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THE EARNEST CHRISTIAN

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NO. 6.

SEMI-CENTENNIAL SERMON.

BY ELIAS BOWEN, D. D.

It is now half a century since I joined the Old Genesee Conference as a member on trial; and commenced the career of a Methodist Itinerant preacher. And when, a year ago, the Conference of which I am now a member were pleased to invite me to preach a semi-centennial sermon at its next session; I felt I must decline the honor—partly through a sort of prejudice I had imbibed against the commemoration of anniversaries, birth days, and other similar occasions, on account of their most universal abuse; but chiefly from a conscious inability to do either myself or the Conference any credit by the undertaking. Reflecting, however, that I had never allowed myself to have my own way in opposition to the indications of the will of the Conference, and that the brethren imposing the obligation would be responsible for any short comings in the performance, after I had done the best I could, I resolved to comply with the invitation; and I now stand before your reverend body for that purpose.

The following text has been chosen for the occasion:

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

"Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach unto you any other gospel than that we have preached unto you let him be accursed."—Gal. 1: 6-9.

In looking over the history of our fallen race, the conclusion of Tytler, that it is little else than a record of the crimes and miseries of mankind, forces itself upon our minds. Even the Church, though scarcely liable to the imputation here thrown upon the world in general; has nevertheless been characterized by an almost "perpetual backsliding." If she have had her seasons of revival and prosperity, they have been "few and far between." Apostacy from God has been the rule: a state of experimental and practical piety the exception.

To say nothing of the antediluvian, or patriarchal Church—the apostacy of the one culminating in that universal corruption which left but a single righteous family to enter the ark; and of the other, in the deep degradation and darkness of Egyptian bondage—a glance at the Jewish Church alone, will sufficiently demonstrate the truth of our position with respect to religious apostacy. How marvelously soon did "the Church in the wilderness" become "removed from" Moses and from God, and plunge into the foulest idolatry, after "he had brought them up out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and an outstretched arm." And how soon and often, during their forty years' journey from Egypt to Canaan, and after they became settled in the promised land, did they provoke God to jealousy by their shameful apostacies from him—even in the very face of the continued miraculous interpositions of his ever-watchful Providence in their behalf—bringing upon themselves the terrible scourge of war, of famine, of pestilence, and of captivity; with

all their attendant privations and horrors. We have wondered a thousand times, in tracing the history of the Jews, that the stupendous miracles by which they were delivered out of the hands of their enemies, upheld and subsisted during their wanderings in the wilderness for so many years, and brought from the field of battle; having vanquished vastly outnumbering armies, and slain their hundreds of thousands without the loss of a man; should be so soon forgotten by them. How strange, that with all these lessons of "the goodness and severity of God" before them, "they should be so soon removed from him," to a senseless idol-worship!

But so it was with "God's ancient people, and so it has been with the Christian Church; the latter having no pre-eminence over the former in this respect. Even in apostolic times; not to mention that "many of Christ's immediate disciples went back and followed no more with him;" jealousies, altercations, and dissensions not unfrequently arose in the Church; and the seeds of apostacy which soon ripened into an almost universal defection, began to develop their anti-christian character in dark, portentous omens. Twenty short years had scarcely elapsed from the crucifixion of our Saviour, when Paul said, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work;" and the apostle John represents "the seven Churches of Asia" as having so far fallen a few years after—some of them in "having left their first love," some in tolerating "false teachers among them," and others in becoming so offensively lukewarm" or indifferent in the things of religion—as to require immediate and deep repentance to save them from an awful overthrow with which they were threatened by their offended Lord. It is true, the old apostolic Church continued to drag along after a fashion, alternately sinning and repenting—yet gradually declining upon the whole, like all other dying Churches—till the last vestige of living, spiritual Christianity was ex-

tinguished by the accession of the time-serving Constantine to her communion.

And where, among the various branches of the Protestant Church shall we find a much better state of things? What Christian denomination of any age or standing in the world, whether Protestant or Catholic, has not sunk into a dead formality—"the spirit in the letter lost, the substance in the shade?" We should like to be certified of any veritable reformation of the Church, or revival of religion, at any period of the world's history, that has been known to survive the age in which it originated. Usually, the natural life of the reformer, or a single generation of his cotemporaries, constitutes the measure of the duration of all that is vital or saving in it. In vain does the apostle say,—referring to the repeated calamities which the Jewish people brought upon themselves by their everlasting backslidings—"Now these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." The same "wicked heart of unbelief in departing from the living God" which plagued the primitive Church, is seen to possess the Church of the present day. Scarcely at all have we profited by the example God saw fit to make of the Jewish Church for her oft-repeated and final apostacy.

But let us come a little nearer home, and inquire how it is with our own Church in respect to this matter. Does she furnish any exception to the dark and dismal picture we have drawn of the Churches in general? To our apprehension, we have all pursued pretty much the same course; and if the apostle had designed his epistle to the Galatians expressly for the Methodist Episcopal Church, it could scarcely have been more applicable than it now is. There is such a sameness among the Churches of every age and place—each succeeding Church following in the footsteps of its predecessor—that the history of any one of them is sub-

stantially the history of the whole; and by tracing the parallel between our Church and that of Galatia, we shall be furnished with an admonitory clue to the extent and manner of our defection from God.

1. The Galatians, being mostly gathered in from the common walks of life, were soundly converted to the gospel of Christ; leaving no doubt upon the apostle's mind that "they had begun in the Spirit." So with respect to our Church: We "began in the Spirit;" professing "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from our sins; and evidencing our desire of salvation by avoiding evil of every kind" on the one hand, "and by doing all the good in our power" on the other—experimental and practical piety then constituting the grand and only condition of membership among us.

2. The fidelity and devotion of the Galatians to the cause of God was of short duration. "I marvel," said the apostle, "that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel;" the space of three or four years sufficing to alienate them "from the truth as it is in Jesus," and plunge them into great doctrinal, if not practical error. And though we may not have "declined from the ways of the Lord" with equal pace; yet that so brief a period "since the fathers fell asleep" should find us so far removed from our primitive simplicity and godliness, and so deeply involved in worldliness and error can but excite the marvel of men and of angels. Who would have thought that a thousand beacon lights, erected by the history of the past to warn us off the coast of danger; especially in the example and teachings of the apostolic Wesley, whose voice has scarcely died away upon our ear; could so soon be lost to view, and our gallant old ship be left to founder amid the breakers of a rayless night?

3. The first step in the apostacy of the Galatians consisted in turning their backs upon God, or the apostle, or

both—some understanding the pronoun "him," in the text, as referring to the one, and some to the other—and indeed the one always implies the other; since they who forsake God, forsake his truly evangelical ministers also, and *vice versa*; but their apostacy commenced in forsaking "him"—whether God or the apostle—"who had called them into the grace of Christ;" or in omitting to follow him in the use of the means of grace. It is the same with us: the too natural and easy sin of omission—the neglect of the instituted and prudential means of grace—lies at the foundation of our apostacy from God and his faithful ambassadors.

4. The Galatians, having laid themselves open to imposition by forsaking "the gospel of Christ," were readily, "removed to another gospel"—a compound of Judaism and Christianity—"which was not another;" nothing but an imaginary "Justification by the deeds of the law," which was no gospel at all. Our gospel, like theirs, has become *legal* rather than *evangelical*; they, working themselves into favor with God and making their way to heaven by the observance of the Mosaic ritual; and we, "going on unto perfection" and maturing our claim "to mansions in the sky" by the improvement of the grace of regeneration without any further change in our moral nature.

5. The Galatians were "removed from him who had called them into the grace of Christ, by certain Judaizing teachers, whose object was to crush out a religion which disturbed their consciences by its inculcation of a holy life, and to "fleece the sheep without feeding the flock; or to realize the emolument of the Christian ministry by the hypocritical assumption of their character, while they "perverted the gospel of Christ" to unholy purposes. We also have teachers among us who are equally unevangelical and worldly; their teachings being calculated, if not designed, to imbue us with "another gospel; which is not another;" since

there is no more gospel in their "going on unto perfection" dogma, irrespective of the great second blessing, than in being circumcised and keeping the law. Both the one and the other are essentially heterodox; and alike fatal to all vital religion.

But the great object of our present discourse, is, to portray the defection of the Methodist Episcopal Church from God and holiness. And having given a brief illustration of the general subject in the parallel we have drawn between our Church and that of Galatia, we shall proceed to show, somewhat more in the light of history, what are the particular aspects of the case by comparing our *present* with our *former* condition: the comparison having respect—not as usual, to numbers, wealth, or worldly influence, which constitute no adequate test of the true character of a church; but—to doctrine, to discipline and to practical godliness.

1. We shall treat of our defection from God in respect to doctrine.

1. And here we have most clearly been "removed from him—Wesley, God, or both—who called us into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel," on the subject of sanctification; merging this great subsequent change as we do, in that of regeneration. Mr. Wesley taught a distinction between these two states—using the terms justification and regeneration interchangeably—in the following language of question and answer:

"Q. When does inward sanctification begin?

"A. The moment a man is justified. (Yet sin remains in him, yea, the seed of all sin till he is sanctified through-out.) From that moment a believer gradually dies to sin, and grows in grace." Works, vol. vi, p. 496.

"Q. Is this death to sin, and renewal in love, gradual, or instantaneous?"

"A. A man may be dying for some time, yet he does not, properly speaking, die, till the instant the soul is separated from the body; and in that instant he lives the life of eternity. In

like manner he may be dying to sin for some time; yet he is not dead to sin, till sin is separated from the soul; in that instant he lives the full life of love. And the change undergone, when the body dies, is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any he had known before, yea such as till then it is impossible to conceive; so the change wrought when the soul dies to sin, is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any before, and than any can conceive, till he experiences it. Yet he still grows in grace and in the knowledge of Christ, in the love and image of God, not only till death, but to all eternity." Vol. vi, p. 505. Here we have the views of our great Founder, too plainly set forth to be misunderstood;—the views of all our standard authors; and of the whole Church formerly; on the manifest Scriptural distinction between sanctification and justification—a distinction Mr. Wesley considers equivalent to that between death and dying; pronouncing it infinite.

The doctrine we now generally hold and teach upon the subject, being "removed," as we are, "unto another gospel," may be seen in the following extract, made by Mr. Wesley, from the writings of Count Zinzendorf:

"We are sanctified wholly the moment we are justified, and are neither more nor less holy to the day of our death; entire sanctification, and justification, being in one and the same instant." Works, vol. vi, p. 22.

