

# The Earnest Christian

AND

GOLDEN RULE.

DECEMBER, 1867.

## THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK.

BY MRS. H. A. CROUCH.

THE church of God is often symbolized in Scripture by a golden candlestick; as in the vision of Zechariah; also in the vision of St. John, the Revelator. It was said to him, "The seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches."—Rev. i: 20. There can be no doubt but that the seven-branched candlestick of the tabernacle also shadowed forth the church of God. It was of pure gold; no dross or base alloy. And thus has God always signified that His church should be—pure, glorious, "not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

The church of Ephesus was commended by him who walked among the golden candlesticks, because she had *tried them* which said they were apostles, and were not, and had found them liars; and he whose eyes were like unto a flame of fire, was not ignorant of the good works and good deeds of the churches, while he said, "I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue (church) of Satan."

With what scathing terms he speaks of Jezebel, who *called herself* a prophetess, and yet seduced the children of God to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols! And Jezebel lives to-day, and with her loud profession would stand as something above many who are of the fold. To-

day, as then, she teaches contrary to the Holy Spirit, and the commandments of God's word, that Christians may form alliances with the world, enjoy its pleasures, and fellowship its idolatry by wearing its trappings, its gold and gems.

"Behold, I will cast her into a bed, (the wicked make their bed in hell,) and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts."

Who has seen hundreds crowding the altar night after night, and their names counted as "born again," and has not wondered at the few, comparatively speaking, who have held out long enough to enter their names upon the church record? And who has not been still more astonished a few months later, in seeking fruit of the revival?

Why is this?

There is fornication of the church with the world, and God has said, "I will kill her children with death."

"Repent, lest thy candlestick be removed out of its place; for God will have a candlestick of *pure gold*."—Ex. xxv: 31.

He who liveth and was dead, but who is now alive forevermore, having the keys of hell and of death, has seven times said, "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

"Of beaten work shall the candlestick be made." Beaten work will not

break. His shaft, branches, bowls, knobs and flowers, all of pure gold—beaten work.

"Three bowls made like unto almonds, with a knob and a flower in one branch; and three bowls made like almonds in the other branch, with a knob and a flower: so in the six branches that come out of the candlestick. And in the candlestick shall be four bowls made like unto almonds, with their knobs and their flowers."

In the dissension that arose among some of the Israelites as to who were the chosen priesthood of the Lord, God commanded that the prince of each house of Israel should bring a rod to be laid up in the tabernacle before the testimony, and he would show whom he should choose, by causing his rod to blossom. And on the morrow, when the rods were brought forth, behold, the rod of Aaron, for the house of Levi, (type of the royal priesthood and holy nation,) was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds.

We see in the golden candlestick three almonds in each of the branches, and four in the main body of the candlestick. Of the fruit of the Spirit as seen in the church, there abideth faith, hope and charity; these three. Hope shows itself by works, in religion as in everything else. The man who hopes to be rich, labors and works in earnest to be, else his hope would not be hope, but only an idle wish. All our labor, in whatever direction it may be, is in hope. Faith, hope and charity, these fruits are of the Spirit, seen in every branch of the true church of God; but in the main body of the church, by the same Spirit are given *gifts*, of healing, of prophesy, of tongues, etc. In Gal. v: 22-23, the fruit of the Spirit is named, and we find that it comes under the three heads spoken of. We cannot place joy, which is named of the fruit, under any particular head, but as oil is abundant in the almond, so is joy—which is one spiritual definition of oil, abundant in gifts, faith, hope and love, entering largely into all.

It may be an inquiry with some of

my readers, as it was with me, "What is meant by those knobs and flowers?" I will take you around the winding way, (you will love to go,) and tell you what I think, and how I came to think so. I found one other place in the Bible where the word "knobs" was used (1 Kings vii: 24) in the description of the molten sea; and here, too, it was in close connection with flowers. There were ten knobs in the candlestick, and in the brazen sea were ten knobs in a cubit. Whatever the meaning might be in the one, I judged it was not very different in the other.

"And under the brim of it round about there were knobs compassing it, ten in a cubit, compassing it round about; the knobs were cast in two rows when it was cast. And it (the molten sea) was a hand-breadth thick, and the brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies."

So the knobs were just under the lilies. Another description of the molten sea is given in 2 Chron. iv.—There, instead of "knobs," we find oxen spoken of. "And under it (the brim) was the similitude of oxen, which did compass it round about; ten in a cubit, compassing the sea round about. Two rows of oxen were cast, when it was cast."

Here we have the Bible definition of knobs: that is, oxen, or "similitude of oxen." If the oxen stood with their faces to the beholder, as those did under the sea, their heads, in the rows, would present an appearance not unlike knobs. I have spoken of oxen in another paper, and need only briefly here to say that the Christian, as a servant, is often set forth under this figure. "Take my yoke upon you," said Jesus, "and learn of me." "Rebuke the company of spearmen, the multitude of bulls, with the calves of the people, till every one submit himself with pieces of silver. Scatter thou the people that delight in war."—Psa. lxxviii: 30. "Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke."

The oxen in the brazen sea were cast in two rows. Do they represent Jews

and Gentiles? "What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies."—Cant. vi: 13.

After tracing the word "knops" in the Scripture, and satisfying myself that they represented Christians, I still had not one thought as to the flowers, and many times a day the question arose in my mind, what can the flowers mean? And I asked the Lord if it might please him to tell me.

What of the flowers? *Openings of flowers*, as the marginal reading is.—Lilies, as they are termed in the brazen sea, and in the temple.

Christ was often presented to my mind as the lily of the valley—Cant. ii: 1—but the large number of flowers in the candlestick, and *close to the water's edge* in the sea, and in the temple, indicated that there was another meaning than this, or one of wider scope, taking in something more. I often asked the Lord with regard to it, and thought upon it, but did not get one ray of light. One day, as I was sitting by the crib of a rosy little sleeper, improving the precious opportunity in writing something for my blessed Lord, the question arose in my mind again, what can those flowers mean?

Just then—it was like a voice, and yet it was not a voice, which said, as if surprised at my dullness of apprehension—*why the flowers are the little children!*

How blessed I was in thinking of Jesus, so kind to make provision for the little children in the great plan of redemption, and to give them a place with his people! How I thanked him as I looked upon my sleeping babe, and remembered his words, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven!"

And I walked the room, and blessed his holy name.

"As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." Before any one can be called of Christ, "My love," they must needs be converted, and become *as little children*.

"Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? Whither is thy beloved turned aside, that we

may seek him with thee? My beloved is *gone down* into his garden to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to *gather lilies*."

Mother, you have felt that the parent stem was almost broken when he plucked off those little lilies, and you have asked again and again, *Why* did he take them? We cannot tell.—*It was his pleasure*. Perhaps he wanted them to grace his upper temple.

There are many very good people who do not like to see lilies in the candlestick; but if they ever get to heaven they will see lilies in some chief places. Solomon's temple was but a shadow of the heavenly one, and the crowning work of the pillars was of lilies.

"And the cedar of the house within was carved with *knops and open flowers*. And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubim, and palm trees, and open flowers (*openings of flowers*) within and without."—1 Kings vi: 18-29; see also verses 32 and 35.

I believe the Scripture teaches universal salvation for the little children, but not for oxen who may be self-willed and ungovernable.

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is arisen upon thee." You cannot help shining if you are a true disciple. That new, inherent, shining nature *will shine*.—Mark the words of Jesus, "*Let your light so shine*." If you have the true light in you, you will not have to *make* your light shine, but you will have to make an effort to keep it from shining, and that effort will certainly put it out. It is one of the most natural things in the world for a diamond to sparkle. It does not *try* to sparkle, for it is its nature. A bit of glass looks much like a diamond, but all the powers of earth combined could not make it sparkle so.

Some people think it is a matter of little consequence whether they belong to the church or not. If you are a golden lamp, the place for you is on the golden candlestick. "Men do not light a candle and put it under a bushel,



but *on a candlestick*, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

Perhaps you say, "I am not a *golden lamp*." Well, beloved, hasten to the transmuting blood, for "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Or you say, "I am not worthy of a place there." It is well you feel so. That is the way all Christians feel. We are not worthy of the temporal blessings that are showered upon us, to say nothing of the spiritual blessings we receive, and eternal bliss hereafter.—But though we may not be worthy, Christ is, and all things are ours in him.

"And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil-olive, beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to *burn always*."—Ex. xxvii: 20.

Doctrines cannot be diverse and contradictory, for they are of God; and as the churches shall study his word by the light of the Spirit, and throw away preconceived opinions as they shall find them conflicting with it, there must necessarily be harmony of belief.

The lamps are many, but the light is one. The branches are many, but the candlestick is one. "There is *one body*, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling—one Lord, one faith, one baptism."—Gal. iii: 27. "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."—Eph. iv: 4-5-6.

#### WISDOM KNOWING ITS IGNORANCE.—

The celebrated Duval, librarian of Francis I., often answered questions by, "I don't know." An insolent man replied to him one day, "Why, sir, you ought to know; the Emperor pays you for your knowledge!" Duval answered, "The Emperor pays me for what I know; if he was to pay me for what I don't know, all the treasures of his empire would not be sufficient."

The eager reading of even religious books may be dangerous, and a hindrance to those who are aiming at the true spirit of religion, if they have recourse to them instead of God.

#### GEMS.

FURNISHED BY A. A. PHELPS.

WILFUL waste makes woful want.

EXPERIENCE is God's University.

A SINGLE fact is worth a ship-load of argument.

HE that will not be counselled, cannot be helped.

WHEN the wolf is dead, all the dogs give him a bite!

FIRE and water are good servants, but bad masters.

PEOPLE do not like to drink a river to get a drop of honey.

THE briny waters of intemperance are largely composed of human tears.

PRAYER without study is *presumption*; but study without prayer is *atheism*.

MEN will *wrangle* for religion; *write* for it; *fight* for it; *die* for it; anything but *live* it.

By reading, we commune with the dead; by conversation, with the living; by contemplation, with ourselves.

A DYING man once said: "Gather up my influence and bury it with me." How vain was his request!

HE that *does* not reason, is a *fanatic*; he that *will* not reason, is a *bigot*; he that *cannot* reason, is a *fool*.

It is a just maxim that honesty is the best policy; but he who is governed by that maxim is not an honest man.

"MILLIONS for Mars, but mites for Jesus," is the maxim which the church and the world have practically adopted.

OF dreams Dr. Johnson very wisely said: "Do not wholly *believe* them, for they may be *false*; do not wholly *reject* them, for they may be *true*."

THOUGH wicked men may gnaw my reputation with the rugged teeth of slander, the blood of Jesus can redress my grievances and heal my wounds.



## RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

BY MRS. H. J. BELKNAP.

