't see how we could have done better in selecting a pastor. Our congregations are good; and, when the weather becomes cooler, I think the house will be crowded. And yet there is something lacking in our pastor's preaching, I can hardly tell what. I am so cold and unmoved under it all. I suppose the fault is in myself."

"What do you think ails our Church?"

We have a good edifice, large congregations, a good preacher, who is also an active pastor; our finances are in a good condition, the social means are well attended, and quite a number have recently professed conversion; and yet there seems to be something wanting. I can't tell what it is exactly. I don't feel right; and I judge from the expression I see on many countenances, that many others have a like experience."

Ah! that something "that is lacking" in so many churches, and is missing in so many sermons, is a very subtle

something, and yet very important. I have seen painted fire that looked as real fire; but it wasn't. I have seen painted fruit that was rather more beautiful than real fruit; but it did not taste as well. I have seen a loaf of bread that looked to be as good as the best; but it was sour. The letter of the Gospel is one thing: the Spirit is another. A correct theology is important: the unction of the Holy Ghost is much more important.

What is needed in the churches where there is so much destitution, while no one seems to be able to tell what is the matter, is the doctrine of holiness, all aflame with the fire of love. Preaching holiness without the experience, is feeding the people on cold food. The church is dying on cold victuals. Most ministers manage to drag the doctrine of perfect love into their sermons in some form; but in many instances it is so sour with their own dislike of the whole thing, that their people won't touch it; or so cold from their own cold hearts, that it is rejected as a cold, stale dish. But let a minister bring the doctrine hot from the fires of his own spiritual fervor, and it will be received: and then that something, so long sought in vain, will be realized in the churches. It is the need of the hour. When you go into a cold church, you feel much as you do when you go to the register of a cold morning, and find a current of cold air coming up from the fireless furnace below. You leave that place without much ceremony.

Kindle the fire of perfect love in the pulpit, and it will radiate its heat throughout the whole church. Leaven the pulpit with this animating, cheery, unctuous doctrine, and soon the whole lump will be leavened.—*R. V. Lawrence.*

—It is great folly to heap up much wealth for our children, and not to take care concerning the children for whom we get it. It is as if a man should take more care about his shoe than about his foot.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

YOUR WILL.

In all ordinary cases it is very desirable for every man to be his own executor, rather than to defer his beneficence till after his death. Still, if men have estates that cannot be disposed of during their life, if for any good reason they prefer to distribute their substance by will, they should be careful to do so with the strictest Christian integrity.

In discharging your testamental duties, you naturally remember those causes and objects which hold the dearest place in your affections. Your supreme Friend, Christ, will therefore undoubtedly occupy the first place in this most important and solemn moment of apportioning the wealth which he has bestowed upon you.

Whatever disposal you make of your wealth is the expression of your WILL; not a mere passing thought, not a precipitate, unconsidered act; but an act which you formally preface with saying that you perform it "being in sound mind; in a word it is the deliberate act of the sovereign part of your nature, your WILL. You have during life enjoyed the wealth God has placed in your hands, and all the comforts and advantages it has brought; and now, at your death, the Christian principle which prompts you to provide generously for your loved ones also requires you so to divide the remainder as to accomplish the most good to the greatest number of God's own children, and to the advancement of his cause in the earth. You actually give this to Christ, with the full consent of all the powers of your mind, and impress it with the sovereign seal of your WILL.

Your will is a part of your preparation for death. You make it avowedly, that the subject of your property may not disturb you in that solemn hour, that you may then be able to think of your business affairs with peace. You take it as a part of your preparation for that awful moment when it shall be said to you "Give an account of thy

stewardship," and on the way to that judgment-seat where one of the first inquiries will relate to the use which you have made of your various talents. Make it then with Christ in it from the beginning to end, for the Christ's cause, for Christ's poor, for Christ's sake.

What your death-bed would be, had your attention never been called to this subject, it is not for a man to surmise; but if your will is made with an enlightened conscience and a consecrated spirit, it will plant no thorns in your dying pillow. Think then, Christian professor, we beseech you, to whom you, and all you call your own, belong, and make large bequests to the cause of mercy; or, better still, become your own executor, and enjoy at once the luxury of doing good; or, last of all, do both—if the nature of your property admit—do both.—*Christian Weekly.*

DECEIT.—There are men in the world who love to smile, but that smile is more dangerous than the furrows of a contracted brow, or a storm upon the sea, for their purpose is only to deceive; they easily speak what they never mean; they heap up many arguments to persuade that to others which themselves believe not; they praise that vehemently which they deride in their hearts; they declaim against a thing which themselves covet; they beg passionately for that which they value not, and run from an object which they would fain have to follow and overtake them; they excuse a person dexterously where the man is beloved, and watch to surprise him where he is unguarded; they praise that they may sell, and disgrace that they may keep.—*Jeremy Tuxlor.*

—With what a mixture of fear, reverence and holy joy should we open the Bible—the book of truth and happiness! God's heart opened to man! and yet the whole and every part is secreted from him, and hid under an impenetrable veil, till he opens his heart to God.

DO RIGHT.

Do not embellish a tale in telling it; say not, "It is a mere oratorical variation." O sirs, it rigid, unswerving truth shall sway you, you shall force your way to honor. Your manifest integrity will unravel the villany which will beset you, and a manly independence, the sure companion of conscious rectitude, shall conquer the intimidation which may assault you.

Before the singularity of your uprightness, pretence shall be in amazement; the beauty of your truthfulness even malice shall confess; your courage shall compel admiration; your honesty shall command esteem; your integrity shall insure confidence; and your manliness shall arm you with power.

Let me advise you to wear no armor for your backs when you have determined to follow the track of truth. Receive upon your breastplate of righteousness, the sword-cuts of your adversaries; its stern metal shall turn the edge of your foeman's weapon. Let the right be your lord paramount, and for the rest be free and your own masters still. Follow truth for her own sake; follow her in evil report; let not many waters quench your love to her. Bow to no customs if they be evil. Yield to no established rules if they involve a lie. Do not evil even though good should come of it.

"Consequence!" this is the devil's argument. Leave consequences to God, but do the right. If foemen surround thee, do the right. Be genuine, real, sincere, true, upright, Godlike. The world's maxim is, "Trim your sails and yield to circumstances." But if you would do any good in your generation you must be made of sterner stuff, and help make your times rather than be made by them.

You must not yield to customs, but, like the anvil, endure all the blows until the hammers break themselves. When misrepresented, use no crooked means to clear yourself. Clouds do not last long. If in the course of duty

you are tried by the distrust of friends, gird up your loins, and say in your heart I was not driven to virtue by the encouragement of friends, nor will I be repelled from it by their coldness. Finally, be just, and fear not; "corruption wins not more than honesty;" truth lives and reigns when falsehood dies and rots.

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THE DAY IS AT HAND.—My night is far spent, my day is at hand. The wilderness is nearly traversed; Canaan and Jerusalem are almost within my view; the summits of the everlasting hills are already appearing. What manner of person, then, ought I to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening forward unto the coming day of our God; I must press forward; and so much the more as I see the day approaching. I must be heavenly minded, so walking worthy of my calling, and setting my affections on things above. For what have I, who have a crown in prospect, a kingdom in reversion, to do with vanities or pleasures of this poor and passing world? My eye is above; my treasure is in heaven; shall not my heart be there also? If I am in Christ, I must seek to be like him, and to follow him more and more closely, as the night is hastening to an end, and the day about to break. If I am in sorrow, I shall call to mind that weeping endureth but for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. If I am in comfort, I must see that this prosperity which God has given me is making me a holier man, and a more self-denying worker for him who loved me and washed me from my sins in his own blood. If I am poor, I shall rejoice that my day of wealth is at hand. If I am rich, I shall take the gold my Lord hath given me, and lay it all at his beloved feet. Mine must be no half discipleship—no service of two masters—no divided heart. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. What remains of this brief life of mine must be given wholly to the Lord.—*H. Bonar.*

GIFTS AND GRACE.

BY REV. R. W. HAWKINS.

The "grace of salvation," and the "gifts of the Spirit," emanating alike from the Giver of every good and perfect gift, flow from attributes entirely dissimilar, and depend upon conditions essentially different. Grace springs from the attribute of God's *love*; gifts, whether natural or spiritual, come through the attribute of God's *sovereignty*. Grace is dispensed—gifts are distributed: that is, grace is bestowed without respect of persons, equally to all, upon conditions the same to each, and possibly alike to every one. "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him." "The grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men." "The righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, is manifested unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference." Gifts are conferred, not equally, nor upon certain specified conditions, but according to the will of God, corresponding with his divine purpose concerning each individual. With regard to spiritual gifts, it is written: "All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." Repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are the conditions upon which every one may obtain saving grace; but God reserves to himself the prerogative of assigning to each his place in the body of Christ. A man cannot, because he is in a state of grace, take upon him the work of the ministry; for "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." No more can he become a worker of miracles, or have the gift of healing, by his own choice; for, "Now hath God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him." "To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowl-

edge, to another faith, to another the gift of healing, and to another the working of miracles."

