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GOSPEL TO THE POOR.

BY B. T. ROBERTS.

MAN is immortal. This it is which gives him his value. The diamond is costly; not because it is nicely cut, or richly set, but because it is a diamond. The polishing and the setting may render its rare qualities conspicuous, but they do not give it its value. In its rough state it is the most precious of gems. So, it is the soul of man which makes him of such untold consequence. Polished manners and costly apparel may render him more showy, but they do not give him his worth. This is found in the qualities which were given him by his Creator, and not in the accomplishments which he has received from his fellows. Man is of more consequence than houses or clothes, than education or laws, than gold or diamonds.

1. The Gospel is the method which God has devised for the salvation of man. In his fallen condition he is the slave of sin; but the Gospel opens up a way in which he may have the victory over the world, the flesh and the devil. He is exposed to the damnation of hell; but the Gospel renders Heaven accessible to all who will obey its requirements. Every human being, then, needs the Gospel. Without the aid which it alone secures, he must be wretched to all eternity. It should, then, be proclaimed to all. This is the requirement of its Author. *Go ye, He says, into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.* It must be preached to men as creatures—as

beings standing on the same platform of entire equality before God;—of complete and utter dependence upon Him. It must not be preached to the honored, or rich, or noble as such, but as CREATURES, on a level in the sight of God with the poorest and most despised. The Gospel utterly abhors all caste. It is thoroughly democratic. It brings all down to one common platform. It is an unsparing leveler, before which social distinctions utterly vanish. The brotherhood which it establishes is one of the most perfect equality. The only distinctions which it knows are those based upon personal piety. Its post of honor is not given to Dives, clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day; but to the devout Lazarus, who has given all for Christ, and who lives upon crumbs, till the angels come and carry him away. He who can trace his descent from kings and nobles is not, on that account, any better than the veriest serf; for *God hath made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth.* Under the most arbitrary governments and in ages when social distinctions have run the highest, the Gospel has maintained the essential equality of man. Under its potent influence, despotism melts away, like snows before the sun, and the right of the race to liberty and equality is established. The Gospel, then, should be preached to the poor. They are a part of the human family, and they constitute a large part—a vast majority. The life current that visits their hearts is as pure crimson as that which flows through the veins of nobles—their souls possess the same capacity

of knowing and serving God, and are of equal value in his sight.

2. *The preaching of the Gospel to the poor is the standing miracle which attests its Divine origin.* It is placed by our Saviour in the same class with raising the dead, and cleansing lepers—something which no man acting from the mere promptings of nature ever did, or ever will do. It requires no heaven-born motive to lead one of a literary and serious turn of mind to read, for a good salary, nicely written essays on moral or religious topics, to an audience whose gentility is secured by the high price needed to pay for a sitting; but to go out, without purse or scrip, among the poor and the out-cast, and proclaim the Gospel of God in all fidelity, having no dependence for support but the promise, "Lo, I am with you always," is a course of life, which one will not be very likely to pursue until the end of his days, unless he has been sent by God. He who does this, is in the true succession. He walks as Christ walked. He "minds not high things,"—high salaries, high society, high steeples, high flown language—"but condescends to men of low estate."* Wesley and Whitefield, going to the collieries and commons, and into the streets and lanes of the cities, proclaiming the Gospel to the neglected masses, and offering salvation to the furious mobs, who, instigated by a bigoted priesthood, sought their destruction, did more to rescue England from infidelity than all the learned divines who wrote essays upon "the evidences of Christianity." Those who see the Gospel eradicating pride from the hearts of men, and blending all classes in one holy, loving brotherhood, need no argument to prove it divine;—they have ocular demonstration of the fact;—while all argument is lost upon those who see in it only a system of religious aristocracy, catering to and fostering a spirit of pride and exclusiveness.

"By their fruits ye shall know them."

To John the Baptist's inquiry of Christ as to whether he was the Messiah, the Saviour answered by referring him to his work. "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and **THE POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM.**"

3. In all ages the Gospel has won its greatest trophies among the poor. God has distributed his natural gifts quite equally among all classes. The richest pearls are often found in the roughest shells. Minds of the highest order are frequently buried up in the lowest walks of society.

A true religious experience not only gives a right direction to native talent, but it gives new life and energy. Latent powers are called out and put in action. "The entrance of thy words," says the psalmist, "giveth light, it giveth understanding to the simple." Hence many have become eminent, as servants of God, who, before their conversion were chiefly notorious for their wickedness. The conversion of Martin Luther, a miner's son, seeking by singing ballads in the street, to obtain bread to keep from starving; of John Bunyan, an illiterate, profane tinker: of William Clowes, a drinking, swearing, fighting potter; of Richard Weaver, a collier and a pugilist, may result in greater good to the cause of God, than the uniting with the Church of kings and nobles, of senators and judges. Constantine, embracing Christianity, injured it more than all his predecessors had done by their persecutions. They, by lopping off a few branches, unwittingly made the roots strike the deeper; but he, by bringing worldly power and policy to its support, engrafted upon it corruptions from which it has never recovered. But the immortal dream of the Bedford tinker will contribute largely to hand down the religion of Jesus in its purity to the latest generation. From the days of St. James to the present, it will be found, as a general rule, that those who have been rich in faith, have been the poor of this world. Among

*Romans, xii. 16.

typical of the Church in coming ages, with which our Saviour had not a word of fault to find, was distinguished for its poverty and tribulation. "I know" he says, to the church of Smyrna, "thy works and tribulation and poverty, (but thou art rich)."^{*} But to the church which boasted of its wealth, saying, "I am rich, and increased with goods and have need of nothing" he said, "Thou knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."[†] Do not churches of our own day make the same mistake in regard to their real condition? When the host of martyrs and confessors who loved not their lives unto death, shall stand forth in immortal beauty, with their harps, and their crowns and their blood-washed robes, it will, we doubt not, be found that the great majority resembled their master in their worldly circumstances, as well as in their spirit and course of life.

4. *The poor, as a class* most readily embrace the gospel. When our Saviour was on earth, "The common people heard him gladly."[‡] It is so to-day. They are always the first to come to Christ. When a rich young man, religiously inclined, came to him to learn the conditions of salvation, he went away sorrowful, *for he had great possessions*. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, *verily I say unto you a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven*.§ Human nature is essentially the same in all ages. Christianity is the same. The conditions of discipleship have not changed. No matter how great is the wealth of any individual, if he would get the "pearl of great price," he must sell all that he hath. To become a disciple now, as then, one must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Jesus. The Saviour does not to-day make any exceptions in favor of the wealthy any more than he did when he walked the earth in person. For the church to cater to the pride of the rich, the refined and the educated tends to undo

them, but not to save them. "They must" says Dr. Olin, "come down to the common platform. They must be saved just like so many ploughmen, or common day-laborers." Whoever insists upon the conditions of salvation as laid down by our Saviour, will find that the rich and the proud are just as unwilling to meet these conditions as they were in the days of the incarnation. Lower the standard and they will embrace Christianity, as the vine embraces the tree, that they may climb the higher, and display their own attractions to the better advantage. Require self-denial, non conformity to the world, humility of spirit, and entire consecration to Christ, manifested in all the walks of life, and a stout resistance will be offered by many who are enrolled as Christians, and who exert a controlling influence in the affairs of the church. We heard a Presbyterian minister, in a meeting for relating religious experience, thank the Lord that he was the pastor of a poor congregation; for, said he, **THEY WILL LET ME PREACH THE TRUTH**. We have seldom witnessed more hearty expressions of gratitude. He had evidently found from experience, that there was a portion of divine truth which wealthy church members, as a class, would not receive. In the poor, pride, the mother-sin of all sin has not been so strongly developed, nor so deeply rooted. They are more willing to humble themselves. They are not so prone to feel that they can, themselves, prescribe the terms on which they will become Christians. They are more willing to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. From this class the ranks of the church are most readily recruited. He who is really after souls will go where most souls can, in all probability, be saved. "Ye see," says Paul, "your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the

^{*}Rev. ii. 9. [†]Rev. iii. 17. [‡]Mark xii. 37. [§]Math. xix. 24.

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 the things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence."*

Gibbon says it was, in the early days of the Church, urged by the adversaries of the faith, that "the new sect of Christians was almost entirely composed of the dregs of the populace, of peasants and mechanics, of boys and women, of beggars and slaves." This infidel historian philosophically observes, that the more prudent course is, "to convert the occasion of scandal into a subject of edification. Our serious thought will suggest to us, that the apostles themselves were chosen by Providence among the fishermen of Galilee, and that the lower we depress the temporal condition of the first Christians, the more room we shall find to admire their merit and success. It is incumbent on us diligently to remember, that the Kingdom of Heaven was promised to the poor in spirit, and that minds afflicted by calamity and the contempt of mankind, cheerfully listen to the divine promise of future happiness; while on the contrary, the fortunate are satisfied with the possession of this world; and the wise abuse in doubt and dispute their vain superiority of reason and knowledge."

In modern times, churches that have bent their energies mainly for the salvation of the poor have invariably met with the greatest success. The mission of Methodism was to preach the Gospel to the poor. As she kept to this work she prospered, in the face of persecutions and reproaches. As she abandons it she declines in spirituality and power and in the numbers saved through her instrumentality. The Primitive Methodist Church, the most numerous and the most prosperous of those which have sprung in England from the parent stock, is emphatically the poor-man's church. It is her care for the masses that gives to Romanism, notwithstanding

ing her corruptions and decrepitude, such amazing vitality and strength. The wealthy Churches of our own land have been saved from petrification by the efforts they have made in behalf of the poor heathen abroad.

5. If it is the duty of the Church of Jesus Christ to preach the Gospel to the poor, then all the arrangements of the Church must be made with a view to the accomplishment of this end. No incidental provision will answer. It must be aimed at directly. Every thing, in the adoption of prudential regulations, that has a tendency, according to the well-known principles of human nature, to defeat this, must be thrown out. If the Gospel is placed within the reach of the poor it is placed within the reach of all. The net that will catch small fish will catch large ones that come within its range. A burden that a child can carry does not intimidate a man of strength. Preaching that awakens the attention of the poor, and leads them to Jesus, will interest all classes. Whitefield's sermons, addressed to the neglected ignorant, were eagerly listened to by philosophers and statesmen, by noble lords and ladies. "Sometimes," says Dr. Olin, "we hear men prate about 'preaching that may do for common people, while it is good for nothing for the refined and the educated.' This is a damning heresy. It is a ruinous delusion. All breathe the same air. All are of one blood. All die. There is precisely one Gospel for all; and that is the Gospel that the poor have preached to them. The poor are the favored ones. They are not called up. The great are called down. They may dress, and feed, and ride, and live in ways of their own choosing; but as to getting to heaven, there is only God's way—the way of the poor." Is your carefully written essay, which you have prepared for the pulpit, understood by your hired girl; and does it tell her how she may be saved? If not, you had better consign it to the flames. It is not a gospel sermon.

Finally, the poor must be made to feel

* 1 Cor. 1:26-28.

that they are welcome to all places where the Gospel is preached. Pew doors must be taken off. No Church has the prerogative to make the right of any human being to hear the Gospel depend upon his ability to hire a seat in the house of God. When we wish to spread a knowledge of the Gospel among the heathen abroad, we do not require them to buy or rent a seat in the Christian church. Such a practice would be rebuked by heathenism itself. Their worship, degraded as it is, is not venial. Their temples are free to the meanest and lowest who wish to pay their adorations there. So should all Christian temples be. So they all were until about one hundred and fifty years ago. The practice of selling, in houses of worship, the right to the occupancy of seats is a corruption that owes its origin to the pride and covetousness of modern civilization. It is a practice utterly at variance with Christianity. Not a line in the Gospels or Epistles, in the Law or the Prophets, in the Old or New Testament, can be fairly construed in its support. It is expressly condemned by many plain passages; as we have previously shown in these pages. The usage of no primitive sect, heretical or orthodox, can be quoted in its behalf. It is a usurpation and a robbery. It robs the poor—the representatives of Jesus—of the dearest of all rights—the right to hear the Gospel.