2. Entire sanctification, as taught by Mr. Wesley, implying a subsequent and distinct work from justification, has always been regarded as a primary doctrine of our creed. It is not only found in all our standards, having been held by the whole Church—preachers and people—till within a few years; but thousands of witnesses, of the most reliable character, have borne testimony to its reality and blessedness from their own personal experience. But now, the old Moravian heresy of the identity of the two states is pretty generally embraced

among us. And its advocates, we are sorry to say, exhibit a virulence in their opposition to the Wesleyan view of sanctification which but too clearly betrays the cause of the change they have undergone—a manifest want of the spirit of Christ, and the aversion they feel for the subjects of a living piety.

3. This terrible defection with respect to the great central doctrine of the Church, seriously affects our views of all other Christian doctrines; causing us to hold them in so loose and vague a manner, or so to modify them in their various relations and bearings, as almost to rob them of their evangelical character: thus changing our entire system of theology “into another gospel.” The false character impressed upon the doctrine of justification, especially, by confounding it with sanctification, after the modern style, is most damning in its practical effect: since the newly converted soul, finding by his own experience that justification does not free him from all sin, will be led to conclude, either that he is not justified at all, and so gives up his hope; or that he is never to be made holy here, and consequently settles down satisfied to live and die in sin.

4. These changes in doctrine, though not made by authority—the “Restrictive Rules” forbidding any alteration in our written formula, or “Articles of Religion,”—have nevertheless been foisted upon the pulpit, and widely propagated over the land by various other means. And what seems still more astounding, is, that not only the Bishops, but even the General Conference—doubly bound as they are “to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God’s word,”—should allow themselves to sanction so deplorable a heresy by their tacit endorsement!

II. Having disposed of the question of the doctrinal defection of the Church, we shall proceed, under the second general head, to consider her equally great and desperate falling away in regard to discipline.

1. And here we are compelled to say that the discipline of our Church, no less a rule of holy living than a standard of orthodoxy in former times; has been well-nigh despoiled of its authority and moral power by recent changes. To say nothing of those of a minor character it has undergone in relation to dress, class-meetings, free seats, and the like—all of which have tended to paralyze the arm of the Church in the training of her children for heaven, and to open the door to spiritual licentiousness and pride; the change effected at the General Conference four years ago on the subject of Church slavery, by which the last vestige of any mandatory prohibition of the evil was toned down to a mere matter of advice; has placed us in a most defenceless condition, laying us open to the intrusion of wickedness of all sorts and descriptions. “The world, the flesh, and the devil” may now make their onslaught upon us, and riot upon our sacred altars, with no penal inhibition to arrest their depredations. If some particular sins are still interdicted by the letter of the discipline; the authority to punish the offender in these cases is entirely neutralized from the necessity we are under, for consistency’s sake, of interpreting such interdictory laws upon the basis of a more recent and general enactment which virtually tolerates “the sum of all villainies.”

2. With what grace can we arraign any one for a solitary offence, while we connive at sin in the aggregate by leaving it upon the ground of mere advice; and that too with the understanding that “our godly admonitions” are to be utterly disregarded. The toleration of all sin in general—the greater comprehending the less—is the toleration of every sin in particular. And hence it is that in tolerating slavery—“the sum of all villainies” we tolerate sin of every description. The law of advice, being without penalty, is no law at all. It is a miserable sham; the only effect of which is, when applied to any thing beyond

mere imprudence, to invite and sanction the perpetration of crime. And such the laws of our Church are now become. We virtually say to our offending members—our mandatory rules being reduced to mere advice—"Why do ye such things, my sons? For it is no good report I hear of you;" knowing at the same time that they will do just as they please. But this giving advice, where we ought to command, is a gross dereliction of duty—a crying sin—for which God will hold us to an awful account. We repeat, that to place "the sum of all villainies" upon the ground of mere advice, is to place each and every particular sin on the same ground: a course which the most of us; taking advantage of the rose-water legislation of the General Conference, and drinking into the same spirit of defection which prompted their guilty action in the premises, have already adopted.

III. We shall now, in the third place, go on to speak more directly upon our *practical* defection from God; a result which our defection from Him in doctrine and discipline could not fail to bring about.

1. And here the change we have experienced in our character, as a church, is still more marked and affecting. "We are very far gone from original righteousness"—accommodating this language to our own comparative history—and nothing could be more appropriate to us than the following form of confession: "We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and done those things we ought not to have done, and there is no health in us." And it might almost be added: "From the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in us: but wounds, bruises, and putrefying sores, which have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." Oh how little of our early simplicity, our early abandonment of the world, our early devotion to the one great work of soul-saving, still re-

mains with us at the present day! The successors of Wesley, of Asbury, of Garrettson, and their self-sacrificing lay co-adjutors, where are they? Where are our Whites, our Cases, our Puffers? And those of the membership who helped them "much in the Lord?" On whom, of all our Israel, has their mantle fallen? Does not a melancholy echo answer, "On whom?"

But as all error, in general, since the foundation of the world—as well in life and manners, as in doctrine and discipline—is known to have originated with the clergy; we shall bestow the burden of our remarks on this branch of the subject upon them; comparing them with their predecessors of an early day, as preachers, as pastors, and as Christians.

1. And first, as preachers. Possibly, the early pulpit of our Church may have had less of general science, or of school oratory, than the pulpit of to-day; but in sound, practical theology, and a knowledge of the various susceptibilities and workings of human nature, so necessary to ministerial success, it "stood head and shoulders above us." Its utterances were plain, pointed, and effective; "turning many to righteousness and building up believers in their most holy faith." It might well be said of our fathers in the ministry, that being "full of faith and the Holy Ghost," "their speech and their preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." In those days God was pleased to put honor upon His ambassadors; "pouring out His Spirit" upon the field of their labor, and opening a great and effectual door" to them on every hand.

In those days "the slain of the Lord were many;" it being a matter of ordinary occurrence that scores were converted and brought into the kingdom under the preaching of the word. No all-winter campaigns, with a corps or two of extra help, were then necessary to bring about a revival in the Church; the ordinary appliances in their hands were all-sufficient for this purpose. It

was then they preached holiness—Scriptural, Wesleyan holiness—and that too in almost every sermon; showing forth its power and loveliness in their lives and conversation. And it was then the most hardened and violent opposers even, “unable to resist the wisdom and the Spirit with which they spake;” were won over to Christ by the power of Divine Truth, or driven from the field of contest with shame and confusion of face. Let the millions now on earth and in heaven, gathered into the fold of Christ through their labors, attest the divinity and power of their faithful ministrations.

But O the change that has come over our ministry in later times! How lamentable the defection observable within a very short period. Popularity is now the goal; and in order to reach it, the style and manner of preaching must be changed. The plain, simple style of Jesus, of Wesley, and of Hedding, must give place to a turgid, bombastic display, which makes the illiterate masses gape and stare instead of “bringing them to repentance and to the knowledge of the truth.” Popular sins must not now be meddled with, as they are too delicate a subject to be treated of in a popular assembly; or, belonging exclusively to politics, the Christian minister has nothing to do with them. Such is the pretext. The true reason is, that few of us can hew to the line in respect to these sins, but the chips will fly in our own face. And then, it would offend our fashionable hearers—driving them from our congregations, and cutting off their support—which will never do. The doctrines, the duties, the institutions of the gospel, every thing connected with religion, must be popularized and adapted to the public taste. “The offence of the cross must cease;” and cold, moral essays, interspersed with anecdote and poetry, and embellished with rhetorical flights and flourishes, must succeed to the preaching of “repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.”

And besides all this, there is a numerous class of the community who can only visit places of amusement; and to secure the attendance of these, as well as to gratify our own carnal inclination, we must convert the Church into a sort of play-house; where the most fastidious pleasure-taker can find the entertainment he seeks. Our bombastic, highfalutin, moralizing declamation will not suffice for this class of hearers. There must be something to excite their risibilities, and fill their mouths with laughter; something of the ludicrous, and the funny; something of the *comico-pious* type, by which the almost universal taste of mankind will be gratified, and the highest degree of popularity and patronage secured.

The responsive “amen” of the devout worshiper is no longer looked for or desired among us. Nor is there much in our pulpit exercises to call it forth. Much less do we tolerate the old-fashioned Methodist shouting in our congregations. Such manifestations of pious joy would be esteemed quite disorderly—a palpable interruption of the order and solemnity of Divine worship—and not to be allowed in the house of God. But while we shrink from these pious demonstrations, lest our fashionable hearers should suspect us of sympathizing with a religion the world hates; we can well endure the bursts of carnal laughter, and rounds of clamorous cheering, excited by our comical, pantomimic, merry-making exhibitions, and might not be greatly disturbed in our feelings, were the scenes of the declining apostolic Church to return; when the people, instigated by the preacher, were accustomed to exclaim as he was proceeding with his discourse—“bravo, eloquent, most learned, second Apollos,” and the like; to the very great satisfaction of their humble minded pastor. Such a course has now become the highway to popularity, and must be resorted to at all events, for we must be popular, and there is no other way to gain our end. But the

theme is too painful to be pursued, and we turn from it with disgust. Suffice it to say, we exceedingly loathe this religious buffoonery—this charlatanism of the pulpit—this holy fun—so much in vogue among the ministry of our day, and we would now and forever bear our protest against it.

"Tis pitiful

To court a grin, when you should woo a soul;
To break a jest, when pity should inspire
Pathetic exhortation."

We are deeply pained with such shameful prostitution of the sacred desk. Nor do we find any relief to our feelings in the reflection that the period is not distant when, at our present rate of deterioration, it will be impossible to distinguish between the pulpit and the stage.

[Concluded in our next.]

GO LABOR.

BY MRS. JANETTE OSMUN.

GOD SAYS TO ALL his children, go labor in my vineyard. There is none so small or weak that he can excuse himself from obeying the divine command. He chooses the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and things that are not to bring to naught things that are. He gives to each, talents that he is required to improve that, at his coming he may receive his own with usury.