Here let it be observed, in passing, that faith is classed among the gifts. There is the grace of faith, and the gift of faith. Not that there are two kinds of faith, but that the purposes for which they are imparted are different. One relates to the salvation of the soul, the other relates to the exercise of God's power in other things. This is one reason why many good persons who have perfect faith concerning their soul's salvation, have no power to exercise faith for healing. They have the grace of faith, common to all, but not the gift of faith, conferred by the Spirit for specific purposes.

While it is true that gifts are distributed according to God's sovereign will, it is also true that it is not his intention that any member of the body of Christ should be left entirely without gifts; for, in speaking of the distribution of gifts, it is written: "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal."

The repeated, and generally received declaration, that gifts have ceased because they are no longer necessary, is based upon the blindness of unbelief. Wesley, in his journal, in commenting upon a book, which he had just read, upon the subject of gifts, says: "There, it is just as I had always supposed; the manifestation of gifts in the church declined as the church declined in spirituality; and ceased with the loss of spiritual power." The history of every age declares that, just in proportion as the church has been renewed in grace, in the same degree have gifts been manifest. The truth is, the body of Christ is the same in all ages; but gifts cannot be manifest except as there has been a sufficient degree of grace previously imparted to make it consistent with God to confer them. "There were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, who took upon them to call over one which had an evil spirit, the name of the

Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preached." But the evil spirit answered: "Jesus I know and Paul I know; but who are ye?" Being vagabond Jews, and entirely destitute of grace, they were overcome of the evil spirit, and fled from the house wounded and naked. The disciples once, under similar circumstances, had only enough grace for self defence, and not enough to cast out devils. When they inquired of Christ the cause, he said: "Because of your unbelief: howbeit this kind goeth not forth but by prayer and fasting." Some "professors of religion," in the present day, would fare no better than the sons of Sceva; and how many real disciples can be found who have more than enough grace for their own personal safety?

If the church were not hindered by improper teaching, and by unbelief, as each member received his Pentecost, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit would also assign him his place in the body of Christ, by conferring upon him those gifts which God intended he should exercise. "Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, and diversities of tongues."

In comparing gifts and grace together, it may be said, gifts are great, grace is greater: gifts are to be desired, grace is much more to be desired. "Covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way." "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophesy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing."

—Trouble is the engine in God's hands to lift us up to heaven.

ORIGINAL SIN.

That man's nature was corrupt, the very heathens perceived; but how sin entered, they could not tell. But the Scripture is very plain on this point. "By one man sin entered the world. By one man's disobedience many (all) were made sinners." Adam's sin corrupted man's nature, and leavened the whole lump of mankind. We putrified in Adam as our root. The root was poisoned, and so the branches were in-venomed. The vine turned to the vine of Sodom, and so the grapes became grapes of gall. Adam, by his sin, became not only guilty, but corrupt; and so transmits guilt and corruption to his posterity. By his sin he stripped himself of his original righteousness, and corrupted himself. We were in him representatively, as our moral head; we were in him seminally, as our natural head. Hence we fell in him; (as Levi paid tithes when in the loins of Abraham); by his disobedience we were made sinners. His first sin is imputed to us; and we are left without that original righteousness, which being given to him as a common person he cast off. And this is necessarily followed in him and us, by the corruption of our whole nature; righteousness and corruption being two contraries; one of which must always be in men. And Adam, our common father, being corrupt, so are we; for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?

I shall offer some reasons why we should especially notice the sin of our nature.

1st. Because of all sins, it is the most extensive and diffusive. It goes through the whole man and spoils all. Other sins mar particular parts of the image of God; but this defaces the whole. It is the poison of the Old serpent cast into the fountain, and so infects every action—every breathing of the soul.

2d. It is the cause of all particular sins, both in our hearts and lives. "Out of the heart of man proceed evil

thoughts, adulteries," and all other abominations. It is the bitter fountain; and particular lusts are but rivulets running from it, which bring forth into the life a part only, not the whole of what is within.

3d. It is verbally all sins; for it is the seed of all, which want but the occasion to set up their heads. Hence it is called "a body of death," as consisting of the several members which constitute the body of sin (Col. ii, 11), whose life lies in spiritual death. It is the cursed ground, fit to bring forth all manner of noxious weeds. Never did every sin appear in the conversation of the vilest wretch that ever lived. But look into thy nature, and thou mayest see all and every sin in the root thereof. There is a fulness of all unrighteousness there; atheism, idolatry, murder. Perhaps none of these appear to thee in thy heart; but there is more in this unfathomable depths of wickedness than thou knowest.

4th. The sin of our nature is of all sins the most fixed and abiding. Sinful actions are transient, though the guilt and stain of them may remain; but the corruption of nature passes not away. It remains in its full power, by night and by day, at all times, till nature is changed by converting grace.

You may observe three things in the corrupt heart:

1st. There is the corrupt nature, the evil bent of the heart, whereby men are unapt for all good, and fitted for all evil.

2d. There are particular lusts or dispositions of that corrupt nature, such as pride, passion, covetousness.

3d. There is one of these stronger than all the rest, "the sin which doth so easily beset us; so that the river divides into many streams, whereof one is greater than the rest. The corruption of nature is the river head, which has many particular lusts wherein it runs; but it mainly disburthens itself into that which we call the predominant sin. But as in some rivers the main stream runs not always in the same channel,

so the besetting sin may change, as lust in youth may be succeeded by covetousness in old age. Now what does it avail to reform in other things, while the reigning sin retains its full power? What if a particular sin be gone? If the sin of our nature keep the throne, it will set up another in its stead; as when a water-course is stopped in one place, it will break forth in another; thus some cast off their prodigality, but covetousness comes in its stead; some quit their profaneness, but the same stream runs in another channel of self-righteousness.—*John Wesley.*

BARGAINS.—In making contracts, use not many words; for all the business of a bargain is summed up in few sentences; and he that speaks least means fairest, as having fewer opportunities to deceive. *Lie not at all*, neither in a little thing, nor in a great; neither in word nor deed: that is, pretend not what is false; cover not what is true. Let the measure of your affirmation or denial be the understanding of him with whom you contract; for he that deceives the buyer or the seller by speaking what is true in a sense not intended or understood by the other, is a liar and a thief. For in bargains you are to avoid not only what is false, but that also which deceives.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

TRUE RELIGION IS DIFFUSIVE.—This is its inseparable quality the world over as heat from fire; as light from a sun-beam; as fragrance from the rose. True religion is *diffusive*. It always has been, always will be so; and so is yours, if you have the real thing—that which will save your soul at last. The possession of religion and a desire for its diffusion, go together. Now, mark that fact. Examine yourself by that fact; you cannot help wishing that others should enjoy it, and that will prompt you to do or say something to effect it. It was this which caused the blood of martyrs to redden the earth.—*Caughney.*

HOW TO HAVE PEACE.

Would you be quiet and have peace within in troublous times? Keep near to God; beware of anything that may interpose betwixt you and your confidence. "It is good for me," said the Psalmist, "to be near to God;" not only to draw near, but to keep near, to cleave to him and dwell in him; so the words import. Oh! the sweet calm of such a soul amidst all storms! Thus, once trusting and fixed, then no more fear; "he is not afraid of evil tidings."

Whatever sound is terrible in the ears of men—the news of war, news of death, or even the sound of the trumpet in the last judgment—he hears all undisturbed. Nothing is unexpected. Being once fixed on God, then the heart may put cases to itself, and suppose all things imaginable, even the most terrible, and look for them—not troubled before trouble comes, with dark and dismal apprehensions, but satisfied in a quiet, unmoved expectation of the hardest things. Whatsoever it is, though not thought on particularly before, yet the heart is not afraid of the news of it, because it is "fixed, trusting in the Lord." Nothing can shake the foundation nor dissolve that union; therefore no fear. Yea, this assurance stays the heart in all things, how strange and unforeseen soever. All are foreseen to my God in whom I trust—yea, are fore-contrived and ordered by him. This is the impregnable fortress of a soul—al- is at the disposal and command of my God; my Father rules all, what need I fear? The soul trusting in God is prepared for all; and in the saddest apprehensions of the soul, beyond hope believes against hope; even in the darkest night casts anchor in God—reposes on him when it sees no light. Isa. i, 10.—*Leighton.*

—We must not be crafty to another's injury, so much as by giving countenance to the wrong.—*J. Taylor.*

WESLEY'S THOUGHTS.

To candid, reasonable men, I am not afraid to lay open what have been the inmost thoughts of my heart. I have thought, "I am a creature of a day, passing through life, as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit come from God, and returning to God—just hovering over the great gulf; till in a few moments hence, I am no more seen; I drop into an unchangeable eternity! I want to know one thing—the way to heaven; how to land safe on that happy shore. God himself has condescended to teach the way; for this very end he came from heaven. Oh! give me that book! At any price give me the book of God! I have it. Here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *homo unius libri* (a man of one book.) Here then I am, far from the busy ways of men. I sit down alone; only God is here. In his presence I open—I read his book; for this end, to find the way to heaven. Is there a doubt concerning the meaning of what I read? Does anything appear dark or intricate? I lift up my heart to the Father of Lights. Lord, is it not thy word, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God?" Thou "givest liberally and upbraidest not." Thou hast said, "If any be willing to do thy will, he shall know." I am willing to do. Let me know thy will. I then search after and consider parallel passages of Scriptures, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual." I meditate thereon, with all the attention and earnestness of which my mind is capable. If any doubt still remain, I consult those who are experienced in the things of God; and then, the writings whereby being dead, they yet speak. And what I thus learn, that I teach.

