

The Earnest Christian

—AND—

GOLDEN RULE.

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POPULAR RELIGION.

BY REV. B. T. ROBERTS.

The popular religion of this country is not the Christianity of the New Testament. It has some of its features, but not all. It is lacking in great, fundamental elements. It answers many good purposes—restrains, refines, elevates, and gives to society a high grade of civilization; but it fails in securing the great end which Christianity was designed to accomplish—the salvation of the soul. It dazzles but to blind; it promises but to deceive; it allures by worldly considerations to a heaven of purity, which no worldling can enter; it gives to its votaries who long to eat of forbidden fruit the assurance of impunity from the threatened evils, and leads them on by syren strains from the Paradise of purity into the broad road which ends at last in the blackness of the darkness of an eternal night of despair.

More than a quarter of a century ago, President Finney, a man whose eyes the Lord had opened, said: "Until we can remove from the minds of the people the impression that the current Christianity of the age is true Christianity, we can do but lit-

tle towards promoting a revival of pure religion." Since his day things have gone on from bad to worse in the religious world. The spiritual faculties that were benumbed then, are torpid now; those who needed to be awakened then, now must be raised from the dead. The spiritual power that in his day would make the men of a town suspend their business to attend to the concerns of the soul, now excites but a passing interest.

A cheap currency drives the precious metals out of circulation. When it took two and a half dollars in "greenbacks" to buy a silver dollar, the silver dollar was seldom seen. So when a spurious Christianity can be had on terms so easy that the proud and worldly can readily meet them, the genuine is becoming scarcer and scarcer, until it is in danger of being lost sight of altogether. When Christ came to those who were nominally his own, they did not receive him. So, at the present day, let a genuine Christian be found in a popular church, and he is an object of persecution. If he has money, and will use it freely as the preacher directs, he is perhaps endured: if he is not able or willing to give as they think he should, he is driven out.

We notice a few particulars in which the Christianity of the day falls short of being the Christianity of the New Testament.

1. In the conditions of salvation. God makes these conditions. They are beyond human control. Men cannot alter them. They do not change. It is the province of the preacher to explain them and enforce them as Christ laid them down. To attempt to alter them is presumption. To assume to substitute others is damning rebellion against the authority of God. No matter how much the creeds of churches and the forms of government may differ, the conditions of salvation are the same in all. To raise a crop of wheat, the fallow ground must be broken up, no matter with what kind of a team and a plow it is done. With whatever church a sinner may unite, he must truly repent in the sight of God before he can find forgiveness, and thus take the first step in the way of salvation.

But what popular church in this land insists upon repentance as a condition of obtaining pardon for sins? We do not know one that does it in its practice. Yet the duty and the necessity of repentance is taught in the Holy Scriptures with all plainness. It seems strange that it could be overlooked by any one who reads the Bible.

Repentance was the burden of the preaching of our Lord. "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."—Matt. 4: 17. With great variety of statement and of illustration he continued to preach

in the same strain. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."—Luke 5: 32; Matt. 9: 13. If this was his mission, is it not strange that men who neglect or purposely omit to preach repentance will style themselves his ministers? He taught, as plainly as words can teach, that men must repent in order to escape perdition. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."—Luke 13: 3. What can be more explicit?

After his resurrection he enjoined upon his followers to preach repentance as a condition of forgiveness, the world over. "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."—Luke 24: 45-47. Is it not, then, plain that those who preach remission of sins without repentance do not preach the gospel of Christ? They may be honest (if so, they are deceived); but that does not save the victims whom they delude. The apostles understood their mission. "And they went out, and preached that men should repent."—Mark 6: 12.

On the day of Pentecost, when the Gospel dispensation was fully ushered in, the people were "pricked in their heart" under the preaching of Peter, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and

be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."—Acts 2: 38. The first duty he enjoined was to REPENT. To his next great congregation he cried out, "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."—Acts 3: 19.

Paul received directly from the Lord his commission to preach. "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."—Gal. 1: 11, 12. This was the gospel of forgiveness on condition of repentance. To the elders of the church at Ephesus he said, "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."—Acts 20: 20, 21. Here, as usual, he places repentance in the foreground. He treats it not as something unnecessary, but *profitable* unto them.

After relating to King Agrippa his wonderful conversion, and the directions he received from the Lord Jesus to preach, he says, "Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision; but showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem; and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent

and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance."—Acts 26: 20.

Did not Paul comprehend the gospel? Did he not fully understand and plainly set forth the conditions of salvation? If so, then are the popular preachers of the day generally misleading the people. For they do not insist upon repentance. They pass it by, generally. If they preached it, they would not be so popular. Paul tells us the effect that his preaching had upon the church members of his day. "For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me."—Acts 27: 21. But he did not, on that account, change the style of his preaching.

But if anything can show, more impressively than the divine injunctions and the examples which we have given, the importance of repentance, it is the exhortation to backslidden ministers, by the Lord Jesus after he ascended into heaven. He appeared, in a glorious manner, to the beloved John on the Isle of Patmos, and told him to write to the "angel," or *minister*, of the church at Ephesus; who had left his first love: "Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works." He did not tell him "he needed the blessing of holiness," which he might seek without humbling himself; but he must *repent*, and that on pain of the destruction of himself and his church. "Or else will I come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candle-stick out of his place, except thou repent."—Rev. 2: 5.

So to the minister of the church at Pergamos he said, "Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth."

To some in Thyatira, led away by a false prophetess, he threatened "great tribulation except they repent of their deeds."—Rev. 2: 22.

The minister of the church at Laodicea thought he was in a most excellent condition. He was perfectly satisfied with his religious state, and with his success. He said he "had need of nothing." No one charged him with being beside himself because of his enthusiastic fervor in the cause of Christ. He had become lukewarm and respectable. To him the Lord said, "Be zealous, therefore, and repent."—Rev. 3: 19. There was no time to be lost.

We see, then, the importance of repentance. Without it there can be no salvation. A Christian character that is not built upon it, though the greatest pains may have been taken in its formation, and years may have been employed in its construction, will not stand before the storms of the last day. It will certainly fall; and the higher it is, the greater will be its fall. Paul places "repentance from dead works" as the bottom tier of stones in the foundation of the edifice which every Christian builds for himself to all eternity. Heb. 6: 1.

We see, then, that the Christian religion teaches that it is the first duty of the sinner, of the backslider, of the lukewarm professor or preacher, to repent. Nothing else can take the place of repentance. Joining

the church without repentance only renders it more difficult, and increases the probability of final damnation.

Men are often willing to be baptized, to pay their money, or do any thing that is respectable, rather than humble themselves by repentance. But it is all of no avail. We come to the footstool of sovereign mercy only by genuine self-abasement.

In our next we shall show the nature of true repentance.

MANY, who profess to be working for Christ, have not learned to pray. They have a vague and incorrect idea of what prayer is. While in form addressing the throne of grace, in reality they are addressing the people. Said one of the daily papers of a prayer offered at the dedication of some public works "It was the most eloquent prayer ever made to the citizens of Boston." In public prayer be the mouth-piece to God for the needy and burdened. If you would bring the people to God, you must bring God to the people. If you fail here you fail utterly of doing any permanent good. The potter in making a vessel, wets it thoroughly, and every now and then dips his fashioning hand in water. You can break dry clay, but you can not mould it. You must pray for rain until the cloud appears and the shower falls. He who prays in sincerity will have the help of the Spirit. "Likewise the Spirit also helps our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."—Romans 8: 26.

SOMETIMES when souls are in the advanced ranks of service the enemies of Christ think the blackest thoughts against them.

VICTORY THROUGH FAITH.

BY MRS. W. EDWARDS.

"My soul shall make her boast in the Lord, the humble shall hear thereof and be glad."

"Oh magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt his name together."

"I sought the Lord and he heard me and delivered me from all my fears."

"I was brought low and he helped me."

Which by his help I will attempt to detail.

For many years my life was rendered burdensome by the enervating and threatening progress of chronic bronchitis and general nervous debility, by reason of which my presence with my family was the veriest apology for the pressing duties of wife and mother. But what proved worse than this, after tracing year after year the melancholy history of these affections, I sustained a most virulent attack of blood poisoning while ministering to a dear Christian sister whose last months were stages of decomposing rather than dying. My interest in her concealed for a time the effect upon my own weak condition only to discover itself after her death in a terrible aggravation of my general symptoms.

I went from the chamber of death to my own room and was taken suddenly ill with palpitation of the heart and lung trouble, culminating in the second attack of apoplexy, necessitating prompt treatment and powerful remedies, resulting in a discharging sore in the chest which was as offensive as a decaying corpse. This naturally reduced the intensity of the attack but the hope or rather hopelessness of its entire eradication advised a change of air as indispensable.

In order to do this I took a quiet tour by the Lakes and in the West-

ern States. I returned much improved but the poison was lurking there, spreading its subtle germs which soon exhibited itself by a complication of symptoms combining inflammation of the lungs—paralysis of the heart attended with paroxysms of suffering it were useless to attempt to describe—relapse after relapse marked the debilitating process until utter prostration and incapacity were regarded as chronic.

At this time we became informed of Miss Judd's connection with the ministry of healing for which (by a discipline we should shrink from having repeated) we had been brought although but feebly to appreciate yet most glad to entertain.

I wrote to her receiving her accustomed prompt and encouraging reply, appointing a time for united prayer in my behalf. We grew very hopeful and judged such grace as most worthy and befitting our Redeemer Lord. We felt that we were ripening for initiation into this most desirable, and as we now believe, *original and normal sphere of Christian sympathy.*

We also felt that we had dear friends who, at its announcement would hail it as good news from a far country. We wrote at once to good Sister Smith in Tonawanda, where our daughter Jessie was staying; they laid hold of the hope with avidity.

But, Oh, the fiery prelude to that hour of prayer, every touch of the rod seemed to have a scorpion's bite—neuralgia of the heart, the fever raging—a tongue was given to the adversary, urging with maddening rage the special necessity of the palliatives. In the teeth of this unexampled sophistry I was enabled to resist all persuasives as deceptive supports and to lay exclaiming, "If thou fail, Lord, let all fail!" The repose was calm. The fever left me and I slept and breathed as comfortably as a child. I had expe-

rienced no such rest for several months.

