

The Earnest Christian

AND

GOLDEN RULE.

SEPTEMBER, 1870.

RICHES AND POVERTY OF CHRIST.

BY REV. B. T. ROBERTS.

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."—2 Cor. viii. 9.

In no other way can principles be so well enforced, as by examples.

Duties that have never been performed, would seem impracticable. It would be a profitless task to inculcate the exercise of dispositions that have never been manifested. The apostle, in the context, urges upon the Corinthian brethren the practice of an active benevolence. There was at that time a severe famine in Judea, as well as in other parts of the Roman Empire.—The Christians of Judea, on account of the hatred borne to them by their neighbors, the Jews, were likely to suffer more than any other part of the population. The churches of Macedonia, though poor and persecuted, exerted themselves to the utmost of their ability to relieve their more impoverished and afflicted brethren at Jerusalem.

The apostle, knowing as he did the power of religion to open the heart and the purse, was surprised at the amount and cheerfulness of their contributions. He appeals to their example in urging upon the Corinthian brethren

not to be behind-hand in this work of love.

But as the strongest argument for doing as did the Macedonians—first giving themselves unto the Lord, and then to benevolent objects, according to the will of God—he urges the words quoted at the beginning of this article.

This text may be regarded as a general statement—a historical fact—on account of which important consequences result to our race.

Let us, then, consider the riches and the voluntary poverty of Christ, and the reason for which He became poor.

1. In asserting that Jesus Christ was rich, the text in effect asserts His Divinity. His reputed parents were, as to this world's goods, poor. His family was poor in Bethlehem. From the cradle to the grave, He never possessed property.

But the text asserts that He was rich. This could be true of Him only in a pre-existing state.

We assume, then, without adducing other proof than that before us, that Christ was Divine—that the wealth of the Godhead was His.

1. He was rich in possessions. The work of a man's hand we deem pre-eminently his own. No one may lawfully deprive him, without his consent

of the creation of his own industry.—It is a part of himself—an embodiment of the strength which he formerly put forth.

If dependent man may claim a sort of ownership in that which his toil has achieved, how absolute the right of the Independent Being to all that He has made.

By HIM, the uncreated Word which was made flesh, and dwelt among us, were all things made; and without Him was not anything made which was made.

He claims, then, to be the owner in His own right of everything created, whether animate or inanimate. The beasts of the forest, the fowls of the mountain, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, are His. His Almighty power is ever exerted in preserving the works that He has made. Were He to withdraw His sustaining presence, a desolation such as poet never sung, nor prophet predicted, would immediately follow. So that, by a double right, we may say, *The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof.*

But this earth, with its hills and valleys teeming with a various population, its veins distended with yellow gold and sparkling gems, its briny caverns affording a home for the monsters of the deep, constituted but an insignificant item in his wealth. It might have been blotted out, and, to an eye capable of ranging over the fields of immensity, the possessions of the Godhead would have seemed unimpaired.

The millions of worlds above us and around us, with their untold treasures of mind and matter, moving with majesty and harmony around the throne of the Eternal, would have constituted, without our sin-blighted earth, an ample domain for the Godhead.

These possessions our Redeemer voluntarily resigned. He parted with them all. He took upon Himself the form and condition of a servant, and had not so much as where to lay His head.

2. He was rich in power. We talk of the power of man. We gaze, astonished, at the creations of his industry. We are ready to exclaim, How could mortal hand rear the huge wall of the gigantic pyramid? We carefully survey these monuments of human might; we take in their dimensions, and compute how much of time and strength would suffice to rear them. But how insignificant are they, in comparison with the mighty mountains! But He "laid the foundations of the mountains. He paved the heavens with clouds, and attuned, amid banners of storms, the voice of thunder; and unchained the lightnings that linger, and lurk, and flash in their gloom."

We are filled with emotions almost of sublimity, as we survey the power of Xerxes' army. And yet, the combined strength of all the armies that ever trod the hostile plain, He could crush as easily as we the puny worm that crawls beneath our feet.

There was a time when our earth had no being. Gloomy nothingness occupied the space which, now she fills.—With a word, He called forth from the dark void the smiling universe. He spake, and it was done. He commanded, and it stood fast. When darkness brooded over the new-born world, He said, *Let there be light, and there was light.*

3. He was rich in wisdom. The wisdom of the wisest of earth's honored sires is, compared to His, but as the glimmering spark to the bright orb of

day. The depths of His mind could none explore.

4. He was rich in glory. He shared from everlasting the glories of the Father's throne. The seraph hosts to Him poured forth their loftiest strains. All knees in Heaven bowed to Him, and confessed Him Lord of All. The song of praise poured forth from millions of happy voices, was wafted on the breeze of Heaven. Angel and Archangel, Cherubim and Seraphim, vied with each other in offering adoration and praise to Him that sat upon the throne.

II.—HE BECAME POOR. The offering of poverty was made at His birth.—Such was the destitution of His parents, that they could not offer, as a sacrifice, a lamb and a dove, but were obliged to choose the cheaper offering of two turtle doves, or two young pigeons.

The roving Indian has his wigwam—the son of poverty has his humble shelter; but the Son of Man had not where to lay His head.

The Creator divested Himself of His majesty, took upon Him the form of humanity and came to a province of His own creation, and but here and there the cottage of the lowly was opened for His protection from the pelting storms, and chilling dews of night. Leaving, for a season, the throne of glory and the splendors of Heaven, He walked among the sons of humanity as one of their number; but not a single habitation opened its doors at His bidding, and welcomed Him as its Master. Not a foot of land could He call His own. No flocks and herds acknowledged His ownership. He ate of the bread, and drank of the cup of lowliest poverty.

2. He became poor in reputation.—He was despised and rejected of men.

He went up and down the earth, scattering blessings with a liberal hand as He went; but the song of gratitude seldom fell upon His ear. Ere He came to our sin-blighted world, all the angels of God had worshiped Him.—The anthems of His praise, from millions of happy voices, were borne upon the breath of Heaven. The harps of gold, swept by holy hands, sent forth enchanting strains in honor of His name. But now none were so poor as to do Him reverence. To attend upon His ministry was deemed disreputable. When the ruler came to Him, he chose the friendly covert of the night, that He might not be degraded in the public estimation. Scarce a solitary voice called Him blessed; scarce a single hand was extended to Him in friendship. The reproaches of ungodly men—the foul oath of the blasphemer—fell heavily upon Him. He was charged, by hypocritical pretenders to piety, with being a violator of the commandments of the Most High. He was buffeted, mocked, and spit upon by the multitude.

For God to take upon Him our form and our nature, was poverty such as awakened the deepest astonishment in Angelic minds. It was poverty for Him to travel—a penniless, houseless wanderer—up and down the earth, receiving at every step the obloquies of those who fed upon His bounty, and lived by His forbearance. Such a coming down the Universe had never witnessed, as when the Second Person of the Trinity voluntarily resigned the honors of the Godhead, and became a man, meek and lowly in heart. He took upon Him “the form of a servant.” His companions, without exception, were from the humbler walks

of society. The proud aristocrat never walked side by side with the Holy One of Israel. Jesus' friends were, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, Peter the fisherman, and Matthew the publican,—not Herod the great, nor Gamaliel the wise, or the young man who "went away sorrowful, because he had great possessions." We read that He spent all night in prayer upon the lone mountain's top; but we never hear of His seeking amusement at the gay and splendid parties of the rich. *He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.*

When we see how the Saviour sanctified Poverty, by eating her bread and drinking her water—walking in her lowliest vales, and choosing His companions from her despised sons—we no longer wonder, that in the palmy days of Christianity, *as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet; and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.* This also helps solve the mystery why the poor are generally so much more willing to receive the Gospel in its purity than the rich. They can say, emphatically, "*He was one of us.*"

3. Amazing as was the condescension for God to become man—the Word to become incarnate and dwell among us—a lower step was possible; and that lowest step He took when He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

This was a form of death reserved for criminals of the lowest sort. No Roman citizen, whatever his crimes or character, might be put to death on the cross. None but the outcast or the

slave could be crucified. Yet Jesus consented to this. He might have prevented it: by dying in the garden—by summoning angels to His rescue—by exerting His own Omnipotent energy. But He received, in its most terrible and ignominious form, the blow that gave the wound, from which flowed the blood which was to wash away the sins of the world.

III.—The object for which all this was endured, was that **WE MIGHT BE RICH.**

1. *In the favor of God.* His favor is life, and His loving kindness better than life. That favor we forfeited by our sins. The wrath of God rested upon us. We were under the curse, and there was none to remove it. Die, we or Justice must, unless some one be found able and willing to suffer in our stead. Jesus stood forth on our behalf. He became our patron and intercessor, and the propitiation for our sins. He made pardon attainable by us.

2. *Rich in peace of conscience.* The treasures of the deep are not to be compared with a soul at peace with its God and with itself. This was the legacy of Jesus to His disciples: *My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you.* The world has its peace; but it is the dreadful stupor of the inebriate refusing to be awakened, though he is passing with awful rapidity over the rapids of time, and nearing the frightful cataract over which he will soon plunge into the gulf of perdition. It is the peace of the vampyre's victim, fanned by its wings as his life-blood is fast oozing out. But Jesus gives to every one who renounces the world and follows Him, the "soul's calm sunshine, and the heart-felt joy."

This he carries with him into all the pursuits of life. It sustains him in the midst of cares. When afflictions come—as come they will—it calms the fevered brow, and pours the healing ointment into the crushed and bleeding heart. And when the dark waters of Jordan threaten to overwhelm us, it opens before us a pathway, so that we pass through, as did Elisha, dry shod.

3. *In faith.* It is said of men: of one, he is rich in land—of another, in stocks—of another, in Government bonds. But the saint of God is rich in faith. He is as one having nothing, and yet possessing all things. He who has plenty of money in the bank, can draw from day to day as his necessities demand. God owns all things. Boundless resources are at His command.—He who has a living faith in the living God can come to Him in confidence for what he needs, and receive it. To him the word of promise is, *Ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you.*

4. *Rich in everlasting treasures.* A man may be rich, though he has not, as yet, possession of his inheritance.—The Prince of Wales is received with royal honors, for what he is in prospect. The disciple of Jesus is an heir.—Rom. viii. 17; see also 1 Pet. i., iii. 4. His inheritance is of incomparably more value than that of the heirs of an Astor or a Rothschild. His inheritance lasts forever. His minority is shorter in proportion than that of our earthly heirs. In a few years he will go to his treasures, and reign with God forever.

THE SECRET.—I have observed, for nearly forty years past, that the secret of success in promoting revivals of religion, is in having our own hearts entirely filled with the Holy Spirit.—*Earle.*

A FAMINE OF HEARING THE WORDS OF THE LORD.

BY REV. GEO. W. ANDERSON.

WHEN Amos was called forth from the sheep-folds, to announce the just anger of God against a backsliding people, he poured forth most terrible denunciations,—among which was predicted, “A famine of hearing the words of the Lord.” No prophet should appear—no spiritual counsellor—no faithful reprover—none who would fearlessly proclaim the truth. How severe a judgment!

A famine in any form is a thing to be dreaded. How terrible is widespread starvation! What heart-rending tales, years ago, came from famine-stricken Ireland! Those who entered Richmond soon after its fall, saw signs of coming famine in the haggard faces of the people, and in the scarcity of provisions in the market. But on Belle Isle, in the Libby and Andersonville prisons, awful, gaunt famine was forced on the poor sufferers by iron-handed cruelty. The famine preceding the destruction of Jerusalem was so great, that the lanes and upper rooms were filled with the dead and dying; few received burial. Many ate girdles, shoes, and hay. Parents fought with their children over their food, and one woman boiled and ate her son!

