

# THE EARNEST CHRISTIAN AND GOLDEN RULE.

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## THE TIME.

BY WILLIAM FELL.

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man." These are the words of our Saviour. All who attempt to set the time of His coming go contrary to His teachings. As often as it has been done, so often it has failed. It is not essential to the salvation of the soul to know the time of Christ's coming. If it were possible to know the very time of His appearing, and to get thousands to believe it, this would not save one soul. It might cause a seriousness to come over those who embraced the belief, but the heart would remain unchanged. Its load of guilt and corruption would still cling to it. Nothing but the power of God can convert the soul. This is brought about by a heart-felt sorrow for sin, repentance towards God, and faith in Jesus Christ.

Without this new birth, man is not prepared to meet his God. He may be as strong a believer in the second coming of Christ as the prince of darkness himself. Many who profess to believe in the coming of Christ, and who advocate it strongly, would shrink away with horror if He should suddenly make His appearance. Their lives do not correspond with the teachings of Christ. "They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."—Titus i. 16. None but the pure in heart shall see God in peace.

Error in doctrine leads to error in practice. The word of God is very ex-

plicit on this point. It declares that "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."—2 John ix. 10. This does away with all the seventh day observing, sleep of the soul and annihilation papers and extracts that are sent to you. They are poison, deadly poison and anti-Christian. There is no fellowship between light and darkness. "Christ is the way, the truth and the life." All who love Him cannot help but love His appearing. A genuine lover of Christ is sound in the faith and evenly balanced. He is not all on one side, trying to convert people to his notions and views of things, but is all animated with the love of God and the salvation of souls. His eye is single to the glory of God in all things, and the height of his ambition is to do all the good he can to the souls and bodies of his fellow-beings. He is trying to get as many souls to Christ as he can before the day of probation closes; and he looks at things in the light of eternity and the judgment, and feels that one sinner saved is of infinitely more importance than anything else possibly can be. A man of this stamp is prepared to meet God at any moment. When he thinks of the coming of Christ, he cannot help but feel deeply for those who are unsaved. His heart melts within him, and he cries out, O, give me souls for Jesus' sake!

"Holiness unto the Lord" is his mot-

to, and it shines out in his every-day life. The second coming of Christ thrills the soul of every true believer with joy unspeakable, and stimulates him to greater zeal and earnestness in His cause. The day is rapidly approaching—everything plainly indicates this—and God's word declares it. Happy is the man who is living for it! "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of the light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness."—1 Thess. v. 1-5. God's people will understand all about that day when it comes. It will be a happy surprise when they feel themselves suddenly changed from mortal to immortality. God's dear children can afford to be patient. They are not anxious to set any time. They are obeying the injunction of the apostle: "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."—James v. 7, 8.

The apostles looked for a speedy return of Christ, and so have we a right to look for his coming, but not to set any time. Jesus very plainly declared that He was coming quickly; He says, "Behold, I come quickly." Just before He comes the world will be in a fearful state. Men will be, as the Apostle Paul describes them, "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." The world will be ripe for the fires of the judgment. There is very little vitality among the churches. Only here and there God has a little salt. And those that are alive, with Christ in their souls,

will soon be caught up to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.—1 Thess. iv. 17.

### THE DIVINE METHOD OF GIVING.

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there may be no gatherings when I come."—1 Cor. xvi. 2.

We are not our own, but are bought with a price; and, in the exercise of love, we devote to Him that loved and bought us all that we are and have, and all that we can do, to carry into effect his designs of mercy to perishing men, and we ask, each one for himself,

"What can I do for Him that died  
To save my wretched soul?"

Knowing, as we do, the languishing state of the benevolent enterprises, in all their departments, it is of the utmost importance to know what is the *divine method of raising all the funds we need*. Let us examine this divine method.