Nor is the requirement met by reserving seats for the poor. What unsaved man is willing to advertise his poverty by occupying those seats from Sabbath to Sabbath? Why should we exact this humility from those who are strangers to the Gospel? Such a course is an insult to the poor—it is an insult to the Saviour. "Come unto me" he says, "all ye that labor and are heavy laden." Though we may find Christ in other places, may we not expect to meet him especially in places consecrated to his service? Wherever then, Christ is found, the laboring man, and the heavily laden, the one most grievously burdened with sin and pover-

ty and sorrow, is invited by the Master to come. Where does any church derive its authority to step in and say, he may come as a matter of privilege; but his right to come regularly depends upon his ability or willingness to buy a sitting? As a matter of fact do we find the poor thronging such churches? They know that they are not wanted. If, in a time of special excitement, the seats are made practically free, and the poor, come in and are converted, as soon as the excitement subsides, they are treated with coldness or neglect and gradually fall away.

Let us come back to the spirit of the Gospel. Let us get down so low at the feet of Jesus as to forget all our pride and dignity, and be willing to worship with the lowest of our kind, remembering that we are the followers of Him "who had not where to lay his head." *"THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE HATH ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."*

RICHES A BURDEN.—"And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold." The Hebrew reading is, Abram was very *heavy*, etc. Riches are a burden. There is a burden of care in getting them, fear in keeping them, temptation in using them, guilt in abusing them, sorrow in losing them, and a burden of account at last to be given concerning them.—**MATTHEW HENRY.**

PERFECTION is the denying of our own will, the acknowledgment of our own vileness, constant resignation to the will of God, and unwearied love for our neighbor. In a word, it is that love which thinks of nothing, seeks nothing, desires nothing but God.—**DR. JOHN ARNDT, GERMANY, SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.**

SECRET PRAYER.

BY REV. R. DONKERSLEY.

"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

"I love to steal awhile away,
From every cumb'ring care,
And spend the hours of setting day,
In humble, grateful prayer."

"Men never take so firm hold upon God as in secret. Remember Jacob: Thou shouldst pray alone, for thou hast sinned alone, and art to die alone and to be judged alone. Alone thou wilt have to appear before the judgment seat. Why not get alone to the mercy seat? In the great transactions between thee and God, thou canst have no human helper. You are not going to tell him any secret. You may be sure he will not betray your confidence.—Whatever reasons there may be for any species of devotion, there are more and stronger reasons for secret devotion. Nothing is more embarrassing and distressing in secret than unpropitious circumstances. Great attention ought always to be paid to this point. 'Enter thy closet,' says Christ. He says not a closet, nor the closet, but *thy* closet. The habit of secret communion is supposed to be formed. The man is supposed to have a closet—some place in which he is accustomed to retire to prayer—some spot consecrated by many a meeting there with God—some place that has often been to him a Bethel."

Every Jewish house had a place for secret devotion. Over the porch or entrance to the house, was a small room, the size of the porch, raised a story above the rest of the house, expressly appropriated for the place of retirement. Here, in secrecy and solitude, the pious Jews might offer their prayers unseen by any but the Searcher of hearts. To this, or to some equally retired place, our Saviour directed his

disciples to go, when they wished to hold communion with God.

"But is it necessary," some may ask, "in order to a proper discharge of this duty, that every Christian have a similar place of retirement?" We answer, "No." It is little matter where or what your place of secret prayer is. Isaac went into the field, and Jacob plighted his night-long prayer beside the running brook. Abraham planted a grove, and in the cool of the shadow of the oaks of Bashan, he called on the name of his God. Abraham's servant knelt down beside his camel; and it would appear from some of his psalms, that a cave, or a mountain fastness in the rocks was David's frequent oratory.—Peter had chosen for his place of prayer the quiet and airy roof of the sea-side lodging when the messenger of ^{*}Cornelius found him. It would seem that the open air, the noiseless amplitude of the "solitary place"—the hill-side, with the stars above, and the shadowy world beneath—the fragrant stillness of the garden, when evening had dismissed the labors of the day, were places where the "man of sorrows" loved to pray. It does not need four walls and a bolted door to make a place of prayer. Retirement, and stillness, and a sequestered spirit will make it anywhere. By the shore of the sounding sea—in the depths of the forest—in the remoteness of the green sunny uplands, or the balmy sweetness of the garden bower—nay, amidst the dusty and dingy ware-room, or the cob-webs of the owl-haunted barn—in the jolting corner of the crowded stage, or the unnoticed nook of the traveler's room—you have only to shut your eyes, and seclude your spirit, and you have erected a closet there. It is a closet wherever the soul finds itself alone with God.

"Where do you find a place to pray in?" was asked of a pious sailor on board a whaling ship. "O," said he, "I can always find a quiet spot at the mast head."

"Sam, do you find a spot for secret prayer?" asked a minister of a stable boy. "O, yes sir, that old coach is my closet, it is the best place on earth." Where there is a heart to pray, it is easy enough to find a place for prayer. Where there is not a heart to pray, no place will be suitable.

Private prayer has certain decided advantages not found in any other form or mode of religious worship; some of these we will merely indicate, without attempting illustration thereof.

Retirement is, in itself, conducive to the cultivation of a devotional frame of mind. In the public congregation, in the social religious gatherings, or even in the quiet family circle, devotional feelings and exercises may be interrupted. But in the privacy of the chamber, or in the retirement of the barn, the solitude of the field or of the woods, the busy cares of the world may be more easily excluded. The surrounding silence throws a chastening and hallowing influence upon the heart of the suppliant.

To the diffident and fearful, private prayer is an inexpressible privilege.—Some Christians there are, constitutionally, of so sensitive and shrinking a nature it would be almost impossible for them to make even the attempt to pray in public.

In the privacy of the closet the most timid and fearful may throw off all embarrassment.

Secret prayer is admirably adapted to those peculiar states of mind in which every Christian, at times, finds himself. Here we may freely, fully, and penitentially confess our most secret sins—and ask pardon for the same. In the hour of severe trial, of personal or domestic affliction, of fierce temptation, etc., we may, without restraint, let, or hindrance come before Him who "knoweth our frame."

This mode of religious devotion has ever been specially blessed of God in the culture of personal piety, in the peace, prosperity and enlargement of the Christian Church, and in the salvation of men.

We quote the following appropriate passage from the works of Jonathan Edwards:

"The most eminent, divine favors which the saints have enjoyed, according to what we read in scripture, were enjoyed in retirement. The principle manifestations which God made of himself, and of his covenant mercy to Abraham, were made when he was alone, apart from his numerous family. Isaac received that special gift of God to him, Rebecca, when walking alone, meditating in the field. Jacob was retired for prayers, when he wrestled with the angel of the covenant, and obtained the blessing. God revealed himself to Moses in the bush, when in a solitary place in the desert, in Mount Horeb, and afterward, when he was admitted to the closest communion with God which he ever enjoyed, he was alone in the same mountain, where he continued forty days and forty nights. God held communion with those great prophets, Elijah and Elisha, and conversed with them freely, chiefly in their retirement. When Jesus Christ had the greatest prelibations of his future glory, it was not when he was with the multitude, or with the twelve disciples, but when he retired in a solitary place, with only Peter, James and John. And when John, the beloved disciple, was favored with those wonderful visions of Christ, and of his future dispensations towards the church and the world, which are recorded in the Revelation, he was alone in the isle of Patmos.

I do not deny that there are also instances of great favor received by the saints when in company with others; or that there is not much in Christian conversation, and in social and public worship, tending greatly to refresh and elevate the minds of the saints.—All I aim at by what I have said, is to show, that true grace, however much it loves Christian society, in a peculiar manner delights in retirement and secret communion with God.

If persons are much engaged in social religion, and but little moved

when alone with God, there is reason to doubt the reality of their religion."

"Come, O thou Traveller unknown,
Whom still I hold, but cannot see;
My company before is gone,
And I am left alone with thee:
With thee all night I mean to stay,
And wrestle till the break of day."

THE BARREN FIG-TREE.

"WHAT have I here?" saith God. "What fig-tree is this, that hath stood this year in my vine-yard, and brought me forth no fruit? I will cry unto him, 'Professor, barren fig-tree, be fruitful! I look for fruit!' I expect fruit; I must have fruit; therefore betink thyself." At this the professor pauses; but these are words, not blows; then off goes this consideration from his heart. When God comes the next year, he finds him still as he was, a barren, fruitless, cumber-ground. And now again he complains. "Here are two years gone, and no fruit appears! Well, I will defer mine anger for my name's sake; I will defer mine anger for mine praise; I will refrain from thee, that I cut thee not off as yet. I will wait, I will wait to be gracious."

But this helps not. This hath not the least influence upon the barren fig-tree. "Tush," saith he, "here is no threatening. God is merciful. He will defer his anger, he waits to be gracious; I am not yet afraid." O! how ungodly men, that are unawares crept into the vineyard—how do they turn the grace of God into lasciviousness! Well, he comes the third year for fruit, as he did before, but still he finds but a barren fig-tree; not fruit! Now, he cries out again, "O thou dresser of my vineyard, come hither; here is a fig-tree that has stood these three years in my vineyard, and hath at every season disappointed my expectations, for I have looked for fruit in vain. Cut it down; my patience is worn out. I shall wait on this fig-tree no longer."

And now he begins to shake the fig-tree with his threatenings. "Fetch

out the axe." Now the axe is death. Death, therefore, is called for. "Death, come, smite me this fig-tree." And withal the Lord shakes this sinner, and whirls him upon a sick bed, saying "Take him, death." He hath abused my patience and forbearance, not remembering that it should have led him to repentance, and to the fruit thereof. Death fetch away this fig-tree to the fire, fetch this barren professor to hell!" At this death comes, with grim looks into the chamber, yea, and hell follows with him to the bedside, and both stare this professor in the face, yea, begin to lay hands on him, one smiting him with pains in his body, with head-ache, heart-ache, back-ache, shortness of breath, fainting qualms, trembling of joints, and almost all the symptoms of a man past all recovery. Now, while death is thus tormenting the body, hell is doing with the mind and conscience, striking them with its pains, casting sparks of fire in thither, wounding with sorrows and fears of everlasting damnation, the spirit of this poor creature.

And now he begins to bethink himself, and to cry to God for mercy, "Lord, spare me; Lord, spare me." "Nay," saith God, "You have been a provocation to me these three years. How many times have you disappointed me? How many seasons have you spent in vain? How many sermons and other mercies did I of my patience afford you, but to no purpose at all? Take him death." "O! good Lord," saith the sinner; "spare me but this once. Indeed I have been a barren professor, and have stood to no purpose at all in thy vineyard; but spare! O spare this one time, I beseech thee, and I will be better." Away, away! you will not, I have tried you these three years already; you are naught; if I should recover you again, you would be as bad as you were before." The sinner cries again, "Good Lord, try me this once; let me get up again this once; and see if I do not mend." "But will you promise me to mend?" "Yes, indeed, Lord, and I vow it too."

I will never be so bad again, I will be better."

"Well," saith God, "Death let this professor alone for this time; I will try him a little longer. He hath promised, he hath vowed that he will amend his ways. It may be he will mind to keep his promises. Vows are solemn things; it may be he will fear to break his vows. Arise from off thy bed."

And now God lays down his axe.—At this the poor creature is very thankful, praises God, and fawns upon him, shows as if he did it heartily, and calls to others to thank him too. He, therefore, riseth as one would think to be a new creature indeed. But by that time he hath put on his clothes, is come down from his bed, and then ventured into his yard or shop, and there sees how all things have gone to sixes and sevens, he begins to have second thoughts, and says to his folks, "What have you all been doing? How are all things out of order? I am, I cannot tell what, behindhand: one may see if a man be but a little aside, that you have neither wisdom or prudence to order things." And now, instead of seeking to spend the rest of his time to God, he doubleth his diligence after this world. "Alas," he says, "all must not be lost; we must have provident care." And thus, quite forgetting the sorrows of death, the pains of hell, the promises and vows he made to God, to be better; because judgment was not (now) speedily executed, therefore the heart of this poor creature is fully set in him to do evil.—BUNYAN.