—An eagerness and zeal for dispute on every subject, and with every one, shows great self sufficiency, that never-failing companion of great self-ignorance.

ABIDING IN CHRIST.

There are three declarations made in the Scriptures concerning those who abide in Christ, which all the children of God would do well to ponder deeply, with a view to applying the question to their own souls, whether they are in very truth really abiding in him, or whether, through ignorance or unbelief, or, still worse, through an unwillingness to live the life of holiness which is necessarily involved in such abiding, they are still living and walking in the flesh. For this abiding in Christ is a practical experience, and brings forth practical fruit.

It is very blessed for the child of God to know his complete judicial standing in Christ, and his perfect acceptance before God in him. But far more blessed is it to know an actual completeness in him, and a real experimental dwelling in him, and he in us, whereby he becomes, not only judicially but actually our life, and we come to know what it is to have him to work in us, to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

Let us look, then, at what are these declarations concerning those who abide in Christ.

1. "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not."—1 John iii, 6.
2. "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit."—John xv, 5.
3. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."—John xv, 7.

Just the three things that of all others the souls of God's children cry out for are here declared to be their's on one condition; and if they have them not it must be because that condition is not fulfilled. Now, beloved Christian readers, are these things true of you? Pause for a moment and solemnly consider this question. Is it true of you that you are not sinning? Is it true of you that you are bringing forth much fruit? Is it true of you that you

ask what you will and get it? If not what then is the necessary conclusion? What can it be but that you are not abiding in Christ?

Your understanding of God's truth may be very extensive; your faith as regards justification may be unwavering; your knowledge of the Scriptures may be very exact and critical; the typical and prophetic teaching of the Bible may have been very much opened to your understanding; but do these things avail to keep you from sin, to make you fruit-bearing branches, and to give you power to prevail with God? They cannot; for the positive declaration of our Lord is, that if we are not abiding in him we can do nothing. Nothing? Let this word ring through your souls. No fruit-bearing, no practical righteousness, no walking worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, no power, nothing that will not be burned up in that day when the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is! Beloved readers, can you contemplate these things without sorrow of soul, and without earnest longings to know for yourselves what it is to abide in Christ?

Believers, let me make a solemn appeal to you. Do not your hearts condemn you because of unfaithfulness and sin, and have they not often in times past condemned you? Have you not repented, confessed, and been forgiven times without number, until you have become almost too much ashamed and disheartened to seek forgiveness again, knowing that the same temptations will probably bring the same defeats? Does not the seventh chapter of Romans describe your experiences far more fully than any other chapter in the Bible? Have not the commands to holiness, which stand out so clearly on almost every page of God's word, seemed at times almost like a mockery to you, so impossible have you found it to obey them? Is not the first Epistle of John a sealed book to you? Are not its declarations concerning the practical freedom from committing sin of those who are born

of God unfathomable mysteries? Do you know what it is to be so freed from sin as to have your fruit unto holiness; to be so dead to sin as to find it impossible to live any longer therein?

It may be that outward sins do not much trouble you, but that what you mourn are sins of the heart, of the affections; roots of bitterness; intellectual apprehension of truth without corresponding moral results; much knowledge, but little power; much activity, but little godly zeal; much that is earthly, but little that is heavenly in your walk and conversation. Can you think that this is what it is to "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing?" Is this what it is to "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God?" Is there nothing better for you than this. Surely the Bible does not tell me so? God has not called you to such a calling as this. Christ did not die to leave you in this sad condition. The fault cannot be in the salvation he has procured, but must instead lie in your apprehension of that salvation, or in the failure of your faith to grasp it. Need you seek further for an answer than your own sad admission that you are not abiding in Christ? If you are not abiding there, God says you can do nothing. O friends, it is one thing to talk about abiding in Christ, but it is far different really to be there; and if the fruits of that abiding are not yours, be sure your souls know it not, however clear the doctrine concerning it may be to your understanding.

But perhaps you question whether it is your privilege always to abide in Christ. Has not he commanded it? and is not his command equivalent to a promise? Think you that he meant you only to make of him a transient refuge in times of peculiar trial or especial service, and that at other times you were to abide in self again? Ah no! this you cannot believe. Our blessed Lord meant just what he said—that he would be our abiding place, where we might dwell, and walk, and lie down in quietness and rest of soul forever.

And so fully did he mean this that he sets forth the destiny of those who do not abide in language that may well make you pause. Do not deceive yourselves. It is your privilege, nay, rather, it is your duty to abide in Christ; and the most fearful sin of all the sins you are committing is this one, that you are not so abiding. Fly then to your refuge, and hide yourselves where your life is hid—with Christ in God.—*Mrs. Pearsall Smith.*

SIMPLICITY.—Nothing is easier than simplicity and frankness: it is open and ready without trouble and artificial cares, fit for communities, and is the proper virtue of men. It is the necessary appendage of useful speech, without which language were given to men as nails and teeth to lions, to do mischief. It is a certain token of courage, the companion of goodness, and a noble mind, the preserver of friendship, the bond of society, the security of merchants, and the blessing of trade. It prevents quarrels and appeals to judges; and suffers none of the evils of jealousy. Men by simplicity converse as do the angels; they do their own work, and secure their proper interest, and serve the public, and do glory to God. But hypocrites, and liars and dissemblers, spread darkness over the face of affairs, and make men, like the blind, to walk softly and timorously. Craftiness is the guise of devils, and the dishonor of the soul, and the canker of society, and the enemy of justice, and truth, and peace, of wealth and honor, of courage and merchandise. With a good man, a blind man may safely converse; in respect to his fair treating, the darkness and the light are both alike. But he that bears light upon the face, with a dark heart, is like him that transforms himself into an *angel of light*, when he means to do most mischief. Remember this, that false colors laid upon the face, besmear the skin and dirty it, but they neither make a beauty nor mend it.—*Jeremy Taylor*, A. D. 1673.

FITNESS FOR SERVICE.

God gave me work to do for him; yet it seemed to me the needed fitness was wanting. God never sends his workmen out, without necessary outfit, I said, and, as he has not sent one with this work, it must be that I have one already.

I asked him about it, and he answered. "Work with the promises. I had them carefully laid by, and jealously guarded, as so many costly jewels, too precious to be used now, in my every day garb, yet feeling rich in their possession. And I am using them now, every day—the strong, precious promises. I do with them what I will, not caring whether others use them the same, for they are *mine*. They never fail. God knew we would not use them, at first, as skillful workmen, and he made them on purpose for us, so that use them as we would, they would be ever sure. Said one, "That promise does not mean to *me*, all it does to *you*." "But it helps you work for God? You can lean upon it with all your strength can you not?" It seems to me that all of the Divine Strength is in each promise; and that we may draw and draw upon it, and never exhaust it, seems a miracle. The Lord is teaching me this,—that his words are to comfort, but they are also to *use*. We are, by a living faith, to make them our servants, our willing instruments; we are to use them boldly, and as we will, for God; for they are our very own. A. C. Scammell.

—Satan would make a man look anywhere rather than to Christ. There is such a thing as false conversion. Satan sometimes stirs people up to care about their souls. He makes them look to ministers, or books, or meetings, or duties—to feelings, enlargement in prayer; he will let them look to any thing in the universe except to one object, "the cross of Christ." The only thing he hides is the Gospel, the glorious Gospel of Christ.

CHRISTIAN APPAREL.

BY EDWIN P. SELLEW.

What? Are there some kinds of apparel which are Christian and others which are not? If it is not so, the above caption is improper. According to Webster, that is Christian which pertains to Christ or his religion. By a somewhat liberal use of the term that may be called Christian which pertains to a Christian, or which is consistent with the character of a Christian. That is not necessarily Christian which is done by a Christian, but that which the law of the religion of Christ requires him to do.

The New Testament Scriptures contain the law of the religion of Christ, and therefore, whatever they require in Christian conduct, is Christian; and whatever they forbid, is *unchristian*. Sometimes a person is to be met with who is so ignorant of the teachings of the New Testament as not to know that, among the many rules given to regulate the conduct of the followers of Christ, there are some relative to their apparel or dress; but the most of us are familiar with the following passages, which are the rule upon this subject:

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamfacedness and sobriety; not with brodered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."—1 Tim. ii, 9-10.

"Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."—1 Pet. iii, 3-4.

We may now profitably inquire what apparel this rule forbids as improper for a follower of Christ.