I do not remember the time when my heart was not susceptible to divine impressions. I always had a peculiar love and respect for the people of God, and especially for the ministers, who used to make their home at my father's house. I had a good father and mother. Father has been a class-leader a great many years. God, in his mercy, more effectually called me by his Holy Spirit, when I was about fourteen years of age, through the instrumentality of my grandmother, a very devoted member of the Baptist Church. Her conversation with me, led to thoughtfulness and to deep convictions, which resulted in the salvation of my soul. I sought the Saviour, in all the means of grace—such as reading his word, and our excellent hymns, and in private prayer.—About the time that I began to be serious, we had two new preachers sent on to the circuit—brothers John Luckey and T. Newman. Brother Luckey's first sermon was preached from Habakkuk iii. 2: "O Lord, revive thy work." Brother Newman preached from: "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." Those two sermons were the beginning of a precious work of grace. On this Sabbath both preachers were present, and also brother Datus Ensign, of precious memory. At the close of the sermon, all serious-minded persons were invited to stay at the class-meeting. A great part of the congregation stayed, much to the surprise of all, as one did not know as another felt as they did. We had a great meeting. The preachers went through the aisles, at the same time, exhorting each one to flee from the wrath to come.—Many wept, and the groans and shouts might have been heard afar off. This was the beginning of a glorious work of God in Schuylerville, on old Saratoga circuit.

In the class-meeting I was blessed, but not fully satisfied. In the evening there was preaching, and mourners were invited to come forward for prayers.

The altar was crowded with penitents, and I was among the number. After uniting in prayer, for a short time, while father was inside of the altar, and mother close by me, on the outside, praying for me, I received the witness that all my sins were forgiven. I seemed to see Jesus on the cross, as he said to me, "Daughter, thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee." They rose and sung, "Why, its all glory, glory;" and it was just what I felt. I rose, and sung, though I had never sung a tune before. From this time I went on my way rejoicing. I thought that I could never feel again as happy as I did at first; and that, if I should live long in the world, I should backslide; but having obtained help of God, I continue until this day, which will be thirty-eight years the 24th of this month. Glory be to his holy name! He has permitted me to drink deeper and larger measures from salvation's well many times since then. I daily prove that,

"The hill of Zion yields,  
A thousand sacred sweets."

For about a year after my conversion, I felt that, being justified by faith, I had peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Though at times beset with many temptations, and doubts, and fears, I began to be remiss in duty, especially in sacred prayer. As I was attending school, my studies seemed to take up all my thoughts, and to imperceptibly draw my mind from God, and I lost that sweet sense of the Saviour's presence, which I had enjoyed. But I still retained my place in the church, and kept up the form of godliness. We removed to Albany, N. Y., where the church was in a very prosperous state. I attended all the means of grace, and especially the class-meetings, where the good Lord mercifully restored unto me the joys of his salvation. Very soon after I was restored, I felt the need of a deeper work of grace. I read all the works on holiness that I could get then, and fully believed that it was my privilege to be sanctified, through soul, body, and spirit. Through the help of the Holy Spirit, I tried to consecrate all my redeemed powers to

his service, and to lay all on the altar that sanctifies the gift, and to believe that he received me. At times I fully believed, and had the witness in myself. At other times I doubted, and so, through unbelief, I lost the blessing.—After awhile, I began to be discouraged in trying to seek that blessing. I thought I would give up holiness as a distinct blessing, and try to live as near right as I could; that I would grow in grace, gradually, until I arrived at the stature of a perfect Christian. But, there were times when I did so hunger and thirst after righteousness, when the breathings of my full soul were that my God would mould me—fashion me after his own likeness; and he often heard and answered prayers in blessings on my soul, making me to rejoice in the light of his countenance. Thus I went on for years, alternating between hope and fear, sinning and repenting, not satisfied with myself until about eight years ago, I really became alarmed. I felt afraid that I had grieved that blessed Spirit, so that he had left me to myself. I had become more fashionable and worldly, and had begun to neglect secret prayer, until, through my multiplicity of cares, I really thought I could not find time to pray. When my conscience would accuse me for neglect of duty, I would try to pray, but found no access to a throne of grace until I became thoroughly aroused to a sense of my condition, and sought earnestly him whom my soul desired to love. According to his promise, he manifested himself unto me. All through that summer, I felt a growing interest and attachment to the cause and people of God; but still I felt the need of having a great work wrought in me. I wanted to walk in the narrowest path of the narrow way. About this time, there was to be a camp-meeting, about eight miles from where I lived. I had a very strong desire to attend, and though it seemed almost impossible, God made the way all plain, so that I went to the meeting. My earnest desires and prayers were that I might receive the full baptism of the Holy Ghost, to fit me to live and be useful in my family, and in the church of God.

I enjoyed the meeting, but did not feel satisfied. I had not attained the blessing which I so ardently desired, until the last evening of the meeting, before the stand. While the people of God were wrestling in mighty prayer, for the descent of the Holy Ghost, he suddenly came to his temple, and so filled my poor heart with his love, that I shouted aloud his high praises. But the best of the wine he kept until the last of the feast. While singing the parting hymn, and giving the parting hand, I received the overflowing blessing, greater than I had ever received before. Though I had been powerfully blessed then, I felt that I was indeed brought into a large place. I was made truly free in Christ Jesus. All the fear of man, which had always been a snare to me, was completely taken away. Though surrounded by a great congregation, they seemed as grasshoppers in my sight. I had no fear, as I went from one to another, to speak the words that the Holy Ghost put into my mouth, for saint or sinner, or to shout aloud his praises; for I felt that it was not me speaking, but the Holy Ghost that spoke through me. O, I felt that it was indeed heaven upon earth, to have such liberty, such freedom, after being bound so long. After a short time, the full tide of my joys subsided, and I settled down into a sweet, solemn calm. I felt that I was the least of all, that I wanted to sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn of him.—Soon I had new crosses to take up. One in particular seemed to be right in the way. I could not advance one step, until that was taken up. I had long felt that we ought to have family prayer; but as my husband, once a professor, was now a backslider, I had excused myself for a number of years. I had now come where I could neglect it no longer, and make any advance in the Christian life. It was the greatest cross I had ever borne; but I was enabled for Jesus' sake to bear it; and ever since then, through the help of his Spirit, I have been trying, though in weakness, to deny myself daily, and bear the cross for him who bore it for me. I have had more crosses and trials

and more severe temptations since I received that great blessing, than I ever had before,—trials which seemed as though I could not have borne without this grace; but Jesus strengthened me to endure. Now, I am trying to do all the known will of God. Yet I seem to be so beset with unbelief. After all he has done for me, doubts will intrude, and have all along my Christian journey. I have always felt so afraid of deceiving myself, that I have many times thought that I would give up my hope entirely, and commence anew; but just as soon as I would do that, I would get entirely into the dark, and could get no access to a throne of grace. But just as soon as I would believe and trust Christ again, it would be all light. These doubts still follow me some, and hinder my usefulness, though I believe I am gaining some victory over them. I do not feel anything in my heart, contrary to love. Since I commenced writing this, I have felt strengthened to believe, and to-day I feel that I will trust, and not be afraid; and though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. I believe I shall overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of my testimony.

### THERE'S A GOOD TIME COMING!

BY J. C. RYLE.

THERE has been much that is bad in the times that are past. There is much that is bad in the time present. But, thanks be to God! there is a good time coming.

But for whom is there a good time coming? For everybody? No!—For drunkards, and gamblers, and pleasure-seekers, and money-lovers, and gluttons, and liars, and swearers, and covetous people? No! No! No! There is no good time coming for them. For them there is nothing coming but “everlasting destruction,” except they repent.

Reader, the good time coming is for the people of God. It is for believers in Christ. It is for the converted, the penitent, the holy, the Bible-reading, the praying servants of Christ. Now

it is a time of battle and toil with them. They are worn and wearied with sin, the world, and the devil. But it shall not be always so. Their good time is to come. Their good time is when Jesus Christ returns to this world.

When the good time comes, the godly shall be freed from everything which now mars their comfort. From the fiery darts of Satan—from the loathsome weakness of the flesh, which now clings to them—from the unkind world which now misrepresents and misunderstands them—from the doubts and fears which now so darken their path—from the weariness which now clogs their best efforts to serve the Lord—from coldness and deadness—from shortcomings and backslidings—from all these they shall be delivered for ever. They shall no longer be vexed by temptation, persecuted by the world, warred against by the devil.—Their conflict shall all be over. Their strife with the flesh shall forever cease. The armor of God, which they have so long worn, shall at length be laid aside. They shall be where there is no Satan, no worldliness, and no sin.

When the good time comes the godly shall not only enjoy a freedom from all evil, but they shall also enjoy the presence of all good. They shall be for ever in the company of Christ, and go out no more. Faith shall then be swallowed up in sight. Hope shall become certainty. Knowledge shall at length be perfect. Prayer shall be turned into praise. Desires shall receive their full accomplishment. Hunger and thirst after conformity to Christ's image, shall at length be satisfied. The thought of parting shall not spoil the pleasure of meeting. The company of saints shall be enjoyed without hurry and distraction. The family of Abraham shall no more feel temptations; nor the family of Job, afflictions; nor the family of David, household bereavements; nor the family of Paul, thorns in the flesh; nor the family of Lazarus, poverty and sores. Every tear shall be wiped away in that day. It is the time when the Lord



shall say, "I make all things new."

Oh! reader, if God's children find joy and peace in believing even now, what tongue shall tell their feelings when they behold the King in His beauty? If the report of the land that is far off has been sweet to them in the wilderness, what pen shall describe their happiness when they see it with their own eyes? If it has cheered them now and then to meet two or three like-minded in this evil world, how their hearts will burn within them when they see a multitude that no man can number, the least defect of each purged away, and not one false brother in the list! If the narrow way has been a way of pleasantness to the scattered few who have travelled it with their poor, frail bodies, how precious shall their rest seem in the day of gathering together, when they have a glorious body like their Lord's!

Is there a man or woman among the readers of this page who ever laughs at true religion? Is there one who persecutes and ridicules vital godliness in others, and dares to talk of people being over-particular, and righteous over-much? Oh! beware what you are doing; again I say, beware! You may live to think very differently.—You may live to alter your opinion, but perhaps too late. Ah! reader, there is a day before us all when there will be no infidels. Before the throne of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that He is Lord. Remember that day, and beware.

Is there any one among the readers of this page who is mocked and despised for the Gospel's sake, and feels as if he stood alone? Take comfort. Be patient. Wait a little longer.—Your good time shall yet come. When the spies returned from searching Canaan, men talked of stoning Caleb and Joshua because they brought a good report of the land. A few days passed away, and all the assembly confessed that they alone had been right. Strive to be like them. Follow the Lord fully, as they did, and sooner or later, all men shall confess that you did well. Never, never be afraid of going

too far. Never, never be afraid of being too holy. Millions will lament in the day of Christ's return, because they have not got religion enough:—not one will be heard to say that he has got too much. Take comfort. For you there's a good time coming.