SPEAKING EVIL.—I took great care to speak evil of nobody, and to hinder others from doing it, as much as I could; so that it was well known, where I was, people's characters were secured from evil tongues.—MADAME GUYON.

THE BIBLE is my mirror, in which I see what I was in Adam before the fall—what I became by the fall—what I am, and should be in Christ now, and what I shall be through eternity.

CHRISTIANITY A TRINITY.

BY REV. IRA G. GOULD.

It is remarkable how a trinity prevails. God is a trinity, constituted of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. It prevails in man; he is a trinity of soul, body, and spirit. We may observe a trinity in the body, of flesh, bones, and blood. It may also be seen in the vegetable kingdom. Withal, Christianity is a trinity: 1. It is a *principle*. But this is not all. 2. It is an *affection*. But these do not constitute the whole of religion. 3. It is an *action*. It is a principle to be believed, an affection to be enjoyed, and an action to be performed. It is an entire subjection of the whole being to God. The subjection of the mind by faith, the subjection of the affections by love, and the subjection of the will by obedience. Anything short of this does not save, does not satisfy the soul, honor God, nor answer the demands of the divine law. It is a doctrine to be believed, an affection to be felt, and a law to be obeyed. It is a creed, a life, a work. It is to know, to do, and to feel; knowing, feeling, doing. These three elements were strikingly manifest in Jesus Christ, whose life was a specimen of real and practical Christianity. He knew God, he loved God, and he obeyed God. They are expressed in these very words of our Saviour: "O, righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee." John xvii, 25. "The world may know that I love the Father." John xiv, 31. Again, he says to his Father: "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." John xvii, 4. Pure religion is the fulfillment of the three following requirements: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, might, mind and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in

heaven." The first expresses its doctrinal feature, the second its experimental, and the third its practical.—The three following passages express the whole of religion. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John xvii, 3. Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks." 1st Thess. v, 16, 17, 18. "Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."—John xv, 8. Knowledge is an essential part of religion. There is an essential theory, in all true piety. In a measure, the head must be right, before the heart can become right. In effecting the fall of man, the devil reached the heart through the head. Thus God reaches the heart. Before he saves, he enlightens. The light of the sun reaches us before its heat. Thus the light of God shines into the mind, before his love warms the heart. Prior to the coming of Christ in the soul, comes a John the Baptist. But knowledge is only a part of piety. This affects a region nearer the soul, the affections, the sensibilities. These it restores to a right state. This phrase expresses the positive element of religion: "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Col. i, 27. Piety is not merely God discovered and sighed for, but it is God grasped, God felt, God possessed. The true Christian cries out as did Thomas, "My Lord! and my God!"

The positive element of Christianity, is a life, an inner life, a divine life, God in us, the union of divinity and humanity, a oneness with Christ. This is the gospel's mystery, its power, its glory. But this is not its ultimate design altogether. Its end is rather, work, doing, action. When our divine Master and Pattern descended into our humanity, he possessed all of this, but his words to the Father were, "Lo, I come to do thy will O, God." Heb. x, 7. "Let this mind be in you," beloved, "that was also in Christ Jesus."—Phil. ii, 5. And to the end it may, let your motto be, 'Believe, love and obey.'

SOUNDNESS OF JUDGMENT.

An ancient poet says,—

To some the powers of bloody war belong,
To some sweet music, and the charm of song;
To few and wondrous few has Jove assigned,
A wise, extensive, all-considering mind.

In the paradise of fools Parnell says, "Our defects and follies are too often unknown to us; nay they are so far from being known to us, that we pass them as demonstrations of our worth. This makes us not only easy with them, but fond to show them, fond to improve them, and delighted to be esteemed for them."

Cecil observes, "A perfectly just and sound mind is a rare and invaluable gift. But it is unusual to see even such a mind unbiased in all its actings. God has given this soundness but to few—and but a very small number of those few escape the bias of some predilection perhaps habitually operating, and none are at all times perfectly free. I once saw this subject forcibly illustrated: A watchmaker told me that a gentleman had put into his hands a watch that went irregularly. It was as perfect a piece of work as was ever made. He took it all to pieces and put it together again twenty times. No manner of defect was to be discovered, and yet the watch went intolerably. At last it struck him that possibly the balance wheel might have been near a magnet. On applying a needle to it he found his suspicions true. Here was all the mischief. The steel works in the other parts of the watch had a perpetual influence on its motions and with a new wheel it went as well as possible. If the soundest mind be magnetized by any predilection it must act irregularly."

That men do not judge well, even in matters of the highest importance, is but a melancholy truth too often visible. But that Providence has given the power to judge well to some, and withheld it from others, is not quite so certain. Indeed the contrary seems nearer the fact. Judging or reasoning well, so far at least as practice is con-

cerned, is an art, and must be learned. Heaven no more gives us this art, than it gives us the power to play skillfully on a musical instrument, without our learning. We all come into the world alike totally ignorant of everything, and whatever knowledge we may attain is all the effect of learning. True, some have greater abilities to learn than others, and some are placed in more favorable circumstances for knowledge than others. But a great, if not the chief difference among mankind is, that one, by diligence in learning has acquired an extensive understanding or knowledge of things, and consequently is able to judge well in respect to a multitude of different subjects, while another, through his neglect of his intellect, remains in ignorance, subject to its innumerable, undesirable accompaniments, and complaining, it may be, that Providence has not favored him as it has his intelligent neighbor. Such is the arrangement of Providence in matters of knowledge and sound understanding, as well as in respect to wealth, that "The diligent hand maketh rich." Even the invisible magnetism of the watch was discovered after the twentieth trial. And magnetic predilections, as great hindrances as they truly are in the discovery of truth, are nothing but prejudices, and prejudice is nothing but prejudgment, i.e., judging before examining the evidence, like a judge who should determine a case in law before he had heard the witnesses. If a man will as diligently examine the evidences in respect to a reasonable and important matter of inquiry as the watchmaker did, neither he nor his friends would often have occasion to complain of his judgment. But if he neglects to examine the necessary evidences, and suffers himself to be guided by his feelings, his passions and his sympathies, as most men do, instead of consulting his understanding; (the only power ever given him to judge with), he will seldom, if ever, judge well.

We are as clearly required to "Get understanding," as we are to abstain

from murder or other crimes, and our neglect to do so, may be and often is followed by the most fearful consequences. The Scripture says when fear cometh as desolation and destruction as a whirlwind, then shall they call upon me but I will not answer, for they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord. See Prov. 1st. Errors which are roads to destruction abound everywhere, and are producing the worst effects. And these evils come because men *will teach* before they have ever learned. Instead of following our Saviour who said "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen," (John iii.) they do just the reverse, speak that they know not and testify that which they have not seen. And these teachings are everywhere in great abundance—in your church—in mine—and every other. Hence the necessity for every one to search for a sound understanding as he would for hid treasures; otherwise he will be infallibly deceived, to his loss; it may be to his eternal loss. Suppose every teacher should hereafter speak, not what he believes to be true, but what he knows to be true. What would be the consequence? Perhaps it would cut off nine-tenths of the preaching we now have; whether that be so or not, we should have nothing but the truth.

FORGIVENESS.

BY REV. AMOS B. COBB.

"To err is human, but to forgive is God-like." How important it is that we should be like God in this respect. As we have no peace with God without forgiveness, neither can we have peace in our minds if we retain a hardness against our fellow. Our blessed Lord taught his disciples to say, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," and adds, "Forgive and ye shall be forgiven." "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." We should not dare to sleep holding

an unfriendly feeling toward any man or woman. There is a solemn meaning couched in that saying, "Forgive us as we forgive those that trespass against us." How important that we should examine ourselves and see if we are not faulty in this matter. Have we considered, that when we pray to be forgiven as we forgive others; if we do not forgive them, and do not intend to, we actually pray never to be forgiven, but to be forever condemned? Christ said, "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother has aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

Never attempt to pray with hardness in your heart against a brother, lest your prayer never to be forgiven, be answered. Now, my dear friends, be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth that shall he reap. God has chosen us in Christ that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. The old man will not forgive, but the new man, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness, is of a forgiving spirit; Christ then liveth in us; and the life that we live in the flesh, is by the faith of the Son of God. Forgiveness then, is of the new man, for as he is so are we in this world. The subject of forgiveness is considered by our Lord of so vast importance that he has repeatedly presented it to us in all its bearings. You will see another example in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, in the parable of the king that would take account of his servants. Their conduct is an illustration of ours, the act of the king an illustration of what God will do. So likewise shall my Heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye, from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses. O friends, let us be Christians; then we can meet each other, and look each other in the face, and in each other behold the face of our Father. Hasten, O Lord, the time

when we shall see eye to eye, and understand what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of the Lord. His will it is that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

LET THE LEAVEN WORK!

BY MRS. M. H. FREELAND.

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened."—Mat. xiii, 33.

Let the leaven work; yes, let it work, why not? Ah! here is the difficulty. Does it not make you better to have the life-giving, energizing power of the grace of God—the true gospel leaven—work in you, scattering its life through every part, and sanctifying the whole? Does it not make you happier to have this heavenly life diffused throughout your entire being, consuming the life of sin and self, and causing you to live by faith, on the Son of God? Does it not make you more earnest in your endeavors to save souls and pluck them as brands from the burning? Does it not purge out the Pharisaical leaven of hypocrisy and make you a true man, just what you profess to be? Yea! Is not the effect of the leaven good and desirable to every candid mind? Then why not let it work? Dear Christian reader, why have you so many times, in so many various ways, hindered this leaven from working in your heart; if not altogether quenched the kindling fire! You were in a social meeting a few days since; your longing soul cried out, oppressed, impatient to be free, and soon you felt that a mightier than the strong man armed, had undertaken to deliver you from the roots of bitterness, that had so long sprung up and troubled you. You felt the power of Jesus's blood to wash as white as snow, upon your thirsting spirit; and "Glory to God!" sprang up spontaneously in your soul. The leaven was working there in the deep and hitherto dark

recesses of your soul. But did you let it work by working out, as God worked in? Or, rather, was not your course like that of the nine lepers cleansed, who returned not to give God the glory? You smothered the kindling flame,—quenched the Holy Spirit by allowing the thought “What will others think?” kept your mouth closed, instead of confessing what God had wrought in your soul. Thus a dreary, aching void in your heart experience, instead of that blessed fullness so recently yours; and all because you did not allow the leaven to work; run over though it might in loud praise unto God, exhortations, testimony, or any other way which the Spirit might dictate, your heart all the while crying

“Let the manner be unknown,
So I may with thee be one.”

If we mistake not, this is the grand reason why the Church of God is not now such a power in the earth for good as it was in the days of the Apostles and early Christians, viz: the leaven is not permitted to work.

But there are more ways than one of grieving the Spirit and thus preventing his soul transforming operation on the human heart. One trifling word, oh, how it chills the atmosphere of the soul and grieves the precious Spirit, and if not quickly repented of, will cause his departure. That little article of dress, small, it is true, in itself, but still clearly indicating a tendency to worldly conformity on the part of the wearer, ah! how quickly it makes the soul feel barren of the blessed fruits of the Spirit. The spirit of compromise indulged in, never so little, will most assuredly quench the kindling fire of salvation in the soul, and make the offender feel the curse of Ananias and Sapphira resting upon them. Measures dictated by worldly policy, or the wisdom that cometh from the world; whether resorted to by individuals or churches; by preachers or people; whether to build churches, pay preachers, relieve the poor and distressed, or for any other

praise-worthy object; or on the other hand to obtain the applause—the honor that cometh from men—or any other purely selfish object, the result is the same, the pall of spiritual death quickly shrouds the soul or church that dares thus acknowledge to the world that God is not able to carry forward his own cause without the Devil's help.

