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DECEIVED.

BY REV. B. T. ROBERTS.

One of the greatest of man's capacities is that of being deceived. The popular business of stock-gambling is a system of deception. The art of the politician is to deceive. The study of the fashionable is to put on the semblance of beauty where the reality is wanting. The most successful of those who furnish amusements for the public are skilled in the arts of deception.

Unfortunately this willingness to be deceived is manifested in full force in the things of religion. You see it exhibited in the houses of worship. The panels on the wall and ceiling exist only in appearance. The pulpit and the pew, apparently constructed from rare and costly wood, were built from the cheapest material, and, by the painter's brush, made to deceive the eye.

The worship, like the house in which it is performed, is insincere. The praises of God are offered to Him by organs which have no souls, and by singers whose souls are not in the words which they employ. The object of the prayers is fully answered, if they, who make them, have the credit of offering appropri-

ate and eloquent prayers. The preaching is, or is sought to be, "in enticing words of man's wisdom." There is no earnest reproof of sin; no hearty insisting upon the claims of God. The whole affair is, at best a respectable performance of some of the rites of religion. The sad consequence of all this insincerity is, that many are deceived, to their eternal ruin.

Preachers deceive until they become sincere in the deceptions which they practice, "deceiving and being deceived." They boast of the success of their deceptions, as an evidence that they are right; "sporting themselves with their own deceiving, while they feast with you."—2 Pet. ii, 13.

Many are deceived as to their conversion. They have been partially awakened; but have taken up with something short of conversion. They took some steps in the right direction—felt better, as one always does when he makes an effort to do right, and accepted this good feeling as the evidence of their acceptance with God. Such are found in all the churches. Some such, having natural gifts for speaking, find their way into the ministry, and help on the work of deceiving the people.

Our Saviour has told us that such

will be the case. "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."—Mat. vii, 22, 23. In our day of superficial revivals do not these solemn words demand attention?

Like begets like. That we make converts is by no means proof that we have ourselves been duly converted to God. Are our converts God-fearing, conscientious, earnestly striving to avoid all sin? Or are they conformed to this world, fond of its amusements, following its fashions, and governed by its maxims? If so, we have good reason to fear, not only for them, but for ourselves. He who is himself truly converted to God, will not encourage others to rest satisfied short of a thorough religious experience. The costly manner in which churches are built and carried on renders it necessary that they have members, from whom the large amount of money called for can be obtained. Hence purity is sacrificed to numbers, and piety to wealth. Those who can pay, are urged to join, flattered by personal attentions, into doing what they can to "build up the church," and are not pressed to seek that degree of spirituality which is essential to salvation. What is wanted is their help. Thus the churches come to be controlled by unconverted men. Those in authority, "having itching ears," select

preachers who will please, but not disturb; who will tickle the imagination, but not awaken the conscience, who will furnish easy intellectual entertainment, but will not arouse the moral sensibilities. As a natural—an almost necessary result, the churches are filled up with deceived souls, dreaming of heaven only to wake up in hell!

Many who were once converted, are deceived as to their retaining the saving grace of God. They profess all they ever did—and may even think they enjoy more religion than they did when they were alive to God. They have maintained a creditable standing in the church; have retained their general orthodoxy of doctrines, and, in the main, correctness of morals. They go to church on Sabbath, teach a class in Sunday-school; and some of the best have family prayer. But they have "lost their first love," and become cooled in their zeal, and mechanical in their devotions. The regularity of their machine-worship they mistake for stability; and the total absence of any manifestation of religious joy, they call "living by naked faith." Such persons may have many virtues and many excellencies; they may be commended for their steadfastness; but if they become lukewarm in their religious affections, they are deceived in thinking that they are in the way to Heaven.

A justified soul rejoices in God.—Rom. v, 2. But these deceived ones rejoice in their wealth, in their gifts, in their prosperity, in their good reputation. So far from praising

God, they cannot bear to hear Him praised, unless it be in a formal, fastidious manner. You never hear them speak of the piety of their church; but they never tire of praising the eloquence of their preacher; the quality of their singing; the grandeur of their house of worship, and the strength of their denomination.

Justified souls overcome the world.—1 John v, 4. But the great mass of professing Christians make no effort to overcome the world. They are borne along by the worldly current in which they live, with scarcely a show of resistance. They enjoy the respectable pleasures which it affords with as keen a relish as the avowed worldling—they are as eager for wealth, as hard at a bargain as those who make no profession of religion; they conform to the fashions as fully as if God's word was silent upon the subject. What do such persons do with passages like these: "And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."—Rom. xii, 2. "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."—1 Jno. ii, 15. Is it not plain, in the light of such commands as these, that those who are conformed to this world, and who give every possible evidence of loving it, are deceived if they think that they are in the way of salvation! Can anything be plainer?

Finally, many who profess the blessing of holiness, are deceived. Some evidently manifest unholy

tempers and dispositions. Some are improvident, indolent, unkind to their families. They denounce those who cannot give them Christian fellowship, and instead of love towards these, they manifest envy, and jealousy, and an unkind spirit.

Others are kind in their manners, mild in their spirit, amiable and winning in their address, but they are "not valiant for the truth." They compromise; they never bear a plain, out-spoken testimony against fashionable sins. They fall in with many things which they know to be wrong. They do not "reprove the unfruitful work of darkness," but "rather fellowship them;" they study carefully the popular pulse and govern their motions by its beats. Policy they mistake for principle; and expediency for the wisdom that comes from above. In their public addresses they testify to the truth—but not to the whole truth. They sin in what they do not say.

A church in central New York, held a fair to replenish its funds. With other inducements, they advertised that among the papers of tobacco for sale, a certain number contained a ten dollar greenback! Immediately at the close of this festival, special meetings were held by this church, for the promotion of holiness. Not a word was said of the sin of which the church was known to be guilty in pandering to vice, and in carrying on a lottery! It was all passed over as if nothing wrong had taken place.

As holiness implies repeating of all sin, and abandoning it, the sins of



which those who profess to be seeking it are known to be guilty, should be pointed out. To pass them over in silence may save one from opposition and persecution; but he who can do it for such a cause, is wanting in an essential element of holiness. He lacks courage and fidelity to the truth, the love of which he boasts, and on which he dwells, is really selfishness in disguise.

Beloved, as you do not like to be deceived in other matters of importance, do not consent to be deceived in this matter of the greatest importance. Insist upon knowing the true state of your case. Study to know what God requires of you; and do not permit any preacher, however eloquent, to explain away the plain precepts of God's word, or wipe out the lessons which the Holy Spirit has written upon the fleshly tablets of your hearts. Be true to your convictions. If the light within you has become dim, come to the light, even if some of your deeds are re-proved. While those who deceive you shall bear their judgment, whatever it be, yet that cannot help you. The responsibility resting upon you as an individual, cannot be thrown upon others. You have your own senses which, if properly exercised in spiritual things, would enable you to discern good from evil. If you will let Him, God will make the way so plain to you that a fatal mistake will be out of the question. Then let him lead you.

"AND IF THE BLIND LEAD THE BLIND, BOTH SHALL FALL INTO THE DITCH."—Mat. xv, 14.

## EXPERIENCE.

BY MRS. M. N. WILLIAMS.

From a child I was convinced that I should give myself to the service of God; but I did not yield to my convictions until I was twenty-five years of age, when I sought earnestly for three days with great conviction resting on my soul. I appeared very strange to those about me. They thought something else was the matter with me. The reason I did not receive pardon sooner was because I tried to keep my state to myself. I enjoyed religion for about two years; but being unwell and deprived of the means of grace, and having trials and difficulties to encounter, I gave way to the enemy and wandered from God.

In the year 1877, the Lord, in his providence, brought me down upon a bed of sickness. Then my feelings were indescribable; and I promised the Lord, if he would spare me, I would serve him the rest of my days. He heard my prayer; and when the opportunity was given, I went to the altar of the M. E. Church, and the next day the pastor called to see me, and said that I must not go to the altar, as I had my name still on the church book, and that I must get right at home, because, he said, I would bring a reproach upon the church of Christ. It hurt me to think I could not get saved in the church of which I was a member. I knew it was not forbidden to go to a Free Methodist altar, and so I went over to Phillipsburg, and after three nights, I found peace to my soul. Since then I have received light on different things; but because I did not walk in it fully, my experience became dim until I made up my mind fully to be a Bible Christian, and take the narrow way. Since then, God has done much for me. I belong to the Lord. Praise his name forever.

*South Easton, Pa.*



## THIS IS OF THE LORD.

BY G. R. OLIVER.

My object is to tell of God's dealings with me; being fully persuaded that what he has done for me he is able and willing to do for you.

At the age of twenty-one I arrived in California, and for many years followed mining, in Plumas County where I married; and in 1868 moved to Pacheco, in Contra Costa County, where I commenced business as druggist. Pacheco had a hard name as regards spiritual things, and deservedly so too; for although it was the most important business town in the county, it did not support a preacher, yet the Presbyterians owned a church, which was used occasionally by ministers from the neighboring districts. Thus it was when Brother Horton, in the spring of 1878, came to Pacheco and commenced preaching, holding meetings almost every night for several months.

But little interest was taken in these meetings for several weeks, when a number were converted. Satan then began to show his colors, and the preacher soon had the opportunity to smile at Satan's rage, and face a frowning world.

My wife had been a member of the church for about eight years, and had been attending these meetings; but now I began to persuade her to cease going, but she insisted on going, until one day I told her she should not go any more, that they were doing no good; that there was more religion in the Odd Fellow's Lodge, of which I was a zealous member, than in all the churches in all Christendom. The devil seemed to have complete possession of my soul, and most willingly would I have assisted in anything that would have put a stop to the meetings.

That night I retired, feeling very

unhappy. Next morning I awoke out of a dream so frightful that language fails me to portray its horrors. I was carried back in my dream to the mines, where I was climbing rugged mountains and tumbling from lofty peaks. Now I would be in possession of a rich claim; then again the mountain sides would be sliding together and the earth slipping from under me. All night I was alone in the fearful and rugged cliffs, groping my way in the dark, in mud, mire and slippery places, until it seemed that nature was almost exhausted, and that I could no longer keep from falling into the fearful abyss below. Now and then my wife would appear upon the scene, but would disappear before I could speak with her. Only once, and that but for a mement, did I have an opportunity of speaking to her, when she again disappeared out of my sight. I could see her miles away where a great multitude of people were gathered together; all appeared to be exceedingly happy; but there was a great gulf fixed between them and me, and every attempt to reach them only increased my misery. The agony that I now suffered I cannot describe. I could plainly see my lost condition. I seemed to be surrounded by the powers of darkness, and the horrors of a fearful eternity were before me. Thus I awoke. It was morning. Ah, thought I, it is all over now; it is only a dream, and I would soon forget its fearful horrors. But in this I was mistaken, for I was shaking from head to foot; I could not hold myself still; the horrors of my dream bore heavier and heavier upon my mind. I could not shake it off or forget it.