Since every man's work shall be tried, as by fire, how important that we not only work, but that we work the works of him that hath sent us.—For the improvement of the talents God has entrusted us with, we are to be held strictly accountable, hence how careful we should be to have in all things an eye single to his glory. How many talents are abused to the gratification of pride and unholy desires, and in seeking the praise of men more than the praise of God. How many talents are buried. How many who, when first converted, had the light of the Holy Spirit, but because it required a separating from the world

they refused to follow it. The Holy Spirit is grieved; the work of God is retarded, and the individual, as far as carrying forward the work of God is concerned, is of no more value than Lot's wife was, after she looked back upon Sodom. To be successful in labors we must hear the voice of God, only to obey, leaving results with him. How many professors of religion that are blessed with education and more than ordinary intellectual powers, and who can converse interestingly on other subjects, when the all important subject of the salvation of the soul, the necessity of a deep and thorough work of grace in the heart is introduced, are as silent as mutes. Intellect and education are talents God has given, and he designs that they should be laid on the altar of consecration and be used only to his glory. How many professors are silent in the prayer and social meetings, that are silent nowhere else. The Saviour says, "Ye are my witnesses, and he that is ashamed of me before men, of him will I be ashamed before my Father and his holy angels." The fact that God requires these duties of us, ought to be enough to stimulate the most backward to action; but, when we see souls perishing for whom Christ died, and realize that the church is the instrumentality God uses to carry forward the great plan of saving the world, we should be anxious to be workers with the blessed Spirit. How many ministers that have heard the voice of God, "Go win souls to Christ," and have felt that woe is upon them if they preach not the Gospel, and have conferred not with flesh and blood, but have gone forth claiming the promise, and have seen the work of the Lord prosper in their hand, have failed to give God the glory and have been shorn of their strength, and become weak and powerless, and are in the ministry as blind leaders of the blind. They cry "peace," when God has not spoken peace. Instead of urging God's people to come out from the world, and be separate and not to con-

form to its vanities and fashions, but to be transformed by the renewing of their minds, they speak reproachfully of high professions and plain dress, such as is recommended in the Scriptures. God's true followers are grieved;—pride and vanity are fostered in the church, and the meek and lowly Jesus is dishonored in the house of his friends. Can any of us have any well grounded hopes of heaven unless we are laborers in the vineyard of the Lord? When the Lord came to reckon with his servant that buried his money, he took from him even that which he had, and gave it to him that improved; and cast the unprofitable servant into darkness, where will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Let us strive to be faithful as stewards of the grace of God, that we may be ready at any watch of the night to go out to meet our Lord at his coming. Then shall we hear it said, "well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

AN ANALOGY.

BY REV. W. F. EATON.

One morning early, a feathery balloon, bearing a little black speck came sailing down upon the breeze. Now it floated leasurably along, now rose with the change of the current to a greater altitude, and now sank slowly towards the earth as the breeze died away. Thus it danced merrily along until a dew drop, which hung glistening and trembling in the morning sun, slid gently from the point of a leaf, and falling upon the airy balloon bore it to the ground.

Long time it lay in an obscure corner, wet and mouldy, but at length a tiny germ burst from the little black speck and crept slowly into the mellow soil. Thus it worked its way silently and in the dark, until it had secured a firm hold, then spread upon the surface a little green head. Days passed on, Spring faded slowly into

Summer, and the little plant had pushed itself higher, and its cress was crowned with a large red blossom. Summer gradually yielded to Autumn, the red blossom faded into a sickly white, and soon with every breeze were seen thousands of sparkling, downy globes, each bearing a little black speck, slowly sailing away. They settled to the earth at different distances from the parent stock. There they lay concealed until moistened by the dew, and rain, and warmed by the sun, they in turn burst their little black shell, buried their germs in the soil, and sent up their beautiful tuft of green.

Soon the whole plot became carpeted with what appeared a downy velvet. But time served to increase their size and sharpen their points, until they stood a rank, repulsive bed of thistles. And although the gardener strove to subdue them, every root multiplied its tops, and sent out seeds, until the ground was abandoned to bear thistles undisturbed. Thus the garden, which was beautiful before the first seed was borne down upon the morning breeze, was transformed into an unsightly plot of matted thistles.

In an obscure corner, amid this tangled mass, for a long time there lay a small mouse colored seed, unseen and unknown by all, and deeply shadowed by towering thistles. At length the moisture softened its shell, a few rays penetrated the gloom and warmed it into life. A little root crept quietly into the soil, and finally became crowned by two oval shaped leaves. These gave place to a very delicate stem, then a little tuft of leaves, and finally to tender branches. But still all this was carried on beneath the shade of the rude and domineering thistles. But in its obscurity it slowly gained strength, and steadily pushed itself higher and higher, until the top appeared above its prickly surroundings. At length a bunch of beautiful pink blossoms appeared, these gave place to little globular forms which gradually swelled into ripe, mellow, luscious pears. A man passing caught sight of

them, and braving the sharp points, plucked and ate the mellow fruit.

Soon he returned, and with a sharp scythe laid the thistles low, while the pear tree was left sole possessor of the soil.

Such is the nature of influence, good and bad. Both may be apparently of minor importance, both appear harmless, both may go through the same process of development, and yet the fruit be of opposite character. Many young persons, highly endowed by nature, living without aim, pursuing vain amusements, sow the seeds of idleness and dissipation, which are sure to ripen into poverty and disgrace. While others, like the pear, in virtue, industry and piety, sow seeds which grow on earth into peace, respectability and often wealth, and in heaven ripen into eternal life. God has garnered up for us in his word, seeds, which sown in the mind and heart, may by his grace work out the salvation of the soul. "Take heed, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Soon the reaping time will come and then the rejoicing angels will shout the harvest home.—*Beaufort, S. C.*

SHINE.

BY GEORGE BARNER.

Ye are the light of the world, Mat. v: 14. These words were addressed by our blessed Saviour to a few of his chosen ones, in his memorable sermon on the mount. They were spoken at a period of the world's history, when darkness covered the minds of most of the people. Amid all the darkness that has prevailed at different periods, from the antediluvians to the present, God has always had a people, and He always will have, to the close of time. He has commanded his people to let their light shine before the world. Those who are truly God's children will reflect the light. Any man or woman that fails to reflect the light, cannot claim a seat among the sanctified ones in heaven. Remember this :

worldly-minded, professing Christians, you cannot serve God and mammon. If you fail to bear the cross and reflect the light given, you are none of God's children. Blessed be the name of the Lord, that this light was reflected by the patriarchs and prophets of the old Testament Scriptures. We find, in tracing the history of the church, that in proportion to the reflection of the light of the Gospel by God's children, his church and kingdom have advanced in the world. How necessary it is that this glorious light should continue to be reflected.

By nature no person can reflect the Gospel light. Neither is any Christian self-luminous, but shines as God shines through him. When once the lamp of true devotion is kindled in hearts, they are bound to shine. And wo to that man or woman that fails to reflect the light when it has once been kindled in his or her heart. A traveler who once visited a light house in the British Channel said to the keeper, "But what if your light should go out at night?" "Never" said the keeper, "Never! impossible. Sir, yonder are ships sailing to all parts of the world. If, to-night, my burner were out, in a few days I might hear from France, Spain, Scotland, or America, that such a night the light house in the channel gave no warning, and some vessel had been wrecked. Ah! sir, I sometimes feel when I look at my lights as if the eyes of the world were fixed on me. Go out! Burn dim! never, sir, never!" How closely this incident comes home to us all. Perhaps I may hear it said in eternity that some precious soul was wrecked in consequence of my not reflecting the light as I should have done. God forbid that this should ever be said either of you or me. How is it with you, to-day, dear reader, is the Holy Spirit shining in your heart? If it is, give God the glory and continue to reflect the light. The eyes of the world are fixed on God's children. Precious souls, bound with them to the judgment, are looking to them for example.

Remember, my brother and sister, that God will hold us accountable for the manner in which we have reflected the light he has bestowed upon us. I have seen some pulpits in which the Gospel light has not been held up as it should have been. I fear that some who are aiding in the administration of God's word are mingling too much with the world, and are arranging their discourses more to please the ear than to reach the heart. They fail to show the exceeding sinfulness of sin; and the blessed Jesus, the Great Light of the world, is not held up to wandering sinners as he should be. The question may well be asked by the world and by some of God's children, as it often is, Why do we see such coldness existing in the different churches? And so few souls saved? The difficulty is, in a great measure, in the ministry. They have failed to hold up the standard of holiness, and an entire consecration to God as they should have done. May the good Lord help us in this direction. Give us a holy and light-reflecting ministry, and you will have a holy and light-reflecting membership. I thank the blessed Lord that He is raising up such a people. We have need of it. The church as a body have traveled too far north. The thermometer of holiness has sunk almost to zero. In consequence, darkness in a great degree, again covers the minds of the people. Glory be to God, the darkness is giving way before the light of God's divine truth. Light is breaking in on the minds of some of the people. Still there are certain households in which I hear the light has gone out. That young man would not be seen so often on his way to the theatre or drinking saloon, or gambling table, if father and mother held up the light of the blessed Saviour to his view as they should. That giddy daughter who was once thoughtful about her soul's salvation, might now have been a Christian if father and mother had held up the lamp of true devotion in their family. Think of this, heads of families; think of the misery that will one day rest

upon you in consequence of failing to reflect the Gospel light. It will be said of you in the great day of accounts "Ye knew your duty but ye did it not." There may have been a lamp of profession in the house, but the oil is out, and it fails to shine. The love of the world and the pride of life have extinguished it. Go to the blessed Lord with a repentant, believing and humble heart and get it relit. Thank God! there are some lamps that never go out. Death cannot extinguish them. They continue to shine forever. The light of the Christian martyrs is still shining. The great lantern of Luther still gleams from Wartburg Castle. The light of the Wesleys and of all the ancient worthies, though fallen asleep years ago, is still reflected. Praise the Lord! He has commanded his people to shine as lights in the world, and may they ever shine. I feel to bless the Lord that he has a people who will hold up the standard of holiness and continue to reflect the light of Divine truth. Shall the lamps of life go out or burn dim in any of us? No, never, dear reader, never, God helping us, we will continue to reflect the light as He lets it shine through us till we are called over the river, when we shall shine anew in our Father's Kingdom, as the glories of that blest abode shall burst on our enraptured vision. Amen.

PREACH sanctification, directly and indirectly, in every sermon. O, purity, O, Christian perfection! O, sanctification! It is heaven below to feel all sin removed. Preach it whether they will hear or forbear, PREACH IT.—BP. ASBURY.