The agreement in asking, God wonderfully acknowledged. The next mail brought me their happy congratulations, signally realized by the most perfect acquaintance with my deliverance—the assurance of faith in the Great Physician. They are as follows from my friend and daughter:

“We asked in the name of Jesus Christ—Oh the fire of the Holy Ghost, how it fell on us as we knelt together—God came and the power of the Lord was present to heal in your behalf; we had the promise; it was done according to our faith; we can almost see you rejoicing in your restoration. Write us all the particulars of your healing.”

Your Sister in the faith of Jesus,
E. C. SMITH.

Eureka! What have I found. Surely he hath borne our sicknesses and carried our sorrows! O what an inheritance is this of ours. I could not say I saw but I felt that “these things” though not inseparable from new birth were essentially of the Kingdom of Heaven and like all its investments only to be taken by force.

Their history is the analogue of the soul having its peculiar trials and temptations in their first participations in general, attended with missteps and mistakes; to these I was by no means an exception.

I had but a few friends as I thought sufficiently in my confidence to justify a public testimony; hence a new trial awaited me.

My deliverance came to me in March and in May my faith was again to be tried while staying with a friend in the country. I took a severe cold. My husband was requested to fetch me home; the ride greatly aggravating the attack. I had paralysis of the lungs with those frightful intermittent suspensions of

the heart's action. But now contrary to all former experience—like the grief of a penitent mind—sickness had no longer a necessary but only a relative existence.

I realized that it was all taken notice of by my Heavenly Father and with full satisfaction I felt I was in God's hands. I, who had been accustomed to insist upon professional reference at every change as the one thing indispensable—I had no inclination to call the doctor, it seemed the most irrelevant feature in my case; and perhaps the consequent resignation was acknowledged by my Heavenly Father by frequently as now giving me a most refreshing respite as from his consoling presence.

But I needed more and severer discipline. In a few days I sustained a further relapse attended with suffering I never before experienced.

Wednesday, June 1st, my case became alarming. To my dear ones death seemed near and inevitable.

As hope was flickering my husband telegraphed for my absent daughter. But through it all I had an inward support which consciously viewed as out of myself the whole thing as just a struggle between the adversary and the Saviour of souls and confidently believed in the ultimate triumph of the Sinner's Friend.

My daughter arrived by the midnight train, her face strangely beaming with hope, her faith strong in the Great Physician, met me with the assurance that she had left her friend praying and fasting on my account. I saw no change next day and Mr. E. needing rest, left me in charge of my daughter. Towards four o'clock in the morning I felt one of the dreaded paroxysms coming over me.

My terror of expression caused my child to exclaim, “Look up, ma! God has promised!” In an agony

of conflict I said "yes, I will believe God and not my feelings." O with what force did the gentle reproof to the lagging faith of the first followers of our Lord come home to me, "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name." I put his name over the seat of suffering and pleaded "Dear Lord if this suffering is for thy glory, in Christ's name let it continue, but if it be thy will let it pass." I suddenly realized a heavenly calm with a blessed realization of His presence. I had not been able even to sit up for a long time, but most irresistably I felt the command, "Arise and walk." I hesitated but the impression was the more urgent: Arise, obey, or you must die." And if I did not thus exemplify my faith I was conscious this was the inevitable alternative.

I bid Jessie call her father. He came in haste and tremblingly. I said, "kneel down and thank God, the work is done." Father and daughter with myself praised God together. I then dressed and in Jesus' name I walked into the breakfast room and ate a good meal which I had been so long denied.

The Spirit impressing this luminous token; "I shall not die but live and declare the work of the Lord."

The same Spirit extorted from my husband "The right hand of the Lord is exalted. The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly."

Yet it must seem strange to relate, though in the receipt of such signal benefits, the doctrine in its definite requirements had but a hazy existence and in its exemplary movements "I saw men as trees walking" The spiritual correspondence of which is caused by our prejudice and ignorance finding its counterpart in the propensities and weakness of our physical constitution.

Feeling I was not getting permanently stronger this fleshly determination to resort to secondary helps still conceived it desirable that I should

try a trip east to Buffalo, having the double advantage of a change and an opportunity for personal conference with Miss Judd. Her advanced experience at once recognized my trouble and timidity in stepping out firmly and publishing unreservedly what great things the Lord had done for me.

I still urged that I was not prepared for such responsibility.

I wrote the leading facts of my case, the proof sheets were ready, but I still insisted there was good reason for deferring it until I got stronger; and I would obey by and by when I thought I could better vindicate the merits of the Great Physician.

All of which being equally true of soul and body, I have fully discovered has a purely human basis, a false humility utterly at variance with the nature and purposes of faith.

It is in this relation God graciously teaches the wisdom of his institutions that "Whom He loveth He correcteth even as a father the son whom he receiveth." Hence here, to my intense mortification in Miss Judd's own house—this Bethesda of his signal visitations, He suffered all my sickness (for a season) to return. Taking a slight cold it spread with amazing rapidity over the entire surface of the lungs attended with erysipelas in my eyes. It was in spite of every impulse and propensity which were awakened into a rage for the old relief that I was restrained from going back to Egypt for its specific and emollients. But through the unwearied exhortations and prayers of Miss Judd and her worthy mother, I obtained help of GOD in the strength of which I returned to my home in weakness and fear.

This was in September, and the approaching winter seemed to menace the shattered barque with the most unfriendly forbodings. I be-

came so susceptible to the slightest change that the slightest variation in the temperature of my room inspired the most terrible apprehensions. Right through the winter I sustained constantly recurring attacks of neuralgia and for the third time the terrible symptoms of apoplexy of the lungs, and although there were occasions of absolute distraction I was blest with the abiding persuasion that the finger of God was in it all. I knew that the Physician was at the door but through weakness or blindness I could not open it.

SEVENTH OF ROMANS.

BY R. GILBERT.

Is the experience of Rom. 7:7-25 a penitential or a justified state?

Doubtless the momentous concerns of eternity often hinge upon the correct solution of this vital question. We cannot avoid the firm belief that those who neither expect nor seek a higher state of Christian experience than the moral photograph of Rom. 7:7-25 are in imminent danger of missing heaven.

In all churches, thousands stop short in the preliminary work of salvation, accepting conviction of sin as the consummation of regeneration. They substitute Saul, "carnal and sold under sin," for Paul, "made free from sin." They admit light enough to flounder in the bog of carnality, imagining it to be the serene mountain top of justification.

From the era of Augustine to the present time, the Christian world has held divergent views in regard to the sense of Rom. 7:25. Professor Stuart, a learned Calvinistic commentator, bears testimony that all Arminian churches, and a part of the Calvinistic churches, holds that Paul personates a *sinner under conviction*. A majority of Calvinistic divines,

however, teach that Paul delineates the full experience of a *regenerate Christian*. We deem it a logical certainty, that Paul does not describe the experience of a regenerate Christian; because it would contradict the freedom and purity of justification, as elsewhere given.

Let us place in juxtaposition the two pictures—that of a sinner and that of a saint—and thus exhibit the wide contrariety. Carefully examine the weights of the Scripture scales:

The sinner under penitential conviction.

"I am carnal, sold under sin." "How to perform that which I would, I find not." "The evil which I would not, that I do." "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

The saint in a regenerate state.

"For sin shall not have dominion over you." "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

Unless the reader has a self-imposed, Calvinistic, or Antinomian creed to maintain, he can scarcely fail to see in the left-hand column a moral photograph of abject slavery to sin; while the right-hand column is a heavenly picture of a Christian emancipated from the shackles of sin. It is a stultification of common sense to assume that a man can be "sold under sin," and at the same time be "free from the law of sin and death." And yet thousands, even at the present time, regard Rom. 7:7-25 as a heaven-inspired delineation of a justified state! As in the natural world a stream rises no higher than its fountain, so in the moral world self-deceived thousands advance no higher than their *beau idéal*—a Christian "sold under sin."

The immaculate, self-existent holiness of the Godhead; the immortal destiny of blood-redeemed humanity, in its ultimate association with God, angels and the purified spirits of heaven; the divine mission of Christ to "save his people from their

sins;”—all these demand an empyrean height of Christian experience, to which Rom. 7: 7-25 is the mere step-stone or vestibule that leads the heaven-inspired seeker into the sublime temple of Christianity.

The grand mission of divine revelation, from Genesis to the last Apocalyptic “amen,” is the elimination of sin from humanity. Holiness was concreated in man by the impartation of the “image of God.” It is shadowed forth in the sacrificial system; taught in fiery judgments; thundered in the commandments of Sinai; chanted in the Psalms; promised in the gospels; and imperiously demanded by the tragic scenes of Gethsemane and Calvary.

It is urged by some that Rom. 7: 7-25 expresses a degree of spiritual life too high to be predicated of sinners under conviction. But Isaiah, speaking of Jewish sinners, says: “Yet they seek me daily, and delight in my ways.” And Jesus said that the wicked Jews “rejoiced in the light” given by John. All genuine conviction imparts to the sinner an ardent desire to love and obey God.

It is objected that, as sinners are “dead in trespasses and in sin,” they are incapable of manifesting the acts, as described by Paul in this chapter. But this objection ignores the fact that sinners have enough gracious ability to repent and obey. Paul says: “Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead.” A command implies power to obey.

Because in Rom. 7: 7-25 Paul uses the singular number, and speaks in the first person, it is thought that he is relating a present Christian experience. We have seen that this view is self contradictory. The context shows that Paul desires to illustrate the utter futility of deliverance from sin through a mere law scheme, that ignores the atonement of Christ. It is as though Paul had said: “Let me illustrate the necessity of the gospel by relating my penitential experience

at Damascus; or by personating a sinner seeking deliverance under the moral law.”

Many insist that the inevitability of sin in the regenerate is the necessary consequence of the union of soul and body. This is ancient heathen philosophy. The necessary retention of sin in the soul while in the body is pagan philosophy re-baptized—a dogma worthy of its dark origin. If sin inheres in the body because it is material, may it not also be found in the resurrection body? Wesley, with his usual logical acuteness, says: “No body or matter can be sinful. Spirits alone are capable of sin.”