Finally I awoke my wife and told her that I had been in hell all night. "Thank God for that," said she, for she seemed to realize that her many prayers were about to be answered. When night came, I found myself in church beside my

wife, but did not go forward for prayers until the next evening, when I went forward, and continued to do so until God, in his abundant mercy, let the light of his love shine in upon my guilty soul, enabling me to praise him with all my heart.

From this time commenced a work of grace in my heart, which, God be praised, has continued to grow to the present time.

Years have passed by since that happy day, and praise the Lord! I am still trusting in Jesus.

And now it becomes my duty and privilege to record some of God's most wonderful works of grace and Jesus' power to save.

About two years before my conversion, my eyes were opened to the painful and unwelcome fact that I had become an habitual drunkard, and was at that time but little short of the gutter. I had contracted the habit from selling and tasting liquors kept in the drug store for sale; the terrible monster had fastened his slimy coils around me ere I was aware of it; and many times did I resolve never to touch it again, but just so often did I fail. I could see my danger, but could not avert it; and so determined was I to hide my disgrace, that my most intimate friends or my wife were not aware of the fearful grasp in which I was held by the monster demon. Many times have I compounded medicines for the sick when the greatest accuracy was required, while reeling under the influence of strong drink.

Many times have I staggered home at night at a late hour, purposely waiting until my wife had retired, for my heart would sicken and sink within me when I would think of the possibility of her knowing the depths of my degradation. Resolution after resolution would fail. I discontinued the sale of liquor in the drug store even for medical purposes; this too failed. I would go to the saloons and drink, and buy it by the bottle. With grief and sor-

row did I behold my situation. I felt that something must be done or I was lost.

About this time there was a Good Templars' Lodge organized in Pacheco. Hope once more filled my breast. Anxious to break the demon chains that bound me, and save my family from the dregs of a bitter cup, I joined the order as a charter member; but oh! how often are we disappointed when trusting in human weakness; for in this I not only failed, but perjured myself by breaking my pledge; thus, taking one more step in the depths of degradation, and adding one more sin to the already dark list of what the world, as well as myself, call a strictly moral man; and thus it was when God, in his infinite mercy, found me and set my soul at liberty. But hark! dear reader, can you imagine my surprise and delight when I realized the blessed fact that God, in pardoning my sins, had taken away my appetite for strong drink? From that hour to this, all glory be to God! not one drink have I taken; and thanks be to his holy name, he keeps me from the temptation.

Dear reader, are you intemperate, has the viper fastened his deadly coils around you? If so, go to Jesus—it is your only hope. He will save you when you cannot save yourself. Do not put your trust in temperance lodges, they will not save you; you will only break your pledge, and sink deeper in the mire, as thousands of good, moral men have done before you. Shun them as you would a viper; the fruits of their past labors have been to disappoint men and raise up a nation of perjurers. You can count them by thousands, who have degraded themselves by breaking their pledge; yet you will find some of these lodges officered and attended by those who are professed Christians, eager to accept and initiate the most abandoned cases, while they are aware that the great

probabilities are that the candidate will perjure himself before the light of another morning. Christian friends, refrain from a sin so revolting. The past thirty years' experience shows beyond a doubt, that the more lodges you institute, the more liquor there is drank; and the more candidates you initiate, the more perjurers we have in our midst. You cannot successfully deny it. Look around you; the facts are in sight. It matters not whether the lodge goes down or you withdraw from it, you violate your obligation just the same, as it is well known that the obligation is life-long.

Christian friends, if you want to save the inebriate from a drunkard's grave, lead him to Christ, who alone can take away his appetite for strong drink; it is his only hope; it is all he needs. Oh! but you say, here is a man and there is a man saved from drink by joining the order. That may be and it may not be true; but do no evil that good may come. My observations are, that where one ceases to drink, from fifty to one hundred will violate their pledges, and keep on drinking, even more than before. This is no idle tale, dear reader; the facts are all around you. Wives, ask your husbands if they ever joined the order and have since used liquor as a beverage. Fathers and mothers, ask your sons; sisters, ask your brothers; if so, they have certainly placed themselves in a most unenviable position before God and man.

Christian friends, if you wish to save the drunkard, lead him to Jesus. He and He alone can change the leprous spots and melt the heart of stone.

Dear reader, I speak from experience; I speak of what I do know, and testify that I have seen. And now, let me say to you, my friend, be you who you may, or whatever position in life you may hold, that if

your appetite for strong drink has passed beyond your control, it matters not how low in the gutter you may be, it makes no difference how many resolutions you have formed, or how many pledges you have broken, you have yet a hope, an only hope; but blessed be God! it is one that will not fail you; it is a hope in Jesus. He saved me; he is ready and willing to save you. "Whosoever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out."

A short time after my conversion I became satisfied that the use of tobacco was a dirty, irreligious habit; that it would be to the glory of God to stop the use of it altogether; for we are taught that all things must be done to the glory of God. Now I believe all respectable people do admit that the use of tobacco is a filthy habit; and I positively assert that no one can glorify God by being filthy. Do not squirm, Christian brother, the load is upon you—you cannot shake it off; you must carry the guilt or quit the tobacco.

At the time referred to above, I was forty-three years of age, and had used tobacco thirty-three years, having commenced its use when about ten years old; and during all these years had used it to excess. To quit its use I expected a hard struggle, and perhaps a long spell of sickness, for it had become almost a second nature. But I laid aside my tobacco, and asked God to help me; and he did, and most graciously too; for he not only preserved my health, but he took away my appetite altogether for tobacco, so that I experienced little or no inconvenience in quitting a habit that I had often tried hard to quit before, but failed every time. It has now been about two years since I quit its use, and I have not the slightest taste or desire for it. God be praised for his power to save and keep us from our carnal appetites! Christian brother, lay aside your filthy, unchristian habit. Do it for Jesus' sake. Ask him to



help you and he will surely do it.

Soon after I quit the use of tobacco I became much impressed with the fact that God required me to sever my connection with Pacheco Lodge, No. 117, of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, where I had been a devoted member for seven years. This I very much disliked to do, for I was indeed much attached to the order. I had passed through the chairs and reaped what we were disposed to call its honors, and like many others, had settled down in the belief that if a man was a good Odd Fellow that he was a good Christian; and I believe that hundreds of good, moral men are to-day laboring under the same delusion. Never was there a greater mistake. Odd Fellowship will save no man from his sins. They may claim to be charitable; they may claim and practice morality; but the religion of Jesus Christ is not taught; and Paul tells us that there is no other name under Heaven whereby we must be saved. Nothing but the change of heart, so beautifully described by our Savior to Nicodemus, in the third chapter of the Gospel by Saint John, will save you or me, dear reader, from our sins.

I became more and more impressed each day that it was my duty to withdraw from the order, which I did, on 17th of July, 1877. I have been asked my reasons for withdrawing from the order. My reasons are many; but the one above stated is sufficient, if there was none other, viz.: that hundreds are putting their trust in Odd Fellowship instead of putting their trust in God. For I am fully persuaded that there are very many who believe that if they live up to the teachings of the Order, that it is all that is required of them. Dear soul, do not be deceived. Again I say there was never a greater mistake.

What are the promises or the

hope of a blessed eternity offered to you by the teachings of Odd Fellowship? I answer, nothing. You cannot put your finger on a single promise of eternal life. Dear friend, if that is your only hope, you are lost. "Except a man be born again ye cannot see the kingdom of God." "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." "He that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." This is what Jesus says. This is the way, and the only way, to eternal life.

Much, dear friend, of what I have already said, the natural man would shrink from the very thought of publishing to the world. Man in his depravity is not so willing to raise the curtain and let the world look in upon his depraved nature; but the love of God changes our carnal nature to that degree that we are willing to unbosom our thoughts and lay bare our hearts before God and man; so it was with Zaccheus when our Saviour ordered him down out of the tree. I have no doubt that Zaccheus had been dealing unjustly with his neighbors; but the love of God caused him to exclaim, "Lord, if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold." Thus it is with us when forced down by the love of God from our lofty heights of morality and self-righteousness.

When I left Plumas County, ten years ago, I left debts behind which I really could not conveniently pay at the time I left, and told my creditors so, and agreed to pay them at some future time. But these debts I, for some time, tried to make myself believe that, for several reasons, I had no right to pay. Year after year rolled by, and each year I found that I was less inclined to pay. Finally I argued with myself that they were long since outlawed; the parties were all better off than I

was. I had had a great deal of bad luck, and was yet unable to pay. Thus it was that I was reasoning with myself when the Spirit of Almighty God convinced me that I was a wretch undone. Then it was that these debts, like mountains of guilt, arose before me; and not until I had promised Almighty God that I would pay off these debts, according as by his will he might prosper me and enable me to do so, that he let the light of his love shine in upon my soul. I have in my possession, at the present moment, receipts covering the whole of these debts, except one small account owing to a party whose whereabouts at present is unknown to me, although I have made inquiry for him. Dollar for dollar was not paid in the payment of some of these debts, but enough to fully satisfy the demand. Some of the parties being surprised, and seemingly awe-struck, at the idea of a man paying old debts that had been outlawed for ten or twelve years, kindly relinquished part of their claim and gave receipts in full; but some of these debts have been paid dollar for dollar, the whole amounting to something over four hundred dollars. Ah, but I think I hear you say that I would not publish my sins to the world in that manner. No, indeed, if the love of God is not in your heart you would not. But why not? You are just as guilty. Our first parents were just as guilty as though they had acknowledged their guilt; but they undertook to deceive God by trying to cover up their sins; they would not acknowledge their guilt; they were afraid of the light, therefore hid themselves from the sight of God.

How much better are we than our parents? The first man that was born into the world was a murderer and a liar; how much better are we than he. When the Lord asked him, "Where is Abel, thy brother?" Cain answered, "I know not: am I

my brother's keeper?" Thus he tried to cover up his guilt from the sight of God by a most malignant falsehood, when, at that very time, his hands were red and dripping with his brother's blood. How many times have we shunned the truth? How many times have we equivocated and contended against paying that which we know to be honest and just? How many times have we entertained malice and hatred in our hearts against our fellow man, amounting even to murder, and yet, at the same time, try to cover up our guilt by maliciously trying to place it at another's door, or by flatly and falsely denying it altogether.