### AN IRRELIGIOUS HOME.

If there be one curse more bitter than another to man, it is the offspring of an irreligious home; of a home where the voice of praise and prayer ascends not to God, and where the ties of human affections are not purified and elevated by the refining influence of religious feeling; of a home to which, if the cares or the sorrows of life shall bring religion to the heart in after days, that heart cannot turn without bitterness of feeling, without anguish or vexation of spirit. If there be a curse to any country where the truths of religion are known, the deepest and bitterest curse which can be inflicted on it is a multitude of homes like that which I have supposed. Such homes send forth their sons unchecked in evil thoughts, unhallowed in their habits, and untaught in love to God; and they send them forth to prey upon the land, and to become its curse and its destruction.—But on the other hand, there is a blessing to the religious home which no tongue can speak, no language can describe! The home, where in early years the heart is trained to a love of God, and to take pleasure in his worship and service, interweaves with the existence of man holy affections which die not with the circumstances which gave them birth, which last long, though they may for a season be forgotten or neglected, and which exercise at least some check upon the evil of the human heart, and often, nay commonly recall it to hear again the voice of God, and to turn to the paths of holiness and peace. How great, how unspeakable is the happiness of a land where homes like this are common!

HOLINESS is the star out of the world's horizon—it cannot see it!

## "WE WANT BETTER PREACHING."

LET us tell you how to get it. Good preaching is always desirable, and when preaching is stale and dry, uninteresting and uninteresting, it is natural that the demand should be for "better preaching." The general opinion is that good preaching depends entirely on the preacher. If he studies, is talented, prays, and is devoted to his work, is deeply pious and zealous, free from a worldly mind and worldly cares, then his preaching is generally good, and not without it. If, on the contrary, he neglects his closet, his books, his people, and becomes involved in worldly affairs, the work is apt to diminish in ratio with his diminished zeal. This is all true as preaching itself, and our ministerial brethren are frequently reminded of it. But we have a word to say, this time, to the hearer who "wants better preaching." To get a better preacher you will have to be a better hearer! It is just as essential to the success of the Gospel ministry, to have good hearers as good preachers. In olden times they used to have sounding boards suspended somewhere before and above the pulpit, to break the echo of the preacher's voice. They have done away with those made of wood, but the right ones have not been substituted. The sounding board of the preacher should be the hearer's heart, as ready to respond to the sense of the word, as the board was to the sound. If you want good preaching, therefore, observe these points:

1. Pray much for your minister.—Pray for him with a heart full of sympathy for him, in his arduous and responsible work. If you pray for him in public, never mind reading him lectures about his duty. Perhaps he understands his duty fully as well as you do. His circumstances, certainly, he knows best, and he alone, and not you, will have to be responsible for his acts. But don't be both a hypocrite and a coward by recapitulating in your prayers, what, according to your view, he should consider his duty, while you

have neither manliness enough to tell him in a kindly spirit, nor honesty of heart to bring forward the foul slander any other way, but in a public address to the Deity. If the minister has faults which it is your duty to tell him, had you not better tell him privately, while in public and to others you speak only of his good qualities? But pray for him, both in public and in private, with a pure heart and fervently, and you will do him good.

The seed may be the best in the world, but if it fall on the wayside, in stony or thorny ground, it will do no more good than if it were the poorest. Have your own heart in sympathy, therefore, with your pastor—pray for him—treat him with the respect and kindness due to a servant of God, and you will find that even "foolish preaching" will make you wiser unto salvation, if your heart-ground is well prepared, than the best intellectual treat. You criticise him perhaps. You delight to do it. You think it shows off your own abilities to advantage, and so it may; but it also shows that your heart is in a worse state than your head, and neither of them may be very superior when the bubble of conceit is pricked, and you stand on your naked merits.

2. Make it a point to be a doer of the word. No one asks you to accept everything that is spoken from the pulpit as undeniably the Gospel truth. Preachers, like other men, may err, even in the things they are supposed to know better than others. But the errors are few, and readily detected by comparison with the infallible word of God. Whatever agrees with this, do. Reduce to practice what you hear, and you will find you are getting better preaching continually.

3. Pay for your preaching. Your preacher must live. In these times of fabulous prices, when flour, and beef, and fuel, and clothing is double and triple in price, remember his physical wants. By doing your part, you will find that your conscience is not put to the necessity to hunt up flaws, excuses, and palliations, from the preacher's discourses, or his demeanor, to justify

you neglect. When men do wrong, or refuse to do their duty, a base instinct will make him hunt up arguments to justify their conduct. In such a case the preacher's conduct will be most rigidly examined, to find the wished for excuse. Pay him, and do your duty, and you will find that a paid preacher is better than a borrowed or stolen one.

Besides, a preacher not pinched by want, is free in his mind. His mind is his mint, whence the thoughts that are to enrich you, come coined and ready for public circulation. Do not embarrass his working machine by harassing cares. Put him above want, if possible, and you will enable him to do better preaching; if not possible, then bear with him as he bears with you.

Many good men are driven home simply because they cannot see their families want, or their children go barefooted. They ask for no more than a living, and if they do not get it, they must go to work, and often men of less ability are sent to fill their places. Other good men are kept back, because they see too poor a provision for those in the service. Men that have capacity enough to preach the Gospel effectually are generally men that can do business and make money, if they devote themselves to it; and to ask such men to sacrifice not only this, but to live in wretchedness all their lifetime, simply because the Church does not do her duty, is more than such a Church has a right to ask. Perhaps it is said, "If they are called to preach, it is their duty to go, whether they are supported or not." Perhaps it is; but certain it is, it is no more their duty to preach, than it is your duty to support it. If you judge him for disobedience on this account, you condemn yourself for the same. When the Church is once doing her duty—shows a generous and liberal spirit toward those that labor in word and in doctrine—if then the laborers are few and insufficient, it is time to complain. But,

4. Begin farther back. To have better preaching, you must have better preachers. These do not come of them-

selves. They will not be endowed miraculously with what they can acquire by study and hard labor. If you want better qualified men, then support the schools. Put them into a vigorous life; and instead of speaking and using your influence against these institutions, encourage promising young men to go there. Give them money, if they need it, and books and clothing—at least give them good words and encouragement. As soon as the people send better candidates to the Conference, the Conference will send better preachers to the people.—*Evangelical Messenger.*

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STOP AT ONCE.—Dr. Day, the Superintendent of the Inebriate Asylum at Binghamton, publishes a letter in which he advocates the practice of totally withdrawing from the habitual drinker all liquor, in opposition to the prevalent idea that the patient must be gradually weaned from the use of alcoholic substances, and founds his assertion on the fact that he has treated 2,500 cases of inebriety during the past ten years. He believes that a man who has been in the habit of drinking a quart of liquor per day, will suffer more by being allowed only a pint and gradually less within the same lapse of time than he will if he is kept altogether from the use of it. The blood of such persons is, in his opinion, poisoned by the substances which alcoholic liquors contain, and he does not, therefore, see the necessity of administering any more of such poison, even in infinitesimal doses. He believes that nothing short of absolute abstinence will keep the inebriate cured after he is raised up from his former life of degradation.

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"HE who would have friends must show himself friendly." True; and when a man complains of having no friends, he ought to ask himself the question, Whether he is a friend to any one?

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SOUTH says: "If God has no need of our learning, he hath still less of our ignorance."



## A MOTHER'S VOICE.

SINCE the prevailing Indian troubles commenced, an Indian camp was captured, together with a number of prisoners, including squaws, and some half a dozen white captives, boys and girls, from five to twelve years of age.—

Word was sent throughout the country, inviting those who had lost children to come to the camp and identify, if possible, their children, as none of them could give any account who their parents were, or where they were taken from, so young were they when they were taken captives by the Indians.—Numbers went to the camp—many more than there were children—and of course many of them returned with heavy hearts at being unable to find their lost ones.

Among the number who went hundreds of miles to the camp, was a mother who lost two children—a boy and a girl, one three and the other five years old—years ago. Efforts were made to persuade her not to go, and so long a time had elapsed, it was certain she could not identify her children even if they stood before her. But she could not rest; she must go, and go she did. On arriving at the encampment, she found the captives ranged in line for inspection. She looked at them first from a distance, her anxious heart bounding in her bosom. But she did not see her children; at least she saw nothing in the group that bore the slightest resemblance to her baby boy and girl as they looked when playing about her doorstep. She drew nearer, and peered deep into the eyes of each, who only returned her look with a stony gaze, yet anxious one—they, too, hoping to see something in her that would tell them she was their mother. She looked long and steadily at them, as her heart began to sink and grow heavy in her bosom. At last, with tears and sobs, she withdrew, and when some paces off she stopped and turned about quickly, as, apparently, a thought had occurred to her. Drying her eyes, she broke forth in a sweet hymn she had

been wont to sing to her children as a lullaby. Scarce a line had been uttered, when two of the captives—a boy and a girl—rushed from the line, exclaiming, "Mamma! mamma!" The mother went home perfectly satisfied she had found her long-lost children.

## A SINGULAR SERMON.

FOUR gentlemen and an old minister were assailed on the highway by three robbers, who demanded and took possession of all their funds. The old minister pleaded very hard to be allowed a little money, as he was on his way to pay a bill in London. The highwaymen, as our authority informs us, "being generous fellows, gave him all his money back again, on condition of his preaching them a sermon." Accordingly, they retired a little distance from the highway, and the minister addressed them as follows:

"Gentlemen:—You are the most like the old apostles of any men in the world, for they were wanderers upon the earth, and so are you; they had neither lands nor tenements that they could call their own; neither, as I presume, have you. They were despised of all, but those of their own profession, and so I believe are you; they were often hurried into jails and prisons; all of which sufferings, I presume, have been undergone by you. But in this point, beloved, you differ mightily; for the apostles ascended from a tree into heaven, where, I am afraid you will never come: but as their deaths were compensated with eternal glory, yours will be rewarded with eternal shame and misery, unless you mend your manners."—*Old Methodist Magazine.*

THE drowsy, careless temper will not last long. Conversion and condemnation are both of them awakening things; and one of them will make you feel ere long.—*Baxter.*

WHEN wicked men want estates they are troubled for them, and when they have estates they are troubled with them.—*Dyer.*

## A SEARED CONSCIENCE.

DEEPLY depraved and sunk in sin as our race is, yet charity and hope alike lead me to believe that a seared conscience is, comparatively speaking, a rare thing amongst men. So desperate and wicked is this state that the Apostle does not predict its principal manifestation until the "latter times," when sin shall have reached its highest point of development, and "the man of sin shall be revealed" in the midst of "the falling away." And even then it will not be a general symptom, for the Apostle only speaks of some who "shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy, and having their conscience seared with a hot iron," (1 Tim. iv. 2.)