Ah! how much it means to “Quench not the Spirit!” but how glorious the results of obedience to this divine requirement. And, on the other hand how fearful the results of disobedience! “Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God.” Dear Christian reader beware lest this be your experience. Fear far more to grieve the ever-blessed Spirit, than that you shall be fanatical if you obey his gentle leadings. Glory be to God! we have the Spirit and the word to guide our poor erring feet in the way of life, and when these fully harmonize we need not fear fanaticism. God is true, and he says “Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not to thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him and *he shall direct thy path.*” There is far greater danger of formalism than fanaticism; and would to God the people might feel it. There is a highway cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in; which vulture's eye hath not seen, nor lion's whelp gone up thereon. Here are security and perfect safety. Hallelujah! And this is the way of perfect obedience to *all* the commands of God, —an unqualified surrender of our entire beings to be used in *God's* way without asking the reason why, the way of holiness. Blessed is that individual or people who walk therein. Fear not, only believe.

THE end of the Gospel is life and perfection. It is to make us partakers of the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness. God himself cannot make me happy, if he be only without me; unless he give a participation of himself and his own likeness unto my soul.—CUDWORTH, ENGLAND, 1617 to 1688.

OBEDIENCE.

BY MRS. L. C. EDELER.

Can souls be otherwise than condemned before the Lord if walking in disobedience to His command? and if condemned, by what authority can they claim the lowest state of grace—even justification? There is, in these days, an antinomian view taken of the mercy of our God through the atonement, and while we are told that "there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who *walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit*"—the first clause of this verse is appropriated indiscriminately by those who are constantly walking after the flesh, and making void the law through faith. Consequently there is a wide departure from Bible holiness, a seemingly utter disregard to its injunctions and precepts as the rule of a holy life; and professors apparently feel as if they could live in the open indulgence of that which is forbidden, and yet claim that they are saved, because they believe in the efficacy of the blood of Christ. Mr. Wesley says: "there are many spiritual quacks who apply indiscriminately the same remedy, having but one idea and that is, to give comfort, instead of ascertaining the seat and nature of the disease so that by confession and repentance it may be removed."

It is blessed to get to Jesus and by faith plunge again and again in the all cleansing fountain, realizing its purifying efficacy down in our hearts, being enabled to say each time,

Streaming mercy how it flows
Now I know I feel it.

and praising the Lord that this is His free gift. We are thus brought out from the kingdom of satan. Jesus was manifest to destroy his works in us, and shall we step right over on his ground to live as his subjects do? No, we are to live no longer to the lusts of the flesh, but to the will of God. We are a purchased people, having been bought with a price and are henceforth to *abstain* from fleshy lusts which war

against the soul, "we are created anew in Christ Jesus *unto good works*, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." There is often a great cry raised when the standard of scriptural holiness, requiring a separation from the world, and the necessity of good works, is enforced; and walking in obedience is looked upon as a state of self-righteousness, but, blessed be God for Scriptural evidence.—James tells us, "Show me thy faith by thy works," and plainly declares that faith without works is *dead*. Our Saviour says: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Also, in Matt. v. 17 19, "Think not I am come to destroy the law, or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven,"—and here we learn that not only the outward observance is required, but such a state of purity of heart must exist that we are kept in thought as well as in word. The sixth chapter of Romans teaches plainly that sin must not reign in our mortal body, because we are not under the law but under grace. In obeying the commands we get into the narrow way, but if we are of the many who do not go in thereat, but make broad paths for ourselves, what ground of hope can we have? Will it not be said unto such: "Depart from me ye that *work iniquity*?" How very clear the first part of the eighth chapter of Romans is on this point, referring not to the *profession* of faith made, but declaring that to be carnally minded is *death*: no matter how many touching and eloquent sermons we may hear, nor how many sickly, sentimental experiences we may relate, through the emotional sensibilities being aroused: if there is a following after the flesh—if the carnal mind is not renounced, such an one according to the Bible is on the road to death. The god of this world is blinding the eyes of his followers by causing them to take upon themselves the name of Christians, so that they

will rest upon a false hope, depending upon a mere profession for salvation. Can we, dare we, in view of our eternal state refuse to walk in obedience, and in holiness and righteousness? Why, it is awful to see the vast multitude of those professors who are living in worldliness and vanity, like the certain rich man who was clothed in linen and purple, and fared sumptuously every day,"—while on the contrary we read of the evidence of the true self-denial of a Christian in the example of all who, like Moses, chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, plainly proving the truth of the words that we cannot serve God and mammon.

While we have these commands laid down in the word, the blessed Holy Spirit speaks directly to our hearts and we must obey the inward admonition. Its first act is to convince us of sin, and if we follow its drawings we are led to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for pardon. Soon afterward, when convinced of the remains of natural depravity, the Spirit draws us to a deeper consecration,—an entire surrender of soul and body; if we obey and consent to give all for Christ, we are soon brought out into full salvation. How many halt just here; resist the teachings of the Holy Ghost; cling to their idols, and break the first and greatest command, and fall into a state of coldness and formality. But if the surrender is made and the blessing received, then duties and crosses are presented,—testimonies for Jesus in any place or manner in which He directs. We need to be very careful; to obey every time.

How often has the Spirit been grieved and the inward light withdrawn, because of a refusal to yield and let God have His way in us,—because of a shrinking from the peculiar crosses we are required to bear, and then, instead of repenting and confessing, how many refuse to humble themselves but try to hold right on and talk of the way of naked faith without feeling, when, in

reality, they are, like Sampson, shorn of their strength.

Mr. Wesley says: "The Holy Spirit may become to us as a familiar friend with whom we daily converse;" but when resisted, its influence becomes weaker, we get into a sort of mist in regard to duty, and in thinking sometimes we must work for Jesus anyhow, our words are like a shot fired at random without doing any body any good; and finally, we fall into a state of doubt and unbelief, conclude that it is not possible to be led by the Spirit, and doubt the truth of the passage 'as many are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God.' Most assuredly if one clause of the promise is forfeited through wilful disobedience, there is no power to believe the other.

Oh the blessed path of obedience springing from a living faith—an obedience which is declared to be more acceptable than sacrifice, and in the exercise of which we eat the good of the land and receive the Holy Ghost. Then we bear the easy yoke—our only care, delight is this, to hear the bridegroom's voice, and the language of our heart is,

Lord obediently we'll go,
Only Thee resolved to know,
Only Thou our leader be,
And we still will follow Thee."

Then we are following more fully in the footsteps of our father Abraham, who his faith by his *obedience* showed. Glory be to Jesus. He saves me, salvation is streaming down now into my heart. I am glad that the Spirit bears witness with mine to-day, that I am a child of God.

SAVED.—I have always union with God. I feel nothing but pure love in the greatest afflictions. I am often powerfully tempted, and sometimes heavy; this was in our Lord. I feel that I am going on. I have a continual opening between God and my soul, in prayer, love, and gratitude. I have a constant heaven in dependance upon the Lord. I feel weaker than ever and God my all.—BRAMWELL.

A DRUNKARD SAVED.

A YOUNG MAN who had been connected with a distinguished law firm in the city of New York, gave the following account of his experience, and how the Lord had answered his prayers :

"The past two weeks have been full of the richest experience of the Divine goodness and grace. Two weeks ago I was a hopeless drunkard—a poor lost man I was. My friends had made every possible effort to reclaim me, but with no avail. I had often resolved, with many tears, to break away from the cruel bondage in which I was bound. I took upon myself the most solemn vows that I would reform.—What were resolutions and vows before such an inexorable enemy as mine! I could not stand to them a moment. At last I gave myself up to perish.—There was no hope for me. I was given up, too, of all the world. In this state of despair I went down to the fishing banks one day. There I was attracted by the very pleasing countenance of a young man, I knew he must be a poor man, and a fisherman by profession. He helped me to understand the art of fishing. There was a world of happiness in his face. I loved to look at it. At last, out of gratitude for the little favors which he showed me, a perfect stranger, I took out my flask of liquor and offered him drink. 'No,' he said, 'I never drink intoxicating drink, and ask the Lord Jesus to help me never to touch it.' I looked at him with surprise and inquired, 'Are you a Christian?' 'Yes, I trust I am,' he answered. 'And does Jesus keep you from drinking intoxicating liquor?' 'He does; and I never wish to touch it.' That short answer set me to thinking. In it was revealed a new power. I went home that night; I said to myself as I went, 'How do I know but Christ would keep me from drinking if I would ask him?' When I got to my room I thought over my whole case, and then I knelt down and I told Jesus, just as I would tell you, what a poor, miserable wretch

I was; how I had struggled against my appetite, and had always been overcome by it. I told him if he would take that appetite away, I would give myself up to him, to be his forever, and I would forever love and serve him. I told him I felt assured that he could help me, and that he would. Now I stand here, and tell you most solemnly that Jesus took me at my word. He did take away my appetite then and there, so that, from that sacred moment of my casting myself on his help, I have not tasted a drop of liquor, nor *desired* to taste it. The old appetite is gone, and I tell you, moreover, that I gave myself to Jesus in that very hour, and I received him as a power in my soul against every enemy of my salvation, and he saves me in his infinite grace. I am delivered through the power of Jesus from the awful destruction which was before me. Such has been the method of my relief."

A TRUE CHRISTIAN was never known to be a persecutor. The cruel disputes which have arisen among faithless Christians, has not necessarily sprung from the nature of scriptural doctrines; but rather from the pride of those tyrannical doctors who have contended for their particular explication of such doctrines. That the doctrines of the Gospel should be utterly rejected because some churchmen have taken occasion from them to stir up vehement contests would scarcely be less absurd than to contend that anarchy is to be preferred before an excellent code of laws because unprincipled lawyers are accustomed to foment strife, and have it always in their power to protract a cause.—FLETCHER.

TEST OF CALL.—Success in preaching Christ crucified is the proof of our call—of our apostleship—of the divine validity of our ministry. It is the great practical argument against all who deny it or call it in question. If we save souls, we are true successors of Christ and the Apostles.—OLIN.

FOR CHRIST'S SAKE.

It was quite an annoyance to a fashionable family, in our church, that two old ladies who adhered to a very ancient mode of dress, occupied the pew before them every Sunday. They wore narrow black silk dresses, wide collars, and old fashioned bonnets. The children had drawn several caricatures of their neighbours in the hymn-books.—These thoughtless young people did not notice the sweet peace which illuminated the faces of the two old ladies, while they "worshipped the Lord in the beauty of holiness."

When we were sent out on a collecting tour for the missionary society, we presented the book very gladly to the rich lady who dressed so beautifully. She received us in an elegant drawing-room, but a cloud shadowed her face on learning our errand. After making many excuses about her want of faith in such far off missions, and her preference for home charities, and the hard times which limited her expenditure, she returned with a half crown.

At an unpretending little house we stopped rather unwillingly. Here lived those shabby old ladies who looked so antiquated; it was almost useless to solicit their aid. The room was plainly furnished, with well-worn furniture and a home-made carpet; there were no pictures on the wall, no books visible, except an old family Bible which looked as if it was always open. At the sight of the little subscription book, it was unnecessary to mention our object; the younger sister went to some distant bureau drawer, and brought back an old leather purse. It was full of bright gold pieces. With a radiant face she gave three shining sovereigns into our hands, saved by self-denial and numberless economies, by sales of fruit and eggs, by constant remembrance of the injunction, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." We had been disposed sometimes to laugh at the two old ladies, but never again did we think of them without reverence and love.

When we were preparing to send a present to the hospital, a chaise stopped at the door, and the two old ladies appeared bearing a goodly store. The old chaise was filled with cups of jelly and bottles of current wine, with soft linen and warm blankets. They had brought enough to fill a generous box. It was easy to see why the dear old people wore the same dresses year after year, and carried such faded parlors.

We heard of a very poor family, and went to ascertain what they especially needed; we had been anticipated by the same charitable hands. There was the willow basket, familiar in all the houses of our poor, which had brought bread and meat, and cordials for the sick. With our two old ladies, it seemed very true that "giving does not impoverish;" their cruise of oil was never empty.