1. It forbids the wearing of gold.

No exception is made to the rule. The apostles do not say wearing gold for ornament, and thus leave us free to wear gold buttons and pins with which to fasten our clothes, gold bows for our spectacles, and gold cases for our watches—he does not say we may wear gold if we can make it useful;—but positively forbids the wearing of it for any purpose. Included in this prohibition are all imitations of gold. Wearing gold would be extravagant, on account of the costliness of the material; to avoid which we might wear an imitation, if it was the costliness which caused it to be prohibited. But as the Apostle also specifies *costly array*, we may conclude that it was the brilliancy of its color—its glittering quality—which was the principal reason for its interdiction.

2. It forbids the wearing of pearls, which were a very common ornament with Oriental women. By pearls we may understand all precious stones, of which many kinds have been worn in all ages up to the present.

Some persons, in reply to the advocates of plainness in dress, expose either their ignorance or their want of candor by saying: "You wear pearls"—referring to small buttons. Pearl buttons are made from what is called "mother-of-pearl," which is the white lining of certain kinds of shells, and they are not the pearls forbidden by the Apostle.

3. Brodered and plaited hair are forbidden. By this I understand the fanciful and ornamental styles of putting up the hair which have prevailed among women in all ages. I need not remark that this condemns the use of curling irons, and of false braids and waterfalls.

4. This rule forbids *costly array*. I am aware that this is the most difficult point in all this subject. It is impossible to express in dollars and cents that array which is *costly*, as the prices of all articles vary much in different countries. Two important objects to be kept in view in the choice of apparel are comfort and durability. Now, if a

man pays sixty dollars for a suit of clothes when thirty dollars would buy one equally as comfortable and durable, he is evidently guilty of a violation of this rule against costly array. So when a woman pays thirty dollars for a shawl when ten would buy one as warm and durable, she is guilty of the same thing.

5. All articles of dress worn only for ornament are forbidden. In no other sense can I understand the expression, "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of putting on of apparel; but the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price." No one will contend, that the Apostle intends, by this language, to forbid the use of all apparel. What then does he mean? Evidently he means not apparel in general, but that which is worn for the purpose of ornamentation.

If this is correct, then those people who think that they are at liberty to ornament their persons as much as they desire or can, if they do not use gold or pearls, have entirely mistaken the teachings of the Bible upon this subject. Because the Apostles, in the enumeration of forbidden articles, do not mention by name all of the things which human ingenuity, in the succeeding centuries, would invent with which to gratify human pride, it does not, therefore, follow that they are sanctioned by them. The language of these texts is general and condemns all of those things in which the pride of a depraved heart exhibits itself. With the saved person, not yet fully sanctified, the danger lies not in the more flagrant violations of the rule of plainness, but in the small things. They will not think of wearing gold; but the carnality yet remaining in them will plead for a little *harmless* indulgence in a few superfluous buttons, a bow or two, a few streamers, etc. The small indulgences open the heart and prepare the way for a flood-tide of pride and worldliness.

6. By requiring modest apparel it

prohibits *unmodest* apparel. A plain attire may not be modest. That is modest which conveniently covers and protects the body without being *peculiarly* attractive. It may be immodest in fashion by exposing the form, or by deforming the body. I see no harm in wearing clothes such as other people wear—that is in the fashion—if the fashion is a modest one. But when the fashion requires the appearance of deformity, it is wrong to follow the fashion. Any candid person can see that the prevailing fashions in female attire for the past few years have been anything but modest. Dress may be immodest in color. Some colors are very attractive. Modesty shuns rather than attracts attention. Certainly gay colors, and especially the mingling and contrasting of gay colors, are not modest. One distinguishing characteristic of the dress of *immodest women* has always been the use of gay colors.

Every Christian ought to dress plainly, for the following reasons:

1. God commands it. This has already been shown in the Scriptures quoted. This reason alone is sufficient to influence every true Christian, for the will of his God is the rule of his conduct.

2. Economy demands it. Ornaments are expensive. Artificial, plumes, ribbons, jewelry, etc., cost sometimes as much as hats, cloaks, dresses, and other necessary articles of attire. Christians, as stewards of the Lord, have no right to waste their Lord's money upon such foolish things.

3. Modesty requires it. The abandoned have in all ages been profuse in the use of ornaments evidently for the purpose of attracting attention to themselves. Certainly a Christian woman will not desire such attire. The more barbarous a nation is, the more the people love and use ornaments.

4. Indulging the love of dress fosters and increases pride; and pride is one of the characteristics of the carnal nature—the "old man"—which we are to crucify and *put off*. Pride is a very

dangerous and common sin ; therefore, it should be mortified by dressing plainly.

5. The influence we have over others requires it. If we could do otherwise, without any detriment to ourselves (which we cannot), we have no right to do anything which will injure another. "And be not conformed to the world : but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the *lust of the eyes*, and the *pride of life*, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

VISIONS OF THE SOUL.—Rev. Dr. Oliver S. Munsell, President of Illinois Wesleyan University, was, years ago, driving in a carriage alone across an unsettled prairie. It was a sultry July day. He fell into a light slumber. He seemed to himself to reach his father's house, and at the gateway met a younger brother, from whom he had parted a few days before, a hundred miles away from the homestead, and who said to him : "Did you get our letters, and do you know that father is dead ?" With this vision he awoke. When he reached home he met that brother in that very gateway, with those sad words upon his lips. His vision was a prophecy. He concludes from this, and other well attested similar instances, that the vision and the event are not mere coincidences, and that a limited prescience is an attribute of mind, simply as mind.—*Munsell's Psychology*.

THANKFULNESS.—Well did Martin Luther say :—"We are so shamefully perverse, that we are unthankful for our present gifts and goods, and only think of deficiencies. Let every one go home and count the gifts which he has ; he will find far more gifts than deficiencies ; and let him thank God for them."

TREASURES ON EARTH.

We write for Christian men and women—for those who have voluntarily taken upon them solemn vows, professing to have consecrated themselves and all their property to the Lord, to be used for him and the good of the world. Some act nobly, as good and faithful stewards, and may expect a welcome in the mansions prepared for those who love and obey the Saviour. Others, and not a few, it is to be feared, indulge in large expenditures, and give but little time or money for the good of the church or society, or the upbuilding of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. They live at ease in Zion, are clothed in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day ; they dwell in palatial houses, adorned with costly pictures, statues, books, and curiosities ; they vie with people of fashion and wealth in display and extravagance, in parties, receptions, and other entertainments. After luxurious feasting, to use the language of the late revered Dr. John H. Rice, "they shake the crumbs to some poor Lazarus lying at their gate." On which road do such travel, the broad or the narrow way ? Do they, by their mode of living and giving, show the meaning they attach to the injunctions, "Be not conformed to this world"—"Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord."

The restless activity of worldly men, in their race for riches and in their sensual indulgences, is not unaccountable. They are the devotees of the god of this world, and they sacrifice ease, health, domestic happiness, rational enjoyment, and true felicity, in the insane attempt to amass wealth and enjoy themselves. They live lives of self-indulgence, are often consumed with terrors ; they find by painful experience that gaiety is not happiness, and they are frequently brought into desolation, as in a moment ! But, Christian professor, are you content to live thus, and to die thus ? The course

pursued by many who bear the Christian name is marvelous. Their abnegation of all the characteristics of a Christian, viewed in the light of the Gospel, is painful to all who truly love their Lord and Master, and must grieve the Holy Spirit. Like Dives they live, and like him they will die, unless healed of their backslidings. How often do they grieve the Lord's collectors, —men who devote their lives, in imitation of their Master, in going about doing good, laying the foundation of benevolent and Christian institutions, practicing great self-denial, laboring in season and out of season to build up the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ—by their niggardliness, their vain excuses, the pittance they reluctantly give to the treasury of the Lord! How frequently do these men in affluent circumstances, decked in costly array, living in splendid houses, with rich furniture, whose names are on the assessors' books as having incomes of twenty, thirty, sixty or a hundred thousand dollars, put off the servants of the Lord with their pitiful five, ten, or twenty-five dollars, when they ought to give hundreds and thousands! How dare such men wear the Christian name, sit at the table of the Lord, and offer their prayers in the sanctuary, while they thus practically deny the faith, the Lord that bought them, and treasure up anguish against a dying hour?

And why is it done? For vain show; for the reputation of being millionaires or prosperous men; for the consequence derived from being estimated wealthy; for the purpose of indulging in sumptuous living and having a splendid equipage; for the sake of being considered leaders in fashionable society; in fine, of having people look up to them. The folly of such a course is as marvelous as its wickedness. Such men are evidently on the road to ruin, and bid fair to reach the goal speedily. Their belief, it may be, in the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, will not save them; for there is high authority for the declaration, "But they that will

be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in perdition."

If parents indulge in sensuality, ostentation in any of its forms, in lavish expenditures on dress, in meats and drinks, they will in vain urge the duty of temperance, frugality, and simplicity on their children, who will see through the hypocrisy, perhaps despise their parents, and, it may be, imitate their example. If we desire our children to be industrious, temperate, thrifty, generous, and good, we must set them the example. Thus our direct influence will produce a beneficial effect, while our unconscious influence will probably exert a still greater.