Oh! you say, I never did that; I never was guilty of anything of that sort. I am a moral man; I walk in good society; I pay my honest debts; I hold my head up in the world; I go to church; I never hated anyone; there is no malice or evil of any kind in my heart; I never did any harm to any one; I am a good, moral, straight forward, honest, upright man. Ah! but are you sure of that? Are you sure that this is not another dodge to cover up your sins and keep you away from the light? Let us see what God says about that. God says that the imaginations of a man's heart is evil from his youth. This is what God says about you; and what is your word worth when God speaks.

I am free to confess that my past life has been one of continual sin, with a heart filled with wicked imaginations; and I positively assert that it is the case with every unregenerated man or woman that ever lived or ever will live. It is so from our infancy. At what a tender age the little child will deny his guilt and positively assert his innocence, to escape the chastening rod. We see it in the youth, we see it in old age; and unless the mighty power of God intervene, it will go with us to the grave.

But my unconverted friend, we have a remedy for all of this in the Fountain opened up in the house of David. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. His promises are sacred, and they are to you and me. Then let us, like sensible men and women, lay hold of the blessed truths of the Gospel, and accept Jesus as our Saviour.

Jesus says; "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I thank God, dear friend, that I have accepted the invitation, and to-day am securely resting in the arms of Jesus. Jesus says: "Ask and you shall receive." I praise God that I have asked and received the words of eternal life. Jesus says: "Seek and ye shall find." I have sought, and have found a Saviour that is ever precious to my soul. Jesus says: "Knock and it shall be opened unto you." I have knocked, and the way to the eternal city opens wide before my enchanted vision. Jesus says: "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and sup with him, and he with me." Eighteen months ago I opened the door of my heart to my Saviour, and many times since have we supped together; and to-day he reigns and rules within.

Now, my dear friend, this is just what Jesus wants you to do. You know that he has been knocking at the door of your heart for admittance; you cannot deny it. Remember that this is the same Jesus who gave his life for you, who stands to-day knocking at the door of your heart for admittance. How he yearns and weeps over you; how gladly would he gather you together under his wings, as a hen doth her brood, but you will not. The hour is near at hand when we must lay this body down to die; and, oh! what a sad hour it will be, if it finds us without a hope in Jesus. It matters not how rich we may be in this world's

goods, or how moral we may profess to be; it matters not how much we may be thought of by the world or admiring friends, it will do no good, we will die poor indeed, if we have not an inheritance in the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. I never yet knew or heard of any one in the gloomy and trying hour of death that ever entertained the slightest regret that they had put their trust in Jesus, and I do not believe that I ever will. But, oh! how many bitter wails and lamentations of grief and utter despair have been heard to escape from the lips of the dying millions who have passed from the cradle to their dying couch without a hope beyond the grave? "Oh that I had served my God as I have served my king," exclaimed Cardinal Woolsey, as he passed away into a cold and cheerless eternity. "Oh! for a month, at a single week—I ask not for years—though an age were too little for the much I have to do," said the young and talented Altamont, as he passed out upon the broad ocean of despair; "As for Deity," said he, "nothing but an Almighty could inflict what I now endure."

Oh! with what bitter grief and anguish he now repents; but, alas! it is too late; he now feels the mighty wrath of that God, whose existence he so long denied. Turning to his young and accomplished friend, whom he had led astray, "My friend," said he, "if you could only know what I now feel, you would struggle with the martyr for the stake, and thank heaven for the flame. Hell would be a refuge if it would hide me from the face of the Almighty."

Dear friend, may this never be said of us. This poor deluded soul had lived all his life an infidel, denying the very existence of God, influencing and teaching others his pernicious doctrine; but now we see him laid upon his dying couch; the cold hand of death steals over him; his feet touch the cold and cheerless



stream; he takes one look into the unknown future; he sees and feels the sting of death; the pangs of a guilty conscience pierce his heart; and, behold now he prays; not that he may escape the awful doom that awaits him, he does not pray for pardon, nor even commend his soul to God; no, he sees it is too late; his trembling soul is already looking out into the chilly night. Just one remaining ray of hope is left him; if this is denied him he is lost. And now, perhaps for the first time in his life, he breathes out his soul to God in prayer. He prays for time. Oh! for a single week of his mis-spent life, that he might give his heart to God, and prepare for this his dying hour.

Dear friends, let us heed the warning; let us make good use of the few remaining days or years left to us. Life is short, and time is precious. Then let us improve the time by fleeing into the out-stretched arms of him who says: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." "I am the bright and Morning Star. And the Spirit and the Bride say, come; and let him that heareth say, come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."

*Pacheco, Cal.*

**SELF-EXAMINATION.**—Before thou liest down to sleep, reckon with thy own heart every day, and cast up what thou hast received from God and done for him, and where thou hast also been wanting. This will beget praise and humility, and put thee upon redeeming the day that is past; whereby thou wilt be able, through the continual supplies of grace, in some good measure to drive thy work before thee, and to shorten it as thy life doth shorten, and mayst comfortably live in the hope of bringing both ends sweetly together.—*Bunyan*

—If thou wilt be perfect, sell all.

## DEATH OF THE WICKED.

BY T. P. JARNAGAN.

(*Concluded.*)

The Earl of Chesterfield was one of the most highly educated men of his day, and was considered a polished gentleman. But "the letters of that celebrated nobleman, which he wrote to his son, contain positive evidence that, with all his honors, learning, wit, and politeness, he was a thoroughly bad man, with a heart full of deceit and uncleanness."

He lived without God and died without hope. The following is from his own pen:—

"My reason tells me, that I should wish for the end of life; but instinct, often stronger than reason, and perhaps oftener in the right, makes me take all proper methods to put it off. This innate sentiment alone makes me bear life with patience. For, I assure you, I have no further hope; but, on the contrary, many fears, from it."

"What a confession for a death-bed! He adds, 'I can hardly persuade myself that all that frivolous hurry and bustle, and all the pleasures of the world had any reality; but they seem to have been the dreams of restless nights.'"

Truly, "the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment!"

This scripture is sadly exemplified in the death of Peter Dean, who was born in London, Eng., and for a number of years lived with the parish minister of Berwick, and seemed to be truly religious. He was a preacher in the Methodist connection a short time. He married a person of considerable property, and settled in business in London."

"When this poor, unhappy man, thought himself on the verge of eternity, and the king of terrors stared him in the face, he confessed that he had been influenced by no other motive, nor had he any other end in

view, in becoming an itinerant preacher, than to obtain a rich wife. "And," he added, "the Lord has given me my desire, and his curse with it; and now I am ruined forever!" From that time he refused to be comforted, and would take neither food nor medicine. He abandoned himself to black despair, and seemed resolved to die! For some time before his death his countenance would suddenly change, and be very horrid to look upon; he himself was conscious of it, and sometimes would go to the glass, and would then turn and say to his wife, "Now look at me; now will you believe?" A few days before he died, his wife and a deeply pious person were sitting with him in his room, when they heard something beat him violently on the breast; they heard the blows, but saw nothing! He immediately cried out, as if in great agony, and upon examination, they found his breast quite black with the strokes he had received! After this, he one day feigned himself asleep, and Mrs. D. and her companion, that he might not be disturbed, left the room. Perceiving that they were gone, he put forth all his strength, and rolled himself headlong on the floor. On hearing the noise, they instantly returned, and, awful to relate, found him dead!"

Surely, in every instance, "the hypocrite's hope shall perish." Therefore, O mortal! flee from hypocrisy. "For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?"

The hypocrite will have no one to blame, throughout eternity, but himself. A wretched conscience must be his constant companion!

The backslider will also have a bitter experience, if he does not return to God. "A young woman, moving in a respectable sphere of life, was converted to God, and as a natural consequence, changed her companions, and abandoned the card table, the ball, the dancing-room,

and the gay circles of fashion. Her happiness now lay in other objects—in other pursuits. She had seen Christ; she had drank of the stream of living water that gushes from the throne of God; she had felt that religion was a good thing, and, in the holy light that now shone upon her soul, she viewed the circles in which she had formerly moved, as paths that lead down to the chambers of hell. Her parents, however, looked down upon their daughter as a lost one—lost to happiness, lost to the world, lost to the family. They resolved to leave no effort unmade to regain the lost daughter back to her former course. Balls were given, gay youths were invited, splendid dresses were bought and given to her. At length they succeeded, and she came down from her high and holy calling, to mingle once more with the splendid follies of life. She fell. Oh! how great was the fall!

"By and by sickness came, and she was laid on a bed which proved to be the bed of death; and what could her companions, or her parents do for her now? She felt all the horrid stings of a backslider's conscience, and then the immediate prospect of death added a ten-fold sting to that guilty conscience; the flashes of the eternal flame, the very lurid fires of hell seemed kindled in her soul; the Holy Ghost had taken his flight, and despair, like a weary cloud, settled on her soul. She called her parents to her bedside, and asked them to bring, and hang up at her bed's foot a very splendid dress which they had bought for her some time before, in which she attended a splendid ball. They obeyed her request. She looked at her parents and then at her dress, and said, 'There's the price of my soul! I sold my soul for that! I sold my peace, my Saviour, my God, my heaven, my all for that dress! That is the price for which I have bartered heaven and purchased hell—that is

the price.' And turning to her parents with a shuddering look, said, 'And you are the instruments.' And, then, in a short time, closed her eyes in death."

"Backslider, for what art thou selling thy soul? Hear the words of him who knows the value of the soul and before whose mind heaven, hell, and eternity are without a covering: 'what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?'"

If, while on earth, there is "an aching void" in the backslider's heart, "which the world can never fill;" what will it be to such an one to "be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe?" Methinks the backslider's lot will be much worse than his will be who never knew God.

But all who have the opportunity, and are invited and exhorted to "make their peace with God, their calling and election sure," and yet neglect their salvation, will suffer inconceivable remorse forever. Their sorrows very often begin in this world.

Rev. D. Dorchester, in giving a report of a camp-meeting which was held in Connecticut, in 1817, wrote:

"D—, a young man, about eighteen years of age, attended the meeting, and . . . while the Lord wrought powerfully among the people, some of his young associates sought and found the Saviour. D— felt the need of religion, and the preachers and friends endeavored to prevail with him to seek the salvation of his soul: the subject was urged by entreaties, expostulations, and tears; but all in vain! His reply to them all was, 'I will wait till I get home.' He started for home with his mother in usual health. About five o'clock P. M., he arrived within a few yards of his

father's house, when suddenly springing from the wagon, he exclaimed, 'Mother, I am dying; I am dying; I shall not live one hour! O that I had sought religion at the camp-meeting!' A physician was called immediately; but—vain was the help of man; his flesh soon assumed a purple hue; death had planted the arrow that no human hand could extract; and his friends could only wait with awful anxiety, and hear, with the most painful sensations, the regrets that he uttered, till the next day, at about eight o'clock P. M., when he breathed his last. But though dead, he utters an awful voice! 'Procrastination is the thief of time,' and the murderer of precious souls."