Though Professor Stuart was a Calvinist, he took an anti-Calvinistic view. After an elaborate investigation, he says: “The most ancient fathers of the church, without a dissenting voice—so far as we have any means of ascertaining their views—were united in their belief that an unregenerate, unsanctified person is described in Rom. 7: 7-25.” Stuart also says that Augustine, who flourished in the fourth and fifth centuries, was the first of the fathers to assume that this chapter is an illustration of a regenerate state. This he did in his heated controversy with Pelagius. Why did this dogma originate with Augustine? Doubtless because he was the first of the Greek and Latin fathers who promulgated dogmas that subsequently were denominated Calvinism.

Truth compels us to testify that many in Arminian churches who are correct in theory are, nevertheless, in imminent danger of failure to reach the spiritual Canaan; because they practically linger in the wilderness of conviction, or sigh for the flesh-pots of Egypt.

I LEARNED that he who will be a hero will barely be a man; that he who will be nothing but a doer of his work is sure of his manhood.

DIFFERENT PATHS.

BY MRS. EMELINE SMITH.

"For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood."
—Isaiah, 9 : 5.

The wonderful "dreamer" saw, going on pilgrimage, not alone Great-Heart, but Feeble-Mind and Ready-to-Halt.

It needed, for the recognition of these weaker disciples, a strong nature disciplined by grace; that so the conception and portrayal of these very dissimilar characters might stand out upon the page for our encouragement. The hearts of God's chosen ones, from his day down to our own, have acknowledged the truth of the portraiture of the almost inspired limner.

In the Church militant we find to-day this same diversity of character, of "gifts and callings" alike enrolled under the "Captain of our Salvation."

To some of these He appoints a path so plain, a life so simple and uneventful, that we are reminded that one has sung of those who
"O'er quiet seas, toward heaven, calmly sail."

But for other souls there is the din and noise of battle, the "tumult and the strife," as some forlorn hope set to hold against desperate odds, a port of danger; every nerve set, and muscle tense; their all of strength and endurance is called into exercise. They wrestle not simply with flesh and blood, but wage a deadlier fight; and as the tide of battle rolls over and around them, they catch, it may be, the joyous notes of "brethren beloved" who have gained the kingdom, and yet have not known such agony, and fightings, and fears.

Well for these, while they feel that victory is long delayed, if they do not stop to question, Why not for them, the smoother way appointed to their fellows? They can but wonder at

"the way they take" and inquire in bitterness of soul, why should life hold in store for them such loss of all things?

But, dear heart, is it true that the pleasanter path is so greatly to be desired for thee? Wouldst thou exchange for any earthly good, the blessed discipline gained in this bitter strife?

What if the King sees in thee a steadfastness of purpose, a tenacity of moral fibre, a power of patient endurance and unflinching courage, that, when supplemented by His own almighty grace, will make thee steadfast, faithful, true against fearful odds?

What if hell's hosts encamp against thee, and all thy puny strength is called into deadliest conflict? Hearst thou not His word, "Lo, I am with thee," and wouldst thou choose for thyself an easier way? Oh! be thankful if He count you worthy. Count it high honor if He puts you at the post of danger. "Behold, we count them happy that endure!"

And then there is a joy scarcely less sweet than to be thus called and chosen of God to endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ.

O blessed fellowship of grief, and pain, and loss! is aught beside on earth so sweet?

No need of words to bring into full appreciation and accord the souls who share the same experience. Time and distance cannot sever these uncrowned, unanointed kings and priests. Eyes used to tears, and hearts that have quivered with anguish have a new power to comprehend the compassion of the Infinite One, and thenceforth grow strangely tender toward all who suffer.

Alike to them in all ages, in the midnight of their toil, "wind and wave contrary," comes the music of His voice, "It is I, be not afraid!" and from the sweetness of His gracious presence they, too, catch a little of

His infinite patience, with burdened, grieving hearts.

O blessed, blessed Burden Bearer! Thrice blessed they above their fellows whom thou accountest worthy thus to watch, and toil, and strive! What though for them the victory may be long delayed! the night of tears may stretch on, and on, with no promise of glad morning! but courage! the faithful word stands fast: "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

But though through all the life journey He whom thou lovest sees it needful to appoint thee pain, wouldst thou exchange all the sweet lessons of His faithfulness gained in this life of conflict, for a path less rugged, if so the power to comprehend the joy of those who steadfastly endure were lost to thee?

"O thou so weary of thy self-denials,
And so impatient of thy little cross,
Is it so hard to bear thy daily trials,
To count all earthly things a gainful loss?"

What if thou always suffer tribulation?
What if thy Christian warfare never cease?
The gaining of the quiet habitations
Shall gather thee to everlasting peace."

SINGING.

BY GUSTA TULLIS

I often wonder what St. Paul means when he says: "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." I suppose he meant that he would sing his experience. Then I wonder, again, what kind of tunes they used in his day. From the direction he gives, they must have been edifying: "singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;" and "singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." He does not talk about what kind of measure or notes are to be used. He might have understood all about these things, but he mentioned only the most important requirements.

Singing is one of the most delightful exercises connected with worship. But I have been perplexed concerning much that is called song-worship among our holiness people. The deep, solid, inspired hymns, written by holy men and women, are seldom, if ever, used; but in their stead shallow, light ditties which sound pleasant to the ear the first few times they are sung, but soon lose their attractiveness.

Some one has said, "If you would become acquainted with a people, find out the songs they sing." Brethren and sisters, we like to quote John Wesley, Bramwell and others as good authority for doctrine and experience; let us sing the songs they and their cotemporaries composed. In order to do this in the Spirit, we will need to have a deep experience; but since Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, he can stamp his image as clearly on his people to-day as he did two hundred years ago.

But let us not misuse these spiritual songs by singing them to these late operatic tunes. There is so much melody in the old-fashioned tunes that it seems easy to get blessed while singing them.

I have now relieved my soul of a burden that it has carried for some months. May the Spirit of the Lord apply this truth to all our hearts, for Jesus' sake.

CHRIST gives peace by healing the diseases of the soul. Instead of the wretched device of attempting to satisfy restless and unholy cravings, he expels them and brings in the new sources of joy. The world's false peace begins in delusion, goes on in sin and ends in perdition. Christ's peace begins in pardoning grace, goes on in quiet trust and ends in glory.—*T. L. Cuyler.*

REAL faith trusts God with consequences.

LED BY THE SPIRIT.

BY H. FRANK HILL.

Wonderful thought! that we may be led by the Spirit; and yet the Bible plainly tells us that as many as are the sons of God are led by His Spirit. It would not seem as if this wonderful Being would condescend to come and walk by our side and guide us in all our affairs, and in everything that we do; but it is even so if we are the children of God. It is something of a privilege to be a child of God, and it is to be feared that Christians generally come far short of estimating their privileges in the Lord, and are prevented from receiving much good that they might have, by their want of faith. We never receive anything from God, spiritually, except by faith. God would lead everyone of us in a wonderful manner by the Holy Ghost, but unbelief says, No.

We must never let a sense of our unworthiness and unfitness prevent us from believing in God's graciousness and beneficence. God is never better pleased with us than when we believe in these attributes of his, and venture on them. We should, therefore, expect him to guide even us.

It is a blessed thought that God uses men just as they are, to carry out his purposes. We need not vamp ourselves up, or improve and polish ourselves, before giving our lives to the direction of the Holy Ghost, but give ourselves to him just as we are, and expect him to lead us. If we are wholly consecrated to him, he will see about the polishing and fitting, and he will lead us. We may be weak, we may be foolish, we may be contemptible by nature, but if we are obedient and love him, we are the very ones he wants to use. Gideon felt himself the meanest of all his father's house, but he was the one God chose.

It is one of the marvels of our re-

ligion that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." God often chooses as his choicest instruments those that are despised the most. If God can use the things that are not, to bring to nought the things that are, surely there is work for the very lowliest. And it is his pleasure to stoop down and pick up the very lowliest who will come to him.

God leads some whom we would say were too perverse to be led. We could not get along with them. We would think them unfit to be used for God's glory; yet we know that he does use them, and with a power, too. There are infirmities of will, as well as infirmities of mind and body. Even poor Jonah was willing in the day of God's power. How gently God reasoned with the perverse prophet, after he had performed the work God gave him to do. It was his infirmity to be perverse and contrary, but God had work for even him.

How sweet it is to venture out with the Holy Ghost and expect Him to lead us and guide us! Will He not guide us aright? Most assuredly he will if we stagger not through unbelief. He will lead us in singular ways, and see us through in them, but we need strong faith. We shall be astonished at ourselves if we do not look out. If, after being led by the Spirit, because the devil stirs up a commotion about us, we begin to doubt God and deny the leadings of the Spirit, we shall certainly bring darkness upon our souls. When God leads us in a given direction, and we get light and help in it, he wants us to stand by it and not back down. He that

wavereth is like the waves of the sea, and shall receive nothing of the Lord. If God leads us, it is for a purpose and he wants us to be faithful, though we march through storm and trial.

"God works in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

None can trace His counsels infinite and dark, and those that are led by the Holy Spirit, go like the wind, whithersoever God listeth. The world may despise them, church-members may stand aloof from them, but if they are true to the Spirit, God will be glorified in them, and they will be useful. "I am as a wonder unto many," saith the psalmist, "but thou art my strong refuge." It is not the reapers alone that will be accredited with the salvation of souls, but also those lowly, faithful ones, that were led by the Spirit. It may have been through reproach and trial, through whose leavening influence the work was prepared for the reapers. Everyone that is led by the Spirit is instrumental in the salvation of souls.

JOSEPH COOK, in talking of students who did not have time to go to prayer-meeting, said that when he was in college he always took time for such things. "When a student becomes unspiritual," said he, "his mind is beclouded; but when he is lifted into a high spiritual atmosphere by the influence of an hour or two of prayer he can swoop down upon his studies like an eagle on his prey." Very few students would deny that "prayer is the highest occupation of the human soul," and yet it is a common thing to see some professedly Christian students deliberately neglect the prayer-meetings where it seems to conflict with social or intellectual pursuits.

THEY that have God for their God have angels for their guard.

PERSECUTION.

BY REV. J. OLNEY.

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. 3:12.

The above Scripture is true: then why does a very large number of professed Christians, and even of preachers, escape persecution? They are not persecuted by the world, for they are in close fellowship with an ungodly world. They conform to its spirit and practice. They love fun and frolic. And Christ says that the world will love its own. To his disciples he said, "Because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Again he says, "If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also." Paul had his full share of persecution; but the crown of righteousness that he saw by faith paid for all his suffering.