This is fearful to conceive of; but a “famine of hearing the words of the Lord,” has worse aspects. It spreads desolation through the soul. Famine may be produced by a lack of rain, by mildew, and other kindred causes.—Starvation comes through lack of food. But do people die in their sins because there is no gospel? Is there no bread of life? Thank God! there is.

“Salvation like a river rolls,
Abundant, free, and clear.”

God has provided “a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees, well refined.”

In view of the *rich, abundant, and free* provision made, how is it that so many are to-day, as in the time of the prophet, famishing for want of spiritual

food? The explanation is this: The gospel is shut up with the lukewarm; withheld by those who have "a name to live, but are dead." An embargo is laid on "pure religion" by wealth and aristocracy. It is sealed up in those gorgeous bazaars of fashion, styled churches, and thus is placed beyond the reach of the masses. The high prices charged for even "a sitting" in the house of God, effectually exclude the poor from hearing the gospel, to whom it is especially sent. Those in the ministerial office, and others, occupying prominent positions, have bounties and honors heaped upon them; while others, who are more spiritual and faithful, well-nigh suffer famine of bread and literally beggary of the word of life. The majority crowd into the popular, fashionable churches,—and leave the weaker churches, where they should stay to labor for God and souls.

The land is filled with churches and ministers; and yet there is but little spiritual worship, and but little pure, gospel preaching. There is more *creed* and *theory*, than *experience*. Traditions are substituted for the statutes of God. Ministers deal in fables more than in the pungent, unadorned truth. The people hear more about "The dignity of labor," "The Pacific Railroad," and "Paul, the Christian gentleman," than they do about Repentance, Faith, and Regeneration. Congregations are lulled to sleep by the soft preaching of virtue and morality, and soothed into carnal security by the old cry of "Peace, peace." There is a general fear of giving offense. Even those who know the truth, and are urged by God and their conscience to declare it, are trammelled in giving utterance thereto, or are restrained by an undue regard for the opinions of men. "We have need," as Bramwell says, after speaking of the declension in the Church, "for those to be raised up, who, as at the first, did not shun to declare the whole counsel of God." Are ministers the enemies of the people when they tell them the truth? Nay, they are their friends.—But the people choose to have "smooth

things" prophesied unto them. They will pay a minister more who entertains them with well-written discourses, than one who strikes at their idols,—pricking their consciences—probing and plying every sore with caustic. As of old, "The prophets prophesy falsely, and my people love to have it so."

There is a famine of the words of the Lord, because some who know the truth and have been made free, fear the reproach of publicly embracing and endorsing it. They have received the light, but do not let it shine. They hide their candle under a bushel, and it soon goes out. The salt loses its saltiness. Such people do not amount to much, and God has a fearful account against them. They see the sword coming, but do not give the warning. They know what lifts, in time, the flood-gates of worldliness on the church,—what paves the way for general declension in Zion; but they fear disunion, and withhold the truth most needed.

Many do not feed on the true bread. They pay well, and go through the form of worship very precisely; but they are not eating the body of Jesus and drinking His blood,—hence they have no life in them. They are like men partially deranged, who refuse to take food, or eat straw instead. Their taste is perverted. What is most nourishing is distasteful to them. They cannot endure the strong meat of the gospel. In this their blind leaders humor them, so that they have about their own way—making the ministry adapt itself to their notions.

Some are blessed with faithful pastors, whose aim is to "feed the flock of God." Men who reprove, rebuke, counsel, and comfort. Yet many who enjoy such advantages, are in a lean and pinched condition. Poor souls! they have to be fed on milk, and very much weakened at that. They have not sufficient power to digest the "strong meat." How dyspeptic, sallow, consumptive and unhealthy they are!—God's law of obedience in all things, is most grievous to them: they cannot bear its application to their case by

others. They are "after the flesh," more than "after the Spirit;" still, they profess religion. Often they have unhallowed, worldly desires, which God grants, but "sends leanness into their souls." They hunger and thirst after ease, honor, riches, and popularity, and are filled with these things. Alas! how few "hunger and thirst after righteousness"! How few enjoy hearing the gospel preached in its simplicity—listening with pleasure to God's messenger, when he hews close to the line! But we are to "cry aloud and spare not," "whether they will hear or whether they will forbear." God save us from cowardly ministers, who dare not utter the truth "boldly"—as the early apostles and Christians did, after the Holy Ghost came on them!

"Awed by a mortal's frown, shall I
Conceal the truth of God most high?"

When we bring all the tithes into the storehouse, there will be no famine of the bread of life. There will be "meat in God's house." Let us prove Him herewith, and He will pour out a blessing on our Zion, that will be "pressed down, shaken together and running over."

Crowns Yet to Win.

BY AUSTIN Q. HAGERMAN.

SADLY at fault are they,
Who lightly think or say:
"Smoother has grown the way
O' the Christian race."
Truth slackens not to ease us,
The world cares not to please us,
Who, following after Jesus,
Fear no man's face.

Though not to all is given
To die like marty Stephen,
Looking straight into heaven

With far-off gaze;
Yet, by the truth set free,
We now no less must be
Dead to the world, and see,
By faith, Christ's face.

Earth's gold we must count dross,
Esteem earth's gain but loss,

And daily take the cross
And follow Christ;
Him we must imitate—
Lay aside every weight—
No off'ring deem too great,
Or too high-priced.

Fearless of earth's fierce frown,
Careless of wide renown,
We still must win our crown
Through mighty strife;
The shame of the cross despise,
And, with far-seeing eyes,
Press forward to the prize
Of endless life.

Great Mammon's strong demand,
High Fashion's haughty wand,
Pleasure's seductive hand,
We must disown;
These, with Satanic art,
Put God and us apart,
For the throne within the heart
Holds one alone.

Keen scorn, and scoffs, and sneers,
Have not died out with years,—
Tongues still bear flame that sears
The martyr-heart
Of those who are bravely good,
Who fight, in fearless mood,
Smooth things that now delude
With subtle art.

We have for enemies,
High principalities,—
Fierce powers that grant not ease,
Truce, or repose;
Spirits disguised in light:
Scaling our heavenly height,
Daring us to the fight—
Such are our foes.

Though saints of old have fought,
Have mighty victories wrought,
And gained their robes blood-bought,
Pure, clear, and white:
Still Satan fiercely rages,
Still his long battle wages,—
Sure, in these latter ages,
We too must fight.

Still, by self-abnegation—
Still, tried by strong temptation—
Still, through great tribulation—
We bring peace in:
Not braving wild beasts' gaze,
Not 'mid the faggot's blaze—
But, fighting the great world's ways,
Our crowns we win.

THE CHRISTIAN WARFARE.

BY ELEANOR J. WILSON.

I WANT

"A soul inured to pain,
To hardship, grief, and loss;
Bold to take up, firm to sustain,
The consecrated cross."

For some time past, these lines have been daily running through my mind, and my heart has ever responded, Amen. I have been learning to know what it means to be "inured to pain," in more senses than one; but I have not always been able to say, "Thy will be done." There have been times when self has gained the ascendancy, and then my proud heart rebelled, and questioned the love of my Heavenly Father,—forgetting that "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth,"—Heb. xii. 6,—and that though "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby,"—Heb. xii. 11.

Ah, if we indeed belong to Jesus—if we are true "soldiers of the cross"—we must remember that we have enlisted in a "life-long warfare," and we must expect to fight, and "endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," if we would wear the crown, and bear the palm, high up in Glory.

"Life is the scene of conflict, not of rest;
Man's is laborious happiness at best;
On this side death his dangers never cease,
His joys are joys of conquest, not of peace."

But oh! this is a glorious struggle—this Christian warfare. Its object is glorious; and, if persevered in, its result will be eternally glorious! We are struggling for life—eternal life!—for a "crown of glory that fadeth not away,"—for a seat at the right hand of Jesus forever more!—and if we gain all this, we must expect that there will be some hard fighting to be done, for the enemy is wily, fierce, and strong, and desperately in earnest in opposing our course.

Who is the best soldier? Is it not he who can endure the most fatigue and pain? who shrinks not from any hardship? who plunges into the thickest of the battle, and never wavers in the cause? How can we do all this, unless we become "inured to pain" and hardships? Strength is begotten of conflict. If we would become hardy soldiers of Jesus, we must learn to "suffer and be strong." Inglorious ease saps the energy of character, and makes us weak and unreliable. It was never meant that we should be at "ease in Zion." A woe is pronounced against those who are. They will surely go down into the pit if they do not arise and struggle. Like the traveler in the Arctic regions, if we give up and lie down, we perish.

We do not struggle alone, nor unperceived. "Clouds of witnesses" surround our pathway to the skies. The countless hosts of two invisible worlds are deeply interested in the result of this spiritual conflict. Angels shout in heaven, and devils groan in hell, whenever we gain a victory. Is it possible that we are the objects of so much interest? The Bible plainly declares it. Since the fall of man, earth has ever been the battle-field of invisible armies. Heaven and hell have ever been contending for the souls of men. Angels have always manifested a deep interest in the welfare of the human race.—When man fell from purity, safety, and happiness, and the sword of justice hung over his head, what deliberations were held around the Throne to devise a plan for his redemption; and when the world's Redeemer was born, all Heaven ran over with joy, and the angels flew down to earth, to convey the glad tidings to man;—and Jesus tells us that "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."—Luke xv. 10. And again, it is said of them, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"—Heb. i. 14. Need we say that all hell is interested in the destiny of man? Satan has a terrible will, and

a terrible malice. He was defeated in the object of his rebellion against God; and he seeks revenge in the eternal destruction of the human race, as the sure and only way of grieving God, and the hosts of Heaven. For if they rejoice over the salvation of one, do they not grieve over the loss of the many?—and if “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life,” is it probable that He is indifferent to our fate? Nay, verily. He hath even declared, that whosoever toucheth one of His little ones, toucheth the apple of His eye. Satan knows that his time is short, and he is determined to make the most of his opportunity. All his hosts are in the field, fiercely engaged in the conflict. “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness, (or *wicked spirits*, the margin has it,) in high places.”—Heb. vi. 12.

“But shall believers fear?
But shall believers fly?
Or see the bloody cross appear,
And all their powers defy?
By all hell’s host withstood,
We all hell’s hosts o’erthrow;
And conqu’ring them thro’ Jesus’ blood,
We on to conquer go.”

Hallelujah! Praise God forever!
We need not fear, though our foes are mighty, for “He that is for us is more than all they who can be against us.”
We need not be discouraged,—

“Though sin assail, and hell, thrown wide,
Pour all its flames upon our head,”

for there is power enough in Jesus’ blood to quench all the flames of hell that may threaten our destruction.—Through that blood we conquer evermore, if we remain loyal to our standard.

But if the conflict is glorious, the result will be much more so. Oh, who can imagine the exquisite joy of final victory! How the joyous song of triumph will swell and reverberate thro’ out the vast dome of Heaven, as the

redeemed army march through the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem, and receive from their Captain’s own hand the crowns of glory, and palms of victory! Oh, then, let us march on, and fight on.

SECRET OF SUCCESS.

Dr. Todd visited some large paper mills, owned by a wealthy man who began life without capital, and, after looking at them thoroughly, inquired of the owner the secret of his great financial success. The wealthy manufacturer replied:

I don’t know as there is any secret about it. When I was sixteen years old, I went to S—to work. I was to receive forty dollars a year and my food—no more—no less. My clothing and all my expenses must come out of the forty dollars. I then solemnly promised the Lord that I would give *one tenth* of my wages, and also that I would save another tenth for future capital. This resolution I carried out, and after laying aside one tenth for the Lord, I had at the end of the year much more than a tenth for myself. I then promised the Lord, whether he would give me more or less, I would never give less than one tenth to him. To this vow I have conscientiously adhered from that day to this; and if there be any secret to my success, I attribute it to this. I feel sure I am far richer on my nine tenths (though I hope I don’t now limit my charities to one tenth) than if I had kept the whole.