Then do not put off the day of grace.

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

Rev. James Caughey, in a sermon which he preached in England, on "The Striving of the Spirit," (text, "And the Lord said, my Spirit shall not always strive with man"—Gen. vi, 3,) remarked:—"When the Spirit has ceased to strive with you, you will present, on your dying bed, a horrible spectacle.

"Not long since, in a certain town, a man was dying—a man who respected religion, who had sat in the house of God for years; and, as his end approached, his mind was in a fearful state. One of the members connected with the chapel where he sat, went to see him, and freely held out to him the promises, and told him salvation was free as the air. The dying man waved his hand and said, 'Stop! stop! I could believe all you say, were I not offering the dregs of life to God.' Death seized him, and the last words he was heard to utter were, 'I could believe all you say, were I not offering the dregs of life to God.'"

Do not spend your best days in the service of the adversary, but



give them to Christ. They are his due. If you neglect your salvation but one moment, one hour, or one day, you may not only thereby lose much of the power to believe, but the door of mercy may be forever shut against you.

"While God invites, how blest the day!  
How sweet the Gospel's charming sound!  
Come, sinners, haste; O haste away,  
While yet a pard'ning God is found."

"To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

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

The following description of the last moments of a young lady who postponed her salvation too long, ought to arouse the careless to prepare at once to meet God:—

"Before us lay the struggling, agonizing, dying Chloe, inwardly burning to death with the raging fires of inflammation; her mind excited to the highest degree of anxiety in view of the terrors of approaching death; while she felt the horrible consciousness of being unprepared for the solemn exchange of worlds. The minister had prayed, but no relief was found. The mother had been entreated to pray; but overflowing tears, from a soul full of distress and terror, comprised all the assistance she could afford to a child sinking in despair. The attendants were weeping, but none of them could help the dying girl. And, what was very remarkable, she made no attempts to pray for herself, while her cries for prayer to save her from hell were incessant.

"Believing that death was about to cut short his work, I proposed to her the following question—'Chloe, will you now accept of the Lord Jesus Christ as your only Saviour from sin and hell, and submit your soul into his hands for salvation?'

"With a faltering voice she replied, 'No, I cannot!' Astonished at the answer, I rejoined once more by inquiring, 'Why are you not willing,

and why can you not now with your dying breath accept of Christ for salvation?'

"With evident appearance of being in full possession of her rational powers, but with a still more feeble and tremulous articulation, looking me full in the face, she answered, 'It is too late!'

"These were her dying words. Not another word was spoken to her. Not another syllable did she attempt to utter. She shuddered, groaned, gasped, and ceased to breathe."

Another young woman who had neglected her salvation, "not long before she died, burst into tears, and said, 'O that I had repented, when the spirit of God was striving with me! but now I am undone.' She afterwards exclaimed, 'Oh, how have I been deceived! When I was in health, I delayed repentance from time to time! Oh, that I had my time to live over again! Oh, that I had obeyed the Gospel! but now I must burn in hell forever. Oh! I cannot bear it; I cannot bear it!' Not long before she died she said, 'Eternity! eternity? Oh! to burn throughout eternity!'

"Eternity! Time soon will end,  
Its fleeting moments pass away;  
O sinner, say, where wilt thou spend  
Eternity's unchanging day!  
Shalt thou the hopeless horrors see  
Of hell for all Eternity?  
Eternity, Eternity!  
Where wilt thou spend Eternity?"

"Should you," says J. G. Pike, "love the world ever so well, should you enjoy it ever so much, and even live in it through the longest term allowed to man, yet short is the longest, and when past, a nothing. You must die. How thoughtless soever you may be of death and eternity, they are nearer to you every hour, and you, even you must die. If you continue to live without God, you must die without him.

"Imagine yourself leaving the world in that awful state. You must leave it thus unless you repent and remember your Creator. Imag-

ine your last day arrived. This scene of vanity is ending. The world you loved is leaving you forever. Behind you is a wasted and sin-spent life. Before you is the grave, judgment, and eternity. Your day of grace is finished. Your soul, loaded with innumerable sins, is going to meet that God to whom all your secret guilt has been revealed. Where can you look for refuge? Man cannot help you, and you have every reason to believe that God will not. Now sins forgotten come to mind again. Now guilty pleasures stare you in the face; but all their charms are gone. Now fears and terrors crowd upon your soul; and devils seem to beckon you away. All is darkness and misery before; all guilt and folly behind. Oh, fearful state! Oh, fearful end of an ungodly life! No friend can go with you; you must die alone, and go alone to meet your God. All else is forsaking you; and he who would never have forsaken you; He who would have been your friend forever, even He will refuse to receive you. The hour, the dreadful hour, arrives. Your last moment comes; you die! and oh! the agonies of death are succeeded by the fiercer torments of damnation and despair. No kind angels welcome your departing spirit. No gentle messengers appear to convey it to eternal rest. Oh, doleful state! Your sweet season of mercy is gone; in vain you wish for mercy and for time again. Weeping friends commit your body to the grave; friends who little imagine where the wretched soul is fixed. There must the body lie, till it rise to the resurrection of damnation.

"Oh, how dreadful a change is this! Oh when those who trifle with salvation have breathed their last, how must they shrink back from the scene which opens before them! How must their terrified souls wish to creep into their dead bodies again! but wish in vain. Oh, what terrible dismay must seize upon

them, when the sight of the majesty and glory of that God whose threatenings and invitations they equally disregarded, bursts upon them; and no place is found to hide their souls; no way to escape the terrifying sight! Oh, miserable immortals! how terrible are their feelings, while they stand trembling and despairing before the great and dreadful God; and see Him, who is love itself, to his children, denouncing nothing but vengeance and terror on them! Oh! could they shrink back for one year more to life! What worlds, if they had them, would they give to gain this boon! Could they have but one month's mercy more! or could they die a second time, and never live again! Oh, how distressing, beyond the impassible gulf, to see the blessed heaven, but themselves shut out! to see the glorious and happy saints and angels, who might have been their companions forever, but now not one friend among them! And oh! though heaven is shut against them, hell is open to receive them; that is the region which they must take, instead of heaven—that wretched abode of everlasting fire and ever-tormenting fiends. Oh, dreadful hour, when they enter that flaming prison! yet there they must await eternal judgment."

"Eternity! O dreadful thought  
For thee, a child of Adam's race,  
If thou shouldst in thy sins be brought  
To stand before that awful face  
From which the heaven and earth shall flee  
The throned one of Eternity.  
Eternity, Eternity!  
Where wilt thou spend Eternity?"

If you would not die the death of the wicked, and suffer everlasting punishment, do not lead an ungodly life; but seek the Lord while he may be found and obtain a saving interest in the blood of Christ.

—“Effects are produced by power, not by laws.”—*Paley*.

—“It is the cross, and the cross alone, that brings us out of self.”—*H. W. S.*

## THE MINIMUM CHRISTIAN.

The Christian who aims to have as little religion as he may without lacking it altogether, is no Christian at all. Some one has called him the "Minimum Christian." He goes to church in the morning, and in the evening also, unless it rains, or is too warm, or too cold, or he is too sleepy, or has a headache from eating too much dinner. He listens most respectfully to the preacher, and joins in the prayer and praise. He applies the truth very judiciously—sometimes to himself, often to his neighbors.

The minimum Christian is very friendly to all good works. He wishes them well, but it is not in his power to do much for them. The Sabbath-school he looks upon as an admirable institution, especially for the neglected and the ignorant. It is not convenient however, for him to take a class. His business engagements are so pressing during the week that he needs Sunday as a day of rest; nor does he think himself qualified to act as a teacher. There are so many persons better prepared for this important duty that he must beg to be excused. He is very friendly at home and foreign missions and colportage, and gives his mite. He thinks there are too many appeals, but he gives, if not enough to save his reputation, pretty near it; at all events, he aims at it.

The minimum Christian is not clear on a number of points. The opera and dancing, the theatre and card-playing, and large fashionable parties, give him much trouble. He cannot see the harm in this or that popular amusement. There is nothing in the Bible against it. He does not see but that a man may be a Christian, and dance and go to the opera. He knows several excellent persons who go. Why should not he? He stands so close to the dividing line between the people of

of God and the world, that it is hard to say on which side of it he is actually to be found. Christ says, Would that thou wert hot or cold, but thou art lukewarm. Happy is he to whom Christ is all in all.—*Sal.*

WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT CAN DO.—The Spirit can take a Roman Catholic monk—brought up in the midst of Romish superstition, trained from his infancy to believe false doctrine and obey the pope, steeped to the eyes in error—and make that man the clearest upholder of justification by faith the world ever saw. He has done so already; he did it with Martin Luther.

The Spirit can take an English tinker—without learning, patronage, or money, a man at one time notorious for nothing so much as blasphemy and swearing—and make that man write a religious book, which shall stand unrivalled and unequalled in its way by any since the time of the apostles. He has done so already: he did it with John Bunyan, the author of "Pilgrim's Progress."

The Spirit can take a sailor, drenched in worldliness and sin, a profligate captain of a slave ship—and make that man a most successful minister of the Gospel, a writer of letters which are a store-house of experimental religion, and of hymns which are known and sung wherever English is spoken; he has done it already, he did it with John Newton.

All this the Spirit has done, and much more, of which I cannot speak particularly. And the arm of the Spirit is not shortened. His power is not decayed. He is like the Lord Jesus—the same yesterday, to day, and forever. He is still doing wonders, and will do to the very end.—*Ryle.*

—“Love seeks, where its means are not sufficient, to win others also to its ends.”



## THE CHRISTIAN'S STRENGTH.

BY REV. B. R. JONES.

"Be strong," is the divine injunction.—1 Cor. xvi, 13; Eph. vi, 10; 2 Tim. ii, 1. God wants his people to be strong. It is not his will that they should be weak. Jesus said to his disciples, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."—Luke xxiv, 49. Notice,

I. *Its nature.*

The power of the Christian can be felt, but not fully explained. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." It implies,

1. The absence of sin. Sin in the heart is weakening; it paralyzes our moral powers. A sinning church is a weak church. Where sin abounds, the influence of the Holy Spirit is checked. God has provided a salvation from sin.