By considering what it is to "live godly in Christ Jesus," we may readily see why so few do suffer persecution, and why so many who profess religion do not. Then what is it to live godly in Christ Jesus? This supposes that we are made the righteousness of God in Christ; that we are born again and made one with Christ by a living faith and a vital union, even as Christ and the Father are one. Unless we are thus converted and transformed by the renewing of our minds, we cannot properly be said to be "in Christ," much less to be godly in Christ Jesus. They that are in Christ are new creatures. Old things are passed away, and all things have become new, in their hearts and in their lives. Their lives are hid with Christ in God, their souls feed daily on the invisible realities of another world.

To live godly in Christ Jesus is to make the divine will, and not our own, the sole principle of all our thoughts, words and actions; so that whether we eat or drink, or whatso-

ever we do, we do all for the glory of God. They are led by the Spirit, as the child is led by his father. They follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. They hear and obey his voice. Their hope is full of immortality. Their citizenship is in heaven. Being born of God, they daily walk with God; they are pure in heart; they are holy in all manner of conversation and godliness. This is to live godly in Christ Jesus.

So it is we easily see why so few suffer persecution, and so many that profess religion, and love the world, and follow its practices, are not persecuted. How many in all the churches are depending on their correct lives, on their morality, their profession of religion, their strict attention to all outward duties—preachers preaching great sermons, paying their money to run their church-machinery, in zeal overmuch for outward things, and yet are destitute of godliness. "One thing thou lackest," said Christ. Oh! how I see the danger among us, as a people, of substituting our straight and correct principles of the Bible doctrines, our outside plainness, and pointed preaching against all the popular sins of the day, for the vital union with Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost. We may kill ourselves in preaching straight Bible truths, all correct in themselves, and of vast importance to be heralded all over this ungodly world; but if these truths are not backed up by the Holy Ghost, they cannot accomplish the design of the gospel.

Paul says "the letter kills, but the Spirit giveth life." May the great Head of the Church help us to keep ourselves in the love of God, praying in the Holy Ghost, having this anointing on us all the while, so that when we proclaim these awful truths the Spirit will burn them on all hearts, and bring them to salvation. Then if in the Spirit we are in the apostolic line, as sure as night fol-

lows day, so sure will that black angel persecution follow while we are living godly in Christ Jesus.

MY EXPERIENCE

BY D. M. SMASHEV.

I was born in Ralls county, Saver-ton township, Missouri, December 25th, 1855. I was the youngest of four boys, was brought up by pious parents, and had a good religious training. But, like many other heedless boys, I did not improve my opportunities. "It is not what we eat that strengthens the body, but what we digest."

From my earliest recollections I was religiously inclined. When but a small boy, I had thoughts of preaching when I became a man. But, being cast among evil associates, I soon lost all good desires. My Sundays, instead of being spent at Sabbath school, were spent in riotousness. My evenings, instead of being spent at home, were sometimes spent in the ball-room. And thus I plunged into the vortex of sin with the ungodly, reveling crowd, and grew from bad to worse.

In this sin-cursed condition, while attending a Methodist protracted meeting, God talked to me about eternity, and the Spirit pleaded with me to repent of my sins and prepare to meet my God. I did, and was gloriously converted. It was not long until I heard a voice within, saying, "Go, preach my gospel. I immediately conferred with flesh and blood, and said, "I cannot preach;" consequently, I backslid. I continued in this condition for some time, but all the time my heart was like a troubled sea, casting up mire and clay. "The pains of hell gat hold of me."

About this time I attended a holiness convention. I went for the purpose of getting saved, and I was clearly saved. The same demand

was made of me—Preach! I said, "Yes, I will." At that time I felt like Peter when he said to the Saviour, "Though all men forsake thee, yet will not I." But when the test came, I began to make excuses—that I was slow of speech, etc. I believe that I backslid several different times because I would not obey my convictions on this one point of preaching. Oh! precious soul, obey your convictions.

The last time I backslid, I was an exhorter in the M. E. Church. I speak this to my shame, but hope you will take warning. I gradually lost in my experience until I reached the bottom. I told no one of it, but continued to grow worse, and did things at that time that I would not have been guilty of when an outbroken sinner. It seemed as though the devil had a special hatred toward me, and was determined to destroy my life's mission and drag my soul to hell in spite of all I could do.

All this time, no one knew any thing of my sinful heart. I kept it all a secret; but the Searcher of all hearts found me at the point of death. I promised God that if he would spare my life and restore unto me the joys of his salvation, I would obey my call to preach. The first thing I did was to call on God for mercy, on Jesus to help me. I continued to call on God, but found no relief.

I had heard something of the Free Methodist people, and I wanted to be with them. So I got a letter from the M. E. Church, and came among the Free Methodists. At the very first prayer I ever heard from a real Free Methodist preacher, I felt it go all through me, "You are not right with God." I was troubled, and told Brother B. all about my backsliding—confessed to God and to man; but did not get through as easily as I anticipated. I continued to hold on to God, saying from the depths of my soul, "I will not let thee go, ex-

cept thou bless me." He said, "What is thy name? It seems hard to tell thy name, but it must come." I said, "My name is 'Deceiver';" and the Lord blessed me there.

"Lord, obediently I'll go—gladly follow thee below." "Obedience is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." "I will," to God, brings salvation through the blood of the Lamb.

My soul plants her feet on the Rock of Ages—I am rooted and grounded in Christ, settled and fixed to do the will of God. At times I have some hard conflicts with the old arch-fiend of hell; but God gives me the victory, through the blood of the everlasting covenant. I have been walking in the light almost three years. I am not ashamed of my name or my people. I love this blood-washed way. I am blowing the gospel trumpet, for Jesus' sake.

CARVOSSO was a plain, English farmer. The highest position he filled in the church was that of a class-leader. He was converted through the prayers of his sister, who having found the Saviour when away at service, walked twelve miles to her mother's home to warn her family to flee from the wrath to come. Her brother was clearly converted and soon after clearly sanctified. In after life he retired from business and gave himself wholly to the work of saving souls, mainly by personal efforts. The success he met seems almost incredible in these days, when so much dependence is placed on organized and public efforts. Everywhere he went, souls were brought to Christ through his instrumentality.

As the rushing torrent leaves behind it diamonds and rubies, so do surging tides of judgment leave in their track graces more precious than costly stones.

THE SABBATH DAY.

BY HANNAH PELTON.

The fourth commandment reads thus: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord, thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it."

There is perhaps no one of the ten commandments that is so thoughtlessly observed by many nominally known as Christians as this, the fourth. We believe God is jealous over the strict and religious keeping of every one of his commandments. This is brought before us in the early morning of the ages. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them; and on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it." It was set apart expressly for himself, because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. Here was the divine institution of the Sabbath established. God rested; we would not associate the thought of weariness with the word *rest*; but a cessation of work. The Patriarchs kept "the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord." We find directions for the keeping of the Sabbath all through the Word. Not only is the head of the family to observe strictly the day in a cessation of business or work, but every member of the household, even to the stranger who may be with them for a short time only, or the animals he has the ownership of.

"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord." Also, "Thus saith the Lord: Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem. Neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, neither do any work, but hallow ye the Sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers."—Jer. 17: 22, 23. Some may be ready to say that these commandments were for those who lived under the law, and are not for the gospel dispensation. The divine principle of holiness has not in the least changed, and to live out this principle, the Christian will be careful to observe this day just as God tells us to.

1. All our work is to be done in the six days. We are to see that all animals are properly cared for, but every thing for our comfort and for theirs is to be done as far as possible previous to the Sabbath.

2. We are not to do our pleasure on the Sabbath day. Some take pleasure in strolling around. They view the beautiful fields of waving grain, the laden fruit trees, that luxuriant garden, calculating perhaps the possible profit they may realize; or they take pleasure in showing friends the same, and congratulations are expressed. All this is wrong, and God is displeased. Such do not keep holy the Sabbath: they do their own pleasure.

3. Not doing thine own ways—Some have a way of making calls, or visits, it may be. They are so busy through the week that any excuse will answer. If calls are made to do good, and are strictly religious, they may not be objectionable unless it may be the example, which some

might follow who are worldly. Generally those who indulge in Sunday calls because they find it quite convenient, converse on whatever may come into the mind; worldly matters are talked about with great freedom. This is sinful in the extreme. Such will receive their reward.

A godly woman with her husband were in a community extremely irreligious. The husband was very sick, and many naturally came on the Sabbath to see the afflicted one. Says the wife, "We do not tell them not to come, as we embrace the opportunity to talk with them on the subject of religion." To lead conversation that it may be in harmony with keeping the Sabbath day holy, requires wisdom and grace. This lady was asked (by one, a professor of religion) "How does your garden yield this summer?" She said to us: "Oh! how I did shrink from answering the question." Yes, holiness cannot bear the intrusion of worldly thoughts on the day God has for His own. Some have a dinner that is far from the simplicity of the week day. Some always want warm biscuit for dinner on Sunday afternoon, so the mother, a professor of religion, adjusts her apron and heats the oven.

4. Nor speaking thine own words—words which we naturally use with regard to business; our plans for work, in-door and out door; suggestions on clothing, household arrangements, etc. We once heard a young man say, "It is a good place to learn the price of wheat at the—church." Of course, he had no confidence in their religion.

5. Bear no burden on the Sabbath day. Care and thoughtfulness in this direction should be observed. What is often considered necessary will be found to be quite unnecessary. But how true it is that many consult their own convenience. We have known professors of religion to load up provisions sufficient to last sever-

al persons a week, and on Sabbath afternoon drive several miles to where the children were attending school. Thus they were spared the early rising on Monday morning. Such burden-bearers do not have the favor of the Lord. They are guilty before him. The judgment day is hastening on. Oh! what will they do in that day?

"He that is born of God doth not commit sin." With such, the Sabbath day is a delight. They call it the holy of the Lord. They love to hallow the Sabbath, as God has commanded. The restrictions are not grievous, but a delight. God honors such. He says, "Him that honors me, I will honor."

At the close of the last year a young Japanese Christian was imprisoned at Tokio, for having too freely expressed his liberal opinions. In the prison he explained the Gospel, especially to one man, who became a Christian and was most eager for further instruction. Other prisoners gradually gathered round him until the young Hara had a congregation of 300, to whom he preached salvation through Jesus Christ. On being liberated, Hara brought to the knowledge of the authorities the miserable condition of the prisoners, which ended by his being appointed Governor of a new prison with full liberty to teach and practise the principles of Christianity.—*Le Chretien Belge*.