ADAM sinned and "angels kept not their first estate;" therefore, "let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he falls."

Holiness was the constant theme of Bishop Whatecoat. Holiness was the peculiarity of early Methodists.—DR. OLIN.

THE SABBATH CHANGED.

WE hesitate not in at once referring, for direct inspired authority for the change, to Heb. 4: 9, 10. "There remaineth, therefore, a rest for the people of God:—for he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His."

Before directly stating the argument from this passage, which to us appears clear and decisive, there are two remarks as to its phraseology which require the reader's attention. 1. The word which in the former of these verses is translated rest—"there remaineth a rest for the people of God"—is not (as an English reader cannot but suppose it to be) the same with that which is so rendered throughout the chapter. The English reader who has a Bible with marginal annotations, will see that on the margin it is rendered "*a Sabbatism, or the keeping of a Sabbath.*" It is in this verse alone that this particular word is used. In all the other occurrences of the English word "rest," the Greek word is different—in verses 1st, 3d, 5th, 8th, 10th, and 11th. The word in verse 9th is a noun of regular formation from the verb which, in the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament, is used for *keeping a Sabbath*. We are satisfied that there is more under this change of the term than can be accounted for on any mere principle of taste in composition, or the desire to represent the rest of heaven under the figure of an eternal Sabbath. How just and pleasing soever such a figure may be, a sound reasoner will beware, without some better cause, of introducing into his conclusion a different term, and one capable of a different meaning from that which he had used in his premises. We believe the ninth verse to be an inference from what he had established in the six preceding verses; while, at the same time, the inference was what he had it principally in his view to bring out, from the argument contained in those verses—an argument of apparent intricacy,

though real simplicity, in which it is impossible here to enter. He is writing to Hebrews; and reasonably might it be expected that amongst the variety of topics to which he adverts, connected with ancient observances and the changes under the new economy, *the Sabbath* should not be without notice. Here, as we believe, it is. He vindicates the observance of a new Sabbath-day, under that economy, by "the people of God"—the New Testament Israel. The *ground* of vindication we shall see presently. 2. The other observation relates to the word "remaineth"—"*There remaineth, therefore, a Sabbatism to the people of God.*" That the word may naturally refer to what is "reserved in heaven for them"—as remaining to be obtained and enjoyed by them all in succession—is not denied. It is enough for our purpose that it is capable, with equal propriety, of referring to what was in reserve for God's people under the new spiritual economy, called by him "the time of reformation." Of the Old Testament saints he says: "These all, having received a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they, without us, should not be made perfect"—Heb. 11: 39, 40. "When the fulness of the time came" the "promise" was "received"—the "better things" before "provided" were obtained. And in commemoration of the glorious accomplishment of the promise, and the finishing of the work of redemption, there "remained" this new "Sabbatical rest" to the people of God." The word is used in a sense similar to that in which he applies it, negatively, to the subject of *sacrifice*: "If we sin willfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, *there remaineth* no more sacrifice for sins." The "one offering" of Christ has finished and set aside the entire sacrificial system. But, on the contrary, there did "remain" a special "Sabbath-keeping," adapted to the commemoration of this one offering, and of the completion by

it of the great work of redemption. The sacrifices, though not exclusively Jewish, yet being typical and ceremonial, were set aside, as having answered their end; but the Sabbath, being in its character moral, and having ends to serve that were as important under the last as under previous dispensations, "remained." But it remained as a new day, and with a new and special subject of celebration.

We have before taken notice of the reasonableness of the appropriation of a new day to the celebration of the most glorious of divine transactions. And having thus cleared our way, let the reader candidly observe—divesting himself of all prepossessions in behalf of the common interpretation, which has all the force of habit and all the influence of pious and delightful associations on its side—

1. The beautiful and striking analogy between the reason assigned for this new Sabbatic day and that originally assigned for the old:—"There remaineth, therefore, a Sabbatism to the people of God; for he that is entered into his rest he also HATH CEASED FROM HIS OWN WORKS, AS GOD DID FROM HIS." Just suppose CHRIST to be meant by "*He that is entered into his rest,*" and the analogy is perfect and forcible. The very reading of the words renders the conclusion so simple as to be irresistible. As when God ceased from his work of creation the day of his resting was hallowed as a Sabbathism, or a day of commemorative rest and religious celebration; so, when Jesus finished his work—the work of redemption—and rested from it in his resurrection and his reception to the right hand of God, that blessed day was, in all time coming, to be the day of Sabatical rest and celebration. In the ordinary interpretation, the spirit of this allusion, and of the analogy suggested by it, is entirely lost. There is not a vestige of it left. But interpreted as above, so completely is it preserved, that the language of God in Gen. 2: 1, 3, might, in the full spirit of it, be accommodated to the work of

Jesus when he rose from the dead, and the consequent sanctification of the first day of the week: "Thus the work of redemption was finished, and all its glorious ends secured. And on the first day of the week Jesus rose from the grave, and finally rested from the work he had done:—wherefore the ascended Lord blessed the FIRST DAY and sanctified it."

2. The "*For*" in verse 10 is plainly designed as assigning a reason for what had been stated in the verse preceding. But according to the ordinary interpretation of the passage, it neither assigns a reason nor adduces a proof of what is there affirmed. The supposed affirmation is—"there remaineth a rest"—the heavenly rest—"for the people of God;" and what seems to be assigned as a reason, or adduced as a proof of this is,—"*for* he that is entered into his rest"—the believer, namely, who dies and goes to heaven—"he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." Now apart from the *unnaturalness* of any such analogy as that between the believer's ceasing from his works on earth and God's ceasing from the six days work of creation—and, we think we might add, the *presumption* involved in it—we have to ask, how the believer's ceasing from his works on his entering the heavenly rest can be a reason why that rest remaineth for him, or how it can be a proof that it does remain for him? What kind of argument is imputed to the inspired writer when he is made to say: "There remaineth, therefore, the heavenly and everlasting rest to the people of God; for the believer who enters into that rest ceaseth from his own works, as God did from his?" Surely, there is here neither reason nor proof. There is an unnatural and (to say the least of it) sufficiently bold analogy; and to the illative particle "*for*" there is left no meaning whatever:—whereas, on the other view, the *analogy*—between God ceasing from the work of redemption—is beautiful and striking; and the *reason* thence arising—for a new

"Sabbatism to the people of God"—is pertinent and satisfactory. Then—

3. All other considerations are in full harmony with this interpretation. The change of the word—from that signifying *rest* to that which the Hebrews could hardly fail to understand as meaning *the keeping of a Sabbath*—has been already adverted to; so, too, has the reasonableness of expecting that in such an epistle addressed to Hebrews, and for the express purpose of showing the harmony between the old state of things and the new, and reconciling their minds the more fully to the latter—some notice should be found of the transition, in the worship of the New Testament Church, from the seventh day to the first—a notice which is nowhere in the epistle, unless here. We now add, that the view which we consider the passage as giving of the first-day Sabbath is one which *accords precisely with the fact as to its real nature and design*. For what is that Sabbath? Is it not exactly what our explanation of the passage intimates—a commemoration of the finished work of Jesus—of his triumphantly "ceasing from that work, and entering into his rest?" Is it not just a solemn and delightful celebration of this?—a rest of the believing soul in the completed redemption?—in Jehovah's perfect and eternal satisfaction in it—his "*smelling a savour of rest*" in the accepted sacrifice of his Son? Is it not a day of personal and social jubilee, of spiritual joy and praise, in memory of Him who was "delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification?" And did not the Spirit, by the inspired Psalmist, anticipate the celebration of this day, when he dictated the prophecy: "The stone which the Builders rejected, the same is become the Head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; and it is marvellous in our eyes. **THIS IS THE DAY WHICH THE LORD HATH MADE: WE WILL REJOICE AND BE GLAD IN IT.**"

There is one objection to the view given which naturally occurs to the English reader, but which a single

word or two of explanation will be sufficient to set aside. In the verse immediately subsequent to those on which we have been commenting, the Apostle adds: "Let us labor, therefore, to enter into that rest." How, it is naturally enough asked, can believers be exhorted to labor to enter into the keeping of a Sabbath? Certainly they cannot. And were the only reference of the *rest* in verse 11 to the *Sabbatism* in verse 9th, this would be fatal to our interpretation. But it is not so. The objection proceeds on a misapprehension. The admonition to "labor to enter into that rest" has reference, not at all to the Sabbatism in the 9th verse, but to the rest in the 10th—the rest into which "He who has ceased from his work" has entered; a rest which his people are all destined to share with Him; and of which our Sabbaths on earth, in commemoration of his work, are at once the prelibation and the pledge. We commemorate Christ's rest, and we anticipate our own.—WARDLAW.

MORTIFICATION.—What *hard work will you have in your dying hour*, except you get a heart mortified to the world and all that is in it? Your parting hour will be a dreadful hour without the help of mortification. Your corruptions, like glue, fasten your affections to the world; and how hard it will be for such a man to be separated by death! O, what a bitter parting have carnal hearts from carnal things; whereas the mortified soul can receive the messenger death without alarm, and as cheerfully put off the body as a man does his clothes at night! Death need not compel; such a man goes half-way to meet it. I desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better, Phil. i, 23. Christian, wouldst thou have thy death-bed soft and easy? Wouldst thou have an easy death? then get a mortified heart; the surgeon's knife is scarcely felt when it cuts off a mortified member.—FLAVEL.

THE way of the transgressor is hard.

THE GREATEST WANT.