Though we know but little of the seducing spirits and devils—and truly the less we know of them the better,—yet we have ground for supposing that it is their seared consciences which make them devils. And so it may be safely said that a man whose conscience is seared, is nothing short of a seducing spirit in human form. In a moral sense, indeed, such a man does not belong to our race; he has stepped beyond the line into the category of those unhappy beings who are hopelessly lost, and who see nothing behind them but the angel of vengeance, and nothing before them but the lake of fire and brimstone. It is, therefore, a serious matter to say of a man that he has a seared conscience. It is the worst thing that can be said of him. We should not by any means be quick in passing such a sentence upon any of our fellow-creatures,—if indeed we ought to pass it at all.

The figure Paul uses in the above passage, to describe such a hopeless state, is exceedingly graphic. It is borrowed from operative surgery, which was then in its infancy. Cauterization, which is now but seldom applied, was in those days frequently resorted to, to stop the progress of a wound.

In what form, then, can we best realize the figure which the Apostle had

before his mind when he spoke of men's consciences being seared as with a hot iron?

I represent it to myself in this way:

Suppose a man has a wound in some part of his body, say for instance, his hand. It gives him pain. It interferes with his daily work, and costs him many a sleepless night. It is not incurable, but it requires patience, and careful treatment. But the man has no patience. He becomes deeply annoyed at it. To get rid of the trouble and vexation for good and all, he resolves to sear the wound with a hot iron. This is a violent and very painful operation, it is true, but then it only lasts for a short time, and is soon over. But there is one fatal objection. He will be certain to have a stiff hand,—quite useless, senseless, and dead. True, but then his profession or trade may be such that he will be able to do without this member. At any rate, he would rather have a stiff, dead hand, than one that gives him pain. So he takes a hot iron and sears the wound; and what was expected happens to him. The tendons which moved the fingers, and the veins which fed them, as well as the nerves, are destroyed by the violent process. The hand dries and withers, becomes in fact like a piece of leather, without life, sense, or power of motion. Henceforth the man only knows from memory what it is to have a living, feeling, moving hand; his experience of it is gone forever.

In like manner a man may be imagined to carry a defiled conscience in his bosom, the occasional pangs of which give him pain, and rob him of rest. He may very easily get rid of these pangs, if he will only go to Christ, humble himself as a sinner at his feet, cry for mercy, give up his evil purposes, and walk in the way of righteousness. But he refuses to take this humbling, and in many respects painful course. He loves sin, and has no taste for righteousness. But the thought of the future judgment troubles him, and he at length resolves to get rid of it. So, in a deliberate and cowardly way he allows himself to perpetrate a misdeed which realizes to his own consciousness the awful truth that he

has once and forever broken with God. The hot iron is applied. There is now a systematic enmity between him and God, and conscience ceases to speak, because all moral life is extinct.

From this it appears that the conscience which we have now under consideration must have been formerly in a comparatively healthy state. There was life, but that life has been destroyed by some violent operation. It is not, as in the case of the ignorant conscience, in a state of insensibility, through ignorance; neither is it, like the sleeping conscience, in a state of temporary unconsciousness. It is really dead, so far as moral life and moral functions are concerned. The man whose conscience is seared has, in fact, no conscience. He carries about in his bosom, as it were, the scars which show that there was once such a thing as a conscience there. The knowledge of good and evil, of duty and responsibility, lodges in his intellect and memory; but he has lost all present sense of it. He knows, for instance, that honesty is good, and theft is evil; but he knows this only from recollecting that he himself once felt it to be so, and from observing that other people feel the same still. There is nothing in his own heart which bears witness to the correctness and divine truthfulness of the feeling. He is not morally pleased when he chances to perform an honest action, neither is he grieved or ashamed when he has committed a theft. On the contrary, when he becomes aware that he might quite safely have benefited himself by doing a bad deed, he will regret having been so foolish as to have done well, and wish he had committed the profitable crime.—While a man with an erring conscience will do evil that good may come, he on the contrary, will do good that it may produce evil, provided that evil be in some way or other a good to himself. Not only, for instance, will he deliberately ruin a friend if that friend's fall be likely to be beneficial to him, but he will likewise do acts of generosity to him, if these acts are likely to hasten or to secure his fall. Nor will he deny probably that his deeds are god-

less and shameful, unless he calculates that it will be either profitable or necessary for his safety to do so. He will not even give himself the trouble to try to put a favorable construction upon his conduct, because such expressions as bad, wicked, godless, etc., have lost all meaning to him. Upon discovering that he has infamously cheated you, you may call him a scoundrel, a knave, in short whatever you like; but he will quite coolly pocket the affront and say nothing, calmly waiting till you have said your last word, and then withdraw. With such a man you feel that in a moral sense you can scarce be speaking to a human being. You perceive that between you and him there is no common ground. To him moral truisms have ceased to be self-evident; he will admit no axioms on which to base an argument. To reason with him about his moral obligations is as hopeless a process as it would be to demonstrate a mathematical problem to a man who asserts that a crooked line is straight.

Prone as we often are to explain the actions of a seared conscience by supposing an unsound state of mind, sacred and profane history agree in assuring us that a seared conscience, so far from being a form of insanity, is, on the contrary, often combined with an extraordinary degree of mental power, and a considerable amount of common sense, learning and prudence. Though I would not easily allow myself to call a man's conscience seared, nay, though I am of opinion that a truly seared conscience is one of the rarest moral phenomena, yet I believe that once in the course of my ministerial experience in Holland, I did meet with a man in whose conscience moral life seemed to be totally extinct. He was a pawnbroker, and apparently about fifty years of age. I was brought into contact with him through a poor woman, who, in a state of despair, asked my advice in most distressing circumstances, into which she, along with her husband and family, had been reduced by that usurer's extortions. Her husband was what in this country is called a non-



commissioned officer of the army, drawing a pension from the State of 180 guilders (15*l.*) a year. The poor man, who in his early years had been a shoemaker, wished to resume his former trade, in order to support his wife and four children, and had applied to the pawnbroker for the loan of a certain sum to buy tools and leather. He had been informed that this man was in the habit of advancing money upon certificates of state pensions. It was a comparatively small sum which the pawnbroker advanced, and he kept the certificate as security, requiring the poor soldier to insure his life for the sum advanced. The consequence of this was that the pawnbroker, who every year went to the office of the government paymaster to receive the full amount of the certificate, only handed over some 24 guilders (2*l.*) to the soldier.—Upon my making inquiry into the matter, the pawnbroker presented me with a long list of expenses, which were arranged under a dozen or fifteen heads, such as : Insurance provision, stamp-duty, bureau expenses, postage, &c., &c. The interest of the advanced money was put down at only 5 per cent., but upon closer examination I found that the extortioner was reaping from 15 to 16 per cent.

I showed the list to a friend, one of the principal lawyers in the town. He told me that the man had often been before the court for similar offences, and that many families had been victimized by him in the same way. The cunning fox, however, knew how to put his case so as not to bring himself under the lash of the law. In short, I soon saw that, in a legal way, nothing could be done in the matter. Some years later, however, I learnt, much to my pleasure, that an enactment had been passed, by which it was made illegal to advance sums on government certificates. At the time I speak of, however, the law was still in the bad man's favour, and so I tried to do something with him on behalf of the poor family by means of moral suasion.

I shall not attempt to give a description of the man's countenance; I shall

only say that though the features were pretty regular, I do not recollect having ever witnessed a human face the expression of which was so repulsive. There was something so diabolic in his look. I expected, of course, to find an atheist, or at least a man void of any religious knowledge whatever, and who would laugh me to scorn if I were to speak of God and eternity. But much to my surprise the man was very contrary.—Not only was he thoroughly acquainted with the Bible, but he expressed himself about religious matters in such a grave and serious manner as wholly excluded ridicule. He declared himself most decidedly against neology and skepticism, which even in those days were making alarming progress in the Church. He called neology an absurd system. That Jesus was the Son of God, and that he died for our sins; that He was one day to come to judge the world; that there was a devil; that there was a hell, and that the wicked would suffer everlasting punishment with the devil and his angels,—all this he believed. "To tell you the truth," he said to me, "I *wish* I could be an unbeliever; but God will not permit me to be that." He told me he knew he was one of those who would be *eternally lost*. He said this in such a cold, quiet, matter-of-fact way, that it actually made me shudder. I said that he was committing a great sin in speaking in that way, and that he certainly did not realize what was implied in these awful words—"eternally lost;" that before he allowed such a horrifying expression to pass his lips, he should consider what he was about to say; and that he should bear in mind that such a saying was one of the greatest insults that could be offered to God, inasmuch as it denied God's ability to save. To this he answered, with a bitter smile, that I was quite right in one sense, but altogether mistaken in another. I was right in pointing to the awful signification of the expression he had used, but I was mistaken as to his character.—He said he saw that I supposed him to be one of those anxious, conscience-smitten sinners, who, oppressed by the

overwhelming sense of their sinfulness, allow their dismal feelings to get the better of their faith, and hope, and thus fall into despondency. He wished that he were one of these, because theirs was only a temporary disorder of the spiritual life, which under the agency of God's Spirit might be cured by some well-administered remedy. As to his own case, he had spiritually killed himself by continuing to sin for years against the light of his conscience. He had always known perfectly well what was evil and what good; but he had always resisted the warnings of his conscience, till gradually he found a peculiar pleasure, nay a delight in doing evil. He then mentioned a few instances of his diabolic meanness and baseness, which surpassed everything I had ever heard of. He said he did not regret them. He knew that he had done these things in the spirit of the devil, and that he could do them again without the slightest hesitation or compunction. "The fact is," he said, "God has completely given me up to the devil, and in this he was right, for it was my own choice. I feel I *must* be evil now, I see you shudder at hearing me speak in this way, and I can fully understand the impression such words must make upon your mind. But you cannot realize the inward condition of a man who, like me, has lost even the power of despairing. God has taken that away from me, lest it should retard me in my course towards the place I am doomed to inherit at last." I need not say that my efforts to obtain a promise in favor of the poor soldier were altogether vain. The last words he said to me on parting were, "My doom is sealed, sir; and whether I do right or wrong, it's all the same; go I must to the place at which may you never arrive." The more I reflected upon this poor man's case the more was I driven to the sad conclusion that he was only too correct when he said that God had given him up, and was now driving him towards the doom for which he had been prepared. Nor, appalling as the thought is, is it a conclusion void of ground in Scripture.—