HE who would prevail with men must first prevail with God. Jacob, after wrestling all night in prayer, had a most friendly meeting with his more powerful brother, whom he had grievously wronged, and whom he therefore justly feared. If we would do effective work for Christ, we must be able to pray in the Spirit, until Divine grace melts obdurate hearts.

BENEVOLENCE AND ITS REWARD.

BY R. GILBERT.

"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord: and that which he hath given will He pay him again."—Prov. 19: 17.

Dr. Young translates: "Whoso is lending to the Lord is favoring the poor; and his deed He payeth him again."

The Bible is a revelation of God's thoughts through man's style of speech. When we consider any portion of the Scriptures, two important things demand close attention: first, the meaning; second, the instruction intended for us, and our moral obligation involved.

The Scripture cited above plainly reveals two important ideas: first, the obligation of benevolence; second, its reward. Dr. Hutcheson holds that the virtue of an action is lost, if it is done with a view to a reward. But this is an absurd dogma, inconsistent with the philosophy of morals and also with divine teaching. Paul says that when Moses spurned the crown of Egypt, preferring to share affliction with the people of God, he had "respect to the recompense of reward"—the approbation of Heaven here on earth, and the ultimate glorification of eternity hereafter. Even Jesus "endured the cross" for the "joy that was set before him"—the joy of redeeming the world.

Dr. Webster defines pity: "Sympathy with the grief or misery of another." Kames says: "Pity is always painful, yet always agreeable."

The Mosaic dispensation made ample provision for the poor. Cheap offerings were acceptable from them. The gleanings of the fields, olive-trees and vines were to be given to them. Every seventh year the spontaneous growth of the ground was free to all. The year of jubilee restored to the poor their forfeited inheritances. The prophets sternly

denounced cruelty to the poor. The superior light of the gospel only heightens pity to the poor. Christ, the unerring Judge, confers heaven upon those who, in the persons of his followers, visit and relieve him when sick, hungry, thirsty or in prison.

After the Spirit baptism of Pentecost, the early Christians for a while "had all things common"—no rich, no poor. The annals of the church show that pity for the poor ebbed and flowed, as vital piety rose and fell. When Bridaine, the pious Catholic orator, preached before the pompous, dissolute King of France and his courtiers, he told them, "The poor are the best friends of my God." Pity for the poor was a prominent trait, a striking characteristic, in the lives of Luther, Calvin, Knox, Wesley, Whitfield—indeed all the Christian army militant, the confessors, martyrs and humble saints generally of the church in all nations and in all ages.

A meditative, careful consideration of Prov. 19: 17 elicits the following thoughts:

1. Benevolence is a Christian duty, because made imperatively so by God himself.

2. Benevolence assimilates us to the Divine Nature. It is an indispensable feature of the image of God, lost in Eden, but restored in Gethsemane.

3. Benevolence must be a divine stream from the river of life. It must flow from a pure motive to please God and to benefit man. Money or favors bestowed merely to make us popular are counterfeit coin, uncurrent in heaven.

4. If one really has not the means to aid the poor, God will accept an ardent desire to help them, and our prayers for them. Your heart must not be divested of pity because your purse is empty of money. When Jesus put the widow's "mite" in the balances of heaven, it outweighed

the splendid "gifts" bestowed by the wealthy bankers of Jerusalem.

5. As vegetable seed, planted in the ground, comes up and grows, so true Christian pity will vegetate into active benevolence. Cause and effect are not more naturally related in philosophy.

6. The pulse of pity must beat in harmony with the discrimination of wisdom. We need an impartial and clear judgment, to determine who and what are the proper recipients of benevolence.

7. Banks of deposit on earth frequently fail. The bank of heaven has an endless supply of "gold tried in the fire." He who truly lends to the Lord will receive both principal and interest.

8. Some give to the poor to avoid popular disgrace. Some, to be popular, give to the rich. Such bills of exchange are not negotiable at the bank of heaven. God will never borrow such earthly capital.

9. Two things deserve special attention: the *what* and the *when*—what pay the Lord will give, and at what time. Some say that gifts to benevolent causes, no matter what the motive, will be divinely paid in earthly prosperity. If this dogma were true, then all the tight fisted Shylocks might enter into commercial relations with the Lord, and make more money than in common stocks. We should give with a pure motive, and let God decide whether the pay shall be temporal or spiritual, on earth or in heaven. Christ says that "life eternal," the award of heaven, shall be given to those who visited, fed, clothed and variously helped his needy and humble followers.

10. Never assess a tax on the devil to replenish the treasury of the Lord. Let Romanists sell indulgences, not Protestants. "Manner is as important as matter."

Be thou faithful unto death.

EPITOME OF WESLEY'S SERMONS.

BY REV. A. SIMS.

SERMON FIRST.—Text: "By grace are ye saved, through faith."

Grace is the source, faith is the condition, of salvation.

I. What is the faith through which we are saved?

Not the faith required of a heathen—a faith in the being and attributes of God, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Nor is it the faith of a devil, who believes all that, and that God was manifest in the flesh, that he will tread all enemies under his feet, and that all Scripture was given by inspiration of God. It is not the faith which the apostles had while Christ was on earth. But it is a faith in Christ. Christ, and God through Christ, are the proper objects of it.

This faith may be distinguished from the faith of a devil. It is not a cold, lifeless assent, a train of ideas in the head; but a disposition of the heart. Herein it differs from that faith which the apostles had while our Lord was upon earth: it acknowledges the necessity and merit of his death; and the power of his resurrection. Christian faith is, then, not only an assent to the whole gospel of Christ, but also a full reliance on the blood of Christ, a recumbency on him as our atonement and sacrifice, a trust in the merits of his life, death and resurrection, for salvation.

II. What is the salvation which is through faith?

1. It is a present salvation. "*Ye are saved through faith*"—saved from sin: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins"—from original and actual, past and present, sin of the flesh and of the spirit. First, from the guilt of all past sin. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." They

are also saved from servile fear, and receive the "Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father!" They are saved, also, from the fear, though not from the possibility, of falling from grace. They have peace with God, and love.

2. They are saved from the power of sin, as well as from the guilt of it. "He that is by faith born of God, sinneth not"—(1.) By any habitual sin; for all habitual sin is sin reigning. Nor (2.) By any willful sin; for his will, if he abideth in the faith, is utterly set against all sin. Nor (3.) By any sinful desire; for he continually desireth the holy and perfect will of God. Nor (4.) By infirmities, whether in act, word or thought; for his infirmities have no concurrence of his will.

Objections: 1. That to preach salvation by faith only, is to preach against holiness and good works.—It would be so, if we spoke of a faith which was separate from these; but we speak of a faith which is productive of all good works and all holiness.

2. Does not preaching this faith lead men into pride?—Accidentally it may; but they are cautioned: "Because of unbelief the first branches were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear." "Where is boasting, then?"

3. Does not the preaching of this doctrine encourage men in sin?—Indeed it may, and will. Many will continue in sin, that grace may abound; but their grace is upon their own heads. The goodness of God ought to lead them to repentance.

4. If a man cannot be saved by all that he can do, this will drive men to despair.—True; to despair of being saved by their own works, their own merits; and so it ought, for none can trust in the merits of Christ until he has utterly renounced his own.

But this is an uncomfortable doctrine.—No it is full of comfort.

"Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed."

6. This doctrine should not be preached first, or at least not to all.—"Whosoever believeth on Him shall be saved," is the foundation of our preaching; that is, must be preached first and to all. "Go, preach the gospel to every creature." This doctrine is the rock and foundation of the Christian faith, that first drove papacy out of the land, and it is this alone that can keep it out.

SERMON SECOND.—Text: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

I. What is implied in being almost a Christian:

1. Heathen honesty, truth, mutual assistance. 2. Having a form of godliness; that is, refraining from sin and doing good, and attending all the means of grace. 3. Sincerity, namely: a real desire to serve God, a hearty desire to do his will.

II. What is implied in being altogether a Christian:

1. The love of God. 2. Faith, saving faith, the faith that purifies the heart.

Have we heathen honesty? have we the form of godliness? have we love and-faith?

SERMON THIRD.—Text: "Awake, thou that sleepest, arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

I. Describe the sleeper. Spiritual sleep is the natural state of man—insensibility, a state of utter darkness, full of all diseases; satisfied in his sins. Those who have the outward form of religion are generally in a deep sleep; no spiritual life within. They abide in death, though they know it not; they have no more power to perform the actions of a living Christian than a dead body has power to perform the actions of a living man. They are not exercised to discern spiritual good and evil; their understanding is darkened.

II. Enforce the exhortation. To

such characters God says, "Awake, this moment! awake out of thy dream of worldly happiness. In what state is thy soul? Hast thou oil in thy lamp, grace in thy heart? Art thou a partaker of the divine nature? Seest thou the necessity of that inward change, that spiritual birth? Thou hopest to be saved; but what reason hast thou to give of the faith that is in thee? Listen to the call of God, and Christ shall give thee light.

III. Explain the promise. If thou obey the call, Christ shall give thee the light of his grace here, and the light of his glory hereafter. He will shine in thy heart. God is light, and he will give himself to thee. Thou shalt become a temple of the indwelling God—of Christ. "I shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live."

SERMON FOURTH.—Text: "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

We are not informed that at this time the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were bestowed. Notice the fruits of the Spirit, or Christianity under three distinct forms.

I. As beginning to exist in individuals. The first effects of that Spirit upon the heart of man were conviction of sin, faith in Christ, real conversion, faith, joy, love supreme to God, love to all mankind, humility, temperance, longsuffering, a desire to work no evil to his neighbor, dependence upon God, a thirst to do good.

II. Christianity as spreading from one to another. Such characters would labor to promote religion and save the ungodly around them. This they did. They warned the ungodly, directed the awakened, provoked believers to love and to good works. Their labors were successful: the work spread mightily. Men of pleasure, of reputation, of outside religion, became offended. Opposition grew strong, persecution raged, the Re-

deemer's kingdom spread more and more; but the tares soon appeared with the wheat, and the mystery of iniquity began to work.