"If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—1 Jno. ii, 1, 2. The dominion of sin must be broken, and its pollution washed away before Zion can put on her strength, and march forth as a mighty conqueror. This is our privilege. "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace."—Rom. vi, 14. We shall be moral dwarfs as long as sin defiles our nature.

2. Being filled with God. The Christian's strength is divine. "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might."—Eph. vi, 10. "Our sufficiency is of God." When we feel our own weakness, and rely on divine strength, our usefulness is greatly increased. The great Apostle said: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me, . . . for when I am weak, then am I strong."—2 Cor. xii, 9, 10.

The baptism of the Spirit is the Christian's power. "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." When filled with God, we are divested of self. Carnality is destroyed and divine love pervades the entire being. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."—1 Jno. iv, 16.

II. *Its necessity.*

The Christian's responsibility to God and the world necessitates more than human strength. To renounce the world, to bear burdens, to labor, and to withstand opposition, he needs divine strength. Jesus says, "Without me ye can do nothing." Strength is needed.

1. To renounce the world. The weak and faint-hearted will be repulsed by worldly influences; but to the soul "strong in the Lord," these influences become weak.

Only in the strength of grace can we—

" . . . Walk in heaven's own light  
Above the world and sin."

"Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—1 Jno. v, 4.

2. To bear burdens. Paul says: "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." There will be no gloom around the cross, no murmuring at the trials we meet when we are filled with God. The Lord wants more patient burden-bearers. Jesus says: "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

3. To labor. Labor will be performed with delight when the love of Christ constraineth us. There is much to be done. "The fields are already white to the harvest." The command is given, "Go work in my vineyard." No place for idlers. But however great the task, the Master says, "My grace is sufficient for thee." We need a divine anointing for the work. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

## 4. To withstand opposition.

Mighty forces are arrayed against the Christian. The principles he advocates are calculated to arouse the malice and opposition of carnal minds. "The carnal mind is enmity against God." Those who are "set for the defense of the Gospel" must suffer persecution. The Saviour says, "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you."

The enemies of Christianity are not all dead. We are commanded to "fight the good fight of faith," and we shall find something to fight. But the Captain of our salvation will cause us to triumph. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Yet the "weapons of our warfare are not carnal." We must use the weapons that God furnishes. The "sword of the spirit" wielded in the power of love will bring terror to the ranks of our enemies. We may arm ourselves with straightness and severity, but if wanting in the spirit of love, the sword will fall upon our own heads. He is mighty who trusts in the God of love—all-conquering love—Love is stronger than death." Nothing can prevail against it. O, to be filled with God, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man." That the church may go forth "as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

How short is human life! The very breath  
Which frames my words, accelerates my death.

Hannah More.

—"The Christian throughout the Scriptures is represented as having some distinguishing mark placed upon him by God, and recognized by the world, by which his character and relation to God are known."

—Never trifle with little sins. A small leak will sink a great ship, and a small spark will kindle a great fire, and a little allowed sin, in like manner, will ruin an immortal soul. Never spare a little sin.

## A WARNING.

I take it upon me to warn all who are sincere, who wish to be made holy, and to be saved by Christ, and who really desire to know the condition of success,—all such I warn to beware of admitting *any worldly or selfish motive or consideration whatever*, into the settlement of this great question between God and their souls. I take it upon me to proclaim that all such tampering in the business of religion will certainly prove fatal to any well founded hopes of success in the Christian career.

Whoever stops to inquire whether it may cost him sacrifices to be a Christian, with any intention to hesitate if it does, has admitted a consideration utterly incompatible with his being a Christian at all. Whoever chooses his creed or his church, with any, even the slightest reference to the honor, or the ease, or the emolument it may give or withhold, does by such an admission utterly vitiate all his claim to have any part or lot in the matter of saving piety. I do not speak of those who knowingly and deliberately make these their chief grounds of preference, but I affirm that it is wholly anti-Christian, and an insult to the crucified Saviour to yield any, the smallest place, to worldly motives, in choosing the Christian position which we will occupy. Let Christ and conscience decide in this matter. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." The Gospel will admit of no compromise here. This is its point of honor, which it cannot and will not yield by a single iota.—*Dr. Stephen Olin.*

—"Willing offering is always the result of blessing.—*H. W. S.*

—I think the first virtue is to restrain the tongue; he approaches nearest to the gods who knows how to be silent, even though he is in the right.—*Cato.*

## THE SOLEMN CHARGE.

Paul said to Timothy, "Preach the word." This graphic injunction embraces the whole duty of the Gospel ministry. No one that has been conversant with the current pulpit literature of the last half century, has failed to observe, with honorable exceptions here and there, the gradual drift of the ministry into the carnal and secular. The last half decade furnishes quite a striking exception, which every lover of the Word is glad to note. It is true that God may have had to bring on this revival of the word through a very humble instrumentality, and entirely outside of clerical ranks, but no difference, the revival has come, and its rising sun is hailed by gladdened millions.

It may be God's purpose to rebuke the departure of the clergy from the word by pushing into unprecedented prominence and success an uneducated layman, thus bringing into striking contrast the feebleness of scholastic culture without the word of Power and the all-sufficient might of this word. God is jealous of his word, and when he says, "Preach the word," He means not to honor any and every kind of preaching, irrespective of its relation to the word; but has meant that his honor shall go with that message that he himself has ordained as the word of his salvation.

As all science is a unit, so we must apprehend the message as bringing all God's thoughts into authoritative relations to the message, whether they be in the written or the unwritten volume—the inspired or uninspired revelation.

With God it is not the messenger but the message that does the work. Not that the messenger may have no moral adaptation to the message; for he that bears the vessels of the Lord must be clean, but the efficiency, the power to save, is in the message. There is enough importance that attaches to the messenger to warrant

the council, "Take heed unto thyself," as well as "unto the doctrine." No minister can morally divorce himself from the purity of the Gospel and succeed; and yet, such is the transcendency of the word above him that utters it that he drops to the plane of a mere "earthen vessel." The Gospel is the "treasure," not the vessel that bears it.

Is not the word sufficient? It is the Scriptures that are able to make us "wise unto salvation," and that "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." To what end is the Scriptures made thus profitable? "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This word not only perfects the man himself, but it fully furnishes him unto his work. How important then that he "seek out of the book of the Lord, and read;" that he "search the Scriptures," and that he "speak according to this word."

It is called "the word of this salvation;" "a more sure word of prophecy," and as embracing the Gospel, "the power of God unto salvation." How important that the word be preached. He that turns from it does so at the peril of not only his own soul, but also those of his hearers.—*Highway of Holiness.*

—The hardest and the best arithmetic we can learn is this: So to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. But this we must learn from a Divine Teacher.

—"A dear little girl of my acquaintance, whose life was the truest picture of childlike faith I ever saw, said one morning, as she kneeled in prayer, "Dear Lord, I thank thee that I have nothing to do all day today, but just to mind." Nothing to do but to mind! Ah! this is a blessed secret. We need not plan, we need not worry; we need only to obey and all will come right."

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## CONCERNING FUNERALS.

BY REV. E. P. MARVIN.

The ministry of a pastor to the bereaved and sorrowing, is a delicate and difficult matter. In general we allow mourning friends to have their own will and way in all the performances, no moral wrong being proposed, so that the greatest possible consolation and satisfaction may be afforded.

But if friends could be persuaded to yield a little less to some demands of custom, society, and undertakers, it would be a great public good.

1. Common sense dictates that in testifying our respect and affection for the dead, we should avoid making a vain show. Dives doubtless had a splendid funeral, but it failed to make a favorable impression upon God, or to save him from his just doom. True grief is modest and retiring, and never ostentatious. There are some very sensible and grave objections against mourning apparel. The early Christians never wore it.

Our funeral services should be characterized by modesty, simplicity, tenderness, and godly sincerity.

2. They should be as inexpensive as propriety, convenience, and Christian principle will allow. Burial expenses almost bankrupt many of the poor. The living must go hungry and cold, if these ostentatious and costly funeral expenses are paid. Better buy bread for the living, than flowers for the dead. Far better buy a plain, honest coffin that will last, than a sham, showy casket, put together with glue and putty, and which will fall to pieces, as soon as dampened under ground.

Neighborly kindness ought to bring out vehicles to save the cost of a procession of hired hacks.

3. Funeral services should be as brief as a wise sense of propriety will allow. The kindred are generally weak and weary with toil and anxi-

ety, and when services are held at the house, the church and the grave, promptness and brevity should be the rule.

4. They should be held at the home, unless there is a lack of room or some other special reason. Grief is more becoming there, and the services are shortened and simplified. There is also less temptation to undue costliness and display.

5. It is greatly desired by clergymen that they should not be held on the Lord's day, unless necessary.

6. Eulogy should be indulged in but cautiously and sparingly. Few of us are models, and none are perfect. Many have laid themselves open to the charge of telling, "Not what they were, but what they should have been." We are to assist in depositing the body decently in the grave, and to counsel and comfort the living; not necessarily to pronounce sentence on the soul, either for heaven or for hell.

THE SPIRIT.—The Spirit is an Almighty Spirit. He can change the stony heart into a heart of flesh. He can break the strongest bad habits, like tow before the fire. He can make the most difficult things seem easy, and the mightiest objections melt away like snow in spring. He can cut the bars of brass, and throw the gates of prejudice wide open. He can fill up every valley, and make every rough place smooth. He has done it often, and he can do it again. The Spirit can take a Jew—the bitterest enemy of Christianity, the fiercest persecutor of true believers, the strongest stickler for Pharisaical notions, the most prejudiced opposer of Gospel doctrine—and turn that man into an earnest preacher of the very faith he once destroyed. He has done it already; he did it with the apostle Paul.—*Ryle.*

—“Every thing will look small enough if we only get high enough.

## A SHORT SERMON.

BY H. A. CROUCH.

"Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt beat in pieces many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth."—Micah iv, 13. The original way of threshing was by treading out the grain with oxen. In Deuteronomy, God says, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox, when he treadeth out the corn." God will bring the sheaves unto the floor, and he says, "Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for, I will make thine horn iron and thy hoofs brass." Horns are an emblem of power; there is strength and power in an iron horn.

The Christian has but one source of power; that is Christ. "And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us, in the house of his servant David." This horn is worn on the head. There is danger of trusting to our own power, instead of to Christ. The human mind is capable of such cultivation and power, that there is a tendency to lean to our own understanding, unless we set the Lord always before our face. Jesus said, "Without me, ye can do nothing." It is an iron horn; "He will not give his glory unto another, nor his praise unto graven images." It was Christ who measured down into the darkness of sin's ruin, who stained all his raiment, who trod the wine-press of the wrath of Almighty God alone. This battle must be so fought, as to carry the glory and honor up to Christ; no flesh can glory in his presence.