We may treasure up learning, integrity, honor, piety, and manliness, and children will not be injured by such hoarding; but if we amass wealth or strive to do it, children, as a general rule, will be injured if not ruined by such a course. "Give liberally," said a clergyman in a charity sermon, "give liberally, and you will have enough left to ruin all your children." When will parents learn, and act upon the knowledge acquired, that industry, integrity, and piety are the best safeguards in educating their children, and the best inheritance they can bequeath to them, and that extravagant living, affluence, hoarding money, or even a free use of it, on ourselves or children, is most dangerous and almost always ruinous.

It would be wise in parents to inculcate upon their children, while in a course of education, and as a part of it, the superior advantages of industrial and benevolent pursuits to the acquisition of property, both as it relates to usefulness and happiness, here and hereafter. And if children, after attaining to maturity, should devote a considerable portion of their time to labor for the improvement of those less favored than themselves to the increase of their rational enjoyments, their educational culture, their moral and religious advancement, they would find a source of gratification and happiness

that the pursuits and attainment of wealth will never yield. Such employment would tend to check the feverish desire of riches, to restrain the sensual passions, and, under the Divine blessing, ennoble youth in whatever is virtuous, manly, and Christian. Such employment would be like mercy :

" It is twice blessed ;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes."
Levis Tappan.

—“ Let not your heart be troubled : ye believe in God, believe also in me.” Surely such words of confiding tenderness were never whispered in this cold world before ; and then think how cold, how dark, how dull is the question with which Thomas breaks in upon the heavenly discourse : “ Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way ?” And yet how condescendingly does Jesus bear with their cold-hearted dullness ! How lovingly does he begin the very alphabet of salvation with them, and not only answers, but over answers Thomas—gives him more than he could ask or think. He asked about the way and the place, but Christ answers, “ I am the way, and the truth and the life ; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.”

—Now, as the Lord Jesus came to be a complete Saviour, he not only suffered the curse of the broken law, but he obeyed the law in the stead of sinners. Through his whole life, he made it his meat and drink to do the will of God. Now we may be quite sure that, since he was the Son of God, he hath done all that sinners ought to have done. His righteousness is the righteousness of God ; so that we may be quite sure, that every sinner who puts on that righteousness is more righteous than if man had never fallen—more righteous than angels ; he has “ the righteousness of God.” Who shall condemn him whom God hath justified ?

—When we first enter into the divine life, we propose to grow rich : God’s plan is to make us feel poor.

LETTER TO MINISTERS.

BELOVED BRETHREN :—The Lord is in great mercy visiting our churches again with precious revivals of religion, and will you permit me to make a few suggestions in respect to the course to be pursued to preserve the converts from backsliding ? You are aware, that in the providence of God I have had an opportunity of being in some measure acquainted with the course of things in these blessed seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. I have watched with the deepest interest the rise, and progress, and decline of these seasons, and have inquired, with the deepest solicitude, after the best means of promoting them, and into the causes of their decline. After much reflection and observation upon the subject, there are a great many things that I would say to my beloved brethren, but for the present beg leave to drop a suggestion in regard to the converts of these revivals. It has long appeared to me that errors in the management and training of young converts have been a principle cause of the decline of revivals of religion in the churches.

I am very far from being of the opinion that revivals in this country have declined, for many years, so deeply and radically as many have seemed to suppose. It has been sometimes predicted that the revivals that have prevailed within the last twenty years, had so declined as that a long night of death and darkness would ensue like that which followed the revivals in the days of Whitefield and Edwards. I do not believe that any such thing has occurred or is likely to occur in this country, unless some revolutionary struggle, or great and absorbing political question, should, for a long time, divert the public mind. We have great reason for gratitude that the decline of revivals has, for the last twenty years or more, been but temporary. And I think the fact, that there have been but temporary seasons of declension, can

be accounted for on the plainest principles of philosophy, and common sense. But I pass over this part of the subject for the present, for the purpose of saying, with respect to the converts :

1. That their future character and influence must depend under God upon the instructions they receive in the early stages of their Christian course. The notions that they first form—the shape and direction given to their religious character at first, will, in a great measure, establish their future influence and destiny. They therefore need peculiar instruction suited to their mental capacities, the infancy of their religion, and the circumstances with which they are surrounded. I repeat it, their instructions need to be altogether peculiar. Infants should not be fed with strong meat, nor a child treated as a man. They ought to be made to see that they are children, that they are in a state of spiritual infancy, and have every thing to learn. Too much pains cannot be taken, therefore, to show them the perfection of their ignorance on spiritual subjects. They need, therefore, to begin with the A, B, C, of religious truth and duty, and be, at the outset, well grounded in the first principles of the doctrine of Christ.

2. Their instructions should be very thorough. It is no doubt a great error to suppose that young converts should not be instructed to make those discriminations that distinguish between true and false affections, between selfishness and religion. Unless these discriminations are made, and the convert rendered familiar with them, he will almost with certainty, for a time, imagine that he has much more religion than he really has, and afterwards come to be very doubtful whether he has any religion at all. If selfish affections and emotions are allowed to be intermingled with holy ones, without discrimination, all will at first be taken as religion. But this process long indulged will soon root out and annihilate all holy affection, and leave the mind perpetually under the influence of self-

ishness. This selfish religion will soon develop itself so as to lead its possessor so utterly away from the Bible, as to force upon him the conviction, that he is all wrong, and that he has probably never had any religion. But if he cannot be led to make the necessary discriminations, selfish affections, instead of being puffed up by them, will greatly humble him, put him on his guard to resist them, and the occasions of them. He should therefore be hunted from every form and degree of selfishness. He should have a clear idea of what selfishness is, and, from week to week, the multitudinous forms in which it appears should be pointed out, and its deceitfulness exposed. When I have preached upon selfishness, the question has often been asked me by professors, "Why do not ministers preach more about selfishness? Why is not the fact, that all selfishness is sin, made more prominent in the instruction of religious teachers? And why is it not known, that selfishness and benevolence are eternal opposites, and that their existence in the same mind at the same time is utterly impossible?"

I confess that it has been to myself a matter of great wonder, that the distinction between selfishness and religion is not made more prominent in the instructions of the pulpit, and that selfishness in so many forms, and in such disgusting degrees, is suffered to remain unrebuked in the church of God. If converts are suffered to indulge selfishness; if they are allowed to overlook its malignant character; if they are allowed to indulge it in any form, or in any degree, it will inevitably eat out all their piety. Nay, their piety is gone already; for the indulgence of any form of selfishness is a state of absolute rebellion against God. Hence—

3. They should be searched to the very quick. Their business principles, and habits, and transactions should be thoroughly scrutinized and weighed in the balances of the law of supreme love to God, and equal love to man. They

should be made to see and feel that to pursue any employment or course of life for any selfish end, or in any selfish manner is downright apostacy from God. It should be insisted upon that they adopt, in heart and practice, the law of universal love, as their rule of life.

4. Young converts must be made acquainted with the nature and degree of their spiritual wants and dependence. They should be guarded with the utmost caution against a spirit of self-dependence on the one hand, and esteeming their dependence upon the grace of God, as a calamity rather than a crime, on the other. They should be made to see and feel that their cannot is their will not; in other words, that their want of stability of disposition to do the will of God, is the only difficulty in the way. But that this instability of disposition is so great, that they are as really dependent upon the influence of divine grace, as if obedience to them were naturally impossible. I am aware, my brethren, that, in churches where they have revivals, these truths are taught, or there would not be revivals; yet I have often thought, that pains enough were not taken to make converts clearly apprehend the depth and the nature of their dependence.

5. I have found in my own experience that the greatest pains taking is required to give young converts a just and sufficiently affecting view of their necessities, and in the same connection to lead them to a just apprehension of the fulness and nature of the remedy. The law must for ever serve as a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ. This, as long as the world stands, will be the use of the law in a world of sinners; But, when they are brought to Christ, they should be brought to him not only as a justifying, but as a sanctifying Saviour. No pains should be spared to make them understand, not only that Christ has power on earth to forgive sin, but that his blood cleanseth from the commission of all sin. The law, when properly exhibited, not only

drives the sinner to Christ, for pardon, but for sanctification. And the convert should be made to see that the main business of Jesus is to save him from the commission of sin rather than to pardon him for it.

6. I am fully convinced that pains enough are not taken, to lead the convert to seek earnestly the "baptism of the Holy Ghost, after that he hath believed." My own instruction to converts, in this respect, has formerly been very defective. The fact that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is a thing universally promised or proffered to Christians under this dispensation, and that this blessing is to be sought and received after conversion, was not so distinctly before my mind formerly, as it has been of late. I am satisfied that this truth is abundantly taught in the Bible, and that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is the secret of the stability of Christian character. It is that water of life which Christ has promised, that, if they drink it, "they shall never thirst, but that it shall be in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Converts should therefore have their attention definitely directed to what this blessing is—its nature—how it is to be obtained—to what extent—and with what degree of permanency it may be expected. In short, they need to be baptized into the very death of Christ, and by this baptism to be slain, and buried, and planted, and crucified, and raised to a life of holiness in Christ. Anything short of this will leave the convert to inevitable backsliding, and to this attainment I am persuaded he may be led, by suitable pains taking on the part of his religious teachers.