Wherever we meet with instances of a seared conscience in Scripture we are told, if not explicitly, at least implicitly, that it is a state of irrecoverable callousness which God, in his just anger, has inflicted upon man as a punishment for his wilful hardening of the heart.—The Gospel, which is so rich and consoling in presenting God as a God of grace and mercy, who "*openeth the heart*" of those who listen to his word, at the same time decidedly proclaims Him as a God who is capable of at length "*hardening a man's heart*" at the close of a long and painful period of long-suffering and fruitless chiding with him. Whatever may be said for or against the doctrine of reprobation, this much is beyond doubt, that Scripture not only tells us that God *leaves* in their state of gracelessness such sinners as will be lost, but also points to individuals whom in an active and positive way, He *compels* to remain in that state, depriving them of the capability of obtaining or receiving grace, and causing the seeds of evil, which are ineradicably rooted in their heart, to shoot up with all the luxuriance common to tares. Not to speak of Pharaoh in the Old, and Judas in the New Testament, I have only to point to the people of Israel, concerning whom the Spirit said to the prophet, in Isaiah vi.: "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and *convert and be healed.*" A fearful commandment, which was fully carried into execution at the time of Messiah's appearance, for it was then that the Apostle John asserted (John xii. 40) that they could not believe in Jesus because Isaiah had spoken the above words. And it is with reference to them that Peter (1 Peter ii. 8) said, that they were *appointed* to stumble at the word, being disobedient. But, undeniable as this sad truth is, it is equally certain that Scripture everywhere represents this hardening operation of God upon the human heart as a punishment for preceding disobedience and refractoriness. It is

not necessary to prove this from the well-known history of Israel, for it is equally evident from the history of the Gentile nations. When, in Romans i. 24, the Apostle describes the judgment of hardness which God brought over the heathen, he first shows how, "while they knew God, they glorified Him not, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." "Therefore," he says—and we should mark this important particle—"therefore, God also gave them up unto uncleanness," etc. In the same manner, when speaking in 2 Thess. ii. 11, of the blindness of heart which God will one day bring upon the infidel nations, he first describes the horrible excess of iniquity to which the people will give themselves, and "for this cause," he says, "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned," etc. We meet with no instance in Scripture which makes it appear that God hardens the heart of a man who tries to listen to the voice of his conscience.—God's hardening operation is never the first act, but the last, in a long and gradual process of self-hardening on man's own part. It is the final settlement of the wearisome and fruitless dispute. It is the seal which at length God stamps upon the choice which man himself deliberately makes.

And this, in my opinion, accounts for the fact which otherwise would be quite inexplicable, that men who have seared their consciences, though they know intellectually that they are lost, yet cannot continue in a state of comparative peace and pursue their course of self destruction with pleasure, as if nothing fearful were in store for them. Though a man, like Manasseh, for instance, may have allowed himself to be driven so far away from God by his evil passions as to trample everything good and divine under foot, and to shut his ear to all the whispers and warnings of his conscience and of the Holy Spirit, yet one power may still be left in his nature, which, under the mighty hand of God, may bring him back from the

bottomless pit. That power is the power of fear. The man takes fright at the sight of the yawning abyss, and in his despair, he cries to God, as did Manasseh. But where that power is paralyzed, where the instinct of self-preservation has lost the capacity of anticipating the awful misery in store, no power is then left in a man causing him to stop and consider, and the last chance of bringing him back to God is lost forever. Now it seems that the hardening process which God applies to one who has seared his conscience just consists in paralyzing that power of fear, in making him morally senseless, blind and deaf, so that though he "sees the glare of the infernal flames he is as if he perceived it not, and though he hears the rolling thunders of the approaching judgment he understands them not." "I have lost even the faculty of getting into despair," said the pawnbroker; "God has taken away that sense from me lest it should retard me in my course." Nearly twenty-five years have elapsed since the unhappy man uttered these words in my hearing, but still they ring in my ears as one of the most remarkable testimonies to the truth of Scripture. "Lest they convert, and be healed," says Isaiah.

I have often tried to picture to myself the course of thought and feeling, in a word the mental process through which a man's mind must pass to arrive at the state when his conscience becomes seared. I fancy it is something like this:

The common condition of man's heart when brought into contact with the teachings and warnings of God's Spirit is that of unsettledness. He is undecided. He halts between two opinions. He begins to struggle with himself and with God, and perhaps trims between his conscience and the world, between Jehovah and Baal, between Christ and Belial. Most people never arrive at a decision, but continue in this unsettled condition till they die. Some, however, do come to a decision. Of these one set takes the side of God, and the other takes the side of the devil.—



The latter are those whom we may regard as having seared their consciences with a hot iron. They are no longer the dupes of ignorance, of error, or of self-deception. They have distinctly mapped out the two ways, the one of which leads towards salvation, and the other towards destruction, and they have deliberately chosen the latter.—They know perfectly well what they are about. They have, for a longer or shorter period, been struggling, as all men have, but knowing that they have gradually lost ground, they feel that it is of no use to struggle longer. Indeed they were never, really in earnest in the contest. Nor is it their intention to be so now. If they were only commonplace characters they might continue till their death in that sort of "part-acting" in which they were at once actors and spectators. But those who are capable of thus searing their conscience are not spirits of the common-cast. You will not find them among the uneducated class, among the ruffians and the vagabonds. Or if you should discover one among them, you will, on closer examination, find that he excels, through his sagacity and wit. The man who is capable of searing his conscience is always a person of considerable mental power. Common-place minds may be easily satisfied with that which is dull and unsettled. But he cannot be so.—He wants to be decided. He perceives that a struggle between yea or nay, between good and evil, is mere toil and trouble to no purpose. He perceives that coming too late for the train comes to very much the same thing as not going to the station at all. Fools may run wildly to try to catch it, *he* has made up his mind not to trouble himself, and so quietly turns back. There is despair in that resolution, but it is cold, passionless despair. It is connected with a feeling of ease and comfort, satisfactory at least for the present. The all but irresistible inclination to follow the stream of sin in its various windings may now be indulged without any disturbance. To such minds there is something highly interesting, something agreeably exciting in the adven-

tures and stratagems of the devil's warfare. It is fraught with contrasts productive of strange, poetical effects, which give nourishment to infernal humor. To such minds, because assured of their own ultimate ruin, there is true pleasure in ruining as many others as they can; for, the good having no attraction for them, the only question that interests them is: What can come out of the evil, and how far can its power go in curbing the good?

But the evil can never, like the good, be in itself a complete and perfectly consistent system. Its nature being sheer negation, it has no substance; and therefore it cannot exist except through the admixture of something positive, *i. e.*, of some good. A gang of murderers, perfectly consistent in their principles, for instance, could not exist, because they would murder each other. Even the devils cannot do without some relative good; to a certain extent they exercise mutual fidelity; a devil never casts out a devil. And so there is no man who, though his conscience be seared, acts in every respect consistently with the principles of evil. The picture which I have drawn just now exhibits, if I may be allowed to speak so, more the *ideal* of a seared conscience than a photograph from real life. No man is able to burn out every vestige of the image of God in his heart so completely that there will not be left in it some good thoughts, some instinctively good emotions. And the manifestations of these lingering sparks of good vary according to the education, the circumstances, the tastes, the inclinations of different individuals. It is obvious that in a person who, like the pawnbroker, has received a Christian education, the seared conscience will manifest itself in a manner wholly different from what it will do in a person who from his childhood has been trained in the spirit of skepticism. Nor can it be expected that an excitable, passionate man, will show his determination to serve the devil in the same calm, quiet, and deliberate way as the man who is possessed of a cool, phlegmatic temper. In some the total ab-

sence of moral life may be connected with a considerable amount of sentiment and feeling; in others with much æsthetic sense. Judas was a thief who grumbled at the loss of a pound of ointment, but Jezebel was a spendthrift who painted her face and tired her head.

I have already observed that individuals who are capable of searing their conscience are not common-place characters, but are generally possessed of considerable intellectual and mental power.

A man who has seared his conscience is not necessarily a brute or a ruffian capable of committing the grossest outrages and crimes. Grosser outrages and more atrocious crimes were never committed than those of which Manasseh was guilty, yet Manasseh's conscience was not seared.—God has so deeply lodged the moral sense in our nature that such a power of the will as baffles all the resistance of our natural instinct and sense is required to embolden us to take the hot iron. It is not applied by mere passion or sensuality, though passion and sensuality may commit the most fearful outrages upon conscience. But it is applied by the utterly perverted will of the man who is conscious of never having had a true desire, and of having no intention whatever of becoming good or of serving God. The searing of the conscience is the result of a correct calculation, by which man clearly apprehends that the line which he has drawn hitherto, and which he is determined to complete, cannot possibly end in God, or lead to God. In a certain sense there is sincerity in the process, but it is a horrible sincerity. After a longer or shorter series of miserable sham-fights against evil, man makes himself the object of his own contemplation, and clearly perceiving that he has only been making a fool of himself in the sight of God, his angels, and the devil, he makes a short process of it, flings off the mask cuts away every connection with God and the divine, and takes his stand on the opposite ground.—*John de Liefde.*

### LET US NOT BE WEARY.

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."—Gal. vi: 9.

BY ELEANOR J. WILSON.

Never fainting, never tiring,  
Let us on our way pursue,  
Doing with a willing spirit  
Whatsoever we find to do.  
Though our way be dark and thorny,  
And with trials thickly strewn,  
Let us forward, never shrinking,  
We shall walk it not alone.

"Lo! I'm with you even always!"  
'Tis our Saviour tells us so;  
Then what evil can befall us  
On our journey here below?  
Through deep billows of affliction,  
Though our feet be called to tread,  
Never shall the waves o'erflow us,  
While by Christ's own hand we're led.

Let us forward, then, to labor,  
With a ready, willing mind,  
Toiling for our Master's glory,  
And the good of all mankind;  
Never fainting by the wayside,  
Though oppressed by toil and pain:  
'Tis by patient, earnest labor  
We must gather golden grain.

"Sow thy seed in early morning,  
Nor, at eve, thy hand withhold,  
For ye know not which shall prosper"—  
God will give the sheaves of gold;  
Though we sow with tears of sorrow,  
Yet our labor's not in vain,  
We shall gather, with rejoicing,  
What was sown in tears, and pain.

Labor for the good of others,  
With a pure, unselfish heart;  
Freely we've received from Heaven,  
Freely let us then impart.  
E'en though others may revile us,  
And our efforts be withstood,  
Let us never, never weary  
In our work of doing good.

Though construed and represented  
In a color false, and blind,  
For our good—receiving evil—

Bear it with a patient mind;  
 Long ago, our blessed Saviour  
 Patiently endured it too;  
 Hear Him pray, "Forgive them, Father,  
 For they know not what they do."