III. Christianity as covering the earth. This is promised by God. "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord." Peace will then reign, no injustice or wrong exist among the people, and justice, righteousness, love and mercy will reign among men.

Application: Where does this Christianity now exist—where do these Christians live? Are we filled with the Holy Ghost? Do we thus live as did they?

PRAYER.

BY W. K. LADUE.

If one would gain worldly power he must work for it through the proper channels. If one would become "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might," he must use the right means. Men may become apparently strong by using other than gospel means; but their foundation is rotten and their building will surely fall.

One of the most important means of gaining power with God is prayer. From the Bible we learn that those distinguished for holiness and power were mighty in prayer. Jacob wrestled all night with the angel and prevailed. Moses, at one time, plead forty days and forty nights for Israel and Aaron. In answer to this prayer God withdrew his curse and thousands of lives were saved. Elijah had power through prayer to seal the fountains of the heavens for three years and six months, and then to open them again. The Apostles and early Christians were strong in prayer. See the result of the ten day's prayer-meeting at Jerusalem; three thousand were converted in one day. And this was

only one of the results. Their power was proportioned to their prevailing prayer. "When they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness."—Acts 4: 31.

And this has been true of the bright and shining lights of more modern times. Behold William Bramwell, that mighty man of God, wrestling in his closet. There was the secret of his power. He was well acquainted with his Father. Ask James Caughey the secret whereby thousands were converted to God through his ministry. His answer would be: "KNEE WORK! KNEE WORK!! KNEE WORK!!! It is probable that President Finney led more souls to Christ than any man of his time. He says in his autobiography: "In regard to my own experience, I will say that unless I had the spirit of prayer I could do nothing. If even for a day or an hour I lost the spirit of grace and supplication I found myself unable to preach with power and efficiency, or to win souls by personal conversation. In this respect my experience was what it has always been." It was the same with J. W. Redfield, William Kendall and a host of others.

Why is it that the true work of God is at so low an ebb, compared with what it has been? Is it because of something which the church cannot avoid? Nay, verily; God has not changed. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but (His) words shall not pass away"—Matt. 24: 35. These are indeed "perilous times" and men are fast becoming expert in resisting the light of God. They have refused to obey so often that their hearts are like adamant. But do these things excuse the church from falling short? By no means. The difficulties being increased, the obligation to have power to overcome these difficulties is in-

creased also. These are undoubtedly "the last days," and the hearts of the sons of men are exceeding hard; but for the church to plead these things as an excuse for her indolence is an abomination in the sight of God. Has God's power decreased? "Is any thing too hard for the Lord? His promises remain the same. The reason the church does not enjoy their fulfillment is because she does not meet the conditions. The Lord has said: "I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them."—Ezek. 36: 37. If the church would turn to the Lord with all her heart, "and with fasting and with weeping, and with mourning," if "the priests, the ministers of the Lord" would "weep between the porch and the altar," and would say, "spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over us," then would "the Lord be jealous for his land and pity his people," yea, doubtless, the old time power would return and God would "increase us with men like a flock."

READER, HAVE YOU THE SPIRIT?—
 "The indwelling of God the Holy Spirit is the common mark of all believers in Christ. It is the Shepherd's mark of the flock of the Lord Jesus, distinguishing them from the rest of the world. It is the goldsmith's stamp on the genuine sons of God which separates them from the dross and false professors. It is the King's own seal on those who are his peculiar people, proving them to be his own property. It is the earnest which the Redeemer gives to his believing disciples while they are in the body, as a pledge of the full redemption yet to come on the resurrection morning. This is the case of all believers. They all have the Spirit—*Rev. J. C. Ryle.*

WHEN a child of God thinks he can go alone, he is nearest to falling.

CONSECRATION.

BY MRS. H. C. HAYDEN.

The prophet Isaiah says, "And a highway shall be there, and a way; and it shall be called the way of Holiness."—Isa. 35 : 8. The way and the highway spoken of are two portions of the same way; the way that leads to the celestial city. The way is that part in which the justified man walks, and the highway is that part in which the wholly sanctified man walks. There are only two steps from the way of holiness on to the highway of holiness. First, consecrate all to God. Second, believe that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. It is a sad fact that only a small portion of God's professed children are walking on the highway of holiness. Very many struggle to step up higher who do not succeed. After careful observation I am well satisfied that the great stumblingblock in the way is, they do not let go of everything; they do not consecrate all to God. In seeking pardon we lay everything on the altar in a bundle and it is seldom the consecration is complete; but in seeking the blessing of holiness we must consecrate item by item. There is no other way.

Brother, have you been seeking the blessing of sanctification for some time and yet have not obtained it? You have not given all into God's hands, to control just as he will. The Bible says, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." God is more willing to sanctify you than you are to be sanctified. Perhaps you have not given that farm to God so that he can have one tenth, his share of the proceeds every year. It may be that money in the bank, a large share of it belongs to God and you are hoarding it up. Perhaps you have not given your wife and children to God, and perhaps you have forgotten to put

yourself on the altar, to do anything or go anywhere he may choose to send you. Just look over the list and ask Jesus to help you make the consecration perfect. As a general thing, just the moment that we let go of every earthly thing, and make an effort to believe that the blood cleanses, God will wonderfully help our faith and we will be so filled with the divine presence that we will know the work is done.

Sister, have you been seeking the cleansing blood to take away the last remains of the Adamic nature? Have you sought earnestly and yet God has not given you the witness of the Spirit? Your consecration is not complete. Perhaps you have not given yourself and your family to God so that you realize the force of the text, "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price," and hence have no right to own anything in this world. It may be your dress is the only thing that prevents you from stepping on to the highway. Those finger rings, that bosom pin, that gold chain, those feathers and flowers on your hat, those puffs and ruffles on your dress must all be given up for Jesus' sake. No sister can enjoy the blessing of holiness and follow the silly fashions of the world. It is an impossibility. She must adopt the pilgrim's garb, the plain dress. Do you say, sister, if the way is so straight you will try to get to heaven without this blessing? But you cannot get to heaven without obeying all the commands of God. The Bible says, "Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection." We are commanded to be perfect and to be holy. If you see the steps on to the highway of holiness you must walk in them. If you attempt to stay where you are, in the wilderness of justification, because the cross of letting go of the world is so great, you will gradually backslide and become dead, yea, "twice dead and plucked

up by the roots." If you see the light of heaven and do not walk in it you cannot retain the religion you have. Christ said, "So likewise whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

The great majority of women professing religion go to Bunyan's Vanity Fair and buy all sorts of trinkets to adorn themselves with, while God has strictly forbidden us to adorn ourselves with anything except "a meek and quiet spirit, and good works." For many years past my heart has been greatly grieved and pained at this state of things in the church. In order to illustrate I will relate an experience that came under my own observation.

Several years ago, when I was preaching in the village of Warren, northern Illinois, a brother Jellison of the M. E. church moved into the hotel close by Lincoln Hall, where my meetings were held. He immediately commenced to attend the hall meetings, also the union holiness prayer meeting at my home on Friday evenings. At the first prayer meeting he attended he arose and said, "I see that the doctrine of holiness is taught in the Bible, and I am going to seek until I obtain it." And he sought on and on, earnestly, with strong crying and tears, for a whole year.

Twice during that time I felt led by the Spirit to go to him and say, "Bro. Jellison, you are holding on to something that you have not given up." He said, "I know that the fault is mine. God is ready to do his part of the work."

At the end of the year he went out to his farm one day, with his wagon, to pick a load of corn. While at this work, he said in his heart, "Now, Jesus, I must have this matter settled. I will give everything to thee." He gave his farm to the Lord, his hotel, and every item of his property. He laid himself on the

altar, and his wife and children; but when he came to his only son, the devil suggested, "If you give him to the Lord, He will take him away." He stumbled here for a moment, but presently said to the adversary, "If the Lord needs him more than I do, He can have him." He went on to consecrate every thing he could think of. He then looked up and said, "Now, Jesus, I have given thee all I can think of. What more?" Immediately his tobacco-box was presented to his mind. He had used tobacco for many years. For a moment he thought, "Can I possibly give up my tobacco?" And then he resolved, "I will, I will give it up." He took his tobacco-box out of his pocket, threw it down and stamped it into the mud.

Quick as a shock of electricity, the Holy Spirit rested upon him. In telling his experience, in the prayer-meeting, he said, "I clapped my hands, and danced around my wagon, and shouted, Glory to Jesus! for half an hour, with none but Jesus and the angels to hear me."

He was a wealthy man, but he realized that to be filled with the divine nature was more to him than all his riches. He was then about forty-five years of age, but the Lord immediately called him into the ministry; and he has been preaching the gospel and teaching the doctrine of holiness, in Kansas and Iowa, ever since.

God will either keep his saints from temptations, by his preventing mercy; or in temptations, by his supporting mercy; or find a way of escape by his delivering mercy.

If there be too great an affection for anything here, there will be an answerable affliction.

THE measure to be observed in loving God is to love him without measure.

THE REVIVAL I LIKE.

BY REV. J. J. GRIDLEY.

I like a radical revival, the motto of which is, "Break up your fallow ground—sow not among thorns;" one which goes to the bottom. A revival whose results will "pass muster" at the judgment day. A revival of careful discrimination between truth and error, that discards the "wood, hay and stubble," and retains only the "gold, silver and precious stones," so that there will be nothing for the judgment fires to consume. A revival that uncovers sin and brings to light the deeds of darkness. A revival whose chief human agents dare to "declare all the counsel of God," faithfully, pointedly, impartially, tenderly; not dealing alone in general principles, but specifying the most prevalent and hurtful sins and urging the most important duties; who apply the truth as they go along, and this, too, without fearing the loss of popularity or temporal support; men who dare to do their whole duty, as they understand it, leaving the rest to God.

I like a revival that makes thorough work with church members—that unmasks hypocrites, exposes false hopes, sandy foundations, and self-deceivers. A revival that sweetens tempers and harmonizes the family; that heals heart-divisions among brethren, reclaims backsliders, and stimulates God's children to be saved "to the uttermost;" so that the world shall see that religion *saves men from sin*, making them honest, benevolent, full of good works, contented with their lot, and habitually happy.