Again we called at the old house to beg something for soldiers' tracts and books; still one gold coin remained to send us on our way rejoicing. They were quilting in the clean old kitchen; this must be designed for themselves; but they asked us to walk into the parlour, and see a few articles they were about to send to a home missionary's family. For many months they had been sewing and knitting, until a table was covered with garments for the unknown brother in Christ.

There was a sacred house; it reminded us of the one to which Jesus used to resort. We never failed to find gold in the worn purse, food in the closet for the hungry, wine and soup for the sick, whenever we applied to the women who were "poor, yet making many rich."

When jewels and costly dress will have lost their charm, when the white robe of Christ's giving will be the only one desired, our two old-fashioned ladies will find their gold and silver, hoarded for his sake, safe for them, and all their charities, given so noiselessly that the left hand did not know what the right hand did, repaid a thousand-fold!—TRACT JOURNAL.

DYING TESTIMONIES OF TWENTY-NINE METH- ODIST MINISTERS.

From Steven's History of Methodism, Selected by

REV. R. DONKERSLEY.

I am happy as I can be on earth, and as sure of glory as if I were already in it. *Here goes an unprofitable servant.*—WM. GRIMSHAW.

The way is clear. My soul is at liberty.—JOHN MANNERS.

"Have you followed cunningly devised fables?" inquired one at his bedside. "No! no! no!" was the emphatic reply. "Do you see land?" "Yes, I do."—ALEXANDER COATES.

O, the preciousness of faith! I have finished my course. My pilgrimage is ended. Oh thou Friend of sinners, take thy poor old friend home.—TORRIL JOSS.

Rev. George Whitefield said while at dinner with a friend at Princeton, N. J., "I shall die silent. It has pleased God to enable me to bear so many testimonies for Him during my life that he will require none from me when I die." The only words he uttered during his agony were, "I am dying."

God is always with me.—JOHN RICHARDSON.

Tell my friends in Barbadoes that I die happy in God.—DANIEL GRAHAM.

I am a witness that the blood of Christ does cleanse from all sin. O, the goodness of God to a poor sinner! The Lord has finished his work, has cleansed me, and filled me with his fullness. O what a weight of Glory will that be, since thy weight of grace, O Lord, is now so great? Jesus is come!—DUNCAN WRIGHT.

It is better for me to be dissolved, that I may be with Jesus.—JOSEPH COWNLEY.

I am happy, I am happy! For the last four days my soul has constantly been in a state of inward glory. I have done with prayer now; I can love, I can praise, but I cannot pray.

Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.—JOHN VALTON.

When I get to glory I will make heaven ring with my voice, and wave my palm over the heads of the saints, crying, Victory! victory in the blood of the Lamb!—JOHN PARSONS.

All is well, all is well!—WM. HUNTER.

He that I have served for near fifty years will not forsake me now. Glory be to God and the Lamb, forever and ever! Amen! amen! amen!—ALEXANDER MATHER.

Hark! do you not hear? They are come up for me. I am ready, quite ready! Stop, say nothing but glory! glory!—PEARCE DICKINSON.

Praise him! praise him! praise him!—THOMAS KYTE.

I can look back upon the time I was convinced that I was a lost sinner. I can look back with joy on the day when Mr. Whitefield preached from that text, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," when joy so overpowered me, that whether I was in the body or out of the body, I could not tell; when I appear before my Saviour, I will cast my crown at his feet.—WM. SIMPSON.

I know I am dying, but my death-bed is a bed of roses; I have no thorns planted upon my dying pillow. Heaven is already begun; everlasting life is won, is won, is won! I die a safe, easy, happy death. Thou, my God, art present; I know, I feel that thou art. Precious Jesus! Glory, glory be to God!—JOHN PAWSON.

He has indeed, been a precious Christ to me, and now I feel him to be my rock, my strength, my rest, my hope, my joy, my all in all.—THOMAS RUTHERFORD.

Victory! victory through the blood of the Lamb—GEORGE SHADFORD.

I feel Christ more precious to my soul than ever.—GEORGE STORY.

My dear, I must die.—SAMUEL BRADLEY.

O how this soul of mine longs to be

gone, like a bird out of his cage, to the realms of bliss! O that some guardian angel might be commissioned, for I long to be absent from the body.—
JOHN FLETCHER.

I have no extraordinary triumph, but all is peace.—DANIEL M. ALBUM.

O what has the Lord discovered to me this night! O, the glory of God! the glory of God and heaven! O, the lovely beauty! the happiness of paradise God is all love, he is nothing but love. O, help me to praise him! O, help me to praise him! I shall praise him forever! I shall praise him forever.—
ROBERT WILKINSON.

Glory to God in the height of His Divinity! Glory to God in the depths of His humanity! Glory to God in His all-sufficiency; into His hands I commend my spirit!—EDWARD PERRONET.

God has purged me from all dross; all is done away. I am all love.—
CHARLES PERRONET.

The best of all is, God is with us.—
Farewell! Farewell!—JOHN WESLEY.

My hope is joyous, glory to Christ. Pardon—accept—heal—complete. He pardons—accepts—RICHARD REECE.*

Christ Jesus the Saviour of sinners and life of the dead. I am going, going, going to glory! Farewell sin! farewell death! praise the Lord.—
ROBERT NEWTON.

"O, may I triumph so,
When all my warfare's past;
And, dying, find my latest foe
Under my feet at last."

WE are often tempted to censure where we ought to be forbearing; though the more we ourselves become what we ought to be, the less acute and less gratified we are in marking or mentioning the failings of others.

THE truth must be preached, though hell break out into opposition; and we must keep faith and a good conscience, though persecutors print on our sides the marks of the Lord Jesus.—*An Old Divine.*

THE CHRISTIAN AMBASSADOR. HIS QUALIFICATIONS.

BY REV. SAMUEL SPARKES.

We have said the ambassador should be a man in whom the government which sends him has confidence. What confidence may we ask, can the court of heaven repose in a wicked man? Unto the wicked God saith, "What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant into thy mouth?" Ps. l, 16. Can men of the world, earth-born, sensual persons, "whose god is their belly, who mind earthly things,"—men who view the ministry as the stepping stone to ease, and worldly influence, preach Jesus and the resurrection, with a power and pathos that would at all justify the expression of "*beseeking men to be reconciled to God?*" Impossible! The popish idea of *wicked* men being legitimate priests, or ministers, is absurd; nor are the protestant churches so far removed from this dogma as is generally supposed. The seeming success of wicked men in the ministry is no evidence in their favor. Judas may cast out devils and work miracles in the name of Christ. A woman possessing the spirit of divination, may follow Paul, loudly confirming his teaching, but the influence of such persons on Christianity must be evil and only evil continually.

Often nations derive what knowledge they possess of each other, mainly through the medium of ambassadors and their attendants. If the habits of the ambassadors and those about him, are not a favorable specimen of the nation he represents, his conduct will leave unfavorable impressions. How often does an unfaithful minister destroy, not only his own usefulness, but that of his successors, leaving a blighting influence in the neighborhood, which it takes years to overcome.

It is not enough for the ambassador to be *true to the nation* he represents, but he must be in sympathy, hearty belief and co-operation, *one* with the

sovereign, or *appointing power* that sends him. For instance, the President of these United States will select, to fill the important office of ambassador, especially to a great power, a man who will represent his policy, on any given subject, whatever it may be. To him he has to confide, not only the *general policy*, but also the *secrets* of the State, and to open to his minister the private workings of his own soul. Discordant views between the ambassador and his cabinet, would lead not improbably to great national blunders, ruinous not only to the honor and policy of the President and the nation. If this is a just view of the case, can the President be expected to employ in this office any but "*favorites?*" Assuredly not—the nature of the case forbids it.

Will the Court of Heaven commission to our world an ambassador with whom it has no fellowship, a man who loves not our Lord Jesus Christ, nor appreciates his plan of saving sinners, in whose heart zeal for God and love of souls has no place? This is impossible. Christian ambassadors are the friends of Jesus, "members of his body, of his flesh, and his bones." One with him as he is one with the Father. The mind and the spirit of Christ is in them, and they are united to him as the branch is to the vine. They obey his commands, anticipate his desires and carry them out in every particular. It is their meat and drink to promote their Lord's honor and glory.

Furthermore, the ambassador of the cross is read as a "living epistle" of the religion of Jesus, and the people will form their impressions accordingly. If so, how important that the minister be a devoted, pious man.

Abraham is called the "friend of God," who said, "I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." Gen. xviii, 19. Abraham "walked before God and was perfect," and no good thing was withheld from him. His life was an exhibition of faith and goodness, and,

as *God's representative*, he honored him in the world. Hence, in blessing, the Lord blessed him, and in multiplying, he multiplied him, and showed him his salvation. Paul, the Apostle, was faithful to his mission, and as an ambassador, in his preaching and living, faithfully presented the doctrines and claims, the spirit and purity of the gospel. These distinguished ambassadors are examples and patterns for those who, in all after ages, present the compassion and claims of Jesus to a world in arms.

The ambassador should be a man of *good health, capable of physical endurance, and possess, at least, ordinary mental powers.*

Under the Mosaic dispensation, the Levitical Priesthood was guarded against bodily defects, no man could officiate as priest at the Jewish altar, on whose person existed a blemish or defect. See Leviticus xxi, 17-20. On this subject, I will introduce the sentiments of Dr. A. Clarke. In his comment on these words, he says,

"Never was a wiser, a more rational, and a more expedient law enacted relative to sacred matters. The man who ministers in holy things, who professes to be the interpreter of the will of God, should have nothing in his *person*, nor in his *manner*, which cannot contribute to render him respectable in the eyes of those to whom he ministers. If, on the contrary, he has any *personal defect*, anything that may render him contemptible or despicable, his usefulness will be greatly injured, if not entirely prevented. If, however, a man has received any damage in the work of God, by persecution, or otherwise, his scars are honorable, and add to his respectability. But if he be received into the ministry with any of the blemishes specified here, he never will, and never can have that respect which is essentially necessary to secure his usefulness. Let no man say this is a part of the *Mosaic Law*, and we are not bound by it. It is an eternal law, founded on *reason, propriety, common sense, and absolute necessity.*

THE GLORY OF GOD.

BY W. V. DAVIS.

Whether therefore ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. I. Cor., x, 31.

WE are quite too strongly inclined to lower down the standard of divine truth so as to make it accommodate itself to our style of living, and at the same time not bring us under condemnation. Hence the lukewarmness and deadness of so many professing godliness. But truth is *truth*; and by it we shall *stand* or *fall* in the great and coming day. There is enough in the words of the apostle here quoted to furnish us a complete rule for our life and practice. And yet how little influence do they have upon us in regard to our every day life! This passage requires us to *eye* the glory of God at all times, and in all we do. We are not at liberty to eat and drink that which we are conscious is injurious to our health though our appetites may crave it. Hence all spirituous liquors are excluded. We have no right to use any *quantity* or *kind* as a beverage; neither to assist in producing it in any form. In all our deal with our fellow men, it is our duty to *eye* the glory of God; otherwise, we are brought under condemnation. We have no right to cultivate an appetite for any thing which will defile or injure us in soul or body. Therefore the use of *tobacco*, in any form, is an abomination; and it brings its victims under condemnation. There is no such thing as using it in any form to the glory of God. O how vain are the efforts of those who have become *slaves* to this tyrant to maintain their ground in Christian experience. And many even try to seek and obtain the blessing of holiness while indulging in this sinful habit. But all who have ordinary light upon the subject find that they have to cast away the abomination, and make a solemn promise to God never to use it again in any form.

With Divine truth before us, we can-

not produce that which we know is not only a nuisance, but is actually a great curse to the human race. As Christians we cannot raise grain or hops, for the distillery or brewery. Can we ask the blessing of God on a crop which we know will ruin men (in many instances) *soul and body, for time and eternity*? Do we *eye* the glory of God in so doing? Furthest from it possible! Are we then "the light of the world?" *Nay, verily.* But our light becomes *darkness*; and how great is that darkness." O, who can comprehend the amount of ruin and misery which men professing godliness are bringing upon this and future generations, by going into this unhallowed business.