The doctor inquired, “How do you account for it?” The manufacturer answered:

In two ways. First, I believe God has blessed me, and made my business prosper; and, secondly, I have so learned to be careful and economical, that my nine tenths go far beyond what the whole would. And I believe that any man who will make the trial will find it so.

GRACE is an immortal seed, cast into an immortal soil, that brings forth immortal fruit.

NOTES ON SCRIPTURE.

BY JOHN T. JAMES.

"Now Hiram King of Tyre sent messengers to David, and timbers of cedar, with masons and carpenters, to build him a house. And David perceived that the Lord had confirmed him King over Israel, for his Kingdom was lifted up on high because of his people Israel.

And David took more wives at Jerusalem: and David begat more sons and daughters."—1 Chron. xiv. 1-3.

It is a great honor to be a *King*. "This honor have all his Saints." "He that is feeble among them at that day shall be as *David*." "Hath made us Kings." But still better is it to be "a King against whom there is no rising up."—Prov. xxx. 31. This is a blessed time when God hath "subdued our people under us, and hath 'put down all rule and authority and power'—when like David, we 'perceive that God has confirmed us kings over our Israel. Then is fulfilled the word of the Lord. 'To translate the kingdom from the house of Saul (carnal mind) and set up the throne of David—Luke, xvii. 21—over Israel, and over Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba.'"—2 Sam. iii. 10; 1 Thess. v. 23.

The next thing after the Kingdom is "confirmed," is to build "a house"—1 Chron. xiv. 1. This indicates a settled state of things. As long as there is any "rising up" in the land, a tent is the proper place for the King. So long as there are any friends of the house of Saul, in the land, and remains of the carnal mind in the heart, our rest is precarious and unsettled. But when our Kingdom is loyal from Dan even to Beersheba, yea "lifted up on high."—Eph. ii. 6,—then we can build a house, a place of rest.

And this was no ordinary house, for it was built of Cedar, the best of wood.—2 Sam. vii. 2. The glory of this house is seen in that it was of the same material with God's house.—2 Kings, vi. 14-18. Man's dwelling place is as God's.—John xiv. 23,—wondrous grace! Who would not urge on the war against the carnal mind, when such a house is in prospect?

Saul might have ended his days in

just such a house as this, had he not gone to entertaining God's enemy, Agag, the King of the Amalekites, instead of killing him. He had too little of the mind of God respecting Agag, and had too much sympathy for God's enemy. He was carnally minded, Agag being a type of the flesh. And so many since Saul might have lived and died in such an house had they not failed to obey the word of God,—*"mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry. For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience."*—Col. iii. 5-6,—just as the wrath of God came upon Saul, the disobedient King—1 Sam. xv. 22-23—for failing to "mortify" Agag, as God commanded him.—1 Sam. xv. 3. Instead of "mortifying" the carnal mind, many are satisfied like Saul, to make Agag go "delicately."—1 Sam. xv. 33. They refine "Lust of the flesh, Lust of the eye, Pride of life," until carnal mind loses much of its carnality, and is much improved under the restraining influence of religious association. Agag loses much of his baseness, and enmity to God and his people, and much of his roughness. He is kept in custody and apes the gentleman—the bloody murderer acts the Christian.—1 Sam. xv. 32-33.

But he only waits a chance to escape, when he will show his true nature, even by killing his captor and merciful entertainer. And so Saul died at the hands of an Amalekite.—2 Kings, i. 8-9—because he entertained the King of the Amalekites, instead of killing him. It is a dangerous thing to entertain God's enemies, even though we may have them under good custody. It is not enough to restrain the flesh, and refine the carnal mind, we must "mortify" it. God never will move Hiram to build us a house of Cedar, if that house is going to shelter his enemies. But bless God some do "mortify. And then their Kingdom is lifted up on high."—Col. iii. 1-3. They live

with God—dwell with him, and he with them.

The “timbers of cedar” for David’s house, were furnished by a *Gentile King*, as were also the “masons and carpenters.” This tells us in type of that blessed rest in God, that a soul enjoys amid the most unpropitious *outward* circumstances, when there is “no rising up” *within*. As soon as we are *confirmed Kings* over our inner and spiritual Kingdom, the outer world commences to send us “cedar and wood,” “and masons and carpenters” to build our house. God causes even our enemies to make the circumstances of our rest.

Bless His name! Satan and his company are the “masons.” Wicked and selfish and unsanctified men, are the “carpenters,” while the circumstances of the life affecting us are the “timbers of cedar.” God caused the masons and carpenters to build a cedar house for Daniel in the lions’ den. The devil and the soothsayers, and the magistrates, and the jailor made Paul and Silas a cedar house in the Philippian jail, in which they “prayed and sang praises.” Yes that prison was wondrously changed that night. Like God’s house,—1 Kings, vi. 15–18,—its walls of stone, the work of the masons, could not be seen for the boards of cedar that covered them. Paul and Silas could not see the cold stone walls because of the cedar. They could not touch the cold floor, because it was “covered with planks of fir.”—1 Kings, vi. 15. And just so it is now. We see God in our circumstances. We look through men and devils to God, and he covers all the walls of stone which the masons may build around us, with planks of cedar.

O precious grace—when God is constantly putting cedar wood—beautifully carved cedar wood—1 Kings, vi. 6–8—between us and the devils cold and rugged stone walls. Glory to our God! Who would’nt be a King? Then work on ye masons, and ye carpenters! ye little know what houses ye are building for us! We have got where “Prisons do palaces prove”. O wondrous rest,

when like David we can *sit* in our house—2 Sam. vii. 1,—and see nothing but cedar all around us;—when God is seen in all things, his hand making all things work together for our good—yea God himself is between us and our circumstances, and this is what makes the carved cedar wood.

“Break off the yoke of *inbred sin*,
And fully set my spirit free;
I cannot rest till *pure within*,
Till I am wholly lost in thee.”

When David was *confirmed* a King, and living in his *house of cedar*, “he took more wives and begat more sons and daughters.” The *house* was not only intended as a place of *rest*, being a cedar house, it was also a place of *love and union and fruit*. “The beams of *our house* are cedar.” We will enclose *her* with boards of cedar.”—Can. i. 17, viii. 9.

The *increase of wives and children* speaks to the spiritual mind of that wonderful increase of *union* with God that takes place when all his and our enemies are subdued, and we are living in the cedar house of “perfect love.” It also speaks of the *increase of fruit* that results from this increase of union.

“Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear *much fruit*.”

Beloved, God wishes to *confirm* you over your Kingdom, and to *build you your house of cedar*, where in perfect rest, and love and union, you can bring forth abundant fruit to the glory of God. Amen.

ON REFLECTION.—Let no day go without observation and review of God’s carriage towards you, and of yours towards Him; of mercies and afflictions; and of your duties, and the frame of heart in them; of your sins or inclinations to sin; and so, likewise, of any special or remarkable providence of God related to you by others, or seen or read of yourself. And let God have the glory of what is good. In afflictions, be humble; be ashamed and grieved for sins; and consider what God’s special providence speaks to you.

EXPERIENCE.

BY CLARENCE S. SPALDING.

IN early childhood I had very deep religious impressions. Well do I remember, when only five years of age, of going with my mother to a revival meeting conducted by Rev. A. J. Joslyn, a Baptist preacher, where my three sisters experienced religion. One evening, after meeting, I ran home before the rest, went in my room, took the Bible and wept over it. As my mother came home, she asked me what was the matter. I told her I wanted to be such a man as Elder J. I had a great deal of religious influence around me, for at that time ministers were more zealous for the cause of God than at present; and from all denominations they would come and preach in our school-house, and my father's house was always the preacher's home. I used to love to sit and hear them talk and sing of heaven; and my young heart would swell within me as they would tell the good old story of the cross. But as I grew older, formalism crept into the churches, and the preachers lost the life and power they had possessed.

I was very regular in attending the Sabbath School with my parents; and at the age of fourteen, with fifteen other candidates—among them two brothers—was baptized, and joined the Baptist Church. I lived in the Church for three years, and never but once did a brother or sister inquire of the welfare of my soul. One good old lady, of nearly seventy, sat down by my side one day, as we had just finished cleaning the church, and told me something of the joys of salvation that she had experienced, and encouraged me to prove faithful; but beside that, I had no word of encouragement. My father had given up worship and all family duties; my sisters had run in with the world, put on its trinkets and jewels, and would hardly speak of religion.—So I lived on, thinking that because I had been baptised and joined the church,

I was certainly a Christian; and being taught the doctrine that being once in grace we were always in grace, I had nothing to encourage me to press on. But thanks be to my Jesus! I was not left to grope my way on in moral darkness all my days. God has always had a people that would preach the truth, let come what would.

In the winter of 1860, two of God's chosen ones came to Clintonville and started a series of meetings. They had preached some time before I heard they were there; but the excitement soon began to spread out into the country. It was reported that people were getting crazy; so, out of curiosity, I tho't I would go and see them. I went once—was not satisfied; went again, and praise the Lord! I got under such conviction I could not stay away. I had never heard the Gospel preached on this wise. I heard their converts tell before the congregation how sweetly the Lord had saved them, and what power He had to keep them saved every day. I wanted just such a religion. I arose and asked them to pray for me. I sought, and found the Saviour more precious to me than ever before. I had never had such joy and peace before. I was then a member of the Baptist Church, and when a class was organized at Clinton, I wanted to join it; but my mother did not want me to leave the church and go with the "fanatics," as she called them. So I stayed in the church two years to please her, but could not get the real bread of heaven to satisfy my soul, only as I would go to their meetings for it. I would get so hungry, I could not stay away. So, to wean me still more from them, my parents let me go to Chicago to attend a Baptist Convention. I went, and was very much pleased with it; came home, told my folks what a good time I had had; how nicely the church was decorated, and how I expected some of the great preachers would preach in our church next Sunday. But the June camp-meeting commenced that week, and the next Sunday all the young people wanted to go to camp-meeting. So

I went too, and listened to the sermons as they were preached in power; and after, as I was standing looking on, Bro. S. came to me, and spoke with such a heavenly voice that it melted my heart at once. I went with him to the altar, where the brethren prayed for me, and the Lord answered their prayers. Right there, the Lord blessed me so that I could stand up before all my friends, and witness to His power to cleanse our hearts from all sin. I went from that meeting, fully determined to obey God, and I did obey Him.

On our way home, my sister, who had been awakened, with myself, made up our minds we must have worship if the Lord would help us. We spoke to mother about it. She said the children were the means of the altar's going down, and if it was ever built up again we must do it. "Very well," said I; "if we tore it down we will build it up again." The Lord helped us to rebuild it, and it has ever been a sacred place to me, though I have borne the cross alone many times. Now the Lord has given me a dear companion to help me. The Lord is with us. I find Jesus is a present help in every time of need.

The past year has been one of severe trial to me, but my faith in God never was stronger than at present. I find when we are willing to bear it, His yoke is easy and His burden is light. This is my experience to-day.

A little over five years ago, in a little prayer-meeting of only three souls, God thoroughly sanctified my soul. I have enjoyed that precious blessing most of the time since. I am sorry to say, a few months I have lived without it; but to-day the Spirit answers to the blood, and tells me I am born of God. The pathway grows brighter and better. I have given all for Jesus—He is my all. I am relying on the promises of God, and feel that all things work together for good to them that love God.