Scorned, repulsed, reviled, derided—  
 Yes, our Saviour bore it all;  
 Shall we murmur, then, or falter,  
 When discouragements befall?  
 No! let's do our duty bravely,  
 Scorning pain, and doubt, and fear,  
 Knowing we shall reap in Heaven  
 Rich reward for labors here.

Toiling, hoping, watching, praying,  
 We'll do all the good we can;  
 Fleeting is our span of action,  
 Short, the working day of man.  
 Very soon, if we are faithful,  
 We shall lay our armor down,  
 And, on passing o'er the River,  
 Leave the cross and claim the crown.

**SILENT INFLUENCE.**—It is the bubbling spring which flows gently, the little rivulet which glides through the meadows, and which runs along day and night by the farm house, that is useful, rather than the swollen flood, or the warring cataract. Niagara excites our wonder, and we stand amazed at the power and greatness of God there, as he "pours it from the hollow of his hand." But one Niagara is enough for the continent, or world;—while the same world requires thousands and tens of thousands of silver mountains and gently flowing rivulets, that water every farm and meadow, and every garden, and that shall flow on every day and every night with their gentle, quiet beauty. So with the acts of our lives. It is not by great deeds like those of the martyrs that good is to be done; it is by the daily, quiet virtues of life—the Christian temper, the meek forbearance, the spirit of forgiveness, in the husband, the wife, the father, the brother, the sister, the friend, the neighbor, that good is to be done.—  
*Rev. Albert Barnes.*

### SAFETY---SAFETY---SAFETY!

BY D. F. NEWTON.

THERE is safety, there is danger.—Safety on the one hand, danger on the other. The Lord speaks it, thunders it, flashes it with the lightning's *flash*!—He points out the dangers in his word, in his Providence, by the Spirit's warnings.

"Awake! why sleepest thou, my soul?  
 All nature cries, AWAKE."

Danger? every step. No safety here, save on consecrated ground, full of faith and the Holy Spirit, persevering to the end. No matter how faithful and God-fearing we may have been, how successful in labors of love, how is it now? Are we alive, *now*? our souls on fire *now*? We may have turned thousands to righteousness, multitudes from darkness to light the world over; fought manfully the battles of the Lord, year after year, and carried the warfare into the very heart of the enemy's country. Our names may have gone abroad, far and near, as sons of thunder—giants in holiness. We may have, like Apollos, been mighty in the Scriptures, eloquent as Paul, caught up to the third heavens, and heard things unspeakable. We may have had the faith of Abraham, the meekness of Moses, the prevailing prayer of Elijah and Daniel. We may have had the visions of Isaiah, who saw the Lord high, lifted up with angelic hosts, crying, holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; and a seraphim, flying with a live coal from God's altar, applying it to the lips of the prophet, purging his sins, and taking away his iniquity. But how is it *now*? Are we sitting at the feet of Jesus now? Moreover, we may have had the zeal of John the Baptist, or Paul, the Apostle. We may have received the baptism pentecostal, the tongue of fire, the power of healing the sick, and casting out devils, and have had faith, so as to remove mountains. But have we the faith that works by love, and purifies the heart now? In a word, we may have had opened to our ecstatic view,

Nor to be tempted is sometimes our most subtle temptation.—*Jer. Taylor.*



all the glorious manifestations and communications of the Revelator in the Apocalypse, meanwhile comprehending with all saints, what is the length, and depth, and breadth, and height, and to know the love of God that passeth knowledge, being filled with all the fullness of God. With having had all these, though we may have had love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against which there is no law, still, where is safety—the sure, present title to glory eternal?

"Virtue has not a shrine so pure,  
So holy, but the serpent sin,  
In hours we deem the most secure,  
Beneath its altar will glide in."

Safety? where? O where? how?—Nowhere save in God, in Christ, in newness of life, in the spirit of all grace superabounding, praying always with all prayer and supplication. There is no safety, save following on to know the Lord, constantly giving all diligence, adding to our faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity. And these Christian graces must be in us, and abound. There is no well-grounded hope of a seat at the right hand of the King of kings, except in forgetting the things behind us, and reaching forth to those before us, *pressing* toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Beloved, in the Lord, is there safety anywhere save at the feet of Jesus, forever and forever? "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." Mark well: "*Endureth to the end.*" This sitting at the feet of Jesus, like Mary learning new lessons of humility must be a constant *every day* business, till we can say, with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."—2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. Beware of spiritual pride. "*Beware of thinking yourself something, when you are nothing.*" "Pride goeth

before a fall." "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit, there is more hope of a fool than of him."—Prov. xxvi. 12. "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, whom resist, steadfast in the faith."—1 Pet. v. 8, 9.

"Be sober, be sober, and watch unto prayer;  
For Satan surrounds thee with many a snare."  
His vigils are constant,—awake, O awake!  
Thy God, and thy duty, oh never forsake!  
Gird on the whole armor, prepare for the fight.  
What thine hand finds to do, quickly do with thy  
might;  
For perchance thou art hastening fast to the  
grave  
Where no thoughts are cherished, no good can be  
craved."

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.—"Let us labor, therefore, to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

THE CORRUPTING WRITERS.—I don't mean to check inquiry, but you must take care how you approach the depth! "In the great water-floods they shall not come nigh him." It is dangerous for a young man to try how much poison his constitution will bear. I remember having two intimates at college. We were accustomed to meet together, and read the publications of the day. A subtle and mischievous book made its appearance. I refused to read it. I believe God put the thought in my heart, for I never made a wiser resolution in my life.

"Oh!" said one of the party, "have we not sense to form our own opinions?" "I tell you, R—," said I, "it seems to me like a naked man entering the lists with a combatant armed *cap a-pie*." He read on, and became an infidel. I ran away, and waited for my armor. I can now face the Goliath without fear, and fetch him down with a sling and stone, which God has provided for the assault. This was not cowardice, but good sense measuring the enemy's forces, and making due preparation for the conflict.—*A Father's Reasons for Repose.*

## Editorial.

### WILL YE ALSO GO AWAY?

How sadly these words must have fallen upon the ear, as they were uttered by the Great Teacher! He had been unfolding some of the deep mysteries of his kingdom. He had shown more closely than ever before, the spirituality of his religion, and the thorough, radical change it required of all its votaries. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." Ye must be partakers of the Divine Nature, or your following me will profit you nothing. The utter helplessness of men, without Divine help, was fully set forth. "No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." The effect of these sublime instructions is stated by the Divine Historian: "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."

We should naturally expect that those who personally witnessed the Saviour's miracles, and listened to his wonderful teachings and enjoyed his companionship, would have remained his faithful adherents through all the vicissitudes of his fortune. But it was far otherwise. One day, in the estimation of the people, the earth is not good enough for him to walk upon, "and a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, 'Hosanna to the Son of David: blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.'" A few days later, in the same city, the multitude cried out, "Away with this man." "Crucify him!—crucify him!"

Here we see the inconsistency of poor human nature. It cannot be depended upon. Nothing is more unreliable. Of the blossoms which trees put forth, under the genial influences of spring, not one in a hundred matures, perfectly ripened into fruit. Most of them wither at the touch of the first rude wind that blows. Others that survive the frosts and the winds of spring,

are blasted by the sun of summer. A little worm makes its way to the hearts of others, that bid fair to come to perfection. This was it in our Saviour's day, and thus it is now with those who embrace his doctrines. "Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine?" Were there not a hundred converted, but where are the ninety?

Many go back because of the Saviour's teachings. The Holy Spirit sheds such light on them through the Word, that they see that there is no middle ground. They must be all the Lord's. Their constant aim must be to please Him in all their ways.—In all things their own wills must be given up, and God's will be supreme. It is evident to their minds that this is the will of God, even their sanctification. At first they have no intention of turning back; they only hesitate to go on. But in many cases that hesitation was fatal. The Holy Spirit was grieved. They next refused to go on, and soon the world had clasped them in its deadly embrace. They may keep up the form of godliness, but the power is gone. They are deceived if they think themselves to be in the way of salvation. The religion of Christ is not of an eclectic character.—It is not made up of doctrines borrowed from different systems of religion and philosophy. It is of divine origin. You are not at liberty to choose such portions as you please, and reject the rest. It must be taken as a whole. The assumption that certain precepts may be disregarded, because professing Christians generally disregard them, is false in its nature, and damning in its results.

To embrace certain of the doctrines of the Gospel because they are popular, and to reject others, taught with equal clearness, because they are unpopular, is in reality to reject the gospel altogether. You may as well invent your own religion.

Many go away from Christ because of the reproach that comes upon them from following in his footsteps. All that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. There is no escaping it, but by denying Christ. Yet how very few are willing to bear it! Most persons yield a little here, and a little there, to soften the asperity of the opposition against them, forgetting that:

just in proportion as, by these means, they get away from the cross, they get away from Christ. They love Jesus, but not enough to sacrifice social position for his sake. They seek to save their lives, and so, of course, they lose them.

These are the days foretold by the prophet, when "men shall be lovers of their own selves, heady, high-minded," "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

Beloveds, how is it with you? Can you be depended upon to follow the Saviour fully to the end? Not, if you have not yet learned the lesson of your own weakness. Peter was honest when he said, "Though all men deny thee, yet will I not deny thee." You may have equal honesty; but unless you have received the Pentecostal fire, killing out self, and filling you with holy courage, you will fail as ignominiously as he did.

There are some, thank God, who can, in every emergency, be depended upon.—Others run well for a time, and then fall out by the way. Between their promises and their performances, there is the greatest discrepancy. To which of these classes do you belong?

Make the effort to become an earnest, zealous, stable Christian. Do not be discouraged by past failures. You can succeed. God's grace is always given to all those who honestly strive after conformity to his will in all things. Get a faith in Christ that will carry you through under all circumstances. Walk in the light, and your liability to stumble will be greatly diminished. Bear manfully and willingly the afflictions of the Gospel. Firmly resolve to be of that number "*Who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*"

#### LOVE THE TRUTH.

"The Apostle says, 'The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.'"  
2 Tim. iv: 3-4.

Has not this time already come? Are there not many who will not endure the truth as it is in Jesus? Is there not trouble at once, if their idols are touched? How often do ministers confess that they do not preach as closely as they would, for the "people will not stand it." In a union meeting we attended, a preacher expressed the greatest thankfulness because he had a congregation of poor people, for, said he, "they will let me preach the truth!" You had better preach it whether you have the permission of the people or not. God will hold you responsible.

*Having itching ears, they shall heap to themselves teachers.* What are Theological schools for, but to answer this purpose?—What a commotion the old Heaven-taught and Heaven-sent preachers, taken from the plow and shop, made wherever they went! They preached the people right away from the learned Doctors of Divinity!