7. In order to this, it is indispensable that he should be cut off from every kind and degree of unholy self-indulgence. His appetites and passions must be restrained and subdued; his body kept thoroughly under, and his whole being must be honestly, fully, and sacredly set apart to the service of God.

8. Converts should be guarded with great caution, against a self-righteous use of means on the one hand, and an Antinomian neglect of them on the other.

9. Converts should by all means be kept awake. If they are allowed to fall asleep, you might as well attempt to preach to the tomb-stones as to them. We may as well preach to dead men as to sleeping ones.

And now, beloved brethren, many of us have been and still are blessed with revivals of religion under our ministrations, and I pray you, let me inquire, without offence, do we feel as we ought to feel, the immense responsibility that at this time devolves on us, in what an immensely important sense Christ has committed the keeping of his honor and the training of his little ones to us? Shall these converts backslide through any neglect of ours? Shall the blessed work subside, react, and disgrace religion, for want of a deep sympathy in us with the heart of Christ? Shall the converts be watched over as the apple of our eye, and shall our souls continue "to travail in birth for them, till Christ be fully formed in them the hope of glory."

Your brother in the bonds of the Gospel.
C. G. FINNEY.

—When a poor sinner cleaves to Jesus, and finds the forgiving love of God, he cannot but love God back again. When the prodigal returned home and felt his father's arms around his neck, then did he feel the gushings of affection towards his father. When the summer sun shines full down upon the sea, it draws the vapors upward to the sky. So when the sunbeams of the Sun of Righteousness fall upon the soul, they draw forth the constant risings of love to him in return.

—Ministers only draw the bow successfully when God's Holy Spirit sharpens the Gospel arrow, and wings it to the hearts of them that hear.

—Words tell us what we should be; deeds tell what we are.

LADY BETTY HASTINGS.

Lady Betty Hastings, sister-in-law to the Countess of Huntingdon, patronized the little band of Methodists at Oxford. She afterwards attended that "select society," or holiness meeting, which was regularly attended for a number of years by a select circle of women of high station, many of whom adorned the doctrine which they professed by a life of holiness and self-denial. Lady Hastings is represented as one of the most charming and accomplished women of her time; amiable, intellectual and handsome, as well as deeply pious. The death of her brother added to her wealth, and many gentlemen of the first rank became suitors for her hand, yet she refused all offers of marriage. It is supposed that she considered it more in accordance with that religious perfection which she aimed to live and develop, to remain single. Like Ann Cutler, she gave her whole being to Christ and to His service. She also, finding herself mistress of a large estate, did not wish to lose the power of doing good by resigning it into other hands than her own. Beneath a gentle exterior, Lady Hastings concealed all the religious severity of the preceding age. Her temper naturally led her to delight in seclusion and prayer; she shunned the gaieties of her rank; and even when her means were still limited, the money at her disposal was almost all devoted to the poor. Her life of active charity did not begin, however, until after the death of her brother, the Earl of Huntingdon. Though her income did not exceed fifteen thousand dollars, with this she performed wonders, and became the hope and stay of the poor all around her. Her grounds around the Ledstone House were kept in perfect order; yet the persons employed were chiefly weak and aged individuals, fit for no other task; but who received a salary as high as if they had been strong and able bodied. She first attended to her household, to the welfare and comfort of

her servants; and in those debts of justice, the very cattle (which are declared to be a property of mercy) were not forgotten. The poor had her next care; she assisted them in their own homes, or received them into her own house; often in great numbers. Meal, physic, raiment and money, freely distributed; yearly allowances and large sums bestowed; debts paid; poor scholars assisted; charity schools maintained; religious societies aided; churches erected and adorned, attended her unwearied liberality. A spirit of prudence and liberality and economy, which never rendered her parsimonious, guided all her actions; but her great secret must have been self-denial. She was frugal to herself that she might be generous to others. She was tender and liberal to her poor relatives; but her generosity was not limited to them. Her learned and pious friend, Mary Astell, she often assisted, and once presented her with fourscore guineas—a circumstance which escaped the knowledge of her biographer, so studious was she in concealing the good which she did.

The life of Lady Hastings, though thus devoted to good deeds, was neither cheerless nor unsociable. She mingled with that world where her personal accomplishments, and above all, her great talent for conversation, always enabled her to shine; for though her own tastes led her to seek privacy, she would not give any grounds of accusation or complaint against her of over austeritv; she had indeed the rare talent of conciliating the love and esteem of all. The poor blessed her. Robert Nelson, no flatterer of rank, applied to her the following text: "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all;" and Steele and Congreve both wrote in her praise.

A painful close was reserved to a life so noble and pure. About twenty months before her death, she submitted to a painful surgical operation. Hitherto Lady Hastings had only been good—now she became heroic. Friends

thought it needful to preach submission and resignation to the will of God under this trying dispensation. With more emotion than she usually displayed, Lady Hastings observed, "I would not wish to be out of my present situation for all the world; nor would I exchange it for any other at any price." She was cheerful and composed up to the hour for the operation; and although strong persons held her hands while it was performed; yet a child might have held her, she was so calm.

After seeming slowly to recover, there was a sudden relapse, and no surgeon's skill could save her. Her resignation did not forsake her; although her sufferings were so exquisite that she could not even turn in bed, she sedulously concealed them, in order not to afflict her faithful servants. Her cheerfulness and composure of mind seemed beyond the reach of physical pain. She saw her friends, comforted and counselled those who still came to her as their best adviser, and dictated a great number of letters to the many persons of distinction and piety with whom she held a correspondence. To the last her soul thirsted after deeds of mercy. She would often say: "Where—where is there a poor member of Christ whom I can comfort and refresh?" She made large presents to those who solicited her aid. She sent forty guineas to release a man from prison whom she had never seen. She devised her will which was filled with charitable bequests.

Surrounded by her whole household she received the last offices of the Church. The lamp that was burning low kindled with the last flame, a change came over her countenance, and her eyes lit up, as she exclaimed: "Bless me, Lord! what is it that I see? Oh! the greatness of the glory that is revealed in me—that is before me!" Thus she fell asleep in Jesus.

—A firm religious belief creates new hopes when all earthly ones have vanished.

THE WIFE OF BUNYAN.

There is but one instance in the whole history of England of a woman making her appearance at Westminster Hall, and before the Judges of Assize, in order to make a formal defence in favor of the unfortunate. That woman was the young and interesting wife of John Bunyan.

She, first of all, had the courage to appear before the House of Lords, to ask the Supreme Court of Appeals to relax the rigors of persecuting law. Their Lordships, it is said, rudely told her to go to the Judges of Assize, who condemned her husband, and she did so. At the Assize Court, Sir Matthew Hale presided, accompanied by Judge Twisden, a magistrate of ferocious temperament, whose countenance strangely contrasted with the mildness and placidity of the Lord Chief Justice. We are indebted to John Bunyan himself for a description of the conduct of Judge Twisden on this memorable occasion. He says: "Judge Twisden snapped at my poor wife, Elizabeth, and angrily told her that her husband was a convicted person, and could not be released unless he would promise to preach no more." But Elizabeth, however much she loved her husband, was more enamored of the Gospel, and she gave the court to understand that her husband could not purchase freedom at the expense of keeping silence about the mercy and compassion of God. "It is false," continued Elizabeth, "to say he has done wrong; for at the meeting where he preached they had God's presence with them."

"Will he leave off preaching?" roared Twisden.

"My Lords," said Elizabeth, "he dares not leave off preaching as long as he can speak. But, my Lords," she proceeded, with tears in her eyes, "just consider that we have four small children, one of them blind, and all of them have nothing to live on while their father is in prison, but the charity of Christian people. Oh, my Lords, I

myself, 'smayed at the news when my husband was apprehended, and being young and unaccustomed to such things, I fell in labor, and was delivered of a dead child." This was too much for Sir Matthew Hale, who now interposed with the ejaculation—"Alas! poor woman!" He then inquired what was her husband's calling.

"A tinker, please you, my Lord," said his wife; "and because he is a tinker and a poor man, he is despised and cannot have justice."

The Lord Chief Justice told her that her husband had broken the law. There was but one person in the realm who could pardon her husband, and that was the King. But how was the broken-hearted wife of a tinker to find her way to the footstool of a monarch?

"Alas! poor woman," he said, "I am sorry for your pitiable case."

Elizabeth now became convinced how vain it was to expect justice from an earthly tribunal; and with a heroic glory which can only be found in the annals of Christian faith, she pointed to her tears as she departed, and uttered words which never will die as long as the English language exists. "See these tears," said she; "but I do not weep for myself. I weep for you when I think what an account such poor creatures as you will have to give at the coming of the Lord."

This scene took place not only before John Bunyan was known as the author of a book, but before he had ever conceived the outline of his "Pilgrim's Progress." He was kept in jail, in order that he might not preach; but by this persecution he was enabled to write a book in his prison cell, which was preached to all England for many generations, and which will edify and enlighten the world to the uttermost posterity.—*London Christian Globe.*

COVETOUSNESS.—"Though ye take from a covetous man his treasure, he has yet one jewel left; ye cannot take from him his covetousness."—*Milton.*

STARS.