WASH thy heart in the blood of Jesus, and take every day a turn on Mount Calvary.

Walking with Jesus.

BY JANETTE PALMITER.

WALKING with Jesus! Oh, how high
May fallen man arise!
The vilest, who on Him rely,
He never will despise.

Oh, no; but His great, loving heart,
With pity quick is moved;
He longs to bid our sins depart,
And perfect us in love.

Walking with Jesus! Cleansed from sin,
Our garments pure and white,—
His glorious kingdom fixed within,
His praises our delight.

Walking with Jesus! Oh, how sweet
His presence on the road!
His fullness makes our joys complete,
Our hearts are His abode.

Walking with Jesus! Oh, how safe
From dangers ever near!
One glance into His lovely face
Dispels our every fear.

Walking with Jesus, here below,
Secures a home above,
Where only then we'll fully know
The fellowship of LOVE.

UNIVERSAL STATISTICS.—According to latest researches the number of all languages in the world amounts to 3,642. Dialects are not included therein, as the Italian language alone, for instance, has twenty-seven dialects, and the Slavonian as many dialects as it has provinces. The various religious creeds amount to 980. Annual mortality averages thirty-three and one-third millions, or in each second one death. Average duration of life thirty-three years. A fourth of mankind die before the seventh year; the half before the seventeenth. Of 100,000 only one attains the age of 100; of 500, one ninety; of 100, one sixty years. Clergymen enjoy the longest lease of life: physicians the shortest. Every twenty-eighth male population of Europe is a soldier.

TOBACCO.

BY JULIUS LUND.

A FEW months since, I saw that I was wandering on in the wrong way, at a good speed. But all of a sudden, through the influence of the Methodist E. Church, next to God, I was stopped, led to see myself a lost sinner, asked forgiveness, and through Jesus Christ, my Saviour, I received pardon. This commencement had a great deal to do with all my bad habits. Soon after, I had the privilege of attending the camp-meeting held by the Norwegian M. E. Church, in the town of Christiana, Dane Co., Wis. I was perfectly blessed. A passage of the Holy Word came to my heart—2 Cor. vii. 1: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all *filthiness* of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Here my condemnation came, and I questioned myself if I had given all up for my God, and there was my *tobacco*. I said to myself, *Away with it!* and by the grace of my Father in heaven I shall keep this pledge. The same day, a collection was taken up by one of the pastors, to build a church in Sheboygan. Now here was a good opportunity to make me more steadfast in my purpose. Taking into consideration, "Let us cleanse ourselves from all *filthiness*," I thought, Using tobacco is a very bad and filthy habit. Now cleanse yourself, and let go that vile weed. The second thought was, I will take that money I used to buy tobacco with, and do something in my Lord's service with it. I signed a small sum for that church, which shall come out of my tobacco bill. This led me also to think back. If I had not used tobacco, but saved all that money and invested it in the good cause of my Saviour, how much would that be? Only a trifle, it seemed at first thought. I will figure it up, and it will be seen that it is quite a sum. I have used tobacco for twelve years. My average bill is about \$5.00 a year. Take that little amount, add interest

and compound interest—you have in twelve years spent for tobacco \$117.55. Keep adding for ten more years, and you will have \$423.14. There are but few persons who use less than I did. Many will spend ten or twenty dollars a year, and more, for tobacco, and get broken down health in return. Now, my Christian friends, "So we, being many, are one body in Christ"—Rom. xii. 5—let us exhort one another, and pray that God will help us to leave off all bad habits; and let us earnestly engage in doing everything we do, to the glory of our merciful Judge and God.

Thy Way, Not Mine.

BY ELEANOR J. WILSON.

THY way, not mine, O Lord,
However dark it be!
Lead me by thine own hand,
Choose out the path for me.

Smooth let it be, or rough,
It will be still the best;
Uphill or down, it matters not—
It leads me to thy rest;

I dare not choose my lot—
I would not if I might;
Choose Thou for me, my God,
So shall I walk aright.

The kingdom that I seek
Is Thine; so let the way
That leads to it, be Thine,
Else I must surely stray.

Take Thou my cup, and it
With joy or sorrow fill;
As best to Thee may seem,
Choose Thou my good or ill.

Choose Thou for me my friends,
My sickness or my health,—
Choose Thou my cares for me,
My poverty or wealth.

Not mine, not mine, the choice,
In things or great or small;
Be Thou my guide, my strength,
My wisdom, and my all.

ABANDONING FORTRESSES.

THE whole tendency of modern literature, as regards the Bible and the truths of revealed religion, is, to a great extent, destructive rather than constructive.

Many things once stringently believed and asserted with relation to these subjects, are now denied by some of their warmest friends and supporters, because they think other views better and truer and more efficient.

Such a state of things is like the position of an army shifting its ground. Its real strength is the same; it only abandons old positions to take up with new. Occasionally, however, in effecting a wide movement a fort or fortress may inadvertently be abandoned that ought to be kept, because it is a position of permanent value.

There are many such in relation to the history and authenticity of different portions of the Bible, and some in regard to Bible teachings.

For example, it is a common assertion now-a-days that the Old Testament contained no recognition of a future life, that the doctrine of future rewards and punishments was no part of the working forces in the ancient Jewish Church. This is asserted quite confidently by skeptics who entirely repudiate the idea of any divine inspiration in the Old Testament, and it is conceded by some reverent Christians who have not carefully examined the facts of the case. These latter suppose that by this concession they exalt the great mission of Jesus in bringing life and immortality to light.

But the question still remains: Is this true? Is it true that the ancient Jewish Church of God had no motive power except what was derived simply from promises and threats in relation to things in this life, and that the consideration of a future heaven and hell did not form part of the working force of pious Jews, before Christ appeared?

No one was better acquainted with the theory of the Old Testament, or motives which influenced the Old Testa-

ment saints, than the Apostle Paul, and he asserts most explicitly and emphatically that all the Old Testament worthies, from Abel downward, were influenced in all their lives by motives drawn from the invisible world. Read the whole of the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, especially verses 1-3, 16. It is impossible to state the idea of retribution in a future life, as a working force in this life, more strongly than it is there stated.

Should it be said that Paul perhaps was not the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that makes no difference as to the force of this argument, for that epistle is a part of the New Testament canon; and the author of it, whoever he might be, is a divinely inspired teacher in regard to the meaning of the Old Testament as well as in regard to other points of Christian doctrine. And even if he had not been divinely inspired, his position and education gave him peculiar advantages for knowing what the Old Testament really taught.

Now let us look at this matter a little more closely.

The Apostle Paul was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, an enthusiastic scholar of the Jewish Church. No man could be a better judge than he of what the working forces of the old Jewish and new Christian dispensation were. The eleventh chapter of Hebrews supports at length the doctrine that the Old Testament saints lived and worked not in view of things seen and temporal, but of things unseen and eternal. He says of all the patriarchs that they confessed themselves strangers and pilgrims on earth,—that they sought a better country, even a heavenly one. Moses in the same manner chose to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

St. Paul represents the Christian in his day as surrounded by the whole an

cient Jewish Church as a great cloud of witnesses, who had run the race of faith before them in the same manner and by the same motives. Moreover, to find what are the interior forces that move the minds of men in a generation, we have nothing more authentic than published diaries and writings of its representative men. The biographies of President Edwards and Dr. Payson lay bare in their diaries the motives by which not only they but all the Christians of New England acted. They show the truths by which they sustained their spiritual conflicts amid the varied trials of life.

We have in the Bible, in the Psalms of David, the diary of that Old Testament believer laying bare the throbbings of his soul, the reverses and trials of spiritual life, and showing the truths to which he flew in the hour of temptation.

In the 73d Psalm we have the perplexity and sorrow of a good man, who looked at prosperity and adversity simply in the light of this life, but afterwards in the light of eternity. In the first view David confesses an utter distress and perplexity. He is conscious of being a humble, earnest, faithful follower of God, and yet he is afflicted and chastened. He sees around arrogant, haughty, worldly men, careless of God, living in disregard of his laws, who are enjoying prosperity and ease. He confesses that in view of these things he was full of doubts and skepticism. He had doubts of God that he dared not express to his fellow believers lest he should grieve and distress them. "When I thought to know this," he says, "it was too painful for me."

How did David get relief from this? "I went to the sanctuary of God," he says, "and then understood I their end." He saw, was taught in the instruction of the sanctuary that their prosperity was as a dream that should cease at death. He saw them entering another life in desolation, utterly consumed with terrors. Instructed and humbled, he would turn to God, his Teacher and Invisible Friend and say, "So foolish was I and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee.

Nevertheless, I am continually with thee. Thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."

Here we have the working force of the Old Testament Church in the time of David. This is not the exceptional experience of one who saw beyond his age; it was the experience which he was taught by the "sanctuary teachings" of his day. Like any modern Christian, David went to the sanctuary as a learner, and there he learned that a reward of ineffable joy awaited the righteous in a future state, and a doom of unspeakable terror the wicked. He learned that God was a teacher, that the afflictions and sorrows of this life were his discipline, that eternal glory was to be the end of this teaching. David, no less than Paul, could say,—"Our light affliction, which endureth for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen." The Christian in David's time looked to God not merely as the refuge from temporal trouble and the giver of temporal prosperity, but as his portion for ever.

In the same manner, in the 17th Psalm, David asks to be delivered "from the men of this world which have their portion in this life," which he describes as living in the abundance of worldly prosperity, and says, with regard to himself:—"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness. I will be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness."

In the accounts given of the preaching of Christ, we do not find that the strongest and most graphic language in regard to the sufferings of the wicked and the joys of the good after death, appeared to produce on his hearers any of the surprise and excitement of new doctrine never before heard. There is

evidence in abundance that the Rabbis, the religious teachers of his day, were in the habit of dwelling on both these themes with great minuteness and power, so that there was through all the community a substratum of faith on this subject.

The resurrection of the dead and final judgment, with the separation of the righteous and wicked, were powerfully and explicitly taught by the Prophet Daniel—xii. 2—and appeared to be as much an article of general belief in the time of Christ as it is now. The Sadducees came to him with their cavils and objections in regard to these things, and Christ answered them just as any minister now might answer any skeptic on these subjects. The "sanctuary" teachings in regard to the rewards and penalties of a world to come, appear to be unvarying from the time of Abel and Abraham and Moses and David downward to that of Christ.

It is true there was a difference among the Old Testament saints, just as there is now among modern Christians. Some clung to this life and looked on death in its material aspects as the close of all activity and enjoyment here. King Hezekiah, when threatened with instant death, had not then the same exultant joy in view of a future life that David had. But this was no more inconsistent with a full belief of the joys of a heavenly state than the reluctance of good Christians in our time to die is evidence that they do not believe in heaven.

Some excellent men and active Christians have great physical vitality. They love life and love to live, and do not wish to die. This was eminently a characteristic of the late Dr. Beecher. If at the time he was in full career during the great revival at Boston, it had been suddenly announced to him, as it was to Hezekiah, he should die and leave all his work, he would have mourned and prayed in bitterness, as Hezekiah did; and had a reprieve come, he would have rejoiced in the same manner. Hezekiah was a vigorous man in the prime of his days, who was

carrying on a great reformatory work, and naturally enough he wanted to stay and see it through; and when permission was granted we hear him saying in ecstasy, "For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee. The living,—the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day." Now it would be just as proper to infer from Dr. Beecher's great unwillingness to die and leave this world in the time of his activity, that he knew nothing of the joys of heaven or did not believe in them, as to make the same inferences from the same feeling in Hezekiah.