A revival must be judged by its fruits. I like a revival that breaks up bad habits, that destroys all desire for forbidden objects, that weans the soul from all that is opposed to God. A revival that "cuts off right hands," and "plucks out right eyes;" that parts with every idol, and "makes no

provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof;" that counts heaven "cheap at any price." A revival that begets a tender conscience which dares not indulge in doubtful things, and leads its subjects to "abstain from all appearance of evil." See now the filthy weed thrown away; vain personal adornment given up; foolish fashions forsaken; the abandonment of the saloon, the card-table, the horse-race, the dancing-party, the circus, the theater, the secret lodge, the rink; and whatever else interrupts communion with God given up. "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth." Noble Paul! Let us emulate his example.

I like a revival that fills God's house with humble worshipers, increases Bible reading, throngs the prayer meeting, the class meeting and the Sunday school, and abolishes church festivals. A revival that changes the whole face of society; that shakes things and "pushes" things; that closes the grog shop and the gambling hell; that hushes profanity, keeps the Sabbath holy, cures neighborhood broils, fixes line fences without going to law, and removes garbage without waiting for the town council; that promotes order, honesty, industry, temperance, economy and worldly thrift; that enables the people to dispense with *fully half* of their doctors and lawyers—and half of the remainder. A revival that lessens the criminal list, lightens taxation, and purifies politics.

In a word, I like a revival that advances all human interests for both worlds. Such a revival is of God. But a revival that leaves things about as it found them, is *not* of God.

It is only when we have learned to "stand still" that we are able effectually to "go forward."

WHAT pleaseth God should please us because it pleaseth God.

HEALED BY PRAYER ALONE.

BY MRS. NEWMAN CHAMBERLAIN.

Will Chamberlain, of Stowe, Summit county, Ohio, started away February 27th, in company with another boy of the neighborhood, to dig out some game that had shown their tracks in the snow. Afterward they went into the house of Mr. Overlow. Having been there a few moments fresh blood began to flow profusely from the nostrils of Will Chamberlain and continued more or less for three hours. By the attention of the kind hearted host and hostess it was overcome at last. He waited awhile and then attempted to start for home. The bleeding again started and it was thought best for him to remain all night. In the morning he felt very well and started for home. He came home all right. He took a rest and soon his nose began to bleed again. After trying two or three things we succeeded in stopping it again. In a short time he said it had gone to his heart. It was followed by convulsions. He looked up at me and said that he was dying, and told me whom he would like to see. We immediately complied with his request. In so doing his case became known, and the neighbors were quite stirred up because we did not call a doctor. It has been my custom for thirty-five years to go to the Great Physician, and he has never failed me.

About the middle of the afternoon their pastor, Mr. Green, came in. He asked if we had a doctor. I told him no, and that I was doing the best I could, and trusting in the Lord. "The Lord!" he said, "It is a wonder he does not strike you with thunder and lightning. It is worse than the heathen would do." He would have me arrested, and "that old Chamberlain."

I told him I did not want such

talk—I wished he would go out of doors. They then kept sending delegates until late in the evening, to try and get their way. When they found we would not yield, but stood to the right as we believed, they informed us that there would be a coroner's inquest in the morning. In the morning they sent their delegates and behold, the dear Saviour had been and loosed the bands that held the sufferer and he was able to be up. The coroner was not used, and the enemy succumbed. The boy is able to be all over the neighborhood.

GOD hears prayer. One bitter cold night in the winter of 1873, a widow lady living in Connecticut, being very destitute, arose at the midnight hour and asked God to send help. That same night, a cousin of hers living in Louisiana, from whom she had not heard for years, was so exercised in mind, that he could not sleep, and he arose and asked God to bless the suffering poor. While praying he thought of this cousin, though not supposing her to be needy; yet his impression became such that at daybreak he rode several miles on horseback to a bank, and sent her a check for fifty dollars.—*Words of Faith.*

CONTEMN riches, and thou shalt be rich; contemn glory, and thou shalt be glorious; contemn injuries, and thou shalt be a conqueror; contemn rest and thou shalt gain rest; contemn earth, and thou shalt gain heaven.

I HAVE four good reasons for being an abstainer—my head is clearer my life is better, my heart is lighter, and my purse is heavier.—*Dr. Guthrie.*

Too much confidence in man and too little confidence in God, proves the wreck of many a well intending believer.

EDITORIAL.

DO GOOD.

The heart of a true Christian is full of kindness and sympathy. His love is not a mere sentimental affection. It is active and practical. He makes it a study how to do good to others.

Doing good will not take the place of experimental piety. We must be saved "by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost," or, no matter what we do, we cannot see the kingdom of God. But a genuine experience of saving grace will set us at once to using what influence we have to promote the happiness and the spiritual welfare of others. This is the instinct of every soul that is born from above.

But lest, by disobeying, we might cease to hear this inward voice, God, by written commands, urges us to live devoted to good works. Says Paul to a young minister: "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works."

—Titus 3: 8. Again, "Put them in mind * * to be ready to every good work."

—Titus 3: 1.

Our Lord makes our *eternal* salvation depend upon our doing good, according to our opportunities. "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire."—Matt. 7: 19. This includes all *barren* trees. Those which bring forth *no fruit* share the fate of those which bring forth evil fruit. The same general doom awaits those who do no good that awaits those who do harm. Our Lord settles this beyond dispute. "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."—Matt. 25: 30. The only accusation against this man was, that he did nothing. It is not charged that he did any thing wrong. He simply neglected

to do good. He had a good experience—a genuine talent—but he failed to use it; he did not lose, but he did not grow; he did no positive harm, but he did no good.

— We give one more plain passage: "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."—John 5: 28, 29.

Thus plainly do the Scriptures teach that our eternal happiness depends upon our having a faith that shows itself genuine by our being "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."—1 Cor. 15: 58.

The early Christians were so addicted to good works that their enemies bore testimony to it. In order to justify the terrible persecutions which the enlightened pagans of Rome inflicted upon Christians, they falsely accused them of horrible crimes. But some of these heathen whose testimony cannot be impeached, bear testimony to the excellent character and conduct of the Christians of their day.

Pliny was governor of Pontus, in Asia Minor. He wrote to the Emperor Trajan, about A. D. 106:

"So far as I can learn, the only fault or error of which the Christians are guilty consists of this: they are accustomed to assemble on a certain day, before the rising of the sun, and to sing together a hymn in honor of Christ as a god. Instead of binding themselves to the commission of any crime, they take a solemn oath not to be guilty of fraud, or robbery, or impurity, or any other wrong. They promise never to violate their word, never to be false to a trust. After this they retire, soon to meet again to partake of a simple and innocent repast; but from this they abstained after the ordinance I issued, in accordance with your orders prohibiting

the people from assembling together. The repasts of the Christians were innocent, although the calumny has been widely diffused that they stifled an infant and ate it. I thought it necessary, in order to ascertain the truth, to subject to the torture two females who had served at these feasts; but I could detect nothing but an unreasonable superstition. This subject has seemed to me more worthy of investigation in consequence of the great numbers of the accused. Many persons, of all ages, of both sexes and of every condition in life, are placed in peril. The superstition has infested not only the cities, but the villages and the remote rural districts. But it seems to me it can be arrested and exterminated."

The most strenuous efforts that the most mighty monarchs of the world could make were put forth to exterminate Christianity in its infancy, when it was not even tolerated, much less protected, by any government in the world. The good works of Christians, and their fidelity to the truth, kept Christianity alive.

The Emperor Julian was a man of great intellectual ability and of extensive learning. He was educated a Christian, but never was born of the Spirit. His admiration of the heathen classics led him to embrace its mythology. When he came to the throne he resolved to root Christianity out of the world. He had seen how the utmost exercise of power, in the most cruel persecutions that could be devised, had failed to effect it under the reigns of Nero, and Domitian, and other monsters of cruelty. So to the exercise of power he added argument and ridicule; and still, not succeeding as he expected, he tried to employ the means by which he thought Christianity was spread. He adopted, as far as he well could, its morals. In urging the pagan priests to try to win the wavering to idolatry, he bore a valuable testimony to the good works of the Christians of his day. He wrote:

"As children are coaxed with cake, so have these Christians by kindness enticed the poor to join them. Strangers they have secured by hospitality. By affecting brotherly love, great moral purity, and honoring their dead, they have won the multitude."

He urged his priests to take the same course, and to aid them in it gave them large sums of money. He said that "the pagan poor obtain no assistance from their own people; while the Christians support all their own poor, and assist also many of those who worship the gods." But he made no headway. "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." From his death Christianity became nominally the religion of the Roman Empire.

You profess to be a Christian: are you living to do good? Seriously ask yourself the question. Are you daily doing something for the good of others? Do you go where there are the greatest opportunities for usefulness? Are you as ready to help as to be helped? Do you count it more blessed to give than to receive?

In doing acts that in themselves are commendable, are you governed by right motives? Do you seek to please God, or to please men? In the support you give to the ministers of Jesus Christ, do you do it out of love for Christ and his truth, or do you do it in return for the privilege of occupying a certain pew every Sabbath? Can you give for missions and for Sabbath-schools without being permitted to share, in return, in some church entertainment? Do you preach because "the love of Christ constraineth you," or for a living?

We must see to it that we abound in good works, and that they are performed from Christian motives.

President Edwards says that slothfulness in the cause of God is as damning as open rebellion. The Master says, "He that worketh receiveth wages."

SKATING RINKS.

The roller skating rink is one of the abominations of this land. Its influence is demoralizing and degrading. It is the insidious enemy of Christianity and good morals. It is leading its votaries to vice, barbarism and perdition.

Here all who pay the admission fee—the virtuous maiden and the abandoned libertine, the drunkard, the gambler and the church-member—meet together on terms of social equality, and slide, and joke, and laugh, and bet with each other, in the most unrestricted manner. Vice is a great leveler. It makes the educated and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, roll and reel and wallow together.

The skating rink is managed for one only object—to make money. Hence resort is had to everything that a perverse ingenuity can suggest to draw a crowd. In Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania, a wealthy, aristocratic town, in a rink chiefly owned and controlled by a prominent member of a large, popular church, they had, one night, a pig-race; and pig and man ran, and slid, and slipped, to the delight of the intelligent audience, made up of all sorts and kinds, from bar-tenders to choir-singers, from beautiful girls to abandoned women.