BY MRS. HATTIE A. REQUA.

O! stars that glimmer in the summer night,
 Ye are not half so fair
 As some I know, so radiantly bright;
 Your shining mounds of glory-tinted light;
 Your spiral rays and robes of silvery white,
 Cannot with these compare—
 Nay, never can compare;
 They are so wonderfully pure and fair.

When earth's chaotic masses wildly flew,
 Athwart the inky night,
 God, from His realm, the unlifted dark
 looked thro';
 Night and confusion burst upon his view;
 He spoke, and gleamed the illimitable blue,
 And there were stars and light—
 A soft, dawn-ushering light—
 Darkness dismayed, fled from thy presence
 bright.

Earth plunged in wilder chaos once again,
 Darker the frowning night;
 And God looked out, from the celestial
 plain,
 Upon the hopeless, helplessness, and pain,
 And spoke, in pity to the sons of men,
 Once more—"Let there be light;"
 And there was wondrous light;
 The Sun of Righteousness rose clear and
 bright.

But oft in shadow and the secret night
 Celestial stars are born,
 Wrought from hard griefs and anguish
 burning white.
 As charred and useless substance far from
 sight,
 Turns into gem whose clear, refulgent
 light,
 Is fairer than the morn—
 The soft and dewy morn—
 And meet the crown of royalty to adorn.

Such are the stars—fairer than ever shone
 Athwart the summer night,
 First, Faith's pure radiance thro' the mist
 is thrown,
 Then Love's enchanting light, and one by
 one

Come all—Peace, Patience, Courage; but
 alone
 Shines each refulgent light—
 Each soft, reflected light,
 From the Sun's lustre shining in His
 might.

STRAIT IS THE GATE.

Strait is the gate, the door is strait,
 That leads to joys on high;
 There are but few that find the gate,
 While crowds mistake and die.

Beloved self must be denied,
 The mind and will renewed;
 Passion suppress'd, and patience tried,
 And vain desires subdued.

Flesh is a dang'rous foe to grace,
 Where it prevails and rules;
 Flesh must be humbled, pride abased,
 Lest they destroy our souls,

The love of gold be banish'd hence,
 That vile idolatry;
 And ev'ry member, ev'ry sense,
 In sweet subjection lie.

The tongue, that most unruly power,
 Requires a great restraint;
 We must be watchful ev'ry hour,
 And pray, but never faint.

Lord! can a feeble, helpless worm,
 Fulfil a task so hard?
 Thy grace must all the work perform,
 And give the free reward.

—There is no way to kill a man's
 righteousness, but by his own consent.
 This Job's wife knew full well; hence
 she tempted him to lay violent hands
 on his own integrity. Job ii, 9.

—He who cannot find time to con-
 sult his Bible will find one day that he
 has time to be sick; he who has no
 time to pray must have time to die; he
 who can find no time to reflect is most
 likely to find time to sin; he who can-
 not find time for repentance will find
 an eternity in which repentance will be
 of no avail.

EDITORIAL.

YOUR ASSOCIATES.

Man was not made to live alone. One of the most terrible punishments known to human laws is solitary confinement. As we share our blessings they are multiplied; as we share our troubles, they are divided. We influence those with whom we associate; and they influence us in return. *For none of us liveth unto himself, and no man dieth unto himself.*—Rom. xiv, 7. You should exercise the greatest care in the choice of your associates. For your opinions, your character, and your conduct will be modified greatly by the associations which you voluntarily form and continue. You may not be able to select those with whom you daily mingle. Your domestic relations may be already settled. Those to whom you are providentially related, you may not cast aside. You must love them, be kind to them, and in every possible way strive to do them good. If they are not Christians you must endeavor to win them to Christ. You must not compromise to please them. Your unswerving adherence to the principles of the Gospel will, no matter how much they persecute you for it, have a more salutary influence upon them than any possible degree of sinful compliance.

But we are not, to any great extent, moulded by those with whom we are compelled to mingle, unless it be with our consent. One ungodly, chosen companion, will, while he makes him his associate, have more influence over a wayward boy than a house full of saints at home. It is the choice we make of our friends that well-nigh determines our destiny. Hence the emphatic declarations of the Bible upon this point. *Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.*—1 Cor. xv, 33. *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord.*—1 Cor. vi, 17.

If you would, then, be a saint, you must choose saints for your companions. Take them for your confidants; select them for your friends. Let the degree of the Spirit

of Christ that controls them be the measure of your love. Do not look so much upon the attention they bestow upon you as upon their devotion to God. Do not blindly follow any one simply because he takes notice of you. Select for your associates STABLE CHRISTIANS. Many who become saved do not remain saved. They are fluctuating in their experience, unstable and inconsistent in their lives. If you choose them for your special friends, you will become like them to a great degree. The boat that is tied to a floating tree, floats with it.

See to it that those whom you take as spiritual advisers are of a good spirit. If they are of the world—inwardly longing for its pleasures and its honors, they will draw you with them into the world. If you enter into the outer edge of a whirlpool, you are almost certain in time to reach its vortex and become engulfed.

If they are of an envious spirit, finding fault with every one who, in any respect is superior to themselves, they will be very apt to do you harm. We are commanded to watch—but it is over ourselves. Faithful ministers watch for souls as they that must give an account. But nowhere are we commanded to watch for the faults of our fellow Christians that we may accuse them; as the Pharisees watched our Saviour. Mark iii, 2. There are those who, by their insinuations, make you distrust those in whom you have every reason for placing the greatest confidence. As you listen to them you are almost led to doubt whether any body is right. Suspicion takes the place of love. The veil of prejudice is drawn over your eyes; and seen through it those who once looked good, look bad; as the appearance of objects changes when seen through a colored medium. The less you have to do with such people the better. If you make them your chosen companions your denial will be very likely to degenerate into Phariseeism; your love into a mere partisan feeling. Seek out those who will do you good. Let the faithful friends of Jesus be your friends. Converse most with those whose conversation leads you

to look unto Jesus, and makes you want to be more like Him. *I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.*

PRAY THROUGH.

If you keep the blessing you have received, it will be by earnest, thoughtful, constant prayer. No matter how good the meal, or how nutritious the food, you cannot go a year, or even a week, upon the strength which it imparts. If you would continue to work, you must continue to eat. So, if you would keep the grace you have received, it must be by persevering prayer. Backsliding begins with neglecting the throne of grace. Edwards says: "It is natural to one who is truly born from above to pray to God, and pour out his soul in holy supplications before his Heavenly Father. This is as natural to the new nature and life, as breathing is to the nature and life of the body. But hypocrites have not this new nature. Therefore prayer naturally dies away in them, having no foundation for the keeping of it up laid in the nature of the soul."

Wesley says: "The neglect of prayer is a great hindrance of holiness. Oh! how meek and gentle, how lowly in heart, how full of love, both to God and man, might ye have been at this day, if you had only asked; if you had continued instant in prayer. Therefore now, at least, 'Ask and it shall be given unto you.' Ask that ye may thoroughly experience, and perfectly practice the whole of that religion which our Lord so beautifully describes in the Sermon on the Mount. It shall then be given you, to be holy as He is holy, both in heart and in all manner of conversation."

If you would promote the work, it must be by prevailing prayer. St. Augustine, A.D. 477, says: "A preacher must labor to be heard understandingly, willingly, and obediently; and let him not doubt but he will effect this more by pious prayers than by the power of oratory. At the very time he is coming, let him raise his voice to God, and lift his soul with fervent desire." Baxter adds; "Prayer must carry our work

as well as preaching. He does not preach heartily to his people who does not pray for them. When our own hearts are out of order, and theirs too; if we do not prevail with God to mend and help them, we are likely to be very unsuccessful in our work."

Finney: "In regard to my own experience, unless I had the spirit of prayer, I could do nothing. If even for a day or an hour I lost the spirit of grace and supplication, I found myself unable to preach with power and efficiency, or to win souls by personal conversation."

Of John Berridge, the successful man of God, it was said; "Communion with God was what he enforced in the latter stages of his ministry. It was a banquet from which he never appeared to rise."

Bonar says: "Nothing short of positive success can satisfy a true minister of Christ. His plans may proceed smoothly, and his external machinery may work steadily; but without actual fruit in the saving of souls, he counts all these things loss. The way to heaven is blocked up with dead professors. We may calculate on success in saving souls. We are called upon to pray and labor, with the confident expectation of its being realized; and when it is not, to examine ourselves with all diligence lest the cause of the failure be found in ourselves; in our want of faith, our want of love, our want of prayer. Everything depends on walking with God. This is the grand secret of ministerial success."

McCheyne is quoted, saying: "Let us see God before man every day. Christ rose before day and went into a solitary place. Keep up close communion with God. Keep a clear conscience through the blood of the Lamb."

COST OF WAR.

Many complain of the cost of the Gospel. But considered merely as an agency for the prevention of crime, it is the most economical that the world has ever witnessed.