Again, we should *eye* the glory of God by coming out from the world as we are commanded. Instead of joining in with wicked men in secret societies of any description, or in their parties of pleasure, we should hold up the standard of the cross; and by precept and example, teach them that we have something far superior on which to depend for satisfaction for soul and body—for time and eternity.

Our example should speak loudly in favor of religion at all times, and in all places. Our conversation should be seasoned with grace. No idle word should escape our lips. No jesting; no evil-speaking or tale-bearing.

Again, we should *eye* the glory of God in the distribution of our property. We have no right to squander our substance simply to gratify our pride, either in dress or costly equipage of any kind. In our apparel we should set examples worthy of imitation. We are strictly forbidden to put on "gold or costly apparel." Hence, the man or woman who indulges in this practice, by putting on gold in any form, for the sake of having it seen of others, effectually shuts the door of mercy against themselves. No doubt but many will sell their right to heaven for a gold ring or chain, or some other trappings, which, in their pride, and their desire to please the world, they

have attached to their persons. We are not at liberty to lay out our money in expensive buildings, either in private dwellings or churches. All we put on either, just for the sake of appearance, after we have made them comfortable and in good taste, without doubt, is squandering our "Lord's money," and he will call us to an account for the same.

How careful should we be in this matter in our communications with each other as Christians! It should be our constant aim to strengthen each other in the narrow way. We should deal faithfully with each other. We are not to suffer sin upon our brother and sister for fear of offending. If we expect to have the approbation of heaven now, and in the world to come, we must be faithful to our trust in all things. Then we shall hear from the Saviour those blessed words:—"Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

A NEW ZEALAND CHIEF ON TEMPERANCE.

THE New Zealand chiefs who visited New England were invited to a social gathering in Bath. One of the company endeavored to impress upon them the importance of temperance, dwelling at some length upon the fearful consequences which so frequently result from the use of intoxicating drinks, and urging upon the chiefs the duty of becoming abstainers. To this address one of the chiefs made the following reply:

"I have listened very attentively to all you have said. It is all good, every word of it. I will tell you, our food formerly was potatoes, and taro, and fern root, and sometimes pork. We used to eat simple things, and our men were tall and strong. We knew nothing then of intoxicating drink. We were quite well then, never drinking anything but water. (By the by, we used to eat one another sometimes.)—The English came to our country; they

brought with them wheat and flour, and tea and sugar and coffee, and many other things. I looked at our simple food with one eye, and at the forty or fifty English foods with the other, and I chose the English; I said I'll take that food after all. If the English had stopped at the food, it would have been all very well; but they finished up by bringing the stinking water you called rum and beer, and that is all very bad. I saw other people drink them, so I thought I would taste them. I did so, and threw away the glassful in disgust. I tried beer again the second and third time. I spat it out, I loathed it; but after the fifth or sixth time I said, 'well, it's not so bad after all.' So I began to drink it, and now I like it. I tell you that the taste of it among my countrymen is fast increasing, and I am afraid the evil spirit has got so firm a hold of them that it will be their ruin. My poor country! numbers now have become drunkards. I am afraid it has taken too deep root now. I am afraid our nation is ruined. Drinking has become a general habit; even the children drink grog. I can't understand how it is that so many English people, and ladies too, recommend as so good what you say and we find produces so much evil. Even your clergymen say it is good, and it looks to me as if they had the word of God in one hand and a glass of grog in the other. If they kept to the word of God it would be well; but when they recommend the other thing it is bad, very bad. Great numbers follow their example. Why do you not find out who sent rum out first, and punish him! If you are sincere in what you say, why do you not prevent the people from making any more of it? They must know they are doing wrong, and ought to be punished for it."

Addressing Mr. J., their guide, he added:

"I'll tell you what I'll do. If you will advertise in the papers that neither you nor we are to have intoxicating drinks offered to us, any more, so that we may not be tempted to take it, I

will drink no more; but while the ministers of God and the beautiful ladies ask us to take it, I fear I cannot refuse. I have no more to say."

FASHIONABLE PIETY.

In instances not a few, as many heart-sick pastors will bear me witness, religious parents become voluntary purveyors to the anti-christian propensities of their children. At that period of life when godly counsels and pure examples, and loving, but inflexible firmness, are most needed by the inexperienced youth, just about to look upon life in its more seductive dangers and aspects, do we often see parents; hitherto bright examples of consistent, fervent piety, suddenly transformed in their characters and views. Fathers, long remarkable for the gentle, beautiful dignity of their sway over the household domain, relax the strictness of their principles, and recognize no law higher than the inclinations of their children. Mothers, long known and revered for Christian simplicity and fidelity, and even *awful* for their uncompromising opposition to worldly vanities, pleasures, and conformities, contrive to back-slide when the time comes for their daughters to leave school, in order to introduce them into life with proper *eclat*. The poor young creatures, all decorated and prepared for immolation upon the altars of fashion by maternal indulgence or ambition, powerfully remind us of the children caused by the apostate Jewish parents to pass through the fire to Moloch.

The evil here referred to strikes us as one of fatal tendency as well as of alarming and increasing magnitude, not only in our large cities, where fashion is supposed to exert the most potent influence, but in many of our formerly quiet country towns and villages are our Christian families giving way to the spirit of the world, and opening their doors to amusements which have long since been placed under condemnation by all the spiritual piety in the

land. It seems recently to have been discovered that cards, balls and operas; are in no way incompatible with a creditable profession of religion, and that they constitute innocent and salutary methods for the acquisition and display of such graces as most befit the sons and daughters of educated, opulent Christian families.

We invoke the attention of parents to this overflowing fountain of corruption, which threatens to inundate the churches of all our pious denominations, and banish from among us the simplicity of our Christian habits and the angelic purity of our Christian homes. The example of such a fashionable piety is fearfully contagious, and calls for immediate earnest interference. One of the most alarming symptoms of this spreading plague is the complacent approbation now and then accorded to it by a popular preacher. We desire none of his laurels, and we shall have a more quiet conscience for having raised this note of warning, whoever may sneer or anathematize.—DR. OLIN.

THE living water is a gift, and it is a never failing accompaniment of all the other gifts; and if it be wanting then every one of them is wanting.

Without holiness no man shall see God. Without the Spirit we are none of Christ's. The Spirit is called the earnest of our inheritance; and if we obtain not the earnest on this side of time, we shall not obtain the inheritance on the other side of time. Be assured that he who opens the portals of the mind for a welcome admission of the tidings of pardon and acceptance, does not close it upon the truth which ever follows in their train, that we shall never reach heaven unless by sanctification we are made meet for heaven.—CHALMERS.

I AM more than ever convinced of this truth, that the degrees in heaven will astonish thousands.—BRAMWELL.

FINDING A SERMON.

"Where," said a plain-spoken elder to his pastor,—"where did you get that sermon last Sunday morning? We have not had one with *more juice* in it for many a day."

"Well," said the pastor, "part of it came from your house, and part from neighbour V—B—'s, and part from Widow R—'s; and one of the best hints in it came from your little boy, Frank. I picked up that sermon in one day of pastoral visiting."

He was a wise pastor. He had not a very large library, and his family increased faster than his books. But the book of human nature is never exhausted, and so he set out often, and went from house to house *studying his people*. And by the firesides of his flock he gathered up the suggestive materials for his richest practical discourses. If he was preparing a sermon on "Trusting God in times of trial," he recalled all the cases of trouble and affliction that had come to his knowledge during his last days of pastoral visitation. People love to tell their troubles to their minister, and always will do so if he is a cordial, approachable man (as every pastor should be). So, in reviewing the various trials in which we need the divine support, he drew his illustrations from the many tales of trials that had reached his ear and touched his heart at the hearth-stones of his parishioners. Elder A—had told him of his religious griefs and despondency; neighbour V—B—had spoken of his anxieties about a wayward son; and good widow R—had her usual dolorous lament over her bereavement, and "what hard work it was to make both ends meet, since *her man* had died of the rheumatism." Miss M—had told him all her difficulties in finding her way to Christ. For each one of these troubled souls the good pastor had a cheery word of consolation. With each of them he prayed. And then he went back to his study, and wove all

these individual cases (without making his allusion so personal as to be recognised) into his next Sabbath's sermon.

This is the secret of a long and lasting ministry. The pastor who studies his Bible and human nature never wears out, for his materials are inexhaustible. His books may be few, but every day's life of one of his people adds a new page to that endless volume—the *book of human experience*. How shall a minister of Christ understand that pregnant volume without studying it? And where can he study it better than by the firesides and sickbeds of his flock? If our people need our preaching to help them to live, we as certainly need their lives to help us to preach.—T. L. CUYLER.

THE POWER OF PRAYER.

Prayer is as powerful as ever. The instrument has lost nothing of its ancient value, only we have not learned how to use it. No secret impediment, hid beneath the waves of mystery, has stopped the working of our telegraph, and there is no defect in the medium itself, that makes our feeble signals fail. Even now, a true prayer whispered from the dust will thrill to the throne; and the word has not been yet revoked which says, "Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear." We are not straitened in God, but in ourselves. As at the cry of Moses, the Red Sea was parted by the rod of Omnipotence; as, after three years' famine, when the bird dropped from the bough, and the leaf withered from the stem, and all Israel was but a dying nation in a dying land, the cry of Elijah brought down "abundance of rain;"—the cry of the believer might still bring wonders to pass, and if prayer were put forth in all its power, we should see yet "greater things than these."—"Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, and see if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, so that there shall not

be room enough to contain it." But this power of prayer is the very thing we want, and how can it be obtained? Can we forget that the power of prayer is the power of God, and that he is ready to impart it at our request? Even the patriarch of heathen bards had light enough to say, "Prayers are the daughters of God;" and the ancient Greeks thought all things were possible to the *enthusiast*, that is one filled with the Deity. "Be ye filled with the Spirit," is the language of our more sure word of prophecy; and to be filled with spirit is to be filled with light, filled with faith, filled with that Divine life which will be ever ascending to its source, and breaking forth in free, spontaneous prayer. Brethren we must pray for the power of prayer, we must ask for that Spirit, taught by whose influences we can never "ask amiss;" for is not the promise still in force, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. . . . If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Only, as a father seldom gives his best gift to his children the moment they begin to ask for it, we should not be discouraged if God should not answer us forthwith; we must persevere, we must, with the life he has already given, continue to pray for more. Feeling the low measure in which the Spirit is at present granted to be the greatest affliction of the Church, we must give him no rest until the Spirit comes to us in his full magnificence of blessing. The cry of the individual suppliant, the cry of all the mourners in Zion together, should be, "Behold, O Lord, a poor company of creatures gasping for life! Thy Spirit is vital breath; we are ready to die, if thy Spirit breathe not. Pity thine own offspring, thou Father of mercies. Take from us, keep from us what thou wilt, but, oh, withhold not thine own Spirit."—

REV. CHARLES STANDFORD.

IMMORTAL LONGINGS.

BY MRS. P. G. DAVIS.

Oh Lord, my heart panteth after thee as the hart panteth after the cooling water brooks. I sigh, I thirst for the green pastures near the fountain. My soul hungers for the bread of life. From what a height have we fallen? Help us to return to the Shepherd of our souls, that we may feel our responsibility as individuals and as a church. God declares us impenitent if we are neither cold nor hot, and of such he hath said "I will spew thee out of my mouth." The Scriptures saith, "Awake to righteousness and sin not, and Christ will give thee light," but the fearful and unbelieving are an abomination in his sight. How is it with us a church? Are we as Mount Zion that cannot be removed? God will have a zealous people, one that fear him and work righteousness. While we are bandying with the world the door of acceptance may be shut. Can we believe against hope? Oh Lord, let there be a resurrection among the dry-bones that we may yet live. Hear we not the rumbling of thy chariot wheels, O Lord? Grant us the power of quickening grace for there are those that mourn in Zion and feel the chastisement of her reproach. Will the Lord save us with his own right hand? Come not out in strict judgment against the flock of thy pasture for we have trespassed in thy sanctuary? Will the candle of the Lord again shine round about us a people?