No men in the world want help like them that want the gospel. Of all the distresses, want of the gospel cries loudest for relief. A man may want liberty, and yet be happy, as Joseph was; a man may want peace and yet be happy as David was; a man may want plenty, and yet be full of comfort as Micaiah was; but he that wants the gospel wants everything that should do him good. A throne without the gospel is but the devil's dungeon! wealth without the gospel is fuel for hell, advancement without the gospel is but going high to have the greater fall. What do men need that want the gospel? They want Jesus Christ, for he is revealed only by the Gospel. He is all and in all, and where he is wanting there can be no good. Hunger cannot truly be satisfied without manna, the bread of life, which is Jesus Christ; and what shall a hungry man do that hath no bread? Thirst cannot be quenched without a living spring, which is Jesus Christ; and what shall a thirsty soul do without water? A captive, as we all are, cannot be delivered without redemption, which is Jesus Christ; and what shall the prisoner do without his ransom? Fools, as we all are, cannot be instructed without wisdom, which is Jesus Christ; without him we perish in our folly. All building without him is on the sand, and will surely fall. All working without him is in fire, where it will be consumed. All riches without him have wings, and will fly away. A dungeon with Christ is a throne, and a throne without Christ is a hell. Nothing is so ill but Christ will compensate. He is the way; men without him are Cains, murderers and vagabonds. He is the Truth; men without him are liars, like the devil, who was so of old. He is the Life; men without him are dead, dead in trespasses and sins. He is the light; men without him are in darkness, and go they know not whither. He is the vine; those that are not grafted in him are withered branches,

prepared for the fire. He is the Rock; men not built on him are carried away with a flood. He is Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the author and the ender, the founder and finisher of our salvation; he that has not him hath neither beginning of good, nor shall have an end of misery. O blessed Jesus, how much better were it, not to be, than to be without thee; never to be born, than not to die in thee. A thousand hells come short of this—eternally to want Jesus as men do who want the gospel. They want all holy communion with God, wherein the only happiness of the soul doth consist. Without him, the soul in the body is a dead soul in a living sepulchre. They want all the ordinances of God, the joy of our hearts, and the comforts of our souls. O the sweetness of a Sabbath! the heavenly raptures of prayer. O the glorious communion of saints, which such men are deprived of! If they knew the value of the hidden pearl, and these things were to be purchased, what would such poor souls not part with for them? They will at last want heaven and salvation; they shall never come into the presence of God in glory, never inhabit a glorious mansion; they shall never behold Jesus Christ, but when they shall call for rocks and mountains to fall on them and to hide them from his presence. They shall want light in utter darkness; they shall want life under the second death; want refreshment in the midst of flames; want healing under the gnawing of conscience; want grace continuing to blaspheme; want glory in full misery; and which is the sum of all, they shall want an end to all this: for, "their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched." — *Dr. Owen's Sermon before the English Parliament in 1646.*

IF A MAN is not rising upwards to be an angel, depend upon it he is sinking downwards to be a devil. He cannot stop at the beast. The most savage men are not beasts; they are worse, a great deal worse. — *Coleridge.*

RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS.

BY REV. C. S. GITCHELL.

"Bring them (the children) up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." This is an imperative command, and demands our deepest attention. The earth is groaning under an enormous load of guilt, and as it totters to its fate, the intoxicated crowds passionately pursue fashion and appetite, madly rush after the fleeting pleasures that present themselves, and viciously destroy human beings burying their hands in innocent blood. We need but visit the fireside to find the germ that gives life to this wild derangement.

How awfully true! "The iniquities of the fathers are visited upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation;" that is, the teaching and example are inculcated from generation to generation; and thus a punishment is held in reserve for the unborn. Parents, did you fathom those words that just escaped your lips? or those actions committed in the presence of your children? They are of eternal weight; they are fetters that will bind your offspring hand and foot; or they are waves that will waft them to immortal honor. How little did that father and mother think while reading their novel, or when they replenished their son with means, or decorated their daughter with ornaments, and consented to their attendance at festivals, theatres, and like entertainments, that they were striking a death knell, according to the tendencies of practice, that will toll the sad fate of many, after they have gone to their long home!

"Train up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," means to educate in the commands and warnings of God. For instance: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." They that visit on that day violate the requisitions of God; both striking death to their religious experience, and inflicting a dangerous wound upon their

children. Follow the training of some parents and see how easily the child grows from innocence to infamy; and what a train of evils issue from the breaking of one command. For example: Take professors whose lives have come under your own observation; they attend church with their children; after service, visit their neighbors, make a few remarks about the sermon, also the church, together with the weakness of brethren and sisters, then come the fashions of the day, witty remarks, jokes, and laughter; regardless of the commands to keep the day holy; and, "Be ye holy in all manner of conversation." Of course the children are requested to seek their own sport; thus, being taught to love pleasure more than God. They note the enjoyment of their parents to be far greater than when at church. This is a lesson to undervalue the worship of God. The first step is desecrating the Sabbath; next, foolish conversation; then comes the looking upon the worship of God as a burden. At this point every tendency is downward; the children become giddy, gay, and foolish. The height of their ambition is flattery, coquetry, and revelry. They are now prepared for the sociable, the saloon, and the gambling hall. Here they mingle; first, with the lovers of pleasure, the respecter of persons, and the despisers of God; second, their associates are the gamester, the fighting character, and the bold blasphemer; thirdly, their companions are the profligate, the incendiary, and the murderer. O what will parents do when that holy God shall come to make inquisition for blood!

Let it be remembered, the order of arrangement is such that the teaching and examples of the parent become a second nature to the child. How few professors, living in this age of the world give this fact one serious thought. Their precept and example never rise to consider such commands as these: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Remem-

ber the sabbath day to keep it holy. Be ye holy for I am holy. Be ye holy in all manner of conversation. Love not the world, neither the things of the world. Be not conformed to this world." But O! lamentable! what a destructive nature the child inherits from the life of the parent, instructed to seek first and last the perishable things of time; together with the honor that cometh from man. Listen for a moment to a few lessons actually taught to the children. They are schooled in visiting, and paying calls on the sabbath. Their conversation is almost exclusively made up of jesting, joking, and the fashions of the day, also that abomination, speaking evil of their neighbors. Their conformity to the world is marked by the inexhaustible passion for institutions of pleasure, merriment, and frolicing; their adorning is an equipment of extravagances constituted of jewelry, laces, and artificials. How awful in the extreme! This incipient torture prepared by the parent for the child, stretches out one hand bringing to its embrace the unthinking world; while with the other it grasps the hell of hells in which to torment them eternally.

A child born into the world is surrounded by an innumerable host of diseases, and each striking at his vitals like so many deadly vipers; so one born into the kingdom stands as a mark against whom a multitude of trials, temptations and discouragements are cast; and these are unequalled in their destructive fury. But there is none so unconquerable as this second nature; it is like a never dying worm that has coiled itself around the heart to draw from the trembling form the last drop of blood. Cast aside the veil and witness the experience of these persons after their conversion. Temptations come in like a flood, and each one is a voice calling with prolonged invitations to partake of the pleasures presented. But as the judgment is governed by this second nature the decision is made according to the parent's course of life. Hear the reason-

ing, "My father and mother were good and kind to me; they have been professors for many years, and they did such things." It is evidently the case; the love and affection borne by the child towards the parents will hide their faults; thus, the most sincere will be blinded. But few have breasted the billows of this tide and gained the shore. Now turn the scale and view the one that has been nurtured in the admonition of the Lord. I care not what his character was before his conversion; but he has the Bible standard implanted as a second nature, never to be erased; and the first step is a leap upon the highest wall of his parental experience; and he moves on perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord. Had I the voice of the seven thunders, I would roar in the ears of every professor on earth, *Bring your children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

Marengo, Ill.

RELIGION IN CITIES.

It is indeed a praiseworthy object to seek to provide church accommodations in neglected *districts* of cities, to have a house of worship open in every neighborhood of the cities. Doubtless wise schemes for this purpose will be the means of collecting new congregations in many places. But what of these large cities, with their dense and often vicious masses?—what they want most is, more religion and zeal in the churches. More seasonable, practical, convincing preaching; more amity, fellowship and earnestness with Christians; more of sympathy and love, and if you will, condescension, in affectionate efforts to save the poor and wicked; more sincerity and activity as churches, producing powerful conversions and revivals; and more free sittings or free churches for those who do not or cannot rent pews. Let the people be interested by such means in the public worship of God, and there would soon be more churches built. Do not wait for the buildings, but do

as Methodism did at the first, preach any where till God begins to work; preach in rooms, lofts, foundries, wherever there is an empty place available. What is the use of empty churches, however large and fine? But more zeal and earnestness, more prayer and working, would soon fill the churches and build more of them. Can the power come to city churches which have all the pews rented, often at high rates? Will the poor come to places where they are despised by senseless and offensive purse-proud affectation? If we want to take the people to church, we must leave behind us some of our sinful vanity and pride, and learn to feel that to be a man and have an immortal soul is something greater than to wear fine clothes, or to have money in pocket or any where else.—CH. GUARDIAN.

HUMILITY.—MEEKNESS.

BY NOAH STOWELL.

Our Saviour says, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." He "made himself of no reputation." Although there dwelt in Him, "all the fulness of the Godhead; yet, He made no effort to avoid the reproach heaped upon him by his enemies; or to gratify their sceptical criticisms. Still with great meekness He taught His humble disciples, saying, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God." What an example! The Infinite God, the most lowly of men.

O, where shall we find, the true position of fallen, rebellious man? No wonder the Apostle exclaims, "less than the least of all saints." *Nothing.* A full description of our real state, when seen in the light of the Spirit, and word, beggars language; "an open sepulchre;" a loathsome mass of moral corruption. Any elevation above this indescribable condition, is all of grace. "What has thou, that thou didst not receive?" And yet, what an effort on the part of mankind to be great! It appeared among the early disciples,

even when associated with Him, who said, "How can ye believe who receive honor one of another?" And now, what an effort for human praise, "having men's persons in admiration, because of advantage," both in the Church, and out of it! How little attention to the poor and destitute! "If ye have respect to persons ye commit sin." O, how few will obey God every time, "esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures" of earth.

The warmth of Christian fellowship must often be sacrificed, when the "honor that cometh from God only" is sought. "They will separate you from their company." "A man's foes shall be they of his own household." The grace of humility is frequently tested. When a warm reception, by Christian friends is anticipated, and disappointment ensues, from causes unknown; then it is that perfect humility, quietly rests in God, knowing "that all things work together for good to them that love God."

There is danger of placing too high an estimate upon our religious associations. This may be detected by close examination. Those who are wholly saved, "drink into one spirit—are all one in Christ Jesus, keeping the unity of the Spirit," and usually "they see eye to eye," greatly helping each other in the Lord, but if, when separating, a spiritual loss is realized, a vacancy felt, there is then too much trust in Christian association. We are safe only when we trust in God alone. We are instructed, to "be sober, to be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Those who are truly humble, delight in the simplicity of the gospel, and will be led by the Spirit of God, regardless of popular opinion; but if they are not cautious, Satan will counterfeit true spiritual simplicity, and introduce a silly, foolish, mimicry, "deceiving if possible, the very elect."