At another time they had a prize of twenty dollars for a twenty-four-hours race. Nine boys entered. As the strength of the four who held out was failing, whisky was given them freely. The ball of the great toe of one of the skaters burst open and the blood ran freely. Some were doubtless disabled for life. Betting went on briskly among the applauding spectators.

As one of the results of a six days contest in New York, one or two have already died.

Many a family has already been broken up by flirtations begun in the skating rink between the young wife and the practiced

seducer who comes here to seek his victims.

These barbarous exhibitions should be suppressed by law. Men should not be permitted to line their pockets with money at the expense of the life-blood of others.

The warning against pleasure-mongers which Henry Ward Beecher uttered forty years ago, when his undimmed eye saw truth clearly, has lost none of its appropriateness:

“We pay moral assassins to stab the purity of our children. We warn our sons of temptation, and yet plant the seeds which shall bristle with all the spikes and thorns of the worst temptation. If to this strong language you answer that these men are generous and jovial, that their very business is to *please*, that they do not mean to do harm—I reply that I do not charge them with *trying* to produce immorality but with pursuing a course which produces it, whether they try or not. An evil example does harm by its own liberty, without asking leave. Moral disease, like the plague, is contagious, whether the patient wishes it or not. A vile man infects his children in spite of himself. Criminals make criminals, just as taint makes taint, disease makes disease, and plagues make plagues. Those who run the gay round of pleasure cannot help dazzling the young, confounding their habits, and perverting their morals—it is the very nature of their employment.”

BIOGRAPHICAL.

REV. S. H. BRONSON.

A thorough Christian experience is not readily parted with. It *may* be lost; but the probability is that it will stand by one all his days. When we first became acquainted with REV. S. H. BRONSON, he professed the blessing of holiness. We boarded with him the second year of our

ministry. He was in the M. E. Church, in which the world had already begun to make serious encroachments. He proposed to walk in the light of full salvation, and bore plain, definite testimony against worldly conformity in the church. He had unbending integrity, and was never known to compromise his principles. For over forty years he maintained a consistent profession of perfect love.

He was a local preacher of more than ordinary ability, and often preached with great power. When a providential opportunity was given him to unite with the Free Methodist Church, he did so gladly, as its principles were those which he had always advocated. He remained an active, useful member until his death.

In his business affairs he was industrious, prudent, honest and prosperous. He enjoyed the confidence of the community—even of those who opposed him on account of his unsparing denunciations of popular sins.

He died at Uniondale, Susquehanna county, Pa., March 3d, 1885, aged eighty years, two months and thirteen days. The partner of his youth survives him, also a son, who has had the wisdom to embrace the religion of his father and mother.

His end was peaceful and triumphant, his last audible utterance being the lines:

"A faith that keeps the narrow way
Till life's last hour is fled,
And with a pure and heavenly ray
Illumes a dying bed."

So goes another valiant soldier of the cross to his eternal reward.

REV. S. T. WHITE, of the New Jersey Conference of the M. E. Church, departed this life at the Jefferson Hospital, Philadelphia, Pa., December 28th, 1884, in the twenty-eighth year of his age.

Our beloved brother was born near Long Branch, New Jersey, November 18th, 1857. He was converted to God in February, 1872, in a cottage prayer-meeting near his home. He at once became an earnest worker for Christ, and in the

winter of 1879 rendered valuable aid in an extra meeting at Waretown, where the writer was then stationed. The following spring he recognized a call of God to preach the glorious Gospel, and then he undertook his great life-work. He labored successfully for two years, when he was received into the traveling connection of the New Jersey Conference; and two years later—March, 1884—he was admitted fully into the Conference. He was appointed to the Mullica Hill charge, where he closed up a short but successful life-work. In June, 1880, he was married to Miss Hannah R. Adams, a lady of estimable character, whose adaptation to the itinerant work was marked. This union has been blessed by an interesting son.

Bro. White, as a preacher, was clear, earnest and oft-times eloquent. His Christian character was irreproachable. His last sermon was preached some three months before his death. These were months of suffering, but no murmur escaped his lips. When told that he could not live, he was somewhat surprised, but said, "If it is the Lord's will, I am ready to go. I am fully prepared," adding:

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

He said at another time, with great composure yet with earnestness, "I should like to live for the sake of my wife and boy, and especially to preach; but the Lord's will be done. He can care for them, and he will, for 'he doeth all things well.'" Just before his death, a church bell rang, when he exclaimed, "Soon the great bell of eternity will ring;" then calling for a glass of water, he held it up, saying, "Pure water I shall soon drink, the water of life." Then in great peace he passed away. How true it is, "The chamber where a good man dies is privileged above the common walks of life, quite on the verge of heaven."

So we sketch, but cannot portray, the Christian, the minister; the beloved broth-

er; but how can we pay the tribute we owe to the true, tender, tried friend? For nearly nine years we have enjoyed unbroken intimacy, that is to-day full of the most precious memories. But he has fallen. In years his life was short, but in point of events, toils and labors, it was long. May his mantle fall upon the surviving members of the class of 1882; may we follow him as he followed Christ.

The funeral service was held in the First M. E. Church of Long Branch, December 31st, 1884, where a sketch of his life was read by Rev. B. C. Lippincott, the pastor; and addresses were made by Elders Graw and Moffett, before a large and weeping congregation, several of whom were his brethren in the ministry. They then carried him to the place of burial, where he awaits the resurrection of the just.

S. H. POTTER.

REVIVAL MEETINGS.

The most of the winter we have been engaged in assisting in revival meetings.

AT ROME, N. Y., we had excellent meetings with the pastor, Rev. Zenas Osborne. The church is rising in spirituality, and some sinners are coming to the Lord.

AT FULTON, N. Y., we assisted Bro. J. Odell in some interesting meetings. Good was done.

AT BOLIVAR, N. Y., we found a good church edifice, and a small but excellent society—a part of the result of Bro. J. G. Terrill's last year's labors. A good degree of interest was awakened—some precious souls were saved, and a work of grace begun which we trust will result in the salvation of many.

AT JACKSON, Michigan, we assisted Bro. Bradfield for about a week. There had been about fifty converted. The work of holiness was carried on among the old members and the young converts, and the revival work has been going on since.

AT CEDAR SPRINGS, Michigan, we spent a profitable Sabbath with Bro. Wilcox and his interesting people. Here, too, they reported about fifty converts.

AT WEST GREECE, on Parma circuit, N. Y., we held a quarterly meeting. It was a good meeting. The preachers, Rev. A. Burgess, and Rev. E. E. Adams, report a good revival in progress at North Parma.

AT WILKESBARRE, Pennsylvania, we assisted the pastor, Rev. J. D. Santmier, in some profitable meetings. The Lord was present at every service. Some were saved, and a good revival interest was awakened, which we trust will result in the salvation of many souls. We have just returned from there, after an absence of about two weeks.

Our experience in these meetings confirms us in the belief we adopted years ago, that salvation must come out of Zion. The preaching may be ever so awakening, but *unless the Church will awake, and get "filled with the Spirit,"* but little can be done in the way of getting sinners converted. Professed Christians may lead consistent lives and have the confidence of candid sinners; but they will see but few conversions until they get out of their formal state, and get the blessing of the Lord upon their souls. "The joy of the Lord is your strength."

REV. A. SIMS writes from Uxbridge, Ontario: "Glory to God! I can report victory. Souls saved at every quarterly meeting on the Muskoka district this quarter, except one; and it was rich in influence. Praise God! Bro. Roberts, this work has God in it, and it must go."

CORRESPONDENCE.

FROM IOWA.

DEAR BROTHER ROBERTS:—The year just ended has been one of sorrow and bereavement for us. My dear husband

died on the 11th of August, 1884; aged 59 years. He was confined to his bed for seven months, and his sufferings were great; but he bore it all with patience and Christian fortitude. He was a member of M. E. church for 27 years. For more than fifteen years he was a subscriber to the **EARNEST CHRISTIAN**, which he liked very much and read with pleasure and profit. The last few weeks of his life were spent in prayer and praise to his Creator and Redeemer. Jesus was on his tongue as long as he could speak. We feel lonely, sad, and sorrowful.

FRANCES ROBINSON.

LOVE-FEAST.

REV. J. OLNEY.—No, there is no discharge in this war, neither do we wish there was. Since Conference I have been putting soul and body into the fight, and oh! how God is blessing both soul and body too. We have seen some souls captured from the enemy's ranks. Glory to God for this! Expect to see more before we are called from the battle-field to our reward in heaven. It seems as though I had just enlisted. Although nearly seventy-two years of age, I am proving what is said in Job 11:17—"And thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning." I never loved Jesus so well as to-day. He seems more precious as we are getting along toward the close of the war. We expect to have, as we have had, his divine help, his grace, the under-girdings of the Holy Ghost, to push this battle to the very gates, and to have an honorable discharge from Him who "doeth all things well."

FANNIE WILKINSON.—I rejoice this morning that I am the Lord's, soul and body; His to do His will. I feel Him precious to my heart. While watching the sick one He has suffered afflictions to come upon us, but we say, "The will of

the Lord be done in all things." It is a precious thought that a crown of endless life has been purchased for every one of us; that we are a redeemed company, not that we are to be redeemed, but that we are now. The greatest price that heaven could pay has been given to redeem us from all iniquity. If we will have stars in our crown to cast at the feet of the Lord Jesus, let us be filled with the Holy Ghost. Let us ask ourselves, What has Jesus done and suffered for me? What is He doing for me now? What do I expect him to do for me? The next question should be, What can I do for Jesus? Pray for us that mother may recover.

MRS. L. L. MITCHELL.—From my distant home in the west, I would say to all the dear pilgrims whom I have known in other days, that never in all my past experience did I so sweetly apprehend the truth of these words: "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thy everlasting light." I praise God this morning, he does keep me in just this state:

"Where'er I am, where'er I move,
I meet the object of my love."

"And there I stand this very hour,
Kept by almighty keeping power.
Temptations come, the blood's my plea,
The precious blood now cleanses me."

No service of itself is small,
None great, though earth it fill;
But that is small which seeks its own,
And great which seeks God's will.

MRS. A. E. NICHOLS.—This day finds me sweetly trusting in Jesus. This simple trust brings a peace that passeth all understanding. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God;" and having this grace, it enables me to stand. Glory to God! I feel the cleansing blood. Praise God! He has made it possible for me, even me, to be saved. I mean to end this warfare "down by the river."