EXAMPLES.—I often think of the example of St. Paul, but more of Jesus Christ. I believe it is our place to walk as he walked. I see that the world is in a miserable state, none truly at peace but those who leave all and follow him. Christ has done all in point of merit, but we must ask and receive, that our joy may be full.

I see more than ever, that those who are given up to God continually, are

men of business both for earth and heaven; they go through the world with composure, are resigned to every cross, and make the greatest glory of the greatest cross.—BRAMWELL.

OBSERVE the grand argument with which carnal Christians carry on their opposition. The Comforter, say they, which was promised to our Lord's first disciples, was undoubtedly received by those highly favored missionaries, and conducted them into all the truths of the Gospel. From this divine Spirit they received continual assistance in spreading that gospel; and by him they were endowed with those miraculous gifts which served as so many incontestable marks of their sacred mission.

But as Christianity is at this time so firmly established in the world, the letter of the Holy Scriptures is now abundantly sufficient for every purpose, and there is no longer any necessity for that baptism and illumination of the Spirit, which were evidently requisite among the primitive Christians. As the mistaken Jews, perfectly satisfied with the law of Moses inscribed upon tables of stones, rejected with obstinacy, the promised Messiah, so these carnal Christians, contented with the letter of the New Testament, perversely reject the Holy Spirit of promise. Eph. i, 10. Search the scriptures, for they testify of me (John v, 39), was our Lord's exhortation to these deluded formalists. And the true ministers continue to press the same exhortation upon those who blindly oppose the coming of Christ's spiritual kingdom. He is anxious, with his heavenly master, to put the matter upon this issue, fully conscious that they who peruse those sacred pages with an unprejudiced mind must readily observe that instead of superceding the necessity of a spiritual baptism, they give ample testimony that such baptism is to be considered as a privilege freely offered to the whole multitude of believers.—FLETCHER.

THE LIGHT OF NATURE.

THE celebrated Mr. Hume wrote an essay on the sufficiency of the light of nature, and the no less celebrated Robertson wrote on the necessity of revelation and the insufficiency of the light of nature.

Hume came one evening to visit Robertson, and the evening was spent on this subject. The friends of both were present, and is said that Robertson reasoned with unaccustomed clearness and power; whether Hume was convinced by his reasonings or not, we cannot tell, but at any rate he did not acknowledge his convictions. Hume was very much of a gentleman, and as he rose to depart bowed politely to those in the room, while he retired through the door, Robertson took the light to show him the way. Hume was still facing the door. "Oh! sir," said he to Robertson, "I find the light of nature always sufficient;" and continued, "pray don't trouble yourself, sir," and so he bowed on. The street-door was opened, and presently as he bowed along the entry he stumbled over something concealed, and pitched down stairs into the street. Robertson ran after him with a light, and as he held it over him, whispered softly and cunningly, "You had better have a little light from above, friend Hume." And raising him up, he bid him good night and returned to his friends.

HUMAN LIFE.—Hope writes the poetry of the boy, but memory that of the man. Man looks forwards with smiles, but backward with sighs.—Such is the wise providence of God. The cup of life is sweetest at the brim, the flavor is impaired as we drink deeper, and the dregs are made bitter that we may not struggle when it is taken from our lips.

DEEP THOUGHTS.—If a man be gracious to strangers, it shows he is a citizen of the world, and that his heart is no island cut off from other lands, but a continent that joins them.

THE EARNEST CHRISTIAN AND GOLDEN RULE.

BUFFALO, MARCH, 1864.

ALWAYS GETTING READY.

There are two extremes to be avoided. One is, attempting to build without a foundation. The energies of many professing Christians are often wasted in this fruitless attempt. They labor long and hard to build up a Christian character, without having first laid the foundation of repentance. They have never confessed their sins—have never made restitution where they wronged others. They have been urged to believe in Jesus, and do their duty; have tried to do so, and have felt better. But they started wrong, and have, all the while, been building upon self instead of Christ. Their faith is presumption, and their conversion imaginary, and their hopes of Heaven delusive. In the same condition are those who, having once been really converted, have lost their first love, and are now endeavoring to get back into the enjoyment of religion, by beginning where they left off, to discharge the duties of a Christian. They forget that their first duty is, to "remember whence they have fallen, and repent, and do their first works."

Preachers make this same mistake in directing all their efforts to get sinners converted when those professing Christians whom they expect to work with them, are cold, lukewarm and formal. Such revivals are a positive injury to the cause of God. Persons are generally converted to a little lower standard of piety than that held up in the experience of those who labor for their conversion. Allowance must be made for natural degeneracy. The proselytes of pharisees are usually two-fold more the children of hell than themselves. If those, laboring in the altar have the joy of salvation, sinners will be converted to God; where they are destitute of it, if those who come forward to the altar are converted at all, it will be to the minister, or the church.

The other extreme is, to be always occupied with laying the foundation and never building. This is the case with many in regard to their personal experience. God gives them the light of the Spirit. Instead of coming directly to

Him in the spirit of submission, and consecration and faith for what they need, they go to reading religious books—all right in itself—to learn the way. They are forever settling preliminaries. While they should be seeking God with all the heart, they are endeavoring to study out the philosophy of the plan of salvation. God offers their hungry souls the bread of life, but instead of eating it, they starve on, and occupy themselves with propounding theories as to how it is made.

Others take an advance step. They humble themselves before God, confess and forsake their sins, make restitution, and consecrate themselves to do the whole will of God. The Holy Spirit is imparted to them and they at times rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. They are always going to work for the Lord, but never get quite ready. Instead of resting fully in the Lord Jesus, and going out to do good to the souls and bodies of men, they are always busy in seeking the power to work. They are sincere Christians; but they do not win the crown they would if they were to use the strength they have in leading souls to the cross. Satan gains a great advantage over them in keeping them always busy with themselves. We assure such there is a better way. The Church of Christ cannot afford to lose the services you are capable of rendering. Let your sympathies go out for dying men that are thronging the road to hell. Go to them with earnest exhortations; and to God with fervent prayers in their behalf, and in watering others you will yourself be most abundantly watered.

Sometimes preachers run to this same extreme in making a hobby of getting the church right. They hold up clearly the Bible standard of salvation. Some come to it and are fully saved. There is no misunderstanding as to what they mean by being a Christian. They are going to make a great effort for the salvation of sinners but must first wait until all the members are clear in their experience. It is not enough for them that the general tone of piety is good; that there are more that have power with God than can find opportunity to labor at the altar; they must wait before they make any decided efforts for the conversion of sinners until all the members of the church are fully saved. But while some get out into the light, others become tempted—the church settles down apparently perfectly

contented with expending all their efforts upon themselves, and the conversion of sinners comes to be looked upon as something that is hardly to be expected. We once knew of a man who needed a new house, but he was cautious, and would not commence building till all his preparations were made. He was penurious and would not hire anything done that he could do himself. So one winter he prepared part of the timber. The next winter other pieces were drawn upon the ground. The next winter logs were taken to the mill, and part of the boards were sawed. Then the shingles were made. But before he completed his preparations the timber was rotten. When we passed his premises the last time, the old log-house was ready to fall down, the roof was leaky, and the new house was not any nearer completion than it had been years before. Thus is it with those who are always laying the foundation for a revival of religion.

Brother, if you want a revival, go at it and have one. If you cannot get all the professing Christians who should, to come up to the help of the Lord, take those who will buckle on the armor and rush into the thickest of the fight. Remember Jonathan the son of Saul. The Philistines invaded their country with a strong army. The men of Israel were without arms; and so terrified were they, that they hid themselves "in caves and in thickets, and in wells, and in high places and in pits." Six hundred men alone remained with Saul. Jonathan did not trust in them, but he did trust in God. So he said to the young man that bore his armor, *"Come and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised; it may be that the Lord will work for us; for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few."* They went and God gave them a glorious victory. Imitate his example. And if you cannot get the whole church to do their duty, RELY ON GOD, and in his name join battle, against His enemies, with the help of those who will stand by you. When Jonathan put their enemies to flight the Israelites generally joined in the pursuit, so that the victory was secured. So it is to-day, many timid ones will join with you when they see that the battle is going in your favor.

One of the best revivals we ever knew of, under the labors of the sainted Kendall, was in a church where the majority of the official board—strong men—not only held back, but

persistently opposed the work. But he took the humble and the poor, who were willing to let God work in His own way, and went on laboring for the salvation of souls with as much confidence as if the whole church were united in the effort. Hundreds were converted. And such converts! They came out shouting, able to report themselves, and able and willing to labor for the conversion of others; and they generally hold on their way rejoicing.

At one appointment where we were sent to labor, we met from the outset with a determined opposition from some of the leading official members. And the Presiding Elder headed the opposition. All his personal and official influence was exerted against us. He did not even pray for us or for the prosperity of the work on the charge, at his quarterly visitations. One of the members started opposition meetings at his own house across the street from the church while we were preaching. But we paid no attention to it all, but looked to the Lord for the Spirit, and preached the truth; and salvation came in glorious power. The community for miles around were under conviction, and many were converted. The revival continued all summer, through haying and harvest, and the fruits remain until the present day.

Do not, then, spend all your time in getting ready to do something. Lay the foundation and then build upon it. Heat your iron as hot as necessary, and then strike good heavy blows till you bring it into shape. Break up the fallow ground, and then sow the seed and look for a glorious harvest.

REV. BENAJAH WILLIAMS.

He was a preacher of the old stamp. He reminded us of the prophets of former dispensations. For nearly fifty years he was a travelling Methodist preacher. He was pious, laborious, faithful and successful. On every circuit that he traveled he had revivals—deep thorough revivals. And he took care of the converts. We often meet those who ascribe their salvation, under God, to his faithful labors. He visited from house to house, talked and prayed with the people, distributed religious books, and did all he could for their salvation.

He was a man of deep convictions, and unbending integrity. When, in his old age, his

claim as a superannuated preacher, was withheld by the Genesee Conference to which he belonged, on account of his unbending hostility to sin in the church, especially the sin of slavery, and of worldly conformity, he never murmured, and never compromised. He kept the faith. Once when about seventy years of age, he was made effective, and to subdue him, as was thought, was appointed to a circuit in the wilds of Northern Pennsylvania. He went, and travelled over the mountains and through the wilderness, on foot. His circuit was about seventy miles around it, and he not only filled the appointments, but made new ones, within the bounds of the Baltimore Conference.

He knew all about the privations of the early preachers—sometimes receiving for the support of himself and wife and nine children, less than \$200 a year. Yet by industry and economy he was enabled to give his children a good education. One of them is a travelling preacher, one a lawyer, several of them teachers or professors, and all well settled in life. He lived to see his descendants to the third generation, fifty in number, and all but five still living. His aged partner—who for more than fifty years shared his toils and sacrifices, still survives.

He died at Glencoe, Ohio, on the twenty-second of Jan., 1864, at the house of his son-in-law, Colonel H. Neff. His end was peace. "I heartily forgive all," he said to one who inquired if he felt any hardness towards any individual.

He was a noble, blessed man of God, and his memory will be cherished by thousands.

THE WORK OF GOD.

The first four evenings of the month of February we held meetings in the city of New York. There was a deep interest, and in each meeting some were, we trust, brought out into the clear light of God's saving grace. We know of no greater field of usefulness than is presented in this mighty, growing, wicked city. Its population already numbers nearly, or quite a million of souls. It is commercially, the great metropolis of this continent. There are among its inhabitants, devoted, working Christians, but ungodliness is the rule—sanctity the exception. The churches generally are too aristocratic to reach the masses. Property qualifications are needed to become

worshippers in them. The poor to a great extent do not have the Gospel preached to them.

The 5th, 6th and 7th of February, we preached at Binghamton, N. Y. Some professed to find pardon,—the saints of God were greatly blessed, and there was the shout of the King in the camp. The work of God is evidently spreading in this region.