The fact is, that the physical nature always shudders at death, and the language of the Bible sometimes expresses merely the physical dread, and not always the higher mode of faith.

To suppose that the Old Testament saints did not walk by the faith of a future state is to suppose them below many of the thoughtful heathen of antiquity. With Plato, Cicero, Socrates, and others that belief was a motive and a power,—how much more with those, whose advantage was, as Paul states it, "that to them were committed the oracles of God!"

Furthermore, we are to remember that the Jews who reject Jesus are a numerous, vigorous, living nation, and that they did not get their theologies from Christ.

With one voice and united energy every Jew upon earth would repel the charge that their ancient religion contained no teaching drawn from the motives of an eternal life. What else had they in the long ages of their terrible persecutions?

It would be perfectly easy to show by extracts from Jewish theology that the most elaborate teaching with regard to heaven, hell, the judgment, the final awards of the righteous and the wicked, have been a part of their theology ever since they have had existence.

It is not to be forgotten that Christ himself asserts most clearly that the doctrine of the resurrection or of the future life, (for in the Jewish theology the two terms were entirely synony-

mous) was virtually taught by Moses,—Matt. xxii. 31, 32; Mark xii. 26, 27; Luke xx. 36-38;—and notwithstanding all the mangling by modern writers, the passage in John xix. 25-27, still stands in its original simplicity an unshaken proof of the Old Testament doctrine of the resurrection and a retribution of a future life.—*Prof. Stowe, in Christian Union.*

THE PENTECOSTAL BAPTISM.

No great era in the government of God is ever ushered in, without preparation commensurate with the designs of God in the change. The Great Shepherd was taken up from the crest of Olivet, and a cloud received him out of sight of the witnessing Disciples. The word of Jesus required them to return to the city of Jerusalem, and there abide until the necessary endowment of power for their life-work, the saving of the world.

The Disciples were ten days in their preparatory work. They were to be kept at Jerusalem, till prepared to go forth. Not to enjoy themselves in a season of recreation, after the sad events of the previous forty-five days. But they must go to the place of common assemblage, and there according to Apostolic example, to set apart ten days to the preparatory work. That upper room is witness to the exercises of earnest men and earnest women. The Apostles are present here. Eyes that have seen, and ears that have heard, bosoms that have heaved with sorrows and even agonies, are here to see, to hear, to feel, the treading of events. Here is the man that sank in the sea of Genessaret, and was caught by the saving hand. Here is the bosom that bore the Master at Bethlehem in its holy embrace. Here is the man that lay in the arms of all-conquering Death for four days, and was called up into the light of day with one brief command. The memories of the mount of transfiguration are here. Each person here is conscious of a history that cannot be repeated nor equalled. Concentrated

manhood and noblest womanhood are here mastering and mustering the forces, for the conflicts of Evangelism. God's little army are here, all in line, just ready to break off into the great campaign of a new era. They are answering muster roll-call. A meeting of two hundred and forty hours is begun, in that upper room. They dwell in this house of God. They wait on God, and tarry for the anointing. Food, and rest, and society are of little or no moment to them now—all is intensest preparation for God's will and work. Night follows day, and day follows night, with no notice of either, save as it ministers to them on their journey of grace, nearer to God. They are all arrived within view of the goal of hope, and faith, and love, consummated in the entrance of their souls upon a richer than Jason's argonautic expedition to Colchis, in search of the golden fleece. Rich ventures are in the souls of men, and they are preparing to obey God, in search for the souls of their brethren.

Christ has just left the work of salvation in their hands, and they hasten to be fitted for the trust. Man, when under the training and guidance of wisdom, is never bold in assuming vast responsibilities, and makes earnest endeavor to harness his soul for the battle and the labor of the Christian evangelizing career. Bold little men grapple great things, without humiliation and prayer, and are soon overborne by the weight of the cause taken up, and destroyed by the failure which their weakness challenged. But strong men are carried upward and onward, by the very grace which humility invokes, and trusting love secures. So these men and women hasten to be made humbly and wisely ready for the cause of God, as it was to be laid upon their shoulders by the Holy Ghost. They have a time of sober and careful review. No thought of proudly valuing themselves on adventitious events and surroundings. They re-examined their sacred learning, received from Jesus Christ. Every holy place is in spirit re-visited, from Bethlehem to Golgotha.

All discourses, all teachings, all conversations, all songs of praise, all prayers, are rehearsed in the Spirit's ears, and they lay up anew the holy truth of Jesus. The miracle-working hand is again retraced, as it lifts the shadowy veil off the face of the dead, or touches the blind eyes into sight, or gently takes the child up to bless it, and thrill the little heart with gladness, or points the starving poor to the heavens above for bread that perishes not, while it breaks the wheaten loaf to the Disciples, and they to the hungry mouths, or waves its blessing to the calmed waves of the sea, as they fall asleep, or is nailed to the cross of the Roman. The soul of each is made strong, as they pore over the Hebrew Scriptures and pray. The fears of the hour of darkness in the Garden are gone now, like the brave-hearted on their native hills, as they prepare to close in with the hireling invader, to fight for hearths, and wives, and children, and aged parents. These men bow in consecration, while the dew from the brow of their Master ascended is yet fresh and crystal on their brows. They know what it is to prevail with God—not unlike the man of God on the bosom of Carmel, when he brought down upon the cities and village of idolatrous Israel rain to give them bread, and fruits, and pasture. But it was consecration in the very lion's teeth. They must face the legions of Rome. They must grapple the dulness and unbelief of the stumbling Jew. They must meet and vanquish the sophistry, the learning, the pride, and the cunning of the Greek. They must pierce through the barbaric sloth, and ignorance, and bestiality of the Scythian. Such evangelistic labors could not be accomplished in parlors covered by Syrian carpets, and hung round by curtains of Tyrian purple. On the sea, through deserts, amid wildernesses, among soldier camps, on mountain ranges, along and over rivers, in hostile lands, and dens of wild beasts, lay their path of dangers. Such a work God alone could fully understand, and for it He alone could equip them.

The spirit of devotion was in this preparatory work. This was consequent upon their obedience to Jesus Christ. They drew near to God. Not like those who had little to do, and much to do it with, and abundance of strength to spare, but like those whose hearts were surcharged with burdens, whose minds were overwhelmed with the magnitude of God's love to them in giving the work to do, whose stores of qualification sank into very nothing as time drew on, and whose faith was firm, that God would not let them fail in what His goodness and wisdom had appointed them to do and bear. Were they to bear the vessels of God's house in the presence of the nations of the earth, to testify what they knew before kings, and princes, and judges of the world, and would He not furnish them for the work, as God's work? They together entered the holy place of strength, led by Peter, or led by John, or led by James, and they prevailed in love with love. One wave followed another from the infinite sea of God's fulness, and swept into that upper room, where they held the ten days protracted prayer-meeting, till they made common road-stead for the fleet which lay anchored there, but which was so soon to put to sea with riches for the whole world. Heaven's King was back in His old home among the angels, but had not forgotten the infant Church in Jerusalem, whose little but choice band He had so lately left sorrowing on the top of Olivet, as He went up. Now He sends, from His intercessorial throne of mercy, the first rich tokens of His love, to the worshippers in that prevailing vale of Kidron. Man's strong soul and woman's tender soul were there pleading with God. Did ever such talent, such persons, such worth, such varied experience, meet before in time, or will they ever meet again, "in prayer and supplication?" Who they were, whence they came, what they were, how they were led, what they thought, were of little account—but one and all prayed, and supplicated with one accord—all as one man.

KEEPING THE HEART.

BY REV. G. MARCELLUS.

SOLOMON says, "Keep thy heart with all diligence,"—i. e., Keep thy *mind* or *understanding*, *memory*, *conscience*, *will*, and *affections*—yes, thy *soul* and *spirit*, "with all diligence." Divine Wisdom is the rightful claimant of the heart.—He says, "Son, give me thy heart." If the heart is entirely surrendered, the love of God is received. Then the word is, "Keep yourselves in the love of God."

Dear reader, we purpose to notice a few things which may serve to help in performing this very important duty, viz., keeping the heart. And,

1st. *You must meditate often.* Let yourself be the subject. Commune with your own heart, and let your "spirit make diligent search." Close your eyes to the outside world; now, go down into the motive part of thy being,—pause, don't be in a hurry, be thorough; you must not be satisfied with an apprehension of thy moral state only—take nothing but a *verity*. Analyze thy thoughts; are they selfish? What do you chiefly desire?—Is it the creature, or the Creator? the things of the world, or the things of Christ? Do you "count all things but less for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus"? Do you count the things of this world "but dung that" you "may win Christ"? Can you give as you have ability, to every worthy cause, as easily and innocently as the little child drops its silver piece through the crevice in the floor? Do you profess holiness? How is your spirit? If the echo from the depths of thy soul is, "I am clear; I have a conscience void of offence toward God and man," then it may be proper to notice a few things, upon which you may meditate with pleasure and profit—viz., The perfections of God. His eternity, immutability, omniscience, and omnipotence. His purity, justice and righteousness, goodness and mercy;—all of which afford themes for "sweet and

rapturous" meditation. "The invisible things of God, even His eternal power and Godhead," are revealed to the pious "by the things which do appear." The operations of Divine Providence—redemption by Christ Jesus—the glorious victories of the cross—the resurrection—glorification—heaven—God, are each and all subjects which can engage angels and the redeemed, through all eternity, without exhaustion.

2d. *You must pray much.* This is all important. You may learn your wants by meditation; but by prayer you come to One who can supply them. Bishop Hall says, "Devotion is the life of religion, the very soul of piety, the highest employment of grace." He doubtless means by "devotion," prayer. "The Lord is nigh . . . to all that call on him in truth." Do you want a victory? "Call upon me," saith the Lord, "and I will answer thee and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not." "Ask and it shall be given you," etc. In order that your heart be kept successfully, you must "pray without ceasing." "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." Be sure and never ask a little of the Lord.

3d. *You must vigilantly watch.* God is engaged by prayer, but our strength is employed in watching. Watch yourself—hold yourself to a strict account in all things. If you have fallen in love with yourself, you have laid down your watch, and will be speedily overpowered. Newman says, "The watchful Christian is one who would not be over-surprised if he found Christ coming at once; he would not have something to do first,—something to get ready." Hence Jesus says, "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning." Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; lest Satan should get the advantage of you. Watch your thoughts, words, actions, motives, desires,—the outgoings and

incomings of your soul. Wesley says, "To watch, is to avoid society, books, thoughts, which would prove temptations to you." You have reason to watch even while you are performing important duties; and *especially* after you have passed through them; for the temptations of the devil are then the strongest. "Christ was no sooner out of the water of baptism and the fast of forty days, than He was tempted by the devil."

4th. *You must deny self.* Self must be stoutly opposed. Yielding to self weakens moral power. Denying self strengthens it. The condition of discipleship is self-denial; "for whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple." Every sinful indulgence, habit, or propensity, even though it be as dear as the apple of thine eye, must be given up. You say, It is hard. One thought of hell-fire will count all such acts of self-denial as delightful. Newman says,— "One act of self-denial, one sacrifice or inclination to duty, is worth, as proof of Christian character, all the mere good thoughts, warm feelings, passionate prayers in which many indulge themselves."

"Forsake all things," in doing this be sure and forsake thyself. Behold our pattern, Christ who "pleased not himself."