There is a narrow way, avoiding extremes on either hand. It shows the

vain pomp and show of preaching ones self; substituting for the simplicity of the gospel, human eloquence, rhetorical flourishes, scientific and theological acquisitions, read or repeated, with no more Holy Ghost power, to reach the heart than the sound of a steam whistle, although exciting much popular admiration, yet starving those who are hungry for the bread of life.

But, there is another extreme. In aiming at true meekness and spirituality, there will be an effort to avoid a cold formality. This may lead us ere we are aware, to lay aside important and appropriate forms. There is a kind of scriptural finish, to the forms of religion. In closing prayer for instance, the name of Jesus, in some form, or some expression of adoration, as in the Lord's prayer, "For thine is the kingdom," evidently should be introduced. We once heard grace said at the table of a good man, without the name of God or our Saviour being mentioned in any form. We were surprised, yet the brother, no doubt, supposed he was omitting needless formality. We have also heard prayer ended just as though it was an address to man, without any of those scriptural forms of veneration or adoration, so very appropriate. There is such a thing as a "voluntary humility," not a genuine grace of the Spirit, but a kind of "will worship," dictated by human reason, and greatly tinged with affectation. From all these extremes "Good Lord deliver us." True meekness or lowliness of mind, may be seen in another direction. When strong efforts are put forth sincerely, by the devout in heart, for the benefit of others, and it is evident that the "labor is not in vain in the Lord," the blessing of God attends it, and good is done, and the instrument, is not appreciated, but is treated with coolness, then the soul sweetly and quietly rests in God, rejoicing that his name is written in Heaven, and adopts the sentiment of the Apostle; "Although the more abundantly I love you, the less I

be loved, be it so;" it is [enough, if God only be glorified. We must not place too much dependence on personal appearance or position. We once heard an aged minister, while preaching from this text, "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord," showing that Christians were not confined to the lower classes of society, with a brush of his hair, giving to the audience a fine exhibition of his noble form, say, "We are the *Aristocracy*! We are the upper crust." The Lord have mercy on us! Have the meekness and lowliness of Jesus become extinct? The Apostle instructs us to "be clothed with humility."

Nothing but the pure graces of the Spirit, will stand the test of the final judgment. "Gold, silver, precious stones" only, can endure the flames of the burning day. When "the great day of His wrath is come, who shall be able to stand?"

The grace of humility is lovely in all members of the Church, especially in leaders. We heard a leader say in a class meeting, "you have appointed me your leader, and you must mind me, I am your general and you must obey orders." How much better, to feel our own dependence, and look to the Lord and be led by the Holy Spirit. O, may we all be so taught of God, as to learn "the way of the Lord more perfectly," and observe God's order in all things, so shall the path shine "more and more unto the perfect day." The Lord help us by his grace, that we may glorify Him in all things.

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

BY A. S. WARNER.

NINE years ago, brother Purdy and Dr. Redfield came to this place and held a meeting. Among the many converts, I was one. Being naturally very bashful, I thought I could not do the duties that God required of me. What to do I did not know. I did not want to give up religion,—and to live in a mere form without the power I

would not do. The brethren started a prayer meeting expressly for holiness; I went there; God gave me the blessing of sanctification.

The devil came and told me I had received a great blessing, but not the one I had asked for. Before I reached home I had doubted it away entirely, and a cloud of darkness rested over me. Early the next morning, I went back where the meeting was held the night before, to see the brother that had the charge of the meeting. I told him how I felt. He said I had doubted the blessing away, and urged me to plead with God for the witness of the Spirit, that the work was done.

I went home, and if the devil was ever let loose on any human being, he was on me. I could hardly gather my thoughts on anything. I took my team and went to my fields to work, happy to be alone so I could call on God for help. Every few minutes I would ask God for the witness that I was sanctified. Finally God began to bring up duties before me. The first was, "Will you do your duty among your neighbors?" I promised him I would anywhere, by his help. The next thought was how poor Job was after the devil had stripped him of every thing. I told God that I was poorer than he was, for he might take soul, body, family, property—all I had if he would only give me the witness that he saved me wholly. Then all was settled—such a calmness I had then can not be told by any human tongue. I was following my team along enjoying that calmness, when a voice spoke to me about as loud as two persons generally talk together, "Where Christ dwells there is no sin." I spoke out loud, not being any daunted, "That I knew Christ dwelt in my heart." The voice spoke again, still louder, "That this was the witness I wanted." That moment there was such a pressure in my heart that I could hardly breathe. It was "Glory to God!" as fast as I could speak. I could no more stop shouting Glory to God! while that pressure lasted, which was about three-

fourths of an hour, than I could live without breathing. My voice that moment was changed, and has never gone back to its natural tone. It is quite afflicting to my brothers and sisters that have tender ears that I do, when God blesses me, give him the glory, for it belongs to him. This change took place on April 18th, 1855, at four o'clock p. m.

Some three months after I experienced that great blessing, it was powerfully impressed on my mind to ask Jesus to purify me even as he is pure. I knew the Bible taught that doctrine, but I was afraid that it was some trap the devil had laid to get me down in religion. I regretted it but thought no more about it.—Some two years afterwards it came back again more powerful than ever. What to do I hardly knew, for it was on my mind continually to ask Jesus to purify me even as he is pure. God knew that I was honest. If that was his will I wanted to be made so. I went off alone—got down before the Lord and asked him if that was his will to purify me even as he was pure and holy and to do the work then. If a ball had passed through my heart I should not have fallen any quicker than I did. I now knew that it is our privilege to live pure and holy even as he is pure. From that time I have lived there momentarily. Glory be to God! it is good living. Brothers and sisters try it for yourselves. To Jesus all the glory belongs.

Burlington, Vt.

FIDELITY IN LITTLE THINGS.

Great virtues are rare; the occasions for them are very rare; and when they do occur, we are prepared for them, we are excited by the grandeur of the sacrifice, we are supported either by the splendor of the deed in the eyes of the world, or by the self complacency that we experience from the performance of an uncommon action. Little things are unforseen; they return every moment; they come in contact with our

pride, our indolence, our haughtiness, our readiness to take offense; they contradict our inclinations perpetually. We would much rather make certain great sacrifices to God, however violent and painful they might be, upon condition that we should be rewarded by liberty to follow our desires and habits in the details of life. It is, however, only by fidelity in little things that a true and constant love to God can be distinguished from a passing fervor of spirit.

Let us remember that God looks in our actions only for the motive. The world judges us by appearance; God counts for nothing what is most dazzling to men. What he desires is a pure intention, true docility, and a sincere self-renunciation. All this is exercised more frequently, and in a way that tries us more severely, on common than on great occasions. Sometimes we cling more tenaciously to a trifle than to a great interest. It would give us more pain to relinquish an amusement than to bestow a great sum in charity. We are more easily led away by little things, because we believe them more innocent, and imagine that we are less attached to them; nevertheless, when God deprives us of them we soon discover from the pain of privation how excessive and inexcusable was our attachment to them. The sincerity of our piety is also impeached by the neglect of minor duties. What probability is there that we should not hesitate to make great sacrifices, when we shrink from slight ones?

But what is most dangerous to the mind, is the habit it acquires of unfaithfulness. True love to God thinks nothing small. All that can please or displease him is great. It does not produce constraint and weak scruples, but it places no limits to its fidelity; it acts with simplicity, and as it is not embarrassed with things that God has not commanded, it never hesitates a moment about what he does command, whether it be great or small.

Those persons who are naturally less exact ought to make an inviolable

law with themselves about trifles. They are tempted to despise them; they have a habit of thinking them of no consequence; they are not aware of the insensible growth of the passions; they forget even their own most fatal experience. They trust to a delusive courage, though it has before failed them, for the support of their fidelity.

"It is a trifle," they say, "it is nothing." True; but it is a nothing that will be everything to you, a trifle that you prefer to the will of God, a trifle that will ruin you. There is no real elevation of mind in a contempt of little things; it is, on the contrary, from too narrow views that we consider those things of little importance which have in fact such extensive consequences. The more apt we are to neglect small things; the more we ought to fear the effects of this negligence, be watchful over ourselves, and place around us, if possible, some insurmountable barrier to this remissness. Do not let us be troubled at this constant attention to trifles; at first it will require courage to maintain it, but it is a penance that we have need of, and that will at last bring us peace and serenity. God will gradually render this state pleasant and easy to us.—FENELON.

OVERCOMING.

BY JANE E. CONEY.

"The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord." All power is in the hands of Him who hath said, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Revelation must be our guide. Whatever takes place, will work for our good if we are striving to overcome; and whatever comes to pass will in reality work against us if we are contending for any other victory than the destruction of the life of self, and the possession of the mind of Christ. The great victory is not gained by carnal means, if it were the warfare would be most natural and

easy; but in this conflict, grace is against nature, and the whole strength of self is opposed to the victory. For this reason, few there be that reach the prize at last. The agencies that afflict and alarm us, are not our foes, but our helpers. When we are compelled to suffer for well-doing, if we take it patiently, the enemy sustains a loss. When reviled for what is good, if we complain not, but give in return our prayers and blessings, we gain a victory. Our love must be pure and perfect, sufficient to bear and lose all things without being lost itself. Our faith must be strong and active. The children of Israel were not stopped by the Red Sea. They had their song of triumph upon the farther bank, overlooking the waters which had opened to give them a dry passage, and their enemies a watery grave. But when they came to the borders of Canaan and their spies returned and reported that there were giants in the land, and cities with walls great and exceeding high, they saw through the magnifying glass of fear and were terrified: So it is with us, oftentimes difficulties swell out into the giant proportions of absolute impossibilities and we turn from them and set our faces to go back, but into sin. God help us to overcome these difficulties, then shall our song of triumph arise, as we go forward, and manna will be given us to feast upon by the way, and bitter waters will be made sweet for us by the branch of the tree of life. "Remember" saith our blessed Lord, "the word that I said unto you, if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.—These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended." These words of our Lord are sufficient consolation to any believer. Let us learn daily, to count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, and think it our highest honor that as we can do so little for Christ, we should be called in some way or other to suffer for Him. "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." In these peril-

ous times we need to have our armor on, for, if the weapons which the world uses, are more delicate and subtle than in former times, they are so much the more formidable. Let us be strong, then, and steadfast, fixing our eyes on the certain triumph of the Lord's cause. "For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." It is by faith that we subdue our enemies. Our Lord prayed for his immediate disciples and for us on this wise: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one; as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Let us go forward then, as soldiers of the God of armies and fight fearlessly the fight of faith. His name alone without any human help, gains the most noble victories. Our great leader became like one of us, and was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. In every temptation our Lord overcomes; in every conflict he was victorious, yet the weapons he used were not carnal. The powers of darkness were permitted to contend against him until his life was taken, but his patient submission, was victory; his humiliation and poverty were honor and riches; and his sufferings and death, were glory and immortality. He has left us his example, and those who are chosen and faithful are called to know something of the fellowship of his sufferings in the flesh. But in gaining the victory, we must wrestle against stronger foes than the world or the flesh, "for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places, against the prince of the power of the air." When every thing goes prosperously, it is no great thing to be strong; but to be still and wait patiently in hope when all is gone, requires a degree of submission in which

the will of the creature sinks into the will of God. The world will have its own, and whoever will overcome must give back what belongs to it. Travelers anticipate rest at the end of their journey. If exposed to many privations, they will be more diligent to press onward and reach that better country where their toils shall end. The day will come when the Lord's promise shall be gloriously fulfilled. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

RESTITUTION.