At Batavia, N. Y., we dedicated a Free German Lutheran Church the 11th ult. The singing was in German, the preaching was in English, and the exhortations in German, and the shouting in the language of Canaan. They have a neat, plain church, and are, as far as we could judge, a simple, earnest people that "know the joyful sound."

In the evening we returned to Buffalo and preached, and also preached the next evening. Three came forward, and two testified very clearly that the Lord had restored to them the joy of his salvation.

At Knoxville, near Corning, N. Y., we held a Quarterly Meeting, the 13th and 14th. We found the work in a prosperous condition, and the Lord gave us a season of refreshing. The preachers report that some forty have been converted on the charge, and they have a circuit of about 150 members.

The 18th and 19th we preached three times at Asbury, near Le Roy, N. Y., at a General Quarterly Meeting. It was a time of getting down before the Lord, and some were greatly blessed. We were obliged to leave on Saturday, but have been told that the meeting left a gracious influence. Bro. Hosmer preached on the Sabbath, one of those bold, powerful sermons that come so naturally from his heart. There is nothing he believes in so much as in God.

At Gowanda, N. Y., we attended a Quarterly Meeting, the 20th and 21st. We did not get there in time to preach on Saturday, but on the Sabbath we held religious services about ten hours. It was a good meeting. The work on this circuit is evidently in a prospering condition.

The 23d, we preached at Rush, Monroe Co. N. Y. This is a fine country, but they need a revival of religion to sweep in power through all the region.

At Seneca Falls, N. Y., we attended a four-days meeting, the 26th, 27th and 28th of the month. It was a profitable time and a good

work has been, and still is in progress there.

Thus we have been, through the month of February, enabled by Divine grace to preach *twenty-five sermons*, and to travel, in going to and from our appointments, over thirteen hundred miles. We have been on the cars frequently when accidents have happened, but God has graciously preserved us. **WE TRUST IN THE LIVING GOD** *therefore we gladly, both labor and suffer reproach.*

TO THE DOUBTING.—Have you once "been in the clear light, but have yielded to a spirit of doubting till you cannot tell where you are, spiritually?" Beloved, consecrate yourself *anew* to God! Lay your redeemed powers at His feet! Give yourselves up to be His and more fully His than ever before—to do and suffer all His will and then believe for a fresh application of the blood to your heart. It will wash away all doubts, all perplexities, all confusion, all fears, and the clear light will shine again in your soul. It will set all things right. Hallelujah to Jesus, that there is such a fountain to which we may come in every time of need. It is often the case that impurity has entered the heart and we for a time are scarcely conscious of it. We find ourselves in trouble; anxiety comes in, and we begin to reason, instead of looking directly to Jesus, to know the cause of our difficulty. The best and only true way to see our hearts is to look to Jesus. The King's highway is a very narrow way; a little of receiving the honor that comes from men, a failure to keep a single eye a lack in bridling our tongues, or a following of our own judgment, and reason, instead of the Spirit of the Lord will bring us into bondage, and then our light is dim, our joy comparative-ly gone, and we are shorn of our strength.

THE GREAT FAIR.—This city has been taken up for eight or ten days, with a Fair for the benefit of our sick and wounded soldiers. The object is a worthy one, but the means employed to secure it are anti-Christian and reprehensible. They had a Post Office, lottery, dances and refreshments. Popular clergymen took part in the exercises, and prominent church members shared largely in the management. This gambling and dancing for the benefit of the sick and dying, even upon so large a scale, be it ever so respectably conducted, is sadly out of place in the time of our nation's calamity when the land is draped in

mourning. 'We have not so low an opinion of the patriotism and humanity of our American people as to think that the wants of our suffering soldiers cannot be duly cared for without resorting to expedients, which, in all probability, will initiate many of our youth into the practice of vice, and will ultimately prove their ruin.

A COSTLY SEAT.—It is said that a pew was recently sold in King's Chapel, Boston, for \$4,500. Religious privileges, in that church must be a luxury within the reach of but a few. We see nothing wrong in this if the principle of selling pews is correct. If it is proper to make a man's right to attend religious worship depend upon his ability to pay five dollars, then there is no impropriety in making it depend upon his ability to pay five thousand. The only consistent course is to make the house of God as free as He has made his grace.

HER MAJESTY AND THE USE OF THE 'WEED.'

It may be interesting to the public in general, and more especially to the smoking section, to learn that the use of tobacco for smoking purposes within the precincts of Windsor Castle has been prohibited by the express command of her Majesty, the Queen. Cards, neatly framed and glazed, requesting that gentlemen will not smoke in the Castle, have been hung in the private rooms of the Lord-in-Waiting and Equerries of the royal suite, and even in the rooms in the York Tower, which are being fitted up for his Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales. The servants and workmen of the Castle are also prohibited from smoking within the Castle, by command of her majesty.

A SOLDIER named Reynolds was hung at Nashville recently for the murder of a fellow soldier. On the scaffold he was penitent and said, "Liquor has been the cause of all my trouble, and has brought me to this dreadful end."

THE FREE CHURCH IN BUFFALO.—We publish this month a statement of its financial condition. The society is in a prosperous condition, spiritual, loving, and united. They keep up their current expenses, and in so doing, they do well. We very much desire to pay off the indebtedness upon the church, and are making an effort to do so. If any of our friends have in their possession any of the

Lord's money that they desire to appropriate for this purpose, they will please forward it to us, or to Bro. Thomas Sully, and we will see that it is duly applied. We know of no better use that money can be put to than in supplying Free Churches, where the poor can have the Gospel preached unto them, and the Spirit of God can have free course. This church is doing a good work.

THE CLOTHING OF THE DEAD.

Why is it that a custom so distasteful, so prevails among us?—the custom of laying out the dead in wearing apparel of silk and satin, or broadcloth. Where did the fashion originate? Why should a dead man be dressed like a living one? Is it *becoming* to the motionless clay to be dressed as for the active scenes of life?—the pale, lifeless form to be shrouded in dark, sombre hues? No, even when sick we throw off our everyday apparel; our black garments do not even become the sick room, we choose the clean, white linen. Then why crowd into the coffin, around the corpse, so much which is unsuitable and needless? Again, a custom should never be tolerated by the Christian world that cannot be followed by those in the humblest walks of life. If the rich bury their dead in costly attire, then the poor, when their loved ones die, necessarily feel wounded if they are obliged to diverge from the popular custom. It is weakness surely, but it is the weakness of human nature thus to feel. Neither is it a *Bible* custom. Where in all sacred history do we find that the body was wrapped in black satin and laid in the sepulchre? How was it with the Saviour? "And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth."

Simplicity and purity of dress best become the dead. I hope really, as "Earnest Christians," we shall keep to this simplicity in this one respect as well as others. Let us be shrouded in death in the emblem of the purity of heaven,—spotless white.—MRS. B. E. GREENE.

THE DELAY in this month's issue, was occasioned by circumstances which we could not control. It was not our fault, and we deeply regret it. We shall do all we can to guard against a similar delay in the future.

TOO MUCH MACHINERY.

"I believe in the Holy Ghost," is a fundamental article in our creed. We must be born again not of opinions, but of the Spirit, or we cannot enter to the Kingdom of Heaven. Revivals where the main dependence is evidently in mean and measures, but where the workings of this Spirit of God are ignored or confined to a stereotyped mode of operations; where the manifestations of His presence and power are repressed, where every outgush of genuine religious emotion is stigmatized as fanatical, may figure largely in the papers, but they result in permanent injury to the cause of God. Sinful hearts must be broken in pieces by the Spirit of God before they can be created anew, and the operation is not one that can, in many cases, be carried on so quietly as some imagine.

We were in one place where a noted evangelist had held a series of union, revival meetings, one evening in one church, and then in another. They reckoned the converts by scores and hundreds. The last evening of the meeting, he succeeded in getting every person in the well-filled house to kneel. It took him some time to accomplish it, but he persevered until he succeeded. "Kneel," he cried out, "if you have no more feeling than the seat you sit upon. Kneel just to please me." When all were on their knees, he said, "Now as fast as you will submit to God, arise from your knees." Of course they were not going to stay there upon their knees all night, and as they arose they were counted as converted! At another place the preacher directed his efforts mainly to remove the idea that there was anything thing supernatural in conversion. He said it was very simple, and very plain. There was no need of making any ado about it whatever. All there was of it was to give the heart to God. A large arm-chair was placed in front of the pulpit, and those who would "give their hearts to God" were invited to come forward, and manifest it by taking a seat in that chair. Many did so, and were received into the church. This was all their wase of their experience. Of course these were extreme cases, but there is reason to fear that the principle involved in them is becoming too popular in our churches. Many who do not give evidence of being Scripturally awakened are encouraged to hope that they have passed

from death unto life. They are received into the church with all the emblems of pride and worldly-conformity upon them. These superficial revivals possess one advantage, we must confess. If the habits of the converts have been respectable, there is but little danger of their backsliding so long as they can be kept within the bounds of morality. They have but little to backslide from. But they are in a most fearful condition, and when the bridegroom comes they will be found, there is every reason to fear, among the foolish virgins who had no oil in their vessels. And what a fearful peril those incur who thus heal slightly! *Cursed be he that doeth the work of THE LORD deceitfully*, Jer. xlviii, 10,—that is superficially. Beware then, lest this curse come upon thee. Better have one soul converted to God, than a hundred converted to thyself or to the church!

MRS. HANNAH PHELPS.

She was converted to God about three years ago at Gowanda, during the General Quarterly Meeting held at that place. For nearly forty years she had lived a formalist in the church, and had never known that she was born of God. She had been a member of the Episcopal Church, a strict formalist, dreaming of heaven, like multitudes of church members at the present day. Her conviction and conversion were remarkable in their character. She had never been to a free Methodist Meeting, but had been much opposed to them. One morning she felt deeply convicted that she ought to go and see for herself. She accordingly got ready and started. When about half way she halted and thought she would not go, but something told her that she had better go and see for herself, and when she opened the door the light shone on the people as she had never seen it before. The Spirit told her that these were the people of God. The Spirit began to work on her heart so powerfully that she became distressed as one dying, and some present thought she was dying. But God soon spake peace to her soul, and she knew that she was born again, and gave evidence that the work was wrought in her heart. She walked in the light, and God gave her the blessing of a clean heart; and then she walked in the light of full salvation until God said "It is enough, come up higher." She loved the word holi-

ness; salvation was her theme and she enjoyed it. She was a woman of strong faith, and had power with God. She was always happy, and prayed without ceasing, and in everything gave thanks. She bore burdens for God that few knew anything about. About two weeks before she died she went to see her friends, to do her duty to them for the last time. She was greatly blessed and came home feeling very clear that she had done her duty. She was soon taken sick and was in great distress and pain but she triumphed in Jesus in the midst of all. I asked her the third morning before she died if Jesus was precious, she said, "Yes, yes, happy in God." She was sixty-seven years of age, when she fell asleep in Jesus.

A. W. PERRY.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS, are still coming in increasingly. Thanks to all our friends for their efforts to spread the truth inculcated by the Earnest Christian. One brother, a private member of the church has sent us fifty-dollars for fifty new subscribers for the E. C. which he has obtained this year. We can still supply back numbers to the first of January to new subscribers. Continue your exertions, and may God bless you.

PRAYERLESS MOTHERS.

"You are the cause of it!" said a dying young man to his mother; "I am just going into eternity; there is nothing before me but misery, black despair, and you are the cause of it. You allowed me to violate the sabbath with the gun and angling rod, and thus I was introduced to that career of crime which in ten years, has brought me to perdition." She turned from his bedside, and with a heart-rending groan left the room. The day of judgment will doubtless disclose many similar cases.

Without indulging children in immoral conduct, a mother may indirectly promote their everlasting ruin. Even while administering salutary advice, she may omit to supplicate a Divine blessing on their souls; and if she do not "ask," how can she expect to "receive?" Of what avail are her exhortations to prayer, so long as she neglects to pray? Does not example preach louder than precept? "God is not mocked." TO EVERY PRAYERLESS MOTHER might not a dying impenitent child, while he gasps forth "To hell I must go," add the awful question, "Are you the cause of it?"