5th. *You must be abundant in good works.* Put not asunder what God has joined together, faith and works. What doth it profit my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and hath not works? Can faith save him? Faith without works is dead. The work part of "our salvation," to a great extent, is the denying part. No justification without good works. Was not Abraham, our father, justified by works when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect. Wesley says, "Beware of *Solifidianism*; that is, crying nothing but Believe? believe!" Christ says, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit; so shall ye

be my disciples." Fruit grows on the branches, not on the vine or tree; so Christ is not to bear fruit for us, but we are to bear it for Him, through His grace and power. Genuine faith always supposes good works. Therefore, to "walk by faith," is to be constantly exercised in good works towards our fellows. The exhortation is, "Be merciful, as your Father who is in heaven is merciful." Mercy implies objects of need; therefore your duty is plain. Be merciful, according as God hath given temporal ability; by acts of benevolence and charity, in relieving the wants of the poor—giving bread to the hungry—raiment to the naked—sending relief to those in prison—defending the oppressed—pleading the cause of the fatherless—causing the heart of the widow and the orphan to sing for joy.

Reader are you rich? "We charge such to be rich in good works." Are you poor? You must do something in the line of giving or you cannot "lay up treasures in heaven." Remember the widow's mite, and take courage. Ye rich, if you do not build upon this foundation, ye will hear the fearful sentence, "Go to now, ye rich, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you." *You must study the Scriptures.* We are told to "Search the Scriptures." To search, is to examine thoroughly; to find something; to strip, make bare. The word is compounded of the Greek word (*ereo*.) *I seek* and (*enne*) *a bed*, and is, says, St. Christan, "a metaphor taken from those who dig deep, and search for metals in the bowels of the earth. They look for the *bed* where the metal lies, and break every clod, and sift and examine the whole, in order to discover the ore." Thus *shaking* and *sifting* (as the word implies,) until the true force and meaning of every sentence, yea, of every word and syllable, nay of every letter and point therein be known and understood. Compare *place* with *place*; the scope of one *place* with that of an other; things *going before* with things *coming after*; compare

word with word, letter with letter, and search the whole diligently. If you will examine the Scriptures thus, with prayer, you will certainly be wise unto salvation.

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

THE success which attended the preaching of the gospel by the Apostles and their immediate successors, has no parallel in the history of Christianity. From the time an upper room at Jerusalem contained the congregated strength of the Church, to the time the ensign of that Church floated in triumph over the capitol of Rome, and the diadem of the Cæsars was placed upon the brow of the infant Zion, an almost unbroken series of triumphs are witnessed. From the time that chamber was shaken by a rushing mighty wind, and tongues of fire sat upon each of the devout worshippers, and they "were all filled with the Holy Ghost," the unseen hand of the Master wrought mightily with them. The first day's labor added three thousand to the little band. Five thousand are soon converted. Jerusalem is filled with their doctrine, and Priest and Ruler are fearing the blood of the Nazarene. Samaria believes the word, and Antioch becomes obedient to the faith. But the work does not stop here: Churches are soon established throughout Palestine, and all Asia Minor hears of the Crucified. Greece, Macedonia, and the islands of the Ægean Sea, are shaken by the power of the word; while along the sea-coast of Africa, and before the walls of the Eternal City, the word of life is earnestly and successfully proclaimed. The fire kindled in that upper room, lighted up the whole range of heathendom, from Cape Comorin to Britain, and from Scythia to the Pillars of Hercules. A historian of the 2d century says, that in his time, "Asia, Africa, and Europe, abounded with Christians." These despised followers of Jesus—unlettered fishermen of Galilee, without wealth, without learning, and without kindly favor—had, in a

brief time, planted churches, where Homer and Virgil had sung, where Lycurgus and Solon had given laws, where Demosthenes and Cicero had swayed the populace by their unsurpassed eloquence, where Plato and Aristotle had reasoned, and where Socrates and Cato had taught the people morals.

The temples of the gods—venerable and sacred by the lapse of ages—were smitten as by an invisible, but Almighty hand. Racks, dungeons, faggots, and death in every form, could not stay the progress of the new faith. The gates of hell could not prevail against it.

The numerical strength of the Primitive Church, we have no doubt, has been greatly under-estimated. It is often said, that modern efforts for the spread of the gospel, in point of success, far outstrip the primitive. But we have never been convinced of the correctness of the statement by the facts and figures presented. Let us inquire of the men who then lived, and of the monuments then erected, and see what light they throw upon the subject.

Justin Martyr, in speaking of the success of Christianity, a little more than one hundred years after the Crucifixion, says, "There is no race of men whatever, whether barbarians or Greeks, or by whatsoever other name they may be called, whether living in wagons, or houseless wanderers, among whom there are not offered prayers and thanksgiving to the Father and Maker of all, through the name of the crucified Jesus."

Clemens of Alexandria, speaking of the success of the Gospel about the same time, says, "It is spread through the whole world, in every town, and village and city, converting both whole houses and separate individuals."

Tertullian, one of the most learned and eloquent defenders of the doctrines of the primitive church, born about the middle of the second century, in an *Apology* for the Christians, addressed to the Authorities of Rome, says:—"We are of yesterday; and yet we fill all your places, your cities, islands, castles, towns, courts, your very camps,

your tribes, your decuriæ, your palace, your senate, your markets. We have left you only your temples. What wars we might wage, and with what energy, even against superior forces, we who are so willing to be slain, if it was not a part of our discipline, that it is better to be killed than to kill! We might also, unarmed and without making any rebellion, but only disagreeing with you, contend against you with the hostility of separation only. For if so great a multitude of men as we are should suddenly separate from you, and retire to some distant quarter of the earth, truly the loss of so many and such citizens would undermine your dominion: yes, it would even inflict upon you an absolute desolation. Without doubt you would be dismayed at your solitude, at the general stillness, and the dullness as if of a dead world. You would look about for some to command; you would have more enemies left than citizens; but now you have but few enemies, in comparison with the multitude of Christians."

This is the statement of a man, of whose writings it has been said, "Every word was a sentence, and every sentence a triumph over error." We may learn from these statements the extent to which the gospel was received about two hundred years after Christ. A parallel cannot be found.

There are other evidences of the numerical strength of the primitive church, which we denominate MONUMENTAL, worthy of consideration. The puerile efforts, and half-truthful statements of many, have produced a conviction in the public mind, that the primitive age, was a "dim, shadowy cloud-land, in which nothing is to be seen, but a few figures of bishops and martyrs, moving uncertainly amid the general darkness." But this is a false representation of the times. The monumental records of those times, show how vast was their number, and how sacrificing was their spirit.

The Catacombs of Rome, which contain the honored dust of a vast army of martyrs, who suffered for the cause of

Christ, throw some light upon this subject.

"It is well," says Mr. Rawlinson, "that attention should be called, as it has been called recently—by several publications of greater or less research—to the monumental remains of early Christian times, which are still extant, and which take us back in the most lively way to the first ages of the church, exhibiting before our eyes those primitive communities, which apostles founded, over which apostolic men presided, and in which confessors and martyrs were almost as numerous as ordinary Christians. As when we tread the streets of Pompeii, we have the life of the old Pagan world brought before us with a vividness which makes all other representations appear dull and tame, so when we descend into the Catacombs of Rome we seem to see the struggling, persecuted community, which there 'in dens and caves of the earth,' wrought itself a hidden home, whence it went forth at last 'conquering and to conquer,' triumphantly establishing itself on the ruins of the old religion, and bending its heathen persecutors to the yoke of Christ."

"Time was," continues our author, "when the guiding spirits of our Church not only neglected the study of these precious remains of an antiquity which ought to be dearer to us than that of Greece or Pagan Rome, of Egypt, Assyria, or Babylon, but even ventured to speak of them with contempt, as the recent creations of Pagan forgers, who had placed among the *arenariæ* or sand-pits of heathen times, the pretended miracles of saints who were never born, and martyrs who never suffered. But with increased learning, and improved candor, modern Anglicanism has renounced this shallow and untenable theory; and it is at length admitted universally, alike by the Protestant and Romanist, that the Catacombs themselves, their present contents, and the series of inscriptions which have been taken from them and placed in the Papal galleries, are genuine remains of primitive Christian antiquity. . . . It

is impossible to doubt that the Catacombs belong to the earliest times of Christianity." It was only during the ages of persecution that the Christians were content to hide away the memorials of the dead in gloomy galleries, deep below the earth's service, where few eyes could ever rest upon them." The bulk of the tombs in these Catacombs "must be regarded as belonging to the first three centuries."

Our object is not so much to describe these homes of the dead, as to ascertain, if possible, the numbers who slept their last sleep in these chambers of darkness.

It is stated, on good authority, that these Catacombs extended over not less than nine hundred miles of streets, and contained not less than seven million graves.

It is not to be supposed that all who suffered martyrdom at Rome found a grave here. The ashes of many mingled with the dust of Nero's garden, and were never honored with burial at the hands of friends. No record of them remains, save that in the book of life. Tacitus says, "When the day was not sufficient for their tortures, the flames in which they perished served to illuminate the night."

It should also be borne in mind that the Roman Empire embraced a vast territory. It was at least 2000 miles in breadth, by 3000 in length. Thousands became Christians and died, who never saw Rome, and who never found a grave in her Catacombs.

When we remember that during a period of about two hundred and fifty years, "so mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed," that not less than seven million Christians slept in one grave-yard, we are profoundly impressed with the mighty influence of the gospel of Jesus. These were not merely nominal Christians, embracing the doctrines, but destitute of the life of Christ, but they were Christians from conviction and choice. When to be a Christian is to be a martyr; when to embrace the cross is to embrace the stake,—few are found to do it as a mere mat-

ter of form. It was so with the primitive Church.

God seems to have chosen the capitol of that vast empire, which overshadowed the earth, as the scene in which the conflict between Paganism and Christianity should be fought out. Ten of the most violent persecutions the world has ever witnessed, swept in vain over the heads of the defenseless followers of Christ. And if the testimony of the enemies of Jesus can be credited, untold numbers perished in the tortures which polluted the circus of Nero; in the bloody games of the Flavian Amphitheatre, besides those who were doomed to perpetual slavery. Neither age, sex nor party were spared. The blood of the noblest and wealthiest of the Roman citizens was poured out. This contest between the powers of the old world, and the day-spring of the new, was so unequal in its beginning, and yet so amazing in its results, that it forms the most marvelous epoch in the history of our race. Its uninterrupted advance, won over the numerical majority of the educated classes, overpowered the fiercer hostility of the heathen populace, and eventually took possession of the throne itself. "Within forty years of the fiercest persecution of Diocletian," says one writer, "a Christian emperor reigned over the Empire; and hard by the baptistry of the Lateran, which bore the name of Constantine, the Catacombs of Rome concealed the honored remains of the vast army of martyrs,—the soldiers of the cross who had fallen in the struggle."—*Rev. W. McDonald.*

HE is a brave Christian, and has much of Christ within, who accounts nothing his own that he does not communicate to others. The bee stores her hive out of all sorts of flowers for the common benefit, and why then in this should not every Christian be like a bee?

BLESSED are they who see the day of glory, but more blessed are they who contribute to its approach.—*Secker.*

COMMON SENSE IN RELIGION.

A COLLEGE student once assigned to his professor as a reason for neglecting the college lessons, that he expected to be more profited by *general knowledge*; by which he must have meant knowledge that was to leap into his head without any special study of any special branch.

A similar looseness seems to pervade the notions of Christians in respect to benevolence; they are expecting to do good by *general benevolence*, not by specific efforts for specific ends. But we have learned that neither can general knowledge be gained but by successfully attending to specific studies, nor the purposes of general benevolence be accomplished but by industriously doing one good deed at a time.