Ask God to give you a love for the truth. Rough gold may not be as flashy, but it is far more valuable than polished brass. It is a fatal symptom when one turns away his ears from the truth, no matter with how few of the graces of rhetoric it may be uttered, and turns unto fables, though expressed with the utmost elegance of diction. What must be thought of the piety of the age when one of the most popular preachers of the country writes a novel for a popular paper, and then consents to having it acted upon the stage of the Theatre!

*Buy the truth, and sell it not.* If saved at all, it will be by its influence upon your heart and life. "Sanctify them through thy truth." Go where you can hear it preached in its greatest purity, and yield yourself to its control.

#### INDEBTEDNESS.

Any of our friends who are conscious of being indebted to us, to any amount, however small, will confer a great favor by remitting it at once. *We greatly need it.*—Many drops make a painful. The amount that is due us, in trifling sums, all over the country, from Maine to California, would, if we had it all, relieve us of serious embarrassment. Let us have a prompt response.



THE NEW VOLUME—"THE SWORD  
THAT CUTS, THE FIRE THAT  
BURNS."

Fire on fire, gospel fire. The sword of the Spirit, quick and powerful—

"Where'er it enters in,  
Is sharper than a two-edged sword,  
To slay the man of sin."

Friends of truth and love, we have never felt so fully, deeply, heartily as now, the assurance of God's smiling favor, his entire approval, his spiritual guidance, in preparing this new volume.

In our two previous works—"Home Thrusts" and "Shining Light"—an oversight occurred in their preparation. We had slight fears of being too radical, consequently holy fire was lacking, "the sword that cuts, the fire that burns."—Then, we saw through a glass darkly; but now the light shines clearly, unmistakably.

Now we swing loose, fear not, and are getting all the fire we possibly can, and putting in this same gospel fire to the very utmost of our feeble ability, fire on fire, running the risk of losing friends or making foes, if so be we please Jesus—leaving the consequences of this fire that burns, and the sword of God's truth that cuts, unreservedly with Him who says, "I came not to send peace on earth, but a sword."

"I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I, if it be already kindled?" Luke xii: 49.

The fire is his; the sword is his; the glory *shall* be his.

This holy fire is wanting in the pulpit, in the press, in meetings for social worship, prayer and praise, in family circles, at home and abroad. We long to see ministers on fire—parents and children on fire—editors on fire—every man, woman and child in the Church on *fire* gospelly; fire from Heaven, burning, blazing out, hotter and hotter—so hot, indeed, that no rebel sinner, no formalist, backslider, hypocrite, or time-server can live and breathe in the region or atmosphere of this fire pentecostal, or tongue of fire.

What could the holy prophets have done without this fire—the apostles, Paul, Peter, James and John—Luther, Wesley, Fletcher, Whitfield, Edwards, Baxter, Bunyan, Pay-

son? It was fire on fire—fire here, fire there, fire all about them, in them, and out of them. It was this fire on fire that kept them alive, blazing out—made them blazing firebrands, causing Satan to fall as lightning!

This is just the fire we wanted and sought for in penning this new work, "The Sword that cuts, the Fire that burns."

Oh! for this fire on fire, this fire of love, of salvation—heaven-born, gospel fire—that every article in it, every page, every thought and word may be fire—fire on *fire*, blazing out, shining brighter and brighter, rising higher and higher, intensified.

We begin with fire, and keep on firing, even to the end, increasingly—fire first, fire midst, fire all the way. If the heart is on fire, the fire of God's love, the tongue will be fire, the pen will be fire, fire on *fire!* Lord, give us this fire more and more; send out this fire, till the whole world is on *fire!*

We are dying—~~dead~~ and buried for lack of fire—the fire of salvation, holy fire. Oh! for the breath of Heaven, to breathe on these dry bones!

The whole world is perishing for want of fire! The people want fire, and will have it. Sinners hate the truth; they have no heart, no desire for things holy or heavenly, and yet they are tired and sick of dead formality, a sickly sentimentalism, a hypocritical half-heartedness, a wretched, time-serving policy. Impenitent sinners, wicked as they are, conscience seared as they are, dead in trespasses and sins, will flock where fire is, true pentecostal fire—the hotter the better. God so ordains. Therefore, if editors and publishers want patronage, a rapid sale for their publications, tracts, books and periodicals; and if ministers wish for crowded houses, large audiences, and attentive hearers, let them get their souls on fire from above, and pour in this heavenly fire, scorching hot—hot as hot can be—as when "the melting fire burneth," and our word for it, Satan, with all his legions and hellish machinations, cannot keep these sinners from this fire, fire on fire! Was it not so on Pentecostal day? and the cry, "Lord, save, we perish?" Oh, that men were wise and understood this!

"Give us the nerve of steel,  
And the arm of fearless might,  
And the strength of will that is ready still  
To battle for the right.

For the foeman is now abroad,  
And the earth is filled with crimes;  
Let it be our prayer to God,  
'Oh! give us the men for the times.'"

Friends, will you aid us in the work of fire—"the sword that cuts, the fire that burns?"

The book will be forthcoming, containing over 400 pages, neatly executed, with numerous engravings.

NOTE.—This fire and sword volume is divided into some sixty chapters, or more, of varied subjects—Bible reformatory—suited to every age and class of persons, in the pulpit and out of it. Condensation is aimed at in every article—point, pith, the essence and quintessence of gospel purity and salvation—things, practical every-day things—life-giving, soul-kindling—the flint, the fire, the hammer, the holy unction, Sinai's crash, the lightning's flash, fire on fire!

Price, in cloth, per copy, \$1.50; gilt, \$2.

Any person sending names of five good subscribers will receive a copy gratis.—Agents wanted.

Address D. F. NEWTON, Author of "Home Thrusts" and "Shining Light," 303 West 20th St., New York. N.

#### FASHIONABLE RELIGION.

*No Christ in it; no cross, no power, no salvation, no crown.*

"Take up thy cross, the Saviour said,  
If thou wouldst my disciple be,  
Deny thyself, the world forsake,  
And humbly follow after me."

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."—(Matthew xvi. 24.) The Christianity of the present day is a fashionable religion, walking in silver slippers. "To belong to some party," says one, "in the Church, and show a zeal for its interests, to talk about the leading controversies of the day, to buy popular religious books as fast as they come out, and lay them on your table, to attend meetings, subscribe to societies, and discuss the merits of preachers,—all these are comparatively easy and common attainments. They no

longer make a person singular. They require little or no sacrifice. They entail no cross. But to walk closely with God, to be really spiritually minded, to behave like strangers and pilgrims, to be distinct from the world in employment of time, in conversation, in amusement, in dress, to be as a faithful witness for Christ in all places, to have a savour of our Maker in every society, to be prayerful, humble, unselfish, meek, to be jealously afraid of sin, and tremblingly alive to our dangers from the world—these, these are still rare things,—They are not common among those who are called true Christians, and worst of all, the absence of them is not felt and bewailed as it should be.

Reader, what is your religion? Fashionable? or the religion of the cross? A religion without the cross is not the religion of the Bible. "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me," says Christ, "cannot be my disciple." Here lies the test. Beware of a religion without the cross. We may have fine houses of worship, costly, splendid, ornamented steeples pointing to heaven, loud-sounding organs, fashionable choirs, damasked seats, velvet pulpits, a talented minister—highly educated, fluent, eloquent, a rich parsonage, all outward adornments, and what avail without the cross, the spirit of Jesus, the holy unction, the fire pentecostal. There are hundreds of places of worship in this day in which there is everything except the cross. There are carved oak and sculptured stone; there is stained glass and brilliant paintings; there are solemn services, and a constant round of ordinances. But the real cross of Christ is not there. Jesus crucified is not proclaimed in the pulpit. The Lamb of God is not lifted up, and salvation in him is not freely proclaimed. And hence all is wrong. Reader, beware of such places of worship. They are not apostolical. They would not have satisfied Paul, neither should they satisfy us."

"Jesus, I my cross have taken,  
All to leave and follow thee."

Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ."

"Take up thy cross and follow me,  
Nor think till death to lay it down;  
For only he who bears the cross  
May hope to wear the glorious crown."

N

## ACTIVITY.

There is many a stream which possesses sufficient power to propel valuable machinery, but it is too sluggish in its movement. It is so with many in the church. They possess strength and solidity, but they are too slow to do much. They have but little of the spirit of the Master, who went about doing good. He denied himself for the benefit of others, but they go in for taking their ease. Like the hireling, they love the wages; but they try to avoid all the work they possibly can. Such persons need converting. A touch of hallowed fire would do more for them than learning or position.—It is an easy thing to make a noise, but noise is not fire. If you have the real fire of God in your soul, it will communicate to others. Fire is catching. It is a dry time. *Scatter the fire.* Spread it in all directions.

## AGENTS WANTED.

We want every one of our subscribers to act as agent for *The Earnest Christian*.—Renew for yourself at once, and send us on as many new subscribers as possible. We shall labor faithfully to keep up the high tone of our magazine, and hope to introduce several improvements.

## RENEWALS.

If not notified to the contrary, we take it for granted ordinarily that you intend to renew. This, we find, gives satisfaction to the most of our subscribers. If you intend to discontinue, please notify us at once. In all cases, give your Post Office and State.

**LIQUOR DRINKING.**—The amount of liquor consumed by the American people annually is almost fabulous. The commissioners appointed to revise the revenue system of the country estimate that from 42,000,000 to 45,000,000 gallons of distilled spirits are consumed each year. In addition to this, about 186,000,000 gallons of fermented liquors are also drunk. The amount of revenue derived by the government from the liquor trade amounts to nearly \$48,000,000. The retail cost of these liquors, as paid by the consumers, is estimated to be not less than \$500,000,000, an annual amount sufficient to pay our national debt in a little more than five years.

## REVIVALS.

A revival is in progress on this circuit, under the labors of our beloved pastor, Rev. A. Hall, which has already resulted in the conversion of many souls. In one settlement, of about twenty families, almost every soul is converted, including a family of Irish Roman Catholics, who, instead of worshipping senseless idols, now worship the *true and living God*. There have been some remarkable awakenings. A young man was at work one day, in the fields, when his mind was deeply impressed with this passage of Scripture: "Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee." He tried to banish it from his mind, but in vain. Every now and then, during the day and evening, that declaration of the Almighty to the rich fool was ringing in his ears: "*This night thy soul shall be required of thee.*" He retired to rest, but not to sleep. His whole life came up in review before him—the many vows *unpaid*, the many promises *unfulfilled*. A strong sensation came over him, and an *awful pressure* on his heart. His feet and hands began to grow cold, and the cold sweat stood on his brow. He told his wife that he was going to die—that God had required his soul of him, and would take it that night, if he did not voluntarily surrender it to Him, in a new and living covenant. He got out of bed; but was too weak to stand. He fell upon his knees, and pleaded for mercy. Before the morning dawned, light from the Sun of Righteousness broke into his soul—chased away his darkness—removed his burden—and set his soul at liberty—and he rejoiced in a sense of sins forgiven. This occurred a short time before our Camp Meeting commenced—last September. So the *sceptic* cannot say it was the effect of camp meeting or revival excitement. Down to that time he was unconcerned about his soul; and, when awakened, was in the fields alone.