BY REV. T. S. LA DUE.

Property dishonestly obtained should be restored, and debts due to others should be paid. This should be done even if the defrauder or debtor and their families are beggared by this course. They will not thus violate the precept, "But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

A man must provide for his house by honest means. Property obtained or held dishonestly belongs to the one defrauded, and God demands that it be returned to him. One replies to this,—"Which I also admit, but the rule must work both ways; the defrauder must not take what rightfully belongs to his family, (not himself,) and give it to another without their consent." If this be truth, then the thief who gets one thousand dollars by direct theft, or by the "keen" driving of a bargain, and bestows it in comforts on his suffering family, is under no moral obligation to make a return; for it no longer belongs to the one robbed, or to the thief, but "rightfully to his family." All see that the prevalence of such a principle would soon destroy society. It is contrary to the letter and spirit of God's word. The family of the defrauder dependent on him are called to suffer with him; under the

rule, that God "visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children." The blessed Lord has abundantly provided for all to secure an *honest* subsistence. Who can say that He means, provide for your household by, any course, honest if you can, dishonest if any other seems impracticable; steal, cheat, be extortioners, then go a step further in the same line and murder, rather than have your family suffer; for if you do not provide for them at all hazards, you are "worse than an infidel."

The scripture view is expressed in a few words, "And if any man sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." This certainly covers ground broad as that of a full restitution of stolen property. "Thou shalt not steal." Any property dishonestly obtained is stolen. Think of Zaccheus.

God's requirements, all fully agree, are based in eternal justice. He has seen fit to require over fifty millions of martyrs to die terribly, rather than that one soul of them should break an iota of His law, and thus numbers of innocent children were doubtless thrown helpless on a selfish world.

Let restitution be made, or confession where the power to return has passed away, and let the guilty one trust in God for deliverance. A lack of trust in the Almighty is often one of the greatest difficulties with him whom restitution or confession seems about to ruin.

Many striking cases have occurred of persons held by God in great agony of mind to confess and restore, when they were liable by it to be torn from their dependent families and disgraced with imprisonment. They obeyed, and were filled with Divine peace, their families were provided for, and those injured freely forgave. But suppose beggary to family and self results? It were better to die for the bread that perisheth than for the bread of life, to be disgraced with men than with God, and imprisoned for life in cold, stone walls, than forever in hell.

JEHOVAH TSIDKENU.

BY ROBERT MURRAY M'CHEYNE.

I once was a stranger to grace and to God,
I knew not my danger, and felt not my load;
Though friends spoke in rapture of Christ on
the tree,
Jehovah Tsidkenu was nothing to me.

I oft read with pleasure, to sooth or engage,
Isaiah's wild measure, and John's simple page;
But e'en when they pictured the blood-sprinkl'd
tree,
Jehovah Tsidkenu seem'd nothing to me.

Like tears from the daughters of Zion that
roll,
I wept when the waters went over his soul;
Yet thought not that my sins had nailed to the
tree,
Jehovah Tsidkenu—'twas nothing to me.

When free grace awoke me, by light from on
high,
Then legal fears shook me—I trembled to die;
No refuge, no safety in self could I see—
Jehovah Tsidkenu my Saviour must be.

My terrors all vanished before the sweet name;
My guilty fears banished, with boldness I came
To drink at the fountain, life-giving and free—
Jehovah Tsidkenu is all things to me.

Jehovah Tsidkenu! my treasure and boast,
Jehovah Tsidkenu! I ne'er can be lost;
In thee I shall conquer by flood and by field,
My cable, my anchor, my breastplate and
shield!

Even treading the valley, the shadow of death,
This "watchword" shall rally my faltering
breath;
For while from life's fever my God sets me
free,
Jehovah Tsidkenu my death song shall be.

ORPHANS.—A gentleman once observed an Indian standing at a window, looking into a field where several children were at play. The gentleman asked the interpreter what was the conversation. He answered, "the Indian was lamenting the sad estate of these orphan children." The interpreter inquired of him why he thought them orphans. The Indian with great ear-

nestness replied:—"Is not this the day on which you told me the white people worshipped the Great Spirit? If so, surely these children, if they had parents or any person to take care of them, would not be suffered to be out there playing and making such a noise. No, no. They have lost their fathers and mothers, and have no one to take care of them!" Such was the reasoning of the honest-hearted, untutored savage. Similar reasoning has made many men infidels. Lord help to be consistent.

DEAD CHURCHES.—It does not historically appear, that churches, when once passed the age of their working power, and zenith of their glory, have ever recalled these epochs in their prosperity, any more than the seasons of life are redintegrated. They become as bodies when life is fled, decomposed, or if they remain, it is by human art, such as the Egyptians practiced, who embalm their *dead*, but were not able to restore them to life. The departed spirit of religion re-appears in other forms, in other lands, or in another age. It rears new shrines for itself among other people. The Jew is abandoned, and the Gentile chosen in his stead. The center of Christian life and power are transferred to other parts, just as those of civilization and empire have moved from the east to the west. If the vessel which should have been unto honor is marred, another is formed out of the same general mass, more suited to display the riches of grace. If one instrument become broken or blunted, by which Christ would carry on his work, and secure his renown, another can be transferred by Him who says, "Behold I have created the smith that bloweth the coals, and I have created the water to destroy.—GEO. STEWARD.

"Jehovah Tsidkenu" was the watchword of the Reformers; it signifies "The Lord our Righteousness."

THE ONLY Methodism I desire to know, is a holy method of dying to ourselves and living to God.—WHITE-FIELD.

THE EARNEST CHRISTIAN AND GOLDEN RULE.

BUFFALO, JUNE, 1864.

PROSPERITY.

There is no test of the Christian character so severe as prosperity. Through its means many fall who have stood proof against all the direct assaults of Satan. The smiles of the world are far more to be dreaded than its frowns. The safety of Moses consisted in his refusing, when he came to years "to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." David, an outlaw, hunted from place to place, maintained his integrity; but David, the victorious king, fell into sin and shame. The church, which in her poverty and disgrace was pure and holy, as she becomes rich and prosperous is almost certain to become proud and worldly.

Prosperity has a tendency to induce forgetfulness of God. Means that, by his blessing, are found to be successful, are quite likely to be thought to possess some merit in themselves. A popular minister is reported to have said to his people at the close of an unsuccessful series of meetings: "I do not see what is the matter, I preached the same sermons that I have been preaching here, at L.—and we had a great revival." When he first preached them he depended on God; and a blessing attending, he concluded that they possessed some merit in themselves. Many, who when poor and in trouble, make promises to God as Jacob did, (Gen. xxviii, 20) forget when deliverance comes, to keep their vows. They are in doubt, whether, after all, their success is not owing to their own good management; and a spirit of independence is fostered. *But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked; thou art reazen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God, which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation,* (Deut. xxxii, 15.)

Prosperity tends to self-indulgence. There are but few who, when they become rich, retain their simplicity. They naturally wish to live in the same style that others do in similar circumstances. They yield at first but little. One gratification paves the way for another, until it would be difficult for the individual himself to mention any particular in which he practices self-denial. The "pride of life" in-

dulged in, leads to the gratification of the "lust of the eyes," and this encourages "the lust of the flesh," to clamor for indulgence. All can join sincerely in one petition of Agur, "Give me not poverty, lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." How many can unite heartily in the other petition? "Give me not riches; feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be full and deny thee and say, who is the Lord. If you would guard against the evils of prosperity, you must beware of your associations. You cannot mingle freely with the proud and worldly without partaking of their spirit. Said the royal Psalmist, "I will not sit with the wicked." If I have any business with them, I will do it as soon as possible, and hasten away; but I will not associate with them, no matter how great their talents or high their position. This is the only safe course. "Evil communications corrupt good manners;" and the more attractive unholly associates are, the more harm will result from the association. Let your intimates be the pure in heart; your friends, the despised followers of a despised Master.

You must maintain your simplicity of dress and style of living. Beware how you begin to conform to the world. Adopt Wesley's maxim, "Gain all you can; save all you can; give all you can." Give, not to gratify pride or ambition, but to advance the cause of God in its purity in the world. There is safety in no other course. By neglecting this, many have fallen into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

INTEMPERANCE.

The people of this country are making rapid strides in intemperance. The quantity of spirituous liquors drank the past year, is probably fifty per cent. greater than was ever before consumed in this land in twelve consecutive months. Men drink everywhere; and seem to glory in their shame. Gentlemen, and even ladies, traveling, take their bottle of brandy with them on the cars, and unblushingly partake, before whoever may be present, of the waters of damnation.

When the Emperor of China was compelled, by British arms, to admit opium into the Empire, to the great injury of the people

he was advised to collect duties upon it, and thus increase his revenue. The emphatic reply of this heathen monarch, was:—

IT IS TRUE, I CANNOT PREVENT THE INTRODUCTION OF THE FLOWING POISON; GAIN-SEEKING AND CORRUPT MEN WILL, FOR PROFIT AND SENSUALITY, DEFEAT MY WISHES. BUT NOTHING WILL INDUCE ME TO DERIVE A REVENUE FROM THE VICE AND MISERY OF MY PEOPLE.