One of the most important reasons of the greater usefulness of such men as Harlan Page and Thomas Cranfield, will be found in the fact, that they expended their efforts in accomplishing specific objects. Instead of exhausting their benevolence in an indefinite wish to do good, they, day by day, looked around to see what particular good was to be done, and then, with the same practical wisdom which a man always calls into exercise when he really means to do something, adapted their means to their end, and set about its accomplishment. At one time an effort is to be made to reclaim an intemperate neighbor; at another, an effort to get a poor but worthy man into employment; at another, a sick person to be visited; at another time, an effort to establish a prayer meeting or a Sabbath school, or preparation made to teach successfully in the one, or to speak to edification in the other; at another time, a friend to be spoken to on his soul's salvation, or a letter to be written to him, or a book or a tract to be urged on his attention. So, by doing one thing at a time, and industriously following it up, they became memorable for usefulness as they are. A great reason of the inefficiency of Christians is, that they content themselves with

general wishes that good may be done, or lamentations that their sphere is so narrow, their opportunities so few, their talents so small, instead of looking around to see what good deeds they can perform, what good influence they can exert, and then setting themselves to do one thing at a time, with the same diligence, perseverance, and practical wisdom which they use in effecting their worldly plans.

This is an important cause why ministers labor in vain. A minister cannot expect success without the active co-operation of his church. One of the most important and most difficult parts of ministerial wisdom is, to know how to call into action the talents of his church. And the church member, who is wishing for a more efficient minister, may see how he can make his pastor so, simply by going to work himself to do *specific things* for the conversion of souls. There is no cause for heartier lamentation, than *the appalling inactivity of laymen in Christ's work*, and their apparent feeling of freedom from obligation to lay themselves out to devise and execute specific plans for doing good.

The minister himself may be profited by the same rule. Instead of preaching the truth with a *general and indefinite* aim to do good, he that is wise to win souls will look at specific ends and adapt his measures to the result. Here, he will say, is a circle of young men whom I must draw under more decided religious influences; here is obscurity on the minds of some Christians respecting certain doctrines; here are practical evils resulting from erroneous apprehensions formerly imbibed; here is a deficiency in a particular class of Christian duties; and so on. Thus adapted, his words will be "the words of the wise, like goads, and as nails fastened by the master of assemblies."

And here is a remedy for the evils of "spasmodic revivals." It is quite fashionable to speak against spasmodic efforts and spasmodic revivals; and, indeed, there is something very sad in the alternations of heat and cold often

witnessed in congregations. But these evils can never be remedied by talking about them; but only by introducing *constant effort* in place of *spasmodic effort*. And this is the very duty we are urging. Let the Christian every Sabbath evening lay out his plans for specific efforts to do good through the week; and every day of the week let him patiently and prayerfully labor, executing those specific plans, and see if the Church has not found the remedy for spasmodic efforts in uniform activity. And when Christians are really in earnest to do good, as they are in a revival, they spontaneously go to work just in this way.

A poor boy, the son of a drunkard, was once complaining that there was no chance for him in the world. Said a friend in reply, "Do any piece of work that offers, do it thoroughly and right; and so keep on doing; and you will have plenty of business, and will make your way in the world." The boy adopted the rule and became rich. We would prescribe the same rule to Christians who complain of their narrow sphere and small capacity. Look about you and see what good can be done; and daily do something specific and tangible; improve even the humblest opportunity. This is the very rule of the apostle: "As ye have opportunity, do good unto all men." Obey this rule steadily, and your path will shine with your usefulness, and your sentence shall be like the blessed one pronounced by Christ Himself—"She hath done what she could."

And why do not Christians live thus? Alas! we fear it is because they love little. When they have before them any object on which their hearts are set, they never fail to apply these principles; they consider all the steps necessary to the result; they adapt means to the end; they industriously and patiently labor, doing one thing at a time, accomplishing one part of the work after another, till the end is gained.—Were their hearts as intently fixed on advancing Christ's cause, would they not in like manner lay their plans, toil

daily to do something to promote the great end, and like Jesus, go about doing good?

I HAVE SOMEWHAT AGAINST THEE.

How gentle and yet how forcible this reproof! It came from Him who is "meek and lowly of heart." Whom he loves he rebukes and chastens. He does it because he loves, and that he may awake purer and stronger love in those to whom the reproof is given. Who were thus admonished? Those of whom it had just been said—"I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say that they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars; and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and has not fainted." How cheering if as much as this could now be said of every Christian church, and of all Christians. I fear there are many of whose "works," "labour," and "patience" for Christ's sake, little could be said. This is not an eminently cross-bearing day. Custom seems greatly in favour of an easy, and indolent, and self-indulgent way of living. "The labourers are few." Instead of *striving* to enter in at the strait gate, and so *running* that we may obtain, we are supine and listless as if no struggle or effort were necessary; as though there were no temptation to resist—no besetting sin to lay aside—no hardness to be endured—no cross to bear—no self-denial, toil, or sacrifice; as though it were sufficient to have a name to live. But it is not so with all. There are those of whom the testimony would now be true—"I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience." There are those who cannot bear them which are evil. Who have no fellowship with "them which say they are apostles and are not." Who labor without fainting, and who have counted the cost of serving Christ. Who do not expect to be—

"Carried to the skies,
On flowery beds of ease."

Any yet of such, it may be, the Saviour saith, "I have somewhat against thee." And what? What had he against the church of Ephesus, in whose commendation he had said so many things? "*Because thou hast left thy first love.*" Reader, is it so with thy soul! Are you a disciple of Christ? Have you tasted that the Lord is gracious? Have you had experience of the love of God to sinners? felt its power—its sweetness—its life and peace. Have you known the exceeding delight and love of one who had just "passed from death unto life?" And have you left that first love? Has the Saviour the grief of seeing you withholding those warm affections from him, and fixing them on other things? Ask a few questions of your heart.

1. In the season of my first love, I had tenderness of heart and conscience. A single word respecting the Saviour's love to sinners would fill my eyes with tears. The thought of sin filled my soul with sorrow—I earnestly sought to abstain from every appearance of evil. I had great tenderness of heart toward Christians, and earnest desires that sinners might be saved. Secret places witnessed my prayers and tears in behalf of their souls. Is it so with me now?

2. Then I was dead to the world. I loathed its sinful pleasures, and ceased from its vain pursuits. My love was on better things than its riches, honours, or pleasures. I delighted no more in its amusements and associations. I loved "the calm retreat," where I could forget its cares, its ambitions, its allurements, and all its ensnaring pleasures, and think of God only. I was thankful for providential mercies; but was not anxious respecting them. Is it so now?

3. Then prayer was a delight—religious duties were pleasures—the society of the spiritual and devout, was the only society that I loved. I loved the secret place where I could pour out all my heart before God. I loved to meet with his people in the appointed place

of prayer. I loved to hear the teachings of the sanctuary—its close, faithful, searching lessons. It cost me many a tear, and sigh, and groan of anguish to have all the ills of my heart and life exposed; but I anxiously desired to know the whole, that I might weep over all, confess the whole, forsake all, and have forgiveness, for the sake of the Redeemer. My heart and hands sought something to do, in the name and for the sake of Him who loved me, and who gave himself for me. Is it so with thee now, Oh my soul?

Reader, what response does the heart give to this inquiry—Have you left your first love? "Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen; and repent, and do the first works."

FOR BELIEVERS IN AFFLICTION.

WHEN our children are sick we do not keep them at so great a distance as when they are in health. There are two things which I think not unobservable in relation to this thought. The first is, the parents give more of their company and kindness to the child; and the child even loves to have more of it, and uses more than ordinary boldness and earnestness in requesting of it. O are not both of these applicable to the afflicted saint's case? Does not oftentimes, even the Lord, when his people are under the sickness of affliction, come more kindly to them than at other times? Does he not allow them more of his presence? and, on the other hand, do not even his children cry after him? A child that dare hardly come into the room where ye are, without leave, in health, how will he cry out if ye offer to stir from his bedside, when in sickness? as if there were some mitigation of their trouble by the parent's presence, and as if their sickness gave them a sort of title to it. Is it not just so with the child of God? How are the Psalms replenished with instances of this sort? "Lord, leave me not, for I am sore distressed; be not far off when trouble is at hand."

Editorial.

Perfect Love.

IN many things we are necessarily imperfect, and always shall be. But, by the grace of God, we may become perfect in love. Our capacity for this kind of perfection does not depend upon our talents or our circumstances. He who has but one dollar can give all the money he has, just as well as he who has a million. I can love God with all *my* heart; an angel can love God no more than with *all his* heart. The requirements of God are reasonable. They cover only what we are, or what we are capable, by His help, of becoming.—Whatever our defects, we may have the “love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us.” When this is the case,—when we love God with all our heart, mind and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves,—then have we perfect love. Not that it is incapable of increase. As our capacities enlarge, our love will increase. But as we now are, we can do no better; and it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not.

If we have this perfect love to God, It will be manifested—not in words only, but in actions.

We shall keep His commandments. Our study will be to know His will, with an honest intention of doing it, with whatever losses or crosses it may be attended.—We shall ask, What does God require?—not what is pleasing to self or popular with the world.

We shall manifest our love to God, by acts of kindness, just as far as we have the opportunity, towards all His creatures. We shall take the greatest delight in those who love Him most. *If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?*

—1 John xv. 20. This is emphatic. It shows that our professions of love to God amount to absolutely nothing, unless we love our fellow-men, especially those who are striving to keep His commandments.—

The Charity that Paul speaks of in the xiiiith chapter of 1st Corinthians, without which the strongest faith and the largest gifts, and even martyrdom for the truth, will profit us nothing, manifests itself in tender feelings and kind conduct towards our fellow-men.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.—1. Do not profess perfect love, if you are cross, unamiable, and unkind at home. If you have not natural affection, you certainly have not supernatural. If you do not do as well as the brutes, do not profess to be like the angels of God. If you are not kind to her whom you have sworn to cherish, or to those whose protector nature has constituted you, stop your professions at once.—You have already sins enough to sink you to hell, without adding hypocrisy to them.

2. If you cannot treat your brother, whose opinion may not always coincide with yours, as civilly as men of the world treat each other, do not profess perfect love. It does not require any grace to love those who agree with our opinions, and who yield in willing deference to our authority. Common sinners do as well as that. IF WE LOVE ONE ANOTHER, GOD DWELLETH IN US, AND HIS LOVE IS PERFECTED IN US.

Shine.

THE Christian is commanded to let his light shine. He must not obscure it, nor cover it up. He must give it a fair chance. This is all the advantage that light demands. You must not blow it to make it more intense. That might put it out. You need not call attention to its presence.—Simply let it occupy its natural position, and it will, itself, proclaim its existence.

Give it the opportunity and every light will shine. Other lights may have gone out. This does not dim its brilliancy, but only makes it the more conspicuous. The more intense the darkness, the greater is its importance.

The Saviour, in commanding us to let our light shine, takes it for granted that we have light. And so we have, if we are his disciples. *If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie,*

and do not the truth.—I John, i. 6. This is very emphatic. The moon is a dark body. There is nothing luminous about it. Yet it sheds upon the earth an immense amount of light. But it shines only by reflection. It throws upon us a portion of the light with which the sun covers it, as with a brilliant mantle. So the Christian, ignorant, depraved by nature, shines in his words and in his works because the Sun of Righteousness shines upon him. He does that which is exactly contrary to his nature. He shines, because a light from above shines upon him. He is naturally selfish, but Christ makes him benevolent. A complete transformation has taken place in his moral nature. He is ignorant of many things, but he knows the way to Heaven, and he can point it out to others. A devout and learned minister of the Gospel said, that when he wanted light upon passages of Scripture relating to Christian experience which the Commentaries did not give, he went to a Mother in Israel, a saint of common intelligence, but of uncommon piety, and he never failed to obtain a satisfactory solution of his difficulties.