Sixty years ago, the inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands were idolaters of the

worst type, offering human sacrifices to their false gods. To the abominations of heathenism, they had added the worst vices of civilization, learned from the sailors.

The missionaries went there with the Gospel in A. D. 1819. In fifty years the inhabitants generally had embraced Christianity. The largest Christian churches in the world were gathered in the islands of the Pacific. The whole expense to the American Board for these fifty years, was one million two hundred thousand dollars. Compare this with the war policy of our Government towards the Indians. A communication to the *New York Observer*, says: "For want of a settled policy looking to the conversion of the Indians into citizens amenable to the laws of the country, over \$1,000,000,000 (one thousand millions) have been expended since the foundation of the government in fighting them and in hiring them not to fight; and more lives have been lost in wars with them than in any foreign war in which the nation has been engaged. The present Sioux war alone will probably cost in the neighborhood of \$15,000,000. Between \$5,000,000 and \$6,000,000 a year are now expended in taking care of the Indians, or, in other words, in coaxing them to be peaceable."

Godliness is profitable unto all things—
—to a nation not less than to an individual.

SMOTHERED.

A mother took her child out to ride one of these cold days. The air was keen; and to protect the little child, she not only wrapped it up well, but threw her own covering over it. When they reached their destination the darling was a corpse in its mother's arms. It had died of too great care.

Ministers kill off their churches in a similar way. They smother them with words. Their long sermons, and long prayers, kill the meetings. Everything they say is sound and orthodox, and well meant; but they say too much. The people die of surfeit. They die, too, so

quietly that the preacher never suspects that anything is the matter. If they were in a quarrel their state would alarm him. But they are so still and so harmless that he congratulates himself that if little apparently is done they at least have peace. Poor man! Too late will he awake to the fact that it is the peace of the grave. The people have been buried in words till their spiritual life has gone out without a struggle or a groan.

Why is it that men of ability and of piety cannot see the harm they are doing by overdoing? If you fail to have revivals, why will you not look at the matter calmly and see why you fail? Why not admit at least to yourself, that there may be something wrong in your methods? And if you cannot find out what the matter is, why not consult with some of your most judicious friends and take their advice? Moses talked with God, yet when told that he *took too much upon him*, he did not resent it; but adopted a better course. Imitate his example. Try the effect upon your people of giving them fewer words and more of the Spirit. Shorten up all around. Do not take so long to get to going. Pray at home till you are all on fire with your subject and then start off with a full head of steam on. Something will move. Then when you get through, stop. When the people get through, close the meeting. They will come again. They will not get enough in one service to last a month. *What thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.*

DEDICATION.

PROSPECT HILL, PA.—We attended a dedication at this place on Sabbath, the 21st of January. The location is beautiful—on a hill overlooking the valley of the Susquehanna, and two miles from Tunkhannock, a large village—the county seat of Wyoming county.

The house is neat and convenient. The audience room is 40 by 30, well seated, and in every way pleasant and comfortable. There is a basement-room, 20 by

30. The whole cost of the house and furniture was twelve hundred dollars. The lot was one hundred dollars. Five hundred dollars, the balance unprovided for, was pledged at the dedication. The house was crowded to its utmost capacity. There was a blessed outpouring of the Spirit on the people, and conviction was general among them. The result of the meeting, we trust, will be seen in the salvation of many souls. It is a new work, opened up about two years ago at a grove meeting held in the vicinity.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A REVIVAL.

BELOVED BROTHER IN JESUS: I am so wishing to introduce here THE EARNEST CHRISTIAN. For the last six months the Lord has been wonderfully blessing a little band of Christians from Chicago. We came out in the beginning of June to hold a camp-meeting of three days in Lake County, Indiana. The Lord blessed it to the conversion of souls. Invitations came in from place to place, and we have been journeying ever since, just like the children of Israel—the pillar of cloud or fire going before us. Many souls have been saved. Blessed be the name of the Lord! It has seemed to me often as though the days of Primitive Christianity had come back again; the very experience of Acts ii, 46-47; such love from the people; such joy in our own souls; the joy of the Holy Ghost. Often the words of our loving Christ come to me—"When I sent you out without purse or scrip, lacked ye anything?" Nothing, Lord! Our every want has been supplied. At the beginning of our work, the eldest son of a man of property was converted, and his thankful offering to the Lord was a large tent, in which we held all our summer services; and now the Lord has provided for us—touching another heart to give us—a large hay warehouse, capable of holding nearly a thousand people. We recently began our services, and the Lord has graciously sealed the work with his approval. Souls have been born there. We expect to have it overflowing filled. We have been much drawn out in every place to pray for the convicting power of the Spirit upon the people, and the Lord has been wonderfully gracious, many being very deeply convicted before, from hearing the word on the camp-ground.

O! for deep love for perishing souls. This prepares more than anything else. How often I have thought of Paul's words, "Remember that I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." O! for such deep yearning love—the Lord

SUBSCRIPTIONS are coming in better than they did, but not as they should. We began the publication of this magazine to accomplish a work for the blessed cause of God. Much has been effected, but its mission is not completed. We have never received more or stronger testimonials to the good it is effecting than of late. Many say they prize it next to the Bible. The publication of some of its articles in tract form for general distribution, is every now and then called for. If you love its truths, you want it sustained. But do not compel us to make brick without mortar. Stand by us. Good wishes will not pay for the materials we must use, and the labor we must hire. Send on the small amount necessary to pay for your subscription, and get us one or more new subscribers. We are doing the best we can, but you must hold up our hands. We need a large increase of subscribers. We ought to have them. Shall we? It is for our friends to say. What a few have done, shows what might be done if all would take hold of it heart and soul. Now heed this appeal; and take hold of this matter. Send on at once all the names you can. If any will pay by next June, we will wait for the pay till then. As soon as possible send us what you owe us. If we had half the amount unpaid subscriptions, it would be a great relief to us in these times. A few are sending it as a present to their friends. You cannot well put one dollar and ten cents to a better use for your friends.

give it to all our dear Free Methodists—then should we see the Lord's work move on gloriously.

Yours in the precious love of Jesus,
S. A. COOKE.

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LOVE FEAST.

MRS. L. D. MITCHELL.—“God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. Not by works of righteousness which I have done, but according to his mercy he saved me, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on me abundantly through Jesus Christ my Saviour.” I bless his exalted name for a definite Christian experience, and a clear assurance that I am saved by the blood of the crucified One. My hours are not tedious and tasteless, but sweet and full of joy. I am “kept by the power of God, through faith.” To God be all the glory

MARCIA M. FINNEY.—I am still fighting for a crown. Have victory in my soul to-day. Praise God! The blood cleanseth me from all unrighteousness. I find plenty of work to do here in Iowa. The laborers are comparatively few; but “if God is for us, who can be against us.” We have been having meetings here for the past three weeks; but have seen little done yet. The devil's kingdom is very much stirred. We hope, ere long, to see souls gathered into the fold of Christ.

MRS. L. S. NASMITH.—I am satisfied with God's dealings with me. I trust I am fully saved from murmuring at the providences of God concerning me. When at times, the way before me, seems all a mystery, which I cannot comprehend, and yet I hear a voice, saying: “This is the way, walk ye in it.” I know it is my heavenly Father's voice. I do not stop, as I once did, to question why my pathway lies hidden in the impenetrable gloom, but confidently put my hand in His, and venture out upon the unknown way, and as I walk along, trusting Divine guidance every step, the way opens up gloriously before me, and all the obstructions melt

away under the radiance of the Sun of Righteousness. If I can only learn to trust when in my weakness I cannot understand, I shall find, by blessed experience, that “the path of the just shineth more and more, unto the perfect day. I am learning to live by faith; and while I feel grateful for joy and ecstasy, I love to luxuriate among the promises, and to have liberty in appropriating them to my own especial benefit, and love to feel the overwhelming power of the Holy One resting upon me, and to be blessed with a spirit of prayer and intercession for the salvation of sinners, and love to do active service for Jesus in winning souls, I also love, when all these things are denied, and days and nights of weary suffering are my lot, to cast all my cares on my Redeemer, and meekly kiss the hand which strikes the blow, and still say, “My Jesus doeth all things well.” This has been my experience the past six weeks. The sustaining power of God has been my support. Waiting and trusting when scarcely able to think or pray—letting patience have her perfect work; when hardly able to realize I had any other Christian grace. It is blessed to look back and see how my Saviour led me along through all my weakness of body and mind and kept me from despondency, and gave me sweet peace. Sometimes of late he has been revealing himself to me in such glory and loveliness, and again in such majesty and power, that I don't know where to begin to utter just a little of his goodness and greatness. In the night season several times, since my strength has been returning, I have seemed to be shut in with God; I have waked suddenly, as if a person had spoken to me, and it has seemed as if the air I breathed was filled with God's love, and with every breath I took in more of the divine nature; but I must wait until mortality is swallowed up in life, to describe these precious visitations from on high. I want to know more and still more of God. O! the length and breadth, the depth and height of his love. I want to sink deeper and rise higher, and be filled with the fulness of God continually while here, and then rise triumphantly to enjoy his glorious presence to all eternity.