The prophets used to anoint kings and priests, and they carried their oil in a horn. Christ is our prophet and the anointing comes through him. He has made us unto our God, kings and priests. Some timber is so dead and dry, that, unless a nail

is well oiled, it cannot be made to penetrate it; and there are human hearts so dry and dead to every good thing, that, unless the anointing of the Holy Ghost rests upon us, our efforts will be all in vain to reach them.

"I will make thy hoofs brass," "shod with a preparation of the Gospel of peace." "How beautiful upon the mountains, are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth." He who walked in the midst of the seven golden candle-sticks, had feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace.

If we wear the iron horn, if we set the Lord always before our face, we shall get the anointing and be shod with brass, and the result will be, the threshing will go on; the work will be deep and thorough, and there will be no lack of means in God's treasury; "For I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth." But, if the iron horn is not worn, if Christ is not exalted, there will be no anointing, no preparation of the Gospel for the feet, and self will come down on the precious grain, only to bruise and mar it.

## THE DIFFICULTY OF CONVERSION.

—Conversion to God is not so easy and so smooth a thing, as some would have men believe it is. Why is man's heart compared to fallow ground, God's word to a plough, and his ministers to ploughmen, if the heart, indeed, has no need of breaking in order to the receiving of the seed of God unto eternal life? Why is the conversion of the soul compared to the grafting of a tree, if that be done without cutting?

—"Where God is, there is as much simplicity as power."—Guyon.

## GOD'S TEMPLE.

BY REV. T. F. STUART.

The rule of the Methodist Discipline, concerning dress, is: "This is no time to encourage superfluity of dress. Therefore let all our people be exhorted to conform to the spirit of the apostolic precept,—not to adorn themselves 'with gold or pearls or costly array.'"—1 Tim. ii, 9.

The Discipline, further, declares these truths "are written on truly awakened hearts." If one can judge by dress, it would seem that there are few women in our churches, who are even awakened, much less converted, to say nothing of sanctification or holiness of heart.

If you are saved, as you profess to be, your body is the temple of God. You are the house of God; you are temples of the Holy Ghost; Christ dwells in you, and you in him. In First Corinthians, we read, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."—ch. iii, 16-17. Also in chapter vi, 19th and 20th verses, it is written, "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price." Again in Second Corinthians, vi, 16, 17, 18: "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people; wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord, Almighty.

We find the same truth presented

in Romans viii, 10: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin."

The keeper of this temple is Christ. "But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we." Heb. iii, 6. This being the fact that Christians are the house, the temple, and dwelling place of the holy and ever blessed God, I would ask if that infinitely pure being desires you to decorate his abode with trinkets? Is it pleasing to him to have you adorned like the world—wearing gay apparel with wreaths and artificial flowers? While you are so intent on adorning your dying bodies, are you not neglecting the wedding garment without which you can never attend the marriage supper of the Lamb? Will not the terrible Judge say to you, "Friend, how earnest thou in hither, not having on the wedding garment?" O would you not be speechless before him? Would not the terrible command be given, "Bind them hand and foot; and take them away; and cast them into outer darkness; there shall be wailing, and gnashing of teeth."

*Burlington, Vt.*

—"When I would possess nothing through selfishness, every thing was given me without going after it."

—The devil only wants to get the wedge of a little allowed sin in: to our hearts, and you will soon be all his own. Never play with fire. Never trifle with little sins.—*Ryle.*

—No wicked man ever meant to be so wicked at his first beginnings. But he began with allowing himself some little transgression, and that, led on to something greater still, and thus he became the miserable being that he now is.



## DEFINITE PREACHING.

BY REV. W. T. HOGG.

Ministers of the Gospel should be definite in their preaching. Otherwise, their time and energy will be spent in vain. A thousand good things may be said by the preacher, and yet be uttered so indefinitely as to lose their force and move nobody. Paul was a model preacher. He always struck to hit. Hear his own testimony: "So fight I not as one that beateth the air." Paul's preaching hit and provoked hits; he never used blank cartridges: he never made any false motions; he spared no citadel of sin and error, in church or state; he made no childish manœuvres; as a man, he had "put away childish things"—a characteristic of every true Gospel minister; he fearlessly declared "the whole counsel of God," and boldly faced the consequences.

He who preaches in a smooth and aimless manner, may say much to please his hearers, and win popularity for himself, but, by thus pleasing the itching ears of the carnal multitude, he displeases God and ruins himself, together with them that hear him. It is written: "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully."—Jer. xlviii. 10.

The doctrines, conditions and fruits of Gospel salvation, should be preached in the most definite manner; since "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." The word of God particularizes; so must the faithful preacher of that word. "The sword of the Spirit is designed to cut and to kill; and it is no use to apply the Gospel balm before the carnal spirit has been wounded. Men must be made sorry, before they can be made truly glad by the Gospel. One must be made to feel, "O wretched man that I am!" before he can exclaim, "Thanks be unto God, (for deliverance,) through Jesus Christ our

Lord!" Jesus says, "Blessed are they which mourn, for they shall be comforted."—Matt. v. 4.

Particularly, should the minister of Christ "declare the whole counsel of God" against the prevailing and popular sins of the age, especially against "spiritual wickedness in high places," the prevailing sins of the church. God's command is: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins."—Isa. lviii. 1. And surely, he who fails in this, will not be held guiltless before God.

As ministers, therefore, we all have need to diligently heed the direction Paul gave to Timothy: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."—2 Tim. ii. 15.

WHAT IS THE HAPPIEST PERIOD OF HUMAN LIFE?—I am sure there is only one answer. It is now. If I am doing my duty, to-day is the best day I ever had. Yesterday had a happiness of its own, and up to this morning it was the best day of all. I would not, however, live it over again. I string it, as a new bead, on the chaplet of *orris*, and turn to the better work and the higher thoughts of this present time. Of all the many days of my life, give me to-day. This should be our feeling always, from the cradle to the hour when we are called to come up higher. Childhood is best for children, manhood is best for men, and old age for the silver-haired. We will all join in a chorus of common thanksgiving to God, and, when asked, "Which is the happiest period?" will say—childhood, manhood and old age alike,—*"O Father, it is now."*—*Geo. H. Hepworth.*

—Skillful pilots gain their reputation from storms and tempests.

## CHANGED TASTE.

BY JOHN MC GAHIE.

I have taken *THE EARNEST CHRISTIAN AND GOLDEN RULE* for several years, but up to the present number, have not had much delight in reading it. After reading the present number, (February,) and being very much delighted with it, I asked myself how is it that I like this number so much, when I felt so little interest in all the previous numbers which I had read? Likely they were equally as good, may be better. Why then, appreciate this one so much? The true answer, I believe, is this: I have risen into the atmosphere of truth, where such truths as are taught in *THE EARNEST CHRISTIAN* are palatable to the taste; and I would like to say here, if any persons have read *THE EARNEST CHRISTIAN* without relishing it, it would be well for them to ask themselves the following questions: Have I carefully and prayerfully read the Bible? have I been enlightened by the Holy Spirit? am I obeying all the light given me? do I believe all God's word? and am I enjoying all privileges possible in the Christian inheritance?

To refer to some of the articles which are very sweet to my taste: "Security of Christians," "They shall be mine," "Dying daily," "Tumbling the hills," "Do not worry," "The model church," "Elijah's mantle." Would to God, all ministers would rend their own clothes, and take up the mantle of Christ, before attempting to be his ambassadors. I will only refer to one more article: "The law of love." How few church members understand this law, and why do they not? I think one reason is, very few ministers are developed enough to know it, consequently they cannot teach what they do not know. Another reason is, church members do not study the word of God as care-

fully, prayerfully and constantly, as it is necessary to do, in order to get the spirit of this law of love and keep it. And generally church members do not rise above their minister. Hence the great necessity of the ministers being true disciples, thoroughly taught in the word, wholly consecrated to the work, full of the Holy Spirit, and speaking the words which God has commanded them. We should continually pray for the ministry, that God would purge it as gold and silver, so that it would be pure, understanding the truth, teaching the truth, living the truth, being examples to the people, consequently drawing people into sympathy and love of the truth, which is God. They cannot break in pieces the stony hearts with hammers of logic or human fancy; it is like striking rock with chaff. They have never learned, or, may be, have forgotten that God's word is the hammer that breaks the stony heart successfully. There is a science in spiritual things, as well as in natural things, and if understood and obeyed, success is sure.—See Josh. i, 1-9.

There is need to-day for a "Luther," a "Knox," a "Wesley," to bring the church back to its duty, so that there may be meat in the house of God for his people, pasture for his sheep. Oh, Lord, lead all ministers and church members out of the seventh chapter of Romans into the eighth, where there is no condemnation and no separation, where they will be led by the Spirit of God. But how are we to get this Spirit? It is God's will that we should have it, and we have examples of those of his children who had it. Paul said, "The love of Christ constraineth me," and "For me to live is Christ." In the first place, then, this gift is like all good gifts, in that it comes from God.—Jas. i, 17. Secondly, it is freer and fuller than the sunlight; and the reason we are not enjoying it, is we

keep ourselves in such dark and shaded places, that the light is obstructed; if we only come out where the rays fall, we can have their full benefit. When we ask the Lord, like Saul, "What wilt thou have me to do?" the light reveals what we should do (Acts, ix, 6).

Paul kept in the light (Acts xxvi, 19-22.), consequently, he could speak in light, in the eighth of Romans. Dear reader, if you will, like Paul, be true to the light given you, "heavenly visions," you will become a partaker of the triumphant faith manifested in the eighth of Romans.

FEELING.—Whilst you cannot feel too keenly, do not wait for feeling. No sorrow for the past can be too poignant; but do not wait for that sorrow. If the prodigal had not arisen till he was satisfied with his own repentance he would have died in a far country. The tears which do not flow from the gaunt eyes of famine will come unbidden at the feast of fat things; and the fountains of the great deep, which freeze in the winter of remoteness and estrangement, will break up and brim over in the sunshine of mercy. The word which you take, be it what it may—"Father, I have sinned, and am no more worthy to be called thy son;" "Take away mine iniquity, and receive me graciously"—whatever the word may be, let it be a true one, and swifter than you return will be the footsteps of forthcoming pardon; and great as may be your own joy in rescuing and restoring grace, no less will be the joy in heaven over your repentance.—*James Hamilton.*

—"Seek holiness rather than consolation."

—Dare to change your mind, confess your error, and alter your conduct, when you are convinced you are wrong; it is manly, it is scriptural.

## EASTER.

By REV. J. MCCREERY.