If we fail to have light in ourselves there must be something serious the matter.—Christ is the great source of light, and he gives to every one of his disciples all the light that he needs.

You must then see to it that you have light, and that you let it shine. Cover it up and it will go out. Many a talent has been taken away, because it was not used to the glory of God. In many a soul has the light become darkness because it was not followed. He who sees it to be his duty to do good to his fellow man, and steadfastly refuses to do it, will, after a while, come to the conclusion that he was mistaken. She who sees that she ought to dress plain, but still continues "conformed to the world," will, by and by, be easily persuaded that the Scriptures do not mean what they say upon this point.

Then let your light shine. If you cannot be learned nor eloquent, there is one thing you can do, you can shine. The glow-worm is very small—very insignificant,—but it shines. You can do no less.

Under whatever circumstances you are placed, you can do your duty faithfully and cheerfully, and thus show others what their duties are. Your every-day walk can be a living sermon; your loving, humble spirit, a perpetual commendation of the religion of Jesus.

Too Late.

A SAILOR, hearing a farmer tell how much maple sugar he made in a short time, innocently asked, "Why do you not make sugar the year round?" He was not aware of the little, but important fact, that it cannot be made out of its season. *There is a time for every thing* that is proper to be done. He is a wise man who does what he should: and does it at the right time. Many things may as well be left undone, as be done out of season. Last fall we passed a piece of ground which was being sowed to wheat. The seed was of good quality, the ground carefully prepared; but it was six weeks too late. We noticed the field just before harvest, and the crop would not pay expenses.

Thus it is with many,—they are always behind-hand. They work hard enough, but they do not begin in time. "You did not run fast enough," said a bystander to an unlucky traveler who, all covered with perspiration, and tired out, just missed the train. "Yes, I did," was the reply; "but I did not start soon enough."

Brother, wake up! Take time by the forelock. Try and catch up once, and then keep up, in all matters, secular and religious. Go to bed early and get up early. Do your work when it should be done. Go to meeting in season, and take that part in the services which you should, and at the proper time. Many are eternally the losers by being too late. Some are repenting when they should have been preaching twenty years ago. Such is their condition, that they themselves have to be helped, when their help is most greatly needed.—They cannot pray for sinners in faith, for they are themselves under condemnation.

Sad is the lamentation which many make in the dying hour. "Shall I send for a minister?" said a wicked man, to his son

who was dying, at about the age of twenty-one, of dissipation. "O, no, father," replied the dying youth, "it is of no use now; it is too late." Reader, shall it be so with you? There is great danger. If you are to-day putting off the duties which you owe to God, the probabilities are increasing that you will put them off to-morrow, and thus on to the end of life.—*Now* is the day of salvation. Now is the time to make your peace with God—your calling and your election sure.

"Tis the last call of mercy,
That lingers for thee;
Oh! sinner, receive it,
To Jesus now flee!
He often has called thee,
But thou hast refused!
His offered salvation
And love, are abused."

Camp-Meetings.

THE TONAWANDA meeting was very successful. A high tone of spirituality prevailed, and there were numerous and marked conversions. Many entered into a deeper religious experience; the preachers as well as the people were greatly blessed; and deep conviction rested upon the minds of the people. The congregations were large and orderly.

There were about thirty-six tents on the ground, and would have been more if they could have been obtained. We urge those who regularly attend Camp-Meeting to buy or make a tent for themselves. The rent at about four meetings would pay for it.

THE one held near Fairport, N. Y., was in every respect, successful. There were seventeen tents. The attendance was large, The Spirit was poured out, from the beginning to the close. A goodly number were converted, and many entered into the rest of perfect love. The order was excellent, and close attention was paid to the plain, pointed, searching appeals made to the heart and conscience. There was a gratifying improvement in the evangelical tone given to the preaching. Christ was held up as an all-sufficient Saviour, able to save all who come to Him, and willing to keep his people unspotted from the world.

THE RUSHFORD Camp-Meeting we heard spoken of by many as the best one held in that region for many years. The attendance was good, and the people listened with deep attention to the services. There were a number of clear conversions, and the light shone on many minds.

A Correction.

In our August number, in an article entitled "Impressions of a Camp-Meeting," the writer is made to say, "I started on a lovely Sunday for Chicago." This is a serious mistake of ours. In the manuscript it read, "on a lovely morning in June."—Our blunder is inexcusable, and we gladly make the correction.

The saints do not travel on the cars on Sunday, not even to go to so good a place as a Camp-Meeting. The good which they would get would not compensate for their wanton violation of a plain command of God. The saints *remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy*.

To our Writers.

If you write for the *Earnest Christian*, you must give your name. You must stand before the public responsible for what you write. Let the people see that you live up to what you teach.

Write with good, black ink, in a plain hand. Pencil marks get rubbed out from handling the sheet over a number of times. Give us articles full of the fire of the Holy Ghost.

Literary Notices.

"HELPS TO EVERY-DAY HOLINESS".—By C. Rose. This work is what its name imports, comprising an appropriate Scripture text, a verse of poetry, and a choice sentiment or prayer, for every day in the year, well adapted to stimulate devotion. A beautiful gift-book to a Christian friend.—48mo. Price, 50 cents. Sent on receipt of price by mail to any address. Direct to Rev. A. C. Rose, North Granville, N. Y.

LOVE FEAST.

E. BABCOCK.—Jesus loves witnesses of his power to save. I can say he saves me now, and I am not ashamed of him or his cause. Five years ago I became convicted, sought for and obtained the blessing of holiness. I have enjoyed the blessing most of the time since. But I must say my experience has been too much given to doubts. When I would begin to doubt or distrust Jesus, it would seem like the enemy binding me hand and foot, and soon I would be overcome by temptation. But I praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that I am now saved from doubts. Since the 30th day of June I have not had so much as a shadow of doubt,—have been tried, but Jesus saves. The secret is, I trust him for to-day, and when the morrow comes, I renew my consecration, and promise to trust the Lord, let come what will; and then he keeps me from day to day. All glory be to Him forever. My boast is in the Lord, who has become my wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.—Let all that is within me praise and serve Him.

Montrose, Mich.

S. A. GILLY.—My experience to-day is rich and full. Jesus reigns without a rival in my poor heart. I have found a way opened by the blood of Christ, leading out of the death-land of sin and unbelief, up to the mount of God, and understandingly my soul says, "Master, I will go therein." Glory to God forever! The joy of the Lord wells up in my soul as I toil in the vineyard below, and gives me a foretaste of those richer joys that await us "beyond the river."

Marengo, Ill.

JAMES ODELL.—I praise God for salvation. I now read my title clear to mansions in the skies. "Faith," to me, "is the substance of things hoped for—the evidence of things not seen." All glory be to God! We have been called to pass through deep afflictions of late; but Jesus has stood by us, and comforted us. Last Sabbath, we followed our lovely and only child to his

narrow resting-place. It was a season of sorrow and joy. O, how I bless God for the consolation of the Gospel! Never, never, has the Word been so precious. O, I praise God I am born to die; but I shall live forever. I am in the King's high way. A light from heaven is beaming on it.—There is a light in the window above for me. The dearest of all earthly objects to me has gone to be the angels' guest. Now I sing, "I am coming, blessed Jesus."—Praise God for salvation!

Saratoga, N. Y.

JUDITH C. BEACH.—About thirteen years ago, the Lord led me to consecrate all to Him. While in prayer, one thing after another passed before me, and I passed it over to Him. It was His by right. He became all in all to me. Oh, the bliss of that happy hour! I fully realized the hidden manna, and the tree of life, and the white stone, and the new name written on it, which no one knew save him that receiveth it. Oh, it was perfect love casting out all fear. I seemed to walk and talk with God. I seemed to lose sight of all below. I could not be silent. To one man and his wife I related some of the exercises of my mind. He said, That was not so; if it was I would not stay in the world; that I would fly off to heaven like lightning. He said I lied. She was not so hard, but did not believe me, and so it was with others. The war came on with all its various troubles. Soon the report of the death of my youngest son reached me. He died September 10th, 1862. He had experienced religion when quite a small boy. When our minister came from the Conference, he did not seem to say anything to stay up my sinking heart. I felt my heart sink and die, and I complained bitterly and wept piteously. The Spirit said it would leave me awhile, and so it did. I had greatly to mourn its departure. I realized its departure as plainly as if I had seen it. In about this condition the *Earnest Christian* found me; and when I began to read the testimonies given, I felt the Holy Spirit's sacred influence moving and cheering my crushed and aching heart, and saying, Be bold—thou

hast not lied. Arise, and testify to the power of God to cleanse from all sin.

Salem, Ills.

E. L. JOHNSTON.—I am the Lord's—soul, body, and spirit—to be led by Him in all things. I thank God for the *Earnest Christian*. It has done my soul much good.—The Lord grant it may be placed in every house.

Rockford, Ills.

MRS. WALTER GRAY.—I smoked tobacco twenty years of my life. The habit had completely enslaved me. It affected my memory; at times my mind was oblivious. Mental action seemed to cease, and there was for the time being a mental suicide. It was an "assault and battery" on my whole nervous system. Such a slave to the vile habit was I, that when on my knees in prayer-meetings, I have longed for the time to close to come, that I might resume the pipe, to satisfy the cravings of this morbid appetite. I have tried many times to break the chains that bound me. But the habit had so paralyzed my will, that I would soon take to my pipe again. For the last two years I have been convicted that it was wrong to use the vile weed in any form.—The light has shone upon my understanding and conscience when at my devotions. A few weeks ago, I was suddenly taken very sick when smoking. During that night of extreme suffering, I looked to the Lord as my only source of deliverance, and my pipe came up before my mind, as it had many times before when praying, for two years past; and I then promised the Lord I would never smoke again; and deliverance came—glory be to His name! My health returned, and with it I lost my appetite for tobacco. I am completely cured! as much so as was the blind man of his blindness by the mighty power of Jesus. Praise His name! "He is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him;" and will give grace "to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." I am traveling on in the narrow way, with light and glory in my soul.

Ellenburgh, N. Y.

MARY A. FOWLER.—It is Jesus, JESUS—the One altogether lovely, who hath wrought this great salvation. In Him all my wants are met. In sickness, He is my Physician; in weakness, my Strength; in ignorance, my Wisdom. He found me in rags, and clothed me with righteousness. Oh, praise God for all the means He has used to bring me to Himself. The language of my heart is,

"O, let me more of thy nature know,
And more of thy love bestow."

The love that brought Him down to earth leads me to deny myself, and take the cross upon which the bleeding victim hangs, and cry, Behold, behold, the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world!

Lena, Ills.

ADELIA ARNOLD.—I wish to witness for Christ once more, as He continues to keep me by the power of His grace. Oh, I do love Jesus. I am making it the business of my life to keep the commandments, and to insist upon others doing so.

Sycamore, Ills.

MARY CARPENTER.—Jesus lives! and I believe He leadeth me in peace through the valley. I know to day that I have on the wedding-garment, and am walking with the Saviour in white. Oh, glory! I feel like shouting praises to my God as never before. Am firmly of the belief that unless the high praises of Jesus are sounded here, they will not be heard on the other shore. I have been led, of late, to do all I could to pay off our minister's salary for the present year. Others of the class have done the same. The demands are fully met. We have nothing to boast of,—have only done our duty, which makes us feel blessed. Our prayer-meetings are our very best meetings. Our minister and family have gone on a visit, and will hold meetings on their way. We haven't shut our church doors, and gone like hungry children to seek bread elsewhere. No; the Lord has met us every time, provided us with preachers, and with so much of His Spirit that carries the meetings through every time, and removes all obstructions.

Mooreville, Mich.