Thus God can work, and no one can hinder. Jesus says, "When the Comforter shall come, He shall reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." And still the work is going on.

S. L. PHELPS.

Ellenburgh, N. Y.



## A SKETCH OF MY EXPERIENCE.

I never had religious parents to teach me the way of salvation. I attended the Presbyterian Sabbath school until I was thirteen years old. At that time the Methodists were not as popular as they are now, — and my father, being a proud-spirited man, would not allow his children to attend their meetings. When I was thirteen years of age, Bro. Clark was holding a protracted meeting in the village of Camillus, one evening, and while there, the Holy Spirit touched my heart. I trembled exceedingly, and wished some one would ask me to go to the altar; but no one took notice of a little girl like me. I went home, feeling sad; but with a strong desire to go again. If my father had a favorite among his children, I was that one. I persuaded my father to let me go to meeting the next night. I went, and as soon as an opportunity was given, I went forward, and that night the Lord converted my soul so powerfully that, during the twenty-nine years that have elapsed since, I have never doubted it for one moment. That day I had scalded my hand very bad, and while praising God, I rubbed my hand, until it was perfectly raw; but the power of God healed my hand, so that the next day I could put it in hot water, without experiencing any pain; and it never pained me afterwards. The evening I was converted, some brethren and sisters went home with me. We had a season of prayer, and my father seemed penitent. I asked my parent's forgiveness for all I had ever done wrong, which they both readily granted. As soon as the brethren and sisters had gone, an evil spirit took possession of father, and he treated me with cruelty; but the Lord kept the blows inflicted, from hurting me. He then disowned me, and in that bitter cold night he turned me from his house. But when my father forsook me, the Lord took me up, and provided me a home in a minister's family. In a few days my father came after me. I went home with him; he seemed sorry, and told me I might go to the Methodist meetings. I went and soon joined on probation. When my father heard of it, I was at a prayer meeting, which lasted till

nearly midnight. It was a cold, bleak January night. When I got home, my father had retired to bed; but when he heard me come in, he arose and came into the room, much enraged, and, calling me a Methodist, he ordered me to leave his house and without giving me time to get my hat or shawl, he opened the door, and pushed me out, forbidding my ever entering his house again. It was midnight, and I knew not what to do. I went into the back yard, and crawled into an old cupboard. I shut the door, and lay down, and went to sleep, as comfortably as I would in bed. Some may think this strange; but I had the fire of God's love in my heart, and the Lord kept me from being cold, as he did the Hebrew children from the power of the fire when cast into the fiery furnace. — The Lord kept me sweetly all the while. My father was willing I should unite with the Presbyterian church; but the Lord had given me a home among the Methodists, and I chose to serve God rather than man. I was no longer a pet with my father; but I had become a lamb in the fold of Christ, and I had to suffer some, as Paul did. I suffered stripes and imprisonments; for I was shut up in a dark room two days and nights, with but very little to eat. Many times I was turned from home; but the Lord gave me friends, and amid all these things I was happy, and grew strong in the Lord, much faster than I have done since, when the sea of life has run smooth.

When I was nineteen years old I was married; but my husband knew nothing of the saving power of the grace of God. I had held to my profession; but I had lost my power with God. The Holy Spirit followed me. I had no real peace till I again sought and found pardon, and soon the Lord gave me my husband to go with me. Oh how changed was our home then! Our house then became a house of prayer. In the year 1847, at a camp meeting, the Lord gave me the blessing of holiness. I felt that I was clean, through the blood of the Lamb. I was a new creature in Christ.

"Jesus, all the day long,  
Was my joy and my song."

I wanted to proclaim it to the world; but after I got home, fear of some of the older

ones in the church, that did not believe such a blessing attainable, crept into my heart, and I failed to acknowledge before them what great things the Lord had done for me, and I lost the blessing. My light became darkness, and Oh! how great was that darkness! But again the Lord forgave me, and restored unto me the joys of a full salvation. For three years I walked in the light of God. It pleased the Lord at times to let such a weight of glory rest upon me, that this body would sink, and I would be lost to all but God. This stirred some of my friends to be tried with me, and I began to wish for a smoother way; for I loved my friends, and I resisted the power of God, and again I lost the blessing. I thought then I was lost; I was wretched beyond expression. Oh, I would have given the world, were it at my disposal, if it would have given me back my peace; but I did not give up wrestling with God; and for some years, the Lord would bless me at times; but I did not enjoy the fullness. I was like the sea, which sometimes gets angry, and foams, and sometimes is quiet. I was a formal professor. I loved fashion, and the applause of men. I was anxious to get this world's goods; but when we had collected some of earth's treasures together, the Lord permitted them to be taken from us. I found the way of the transgressor was hard, and again I sought for mercy, but this time the Lord gave me to count the cost more than ever before. I had to lay aside the world and the love of fashion. I had to be willing to be crucified in any way, and dare to be right, and dare to be true everywhere.—I had to be willing to be peculiar for Christ's sake. Here I found a shrinking; but the Lord helped me. I was troubled with a disease of the heart. I would fall down like one dead. My friends deemed it unsafe to leave me alone. The doctor advised me to keep away from lively meetings, and not get excited about anything; but in April, 1866, the Lord again cleansed my heart. Glory be to God! I felt the healing power all through my entire being. I felt as if I was transparent. I was emptied of every unholy thought and desire, and I was filled with glory and with God. Sometimes he gives me that joy that is unutterable and

full of glory. He removed this disease of my heart, and I have never felt a symptom of it since. Of our eight children, the Lord has converted six. Some of them have gone after the world again; but I believe the Lord will give us all of our children to go with us. He is not slack concerning his promises. I have had joys and sorrows; but the Lord is leading me by the side of still waters, and into green pastures; and when adverse winds blow, and storms howl, and threatening thunders roar, and huge billows rise and dash against my frail bark, I can calmly sit, and feel that my Father is at the helm—my anchorage is sure. Glory to God! my all for Christ I've given, and he now accepts me. Glory to God! I press my Bible to my bosom, and I've got religion in my soul. I fear no evil, for Christ is my Shepherd, and Heaven is my home.

MRS. M. A. BORDEN.

*Seneca Falls, N. Y.*

#### DYING TESTIMONY.

ELIJAH F. WARREN, of Utica, N. Y., died August 21st, 1867, of Consumption, in the 42d year of his age.

Brother Warren was a faithful and earnest member and recording steward of the Free Methodist Church. About two years previous to his death, God, by his wonderful power, raised him almost from the grave, against the prophecies and fears of doctors and friends, and gave him strength of body and soul to labor daily for the bread that perishes, and constantly and powerfully to do his duty at all the means of grace for about eighteen months. He was a shining light and a living example of the power of God to preserve both body and soul. He suffered much, but with the utmost patience. He was more than a conqueror. He died into life, with the glory of the heavenly world beaming from every feature. Just before he died, when I asked him how it looked beyond the river, he raised his hands and gave one of his characteristic shouts, "Glory to God!" which was full of divine power.

WM. J. SELBY.

*Syracuse, Nov. 11, 1867.*

## THE LOVE FEAST.

RHODA CLAPSADDLE.—I praise the Lord for what he has done for me, and for what he is still doing. I am so glad that when my feet were fast taking hold on hell, that I ever heard Jesus say, "Come hither, soul; I am the way!" I have learned by sad experience that perfect obedience to God is essential to salvation. Through grace, I am enabled to follow the Spirit. I rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. I feel like publishing to the world that I belong to God, determined to go through in the straight and narrow way. The way to heaven is narrow; but, blessed be God! it is ample enough for all that are disposed to walk therein. It is a highway—a way of holiness, cast up for the redeemed of the Lord. How much of the grace of God we need to keep us in our proper place, amid the tide of opposition and formalism that surround us. Nothing but the mighty power of God can keep me. Glory to his name! He does save me from this world and the things of it. I give glory to God for the complete victory he gives me in my soul over death, hell and the grave; for, since Jesus has laid there, I dread not its gloom. I have no fears of hell, for I expect to shout above the fiery void; and when we reach the heights of Glory, then we will shout and sing, and make the upper regions ring with praises to our God.

Porter, N. Y.

MRS. L. D. MITCHELL.—For the past two weeks I have been suffering a trifling affliction of body; but I can rejoice that it has sunk me deeper into God. I have felt such a sweet peace, such an abiding sense of Jesus in my soul, that I could exclaim, in the language of Paul, "Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." I should be most glad every day to be thus emptied of self, and laid low at the feet of Christ, that the all-sufficiency of His grace, and the power of His strength might be made perfect in me. I feel to-night like pressing after deeper degrees of humble love, communion with God and active holiness. It is only with con-

stant communion with our Saviour that we can have the witness day by day that "our life is hid with Christ in God." What a mystery—Christ in us! Though possessed of this spiritual life, we cannot impart what we feel to another. It is that "*new name*, which none knoweth but he that receiveth it." May each one of us that profess to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, have this new name stamped without a doubt on our hearts.

One word to you who have never known the Saviour's love. Now is the accepted time—now is the day of salvation. Jesus is waiting to own and bless you as his child. I plead with you as a friend, as one that loves your souls, don't put off the day of repentance. It may be too late. God grant that each one of us may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

Pittsford, N. Y.

MRS. H. E. HAYDEN.—To-day the blood of Jesus cleanses my heart from every stain that sin has made. It is glorious to realize every moment that our "God is round about us like a wall of fire, and the glory in the midst." I can say with all my heart, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God!" It is through the most dreadful temptations, the greatest trials, and the most intense suffering, that I expect to ascend to glory. O, how the heavenly fire burns in my heart! O, Glory! Hallelujah!

De Kalb, Ill.

A. M. PARCELLE.—I feel that the blood of Jesus saves me now; glory be to His name forever! I feel, as I write, the heavenly fire in my soul. I am His to do or suffer His will; to confess Him at all times; to love Him while I live; to lead a consistent Christian life, and to glorify His name on earth, that I may have a right to the tree of life, and enter through the gate into the city.

J. H. GUFFEY.—I find the *Earnest Christian* a great help to me, and look forward with anxiety from one month to another for its appearance. I love the truth in all its purity. I praise God for a present, free and full salvation—one that saves us from sin, in all conditions and places.

Warsaw, Ill.



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