"That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death."—*Phil. iii, 10.*

Down from the holy cross,  
With Jesus crucified,  
My soul descends into the grave,  
My dying Lord beside:—  
Buried with Him in death,  
My soul in silence lies,  
Till He shall speak the mighty word,  
That bids it live and rise.

His voice I hear, I feel;  
The spell of Death it breaks;  
And, thrill'd with immortality,  
My quicken'd soul awakes.  
The stone is roll'd away—  
The Sabbath morn is come,  
My captive soul breaks forth to-day,  
Triumphant from its tomb.

With risen Christ arisen,  
Into His life above,  
Unto the living join'd, I live,  
And with the living move.  
In newness of my life  
I walk, serene, in light,  
Or thron'd, my risen Lord beside,  
In heavenly places sit.

Baptized into His death,  
The life of Christ is mine,  
His resurrection power I prove,  
In fellowship divine.  
By His almighty word,  
Call'd forth from Death's domain,  
In present immortality,  
With Christ, in life, I reign.

My soul no longer deems  
Its rising day afar,  
But in the resurrection claims  
A glorious present share;—  
Dead, buried, risen with Christ,  
My life no more my own,  
Living in Him, and He in me,  
I live to Christ alone.

My life, with Christ in God,  
Enshielded and secure,  
I am persuaded shall remain  
Inviolably sure;  
Nor life, nor death, nor hell,  
Things earthly or above,  
Nor principalities nor powers,  
That hidden life shall move.



## EDITORIAL.

## FROM CALIFORNIA.

It is now nearly seven weeks since we landed, on Saturday, Jan. 4th, in California. We came here to preach the truth,—to hold up the Bible standard of Christianity. Though we took a severe cold on our way, from which we have not fully recovered, we have been enabled to preach, since we came here, fifty sermons. We have felt in every effort, the help of the Spirit.

On Sabbath, the 25th of January, we preached in the Presbyterian church at Santa Rosa, and in the afternoon in the jail. The Lord was with us in both places. The prisoners in the jail gave good attention, seemed much affected, and expressed their gratitude for the services. We preached on Sabbath, the 2d of February, in the Howard St. M. E. Church, San Francisco, at the invitation of our old friend, the pastor, Dr. M. C. Briggs. The large congregation was very attentive, and we had a season of interest. Soon after coming here, we received a kind note from the Rev. Mr. Harford, pastor of the Powell St. M. E. Church, inviting us to make them a visit, and to occupy his pulpit some Sabbath, at our convenience. His wife in other years heard us preach in Rushford, N. Y. We had met him in Lawrence, Kansas, when he was pastor there, and preached in his church. So we preached for him on the 9th of February. It was a rainy morning, and the congregation was, in consequence, small; but we felt the presence and help of the Master.

The few brethren and sisters we have at Alameda and here, have hired the Second Advent church on Eddy street, in this city, for one month for twenty-five dollars, in which we are now holding a protracted meeting.

From the first, the congregation was small, but it is steadily increasing, and the interest is rising in every meeting.

Our congregations are made up mostly of members of the various churches, among whom are some Christian workers, who have been nobly battling for the purity of the Gospel. The Lord has held us with great stringency to insist upon the New Testament standard of Christianity. We have never felt more of the Spirit than we have here in every service. So far the visible results have been, a few justified, and a few wholly sanctified to God, and a good deal of an awakening among professors. By the grace of God we intend to keep on here while he leads, doing all we can for the salvation of souls. Instead of the hunger for the truth which we have found in many places, we here find the most appalling indifference. The people, to an extent we never witnessed before, seem to have given themselves up to seek the riches and enjoy the pleasures of this world. Men but a few steps from the grave, with a full knowledge of their condition, will tell you with the utmost coolness and candor, that they do not want religion.

We have rented a moderate-sized, furnished room in which we are keeping house. It seemed a little awkward at first to have but one room for kitchen, dining-room, study, and bed-room; but we get along finely. Our simple wants are easily met. We feel happy in God, trying the best we can to do his blessed will.

Invitations and inquiries are coming in from other places, but where we shall go from this city, and how long we shall remain upon this coast, we leave for Him to determine, at whose gracious bidding we have come. We never felt more fully given up to do His blessed will, never more realized the greatness of the privilege in being permitted to preach His truth, than since we came to this land of gold and of gold-worship.

It is a beautiful country,—now, in the middle of February, the fields are green, pinks, roses, and other flowers

are in bloom; it seems like May at home. O that this pleasant land might be won back to God!

### GAMBLING.

It is a bad omen for a country when many of its most active minds engage in gambling for a business. Yet this is already the case in our leading cities. And among our people, contagions and fashions soon spread from the city to the country.

In San Francisco, as in New York and other cities, the leading business of the leading men appears to be stock gambling. Though some get rich at the business, yet they are like successful robbers, in that what they gain, others lose. The manufacturer adds labor to material, and gives it increased value. The merchant takes goods from the manufacturers, to the vicinity where they are needed, and saves to those who want them, a large expense in going for them. But, in gambling, no value is created. The general wealth is not increased. Money simply changes hands. It is taken from one without an equivalent, and given to another as a reward for his luck, or cunning, or more frequently, downright knavery. It demoralizes the business of communities. It makes men restless, feverish, and in haste to be rich. It takes from the productive force of a country, many of the most active, shrewd, energetic and far-seeing. It often leads the unfortunate into still deeper crimes; and makes the fortunate reckless. Its spirit creeps into the local governments, and leads them into extravagant expenditures, which create the necessity for ruinous taxes. It robs churches of their piety, and makes them consecrated avenues to perdition.

There would seem to be nothing wrong, in dividing the value of a mine, or a railroad into shares and selling them here and there, to those who wish to secure a fair return for the use of

their money. This is the theory of stock selling; but the practice is entirely a different matter. In the way it is managed, there is nothing honest about it. A valuable mine is discovered. It is found to be very profitable. If the owners are satisfied with their legitimate profits, they do not put the stock in the market; but work the mine to the best advantage, and divide the proceeds. But if they are gamblers, and greedy of unearned gain, they put a part,—less than half the stock, in market, being careful to keep the control in their own hands. They make large dividends, and so the stock readily sells at a large price. When they have disposed of all they intend to, they change their tactics. They work some vein of their mine that is less productive. They break their machinery—they are flooded with water. Instead of a dividend, they make an assessment. The stock falls. If it does not go low enough, they make another. The holders are anxious to sell. Those in control buy it up at a nominal price. They are enriched, and others made poor. And so the process goes on as long as new victims can be found. It is said by those who claim to know, that the stock of a good mine, honestly managed, is never put upon the market.

Railroad stock is handled in a similar way. When those in control wish to sell, they run the stock up by various contrivances at their command. When they desire to buy, they run it down.

Usually when a new railroad is projected, the people along the line, eager to have it done, buy stock according to their means. Then before the road is completed, it is sold on a mortgage. A few of the rich buy it in, and all the small stockholders are cut off.

It would contribute very materially towards a revival of old-fashioned honesty in business, if in the public mind stock-gambling were placed, where it belongs, with ordinary gam-

bling, and both regarded, as they really are, as a modified form of robbery. In highway robbery, one takes advantage of the physical,—in gambling, of the mental weakness of his victim, to obtain his money without equivalent.

Gambling is promoted by Colleges and schools, and by the press, in encouraging base-ball clubs and boat races. Thus our educated young men are trained up to habits of gambling; and the very foundations of morality and religion are weakened, if not destroyed, by those who ought to be their firm supporters.

Many churches encourage gambling by adopting various lottery schemes to raise money. Thus the sanction of the Church is given to one of the greatest villainies of the age. Against Church gambling, every honest member ought to enter his solemn protest; and if that is disregarded, he should at once withdraw. No Christian has a right to belong to an association of gamblers, though it may be venerable with age, endowed with wealth, and dignified by the name of a Church. If Christ were to come to such an institution, sanctified by taking upon it his name, we might expect that he would do as he did in the temple of old,—make a scourge of small cords, and drive out the buyers and sellers, saying, *My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.*—Matt. xxi, 13.

#### “FISHERS OF MEN.”

Brother Philip Hanna writes us that a brother in Iowa “has bought three copies to send out, one in the name of the Father, one in the name of the Son, and one in the name of the Holy Ghost.”

A brother in San Francisco, a member of the M.E. church, bought a copy for himself, and read it, and then bought three copies to give away. Read the notices on the cover, and send us \$1.25 for a copy.

#### CHURCH RESPONSIBILITY.

The church of Jesus Christ is an institution of divine appointment. So it is called the church of God.—Acts xx, 28; 1 Cor. x, 32. Every Christian should belong to that branch of this Church whose principles and usages he believes most nearly conform to the Bible; and in which he thinks he can most glorify God.

As a member of the Church, it is your duty to help sustain it by your means. While one should exercise an enlightened conscience in judging of the disposition of funds to which he is asked to contribute, yet you should not be captious. You should watch against covetousness; for it is very fertile in inventing excuses for not giving. Many find fault with enterprises which are doing much good, simply because they have failed to do their duty in supporting them. If your means are limited, still you can do your duty by giving according to your ability.

But the piety of the church is of far greater importance than its money resources. The apostles were poor men; but they carried the Gospel in all directions. The church at Jerusalem was poor and persecuted; but its influence was soon felt throughout the city and the country. In maintaining the spirituality of the church, every member should bear a part. No matter how poor he may be, or how small his gifts, he can live so before the world as to bring credit to the religion which he professes. On the contrary, the munificent donation of the wealthy, and the eloquent and appropriate sayings of the gifted, may be more than counterbalanced by a want of integrity in business, or a lack of the proper manifestation of the humility and the love which are inseparable from the character of the Christian.

See to it, then, that you support the Church by a godly life and a holy conversation. Remember that, as a Chris-



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tian, you are no private person, but are a representative character. The opinion which some entertain of the denomination to which you belong, will be greatly modified by what they know of you. The religious influence of others, as well as your own, is in your keeping. Be faithful to your trust.

### THE STRANGER.

"I went to Church two years," said a backslider, "and put myself in the way of the members, in hopes that some of them would speak to me and give me a chance to form their acquaintance. But no one did."

This is not the way that Christians should do. If you see a stranger in your meetings, take pains to speak to him. Show yourself friendly. Do for the stranger any act of kindness that may be in your power to render him. It may be he needs only a friendly word,—a little timely advice or information. It will do you as much good to give it, as it will him to receive it. If he is in distress, do the best you can to relieve him. He may be unworthy,—you need not inquire into that, for it has nothing to do in the case. It is in his capacity as a stranger that he stands as a representative of Christ. Remember what Christ says of the priest, the Levite, and the Samaritan. To those who are finally saved, our Lord will say, "I was a stranger and ye took me in: naked and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me."—Mat. xxv, 35, 36.