Noble words! Could not our professedly Christian government, with profit to themselves and the country, take lessons of morality from this idolatrous emperor? Our government scruples not to derive a revenue from the vice and misery of the people. It is esteemed patriotic to drink. What does it matter, though the once kind husband and father is transformed, by strong drink, into a demon incarnate, who kills his wife by tortures more exquisite than the inquisition ever inflicted, and brings his children to beggary and shame, the wretch who sold him the liquor pays the state for his license, and every glass of poison drank, puts a trifle into the distended pocket of some unscrupulous government official. And so the damning traffic is tolerated and encouraged. What has the country gained for its lavish expenditure of treasure and blood in dethroning King Cotton, if, in its place, we are to have a bloody reign of King Alcohol? No plantation driver ever plied the instruments of torment so mercilessly as he! A few instances of slaves punished by cruel masters until they died, filled the land with horror; but he burns all his victims alive, by slow, unseen fires, which he kindles in their veins. Many a saint has gone from the lowly cabin of the oppressed, in a chariot of fire, to the unseen glories of the upper world, but around the dying cot of the devotees of strong drink, devils dance in wild glee, tormenting their victim before his time, filling the room with the foul atmosphere and the burning, blasphemous words of hell, and waiting in impatience to hurry him away in their horrible clutches to the lurid flames of damnation, where their worm dieth not, and their fires are not quenched.

Already, alcohol is king. Two years since, he gave a governor to the Empire State, and but recently he has brought our Republican Congress to bow their necks in meek submission to terms of his own dictation. State and

national laws he tramples under foot with impunity, when they conflict with his interests, and even army regulations, so stringently executed in ordinary cases, he disregards, as the idle winds, when they stand in his way. Officers, maddened by strong drink, cruelly treat our brave soldiers, and often expose them to unnecessary slaughter; and reckless surgeons inflamed by brandy, make cripples for life, or send to an untimely grave those whom sober skill might have restored to soundness of body.

Christian men! you must rouse yourselves from your lethargy and grapple with this terrible monster. Already some of your own number have fallen by his cruel power. Even ministers of the Gospel are yielding to the terrible influence. Some belonging to the same Conference with which we were once connected, secretly, as they suppose, take delight in the intoxicating cup, and others have openly bartered their hopes of heaven for the maddening bowl. Your children, if not yourselves, may fall under the influence of this ruinous fascination. Every motive of the Gospel and of humanity calls upon you to exert all the influence you possess to check the progress of the tide of woe which is mounting higher and higher, threatening to sweep away everything that is lovely in its blighting progress.

If you are a farmer, do not be tempted by a love of gain to raise anything upon your farm for the brewery or distillery. Let not a bushel of barley nor a pound of hops for the general market grow upon soil which you can control. Is not he who mingles poison to take life equally guilty of murder with the one who administers it? Let no wine plant grow in your garden; better sow it with Canada thistles. Let no grapes of your raising be converted into wine to beget in your children an appetite for drink which may lead them to a drunkard's grave.

In the discharge of your duty as a citizen, beware whom you assist in elevating to office. Let no love of party lead you to aid in putting power in the hands of any one who will, in all probability, use it to keep the land open to the ravages of intemperance. As a Christian, labor incessantly to promote that deep, thorough work of grace, among men which alone can save from intemperance and every other vice. *Know ye not that drunkards shall not inherit the Kingdom of God?*

WE KNOW GOD HEARS US.

"Is it the privilege of God's people to have the direct witness of the Spirit that their prayers for the conversion of others will be answered?" That God really does answer such prayers, we suppose no professed Christian questions; else why are they offered in every praying assembly? Why do you often hear Christians, in relating their experience, say they were converted in answer to the prayers of some who interceded in their behalf? perhaps a praying mother or wife! If God does answer such prayers, as all admit, is it not reasonable that he should give to his interceding saints, for their encouragement, the assurance that they are graciously heard? "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" Paul lays down the general proposition, "We have received the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." 1 Cor: ii, 12. He gives us answers to prayers in behalf of our friends. Therefore he gives us the Spirit THAT WE MIGHT KNOW that he freely gives us such answers.

Daniel prayed most earnestly, "with fasting and sackcloth and ashes" for his people. He confessed their sins and besought God for mercy. And he says that while he "was speaking in prayer," the arch-angel Gabriel came and talked with him and brought him a gracious answer. The Psalmist says of Moses and Aaron and Samuel that "they called up-on the LORD, and he answered them; he spoke unto them in the cloudy pillar."

It is then our privilege to know that God hears us. "And if we know that he hears us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him. If any man sees his brother sin: a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death." 1 John: v, 15.

Nor does this assurance that God hears us, lead to the neglect of proper efforts for the salvation of others. The king who expects his son to reign after him endeavors to give him an education suitable for the position he is to occupy. The farmer takes most pains with that piece of ground which he feels assured will reward him for his toil. So we shall inevitably labor hardest to secure the conversion of those for whom God has given us to travail in spiritual agony, until Christ is formed in them the hope of glory.

WHAT SEVENTY BOYS BECAME.

Many people begin the education of their children with an exhibition of toys, marvelous tales and romances, and wind up with the circus and theatre. The degrading influence and sorrowful consequences of this mode of education will be best illustrated by stating a few facts that have passed under my own observation.

So far as my memory goes, about thirty boys educated in this way—i. e., in contempt of all useful knowledge and occupation, spent their days in reading novels, the lives and confessions of pirates and murderers, etc., and their nights in the streets, dram shops, gambling saloons, circus and theatre. At the age of forty-five, one had been hung for murder, one for robbing the mail, and three as pirates; five died in the penitentiary, and seven lived and died as useless vagabonds about the streets; three were useful mechanics, and the fate of the remainder is unknown.

Of about forty educated with me, by a really moral and scientific teacher, under the old foggy Puritanic system of restraint, as it is now called by young America, at the age of fifty-five, one was a member of Congress, one judge of the Supreme Court, three physicians, five lawyers, fourteen were dead, and the remainder farmers and mechanics, and so far as known, not one of them was ever called before the bar of his country on a criminal charge, and they all had comfortable homes, except two or three, and every one passably respectable. *Dr. Edward Louden.*

THE HIGH PRICES.

Our readers are aware that the cost of almost every thing has greatly advanced. Most periodicals have, in consequence, either reduced their size, or raised their price. The "Guide," and "The Beauty," have but three-fourths their former number of pages. The price and size of the Earnest Christian are still the same as before the war. We shall, if possible, keep them the same. But to do this we have to do the work of two or three persons ourselves. We economize in every possible way. Still we should not have succeeded thus far, had not our friends rendered us timely assistance by largely increasing our list of subscribers for the present year. The cost of publishing is constantly advancing.

Our friends must not relax their efforts. Those who have not paid for the present year, we hope will do so at once. *We cannot afford to lose a single dollar that is our due.* To withhold it in these times, when a dollar pays for so little material or work, is not only an injustice to us, but an injury to the cause. Those whose subscription expires with this number will, we trust, immediately remit us one dollar for another year, and each one send us one or more new subscribers. A NEW VOLUME commences with the July number, and we want *one thousand* new subscribers to commence with it. Shall we have them?

PROTESTANTISM IN MADAGASCAR.

THE Rev. R. Toy, writes from Antananrivo, on August 19th: "The churches in the capital continue to be crowded; mine is some times fairly packed. Before we came, there was no congregation gathered in this part of the town. I formed a small church of forty members in March last; about seventy or eighty have since been admitted. I think I have baptized near a hundred persons. I have also taken under my care five or six country churches, which I visit in rotation. Everywhere in this island-kingdom, Christianity is now welcomed with joy. Many Protestants embrace the forward movement, and, before Romish idolatry and superstition obtain firm footing, send forth laborers to plant in valley and on hill-side, in town and open country, the precious seeds of truth and life. If the church *now* sends the Bible and missionary into every province, Madagascar may soon be free from the clouds of idolatry and the shackles of Rome, and be counted among the Protestant and evangelical nations of the earth." We send heavenward the earnest prayer, that God will give the means to accomplish this worthy and Christian like aim.

MOHAMMEDAN HONESTY.

In the *Cyclopædia of Commercial Anecdotes*, published by Appleton & Co., New York, we observe an incident of Mohammedan mercantile morality which may well put a blush upon the cheek of many a professedly Christian dealer:—"A mercantile house in Salonica had bills to a large amount on the principal inhabitants and merchants of the place, which, with their books and papers, were destroyed by fire. On the day following, a prominent Turk, who was largely in their debt, went in

person and told them that, having heard that their papers had been destroyed, he had brought a copy of his account with them and fresh bills for the amount which was their due. This example was followed by *all* the Turkish debtors to them." It is rather sarcastically added, "It does not appear to be intimated that this course was one that they had ever learned from the *Christian* traders in their country."

ADVANCE IN THE PRICE OF PRAYERS.

A writer in one of our cotemporaries tells of an Irish domestic in her family, who, having heard of the death of her mother in the old country, went to the priest to make provision for the good woman's soul. On her return, her employer asked the result. She freely related it, saying that the priest had consoled her on her loss, and sympathized in her affliction. Her mother's soul was in purgatory, whence it could be relieved by prayer; and cheerfully the loving girl gave two dollars, that as many prayers might be said for its repose.

"Were the prayers said in public?"

"No, ma'm: the priest wrote down my mother's name in a book, that there might be no mistake. He will say them in private. When my sister died, before the war, I only paid half a dollar each for prayers for the same purpose; but the priest assured me the present charge was right—that 'prayers had riz.'"

CAMP MEETINGS.

Arrange your business so as to attend one at least if possible. Go with a tent and take those of your family that do not enjoy religion, and make a special effort for their conversion.

THE BROCKPORT tent meeting, and the ST. CHARLES camp meeting, are to commence the 15th of June; the Windsor camp meeting is to commence the 22nd of June, and the Barnerville camp meeting is to commence the 29th of June, as noticed in our last. Read those notices.

THOSE GOING to the Barnerville camp meeting by the Albany and Susquehanna R. R., will pay full fare from Albany out, and will be returned to Albany FREE. Those going from the west, via N. Y. Central R. R., will, on the first day of the meeting only, be conveyed from Palatine Bridge to the ground, —a distance of 19 miles,—free of charge, by giving notice a week or two in advance, to Dr P. P. Werner, Barnerville, Schoharie Co., N. Y. They will also be returned free. Those who would avail themselves of this kind offer, must take the train so as to be at Palatine Bridge by about 1 o'clock, the 29th of June.