In our cities, particularly, the wicked are not slow to make advances to strangers, that they may in some way derive profit from them. Let Christians be equally forward to do them good. While the wicked seek to entrap them and lead them astray, do you make an effort to deliver them from the wiles of the devil, and lead them to Christ. It does not require any special office or organization to

do this,—if you have that love for your neighbor which is absolutely necessary to the Christian character, you have all the qualification that is needed. *"A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."*—Prov. xviii, 24.

### DIED FROM ANGER.

Mr. Reese was a successful business man, of San Francisco. He had amassed a fortune of fifteen millions of dollars. Last summer he went back to Germany, to view once more, the scenes of his childhood. While there, he went to the grave-yard in which his ancestors were buried. A small fee was demanded for admission, and to save this, he climbed over the fence in a remote corner.

The sexton discovered him, and threatened to arrest him. In the altercation which followed, Mr. Reese became so enraged, that he fell down dead in a fit of anger.

His riches did not profit him in the day of his calamity. The history of our millionaires shows that a life devoted to money-getting, even when most successful is a failure. Their wealth does not generally benefit either themselves or others. As one of their number said: "I admit the claims of religion upon me, but I have no time to attend to it." But he died soon after making the remark. Then there remains the tremendous truth, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God."—Mark x, 23.

Those who devote their lives to money-making, generally fail to secure the object for which they live. Those who succeed fail to enjoy it when obtained. The most splendid palace in San Francisco was built by a man who died before he could get moved into it. His childless widow may occupy it a few years, and then too, her body will be laid in the "narrow house appointed for all living." But

what a failure do those make who spend a long and busy life in amassing wealth which they must leave behind them and make no provision for their soul's eternal welfare! Pompous funerals and costly monuments, can do them no good. "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul."—Mat. xvi, 26.

**FINDING FAULT.**—It is no evidence that you are truly pious, because you find fault with the piety of others. To do this requires neither learning nor grace. It does not show that you are even in earnest about your own salvation. Satan would be glad to have you take up the time in complaining, that you might more profitably employ in praying. If the church is cold, get the fire of God in your own soul, and see if the icebergs, with which you come in contact, will not begin to melt. If others do not manifest a Christian spirit, be careful that you do not violate a plain command of God, by speaking against them.

Bearing a clear, positive testimony against sin, and finding fault, are two things entirely distinct in their nature and in their spirit. Do not mistake the one for the other.

#### LITERARY NOTICES.

We have received "Gospel Gems," published by Geo. D. Russell, 125 Tremont St., Boston, a collection of hymns and sacred songs, well adapted to Gospel meetings and to family use. Price, thirty-five cents. 112 pages.

"Coronation" Hymns from A. S. Barnes & Co., 111 & 113 William St., New York, contains a fine collection of songs for prayer, praise and social meetings. Price 35 cents, sent by mail post-paid. 128 pages.

*The Sin of Tobacco Smoking and Chewing, with an affective Cure for these Habits*, is a 24mo. tract of seventy-six pages, by Rev. A. Sines, of Toronto, Canada. It will be of use in the hands

of every minister or Christian worker. We give the following from the table of contents: Chapter V—The Fearful Injury Tobacco does to Health; Chapter VII—The Idolatry of these Habits; Chapter IX—The Common Use of Tobacco not for God's Glory; Chapter X—Reasons why Ministers should not use the Weed; Chapter XI—The Consumption of Tobacco a direct Curse to the Soul; Chapter XII—The Holiest and Best Examples are against these Habits; Chapter XV—The Cure. *The Toronto Advertiser* says of it:—"It is an able work, and those addicted to the loathsome habit of using tobacco, should at once secure a copy." For sale at THE EARNEST CHRISTIAN office. Price, twenty-five cents.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

##### COMMENDATORY.

While our work is unto God and not unto man, yet we cannot but be glad that THE EARNEST CHRISTIAN has the approval and sanction of God's children. The extracts following illustrate the sentiment of many letters:

"DEAR BROTHER ROBERTS: Your faithful and holy monthly is gladly welcomed. Please receive a kind word from your brother in the best of all causes. Dear brother, persevere a little longer; be faithful; you have the promise of a crown of life.

G. BERNARD.

"I do like THE EARNEST CHRISTIAN very much. It has the Gospel ring in its teachings—its doctrines so pure. It cannot but be appreciated by every soul that is seeking after the true light, and striving to walk therein—even as He is in the light, that we may have fellowship with Him, that his blood may cleanse from all sin. It is a noble and faithful work you are doing, and may God strengthen, guide, and direct you, that you may be able to keep the Gospel banner of holiness up to the Bible standard.

A. R. COLE."

## HEALED.

DEAR BROTHER: It seems to me that it will be to the honor and glory of the Great Physician—the faithful, covenant-keeping God—to bring more fully before the public his goodness, power, and faithfulness, in regard to Brother J. Hoke, an account of whose “suffering affliction and patience,” has already been mentioned.\* My letter was not intended, by me, for publication; but after having written it, the Lord told me it should be made public. His will, not mine, be done. From the time of writing to Brother Hoke, (Nov. 7th,) until a day or two after, I was led to pray for him frequently, then the Spirit ceased to prompt, and I felt my work was done. I will quote from the letter which I received from him in reply, dated Nov. 12th, what he says in regard to the dealings of the Lord with him:

“During the past few weeks, the precious light and peace have daily been increasing, until a week ago, God has revealed himself to my soul so wonderfully, that I can scarcely eat or sleep. Refining fire pervades my entire being, healing soul and body, until yesterday my physicians said my entire recovery seemed probable.”

On reading the above, I was tempted to doubt whether God would effect a perfect cure; but I was not moved, knowing that he who had begun a good work in him, was able to finish it; and on looking to the Lord on his behalf, I received the assurance that he would “make him every whit whole.” I will further quote from another letter of later date (Nov. 28th). He says:

“God has, as it were, raised me from the dead.” And further adds: “I am so far restored, that I have written to my brethren—the Bishop of the church—offering myself to do any work; to go any where, without money or without price, all the residue

of my days. I owe all to God, and it is but right that He should further direct me in duty. I have no language to express the fullness of God ever residing in my happy soul, day and night, as constant as my breathing. I live in an element of pure love—love to God and all mankind. I still suffer from pain and stupor in the brain and eyes; but I am rapidly and surely recovering, and feel confident I can labor for God and his church many, many years yet. Oh! what hath God wrought in so short a time! From the gates of death, from the utmost sufferings, and no expectation of relief only in death, which I greatly desired, I am filled with hope, vigor, joy, Christ and heaven. Glory, glory in the Highest unto my adorable Saviour! My physicians want me to remain here under treatment another month. I will most likely do so; but I expect to return to my friends, (I cannot say my home, for I now have none) about January 1st—say four or five weeks hence. I confidently expect to travel and labor for my Master with more diligence than ever, and for years yet to come; but all this I leave with the Lord, and the church to direct.” DESIRE PLUMB.

DEAR EDITOR: I have been a reader of THE EARNEST CHRISTIAN for five or six years. I prize it very highly, and think often in reading one piece, I am amply paid for what it costs me for a year. May its publication long continue, is my prayer.

I have been an invalid for a number of years. For three years and eight months I have never walked unless supported, and for a greater part of the time, unable to set up long enough to eat. But, praise God! the 14th of last November, through united prayer and faith, I was enabled to walk. I am at present nearer well than I have been in thirteen years. I am the Lord's to-day, soul and body, to do his will. MRS. E. C. GREEN.

\* See page 97, September number, 1878.



## OBITUARY.

SISTER ELLA E. TRUMAN was born August 6th, 1835, in the town of Otego, N. Y., and died of dropsy, December 23, 1878, at Oneonta, N. Y.

She was converted at nineteen years of age, and united at once with the M. E. Church, of which she remained a member until the Free Methodist class was formed at Oneonta, some three years since, when she called for a letter and joined the Free Methodist Church. She was zealous in the work. Sister Truman's maiden name was Slade. In September, 1862, she was married to Asaph C. Truman, but was soon left a widow; her husband dying the following June in the hospital at Washington.

During the winter of 1868, she experienced the blessing of holiness, and from that time to the close of life, was clear in that state of grace. She was very zealous for the cause of God, and gave largely of her means to help on the work. She was sick nearly a year and suffered much, but endured her sufferings patiently, frequently praising God with a loud voice, while her bodily pain was great. She died in holy triumph. We would not recall her; yet her presence, her pleasant smile, and cheering words, will be greatly missed in the family circle, the community, and especially the church.

The funeral was held in the Presbyterian church in Oneonta. The writer preached from Numbers xxiii, 10, the pastor of the church assisting in the services. May God sustain the afflicted.

C. H. SOUTHWORTH.

MARTHA FODDER, died of consumption, in the city of Syracuse, January 6th, 1879, in the twenty-eighth year of her age.

Sister Fodder had been a member of the Free Methodist Church about one year. She died in great peace. A short time before she died, as she was looking very steadily and intently to one side of the room, one of her

sisters who thought perhaps her mind was wandering, spoke to her, and she said in a low voice, "Do you see them?" Her sister said, "See what?" and in a whisper she replied, "The angels;" and after kissing and embracing her family, her sister who thought perhaps she was tired, folded her arms across her breast, and thus she fell asleep in Jesus, as quietly as an infant in its mother's arms, entering into the rest eternal, in full hope of immortality. L. H. ROBINSON.

## LOVE FEAST.

PETER STEINMAN.—It is my greatest delight to speak of the goodness of my heavenly Father. The blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin. I see more beauty in the glorious life of holiness continually. I am full of praise to God and the Lamb.

H. BELLE WATSON.—During my four years of service in the army of the great King, I have proven that the Lord is not slack concerning his promises, and that he is a very present help in every time of need. In affliction he has been with me and helped me to feel "Thy will be done." Praise his name! He blesses me as I write. This morning has been one of great blessing and spiritual comfort to my soul, because of the promises of our Jesus, and because of a review of his wonderful dealings with me. When the Lord pardoned my sins at Chili Seminary, he showed me so plainly the path of the just, the narrowness of the way, and the command, "Be not conformed to the world," that I cannot forget them nor do I desire any other way than that which was marked out for me at the first. This morning Jesus owns me for his child. I feel the Sun of Righteousness shining upon me. The prayer of my heart is for more of the mind of Christ; for more of the spirit of the meek and lowly Jesus that I may work for him and lay up treasure in heaven.