1. It is to *contribute frequently*.—Upon the first day of the week. This is frequently, for it is once in seven days. Nor shall we think that God calls too frequently, if he calls once a week, to make some appropriate acknowledgment of his right, by giving a portion of what he gives us, to carry on his peculiar work in the world, and to save the perishing; to save them,—not from starvation—but from perdition. Can once a week be too frequently to lay by in store to feed the hungry and clothe the naked? Was it not ordered in the churches of Galatia, as well as in the church of Corinth, that the same rule should be observed? And can we hesitate for a moment to adopt it in regard to the evangelizing of the world? Once a week—can this be too often to make a pecuniary contribution to send the word of life, or the messenger of mercy, announcing life to those who are dead in sins? Were our souls where theirs are, should we think once a week too often to be thought of, and prayed for, and labored for, that we might live? Relief must be had. God has ordered it to be given by us, and

given on the first day of the week.—*Frequently*, so that we may never forget it.

2 *Statedly* also. Upon the first day of the week. What day could be more appropriate? The Redeemer's birthday. As it is said, "This day have I begotten thee." The day of the church's foundation: for, on the first day of the week, the stone, which the builders rejected, became the head of the corner. What precious associations! A rising Saviour! A church founded! Now, on the same day, we lay by in store that which may honor the Saviour, add lively stones to the building, send hope to the benighted world. It must be good, also, to begin the week with this labor of love. Let God have the first-fruits of all our time; let the noble object of saving lost men, as co-workers with God, pre-occupy our thoughts and our plans, give tone to our spirit, and direction to all our movements. To commence the week in this manner assimilates earth and heaven, the employments of Christians to the employments of angels. The sanctity and the blessedness of the Sabbath are thus spread over all our time, and all the work of our hands. Thus frequently and *statedly* the *divine method* requires to lay by in store.

3. *Universally*. "Every one of you." Is it a *duty* to contribute frequently and *statedly* for evangelizing the world? Whose duty is it? The duty of every Christian. Is it a *privilege*? Whose privilege? Does our Lord demand the service of every one? Does he not, at the same time, allow every one the privilege? Who is it, then, among all his friends, that is to be exempt from the duty? Who that is to be deprived of the privilege? Not one. Due allegiance is expected of all, and due favor is shown to all. It is ordained that *every* one shall lay by him in store. How suitable and how beautiful is this arrangement! Here the whole church of Christ, the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the male and the female, appear before him on the first day of the week. Nor does any one

appear empty. Every one lays by him in store an offering, as an acknowledgment of obligation and thanksgiving. This being done frequently and *statedly*, and on that day of consecration and blessing, it is suited to produce the most happy results. Here all hearts beat in unison, before the face of the Lord.

For a moment think of the power which a mighty Saviour can call into action on this principle. Suppose a church of two hundred and fifty members. Let every one be poor, and every one lay by only the widow's two mites, which make a farthing. One cent a week from two hundred and fifty Christians will amount in a year to at least one hundred and twenty-five dollars! Is not the *DIVINE METHOD* one of great power? How vast the sum from a million Christians!—from a million of poor Christians! Not less than five hundred thousand dollars!

3. *In due proportion*. "As God hath prospered him." It is supposed that every Christian is engaged in business. It is needful, while in this world, that every one should have some honest and laudable mode of acquiring property, both to supply personal and domestic wants, and afford a surplus for the needy. Believers were generally poor in apostolic times, and obtained the means of their support by daily labor. At the end of the week, their work being done, they could be ready to observe the Divine Providence in regard to them, and to know how they had been prospered in their business. And this was the rule of proportion for their contribution. They might lay by in store a certain per cent., five, ten, twenty, or any other proportion, just as they were able, or as their love prompted them to do, either more or less. If, at any time, they had received more than common, then their proportion would be greater. And so, if they had received less. This would operate equally upon all members; for the rich would give abundance from their abundant income, and the poor would give a little, just in the same proportion.

The apostle does not say, however,



how much each man should give, only that it should be proportionate to each one's prosperity. Every one is able to exercise his own judgment. God wishes not that we should feel as tributaries, but as friends and children; that he is Lord of all, the Father of mercies, and the Saviour of the lost; that we should understand the work he is engaged in, and that we are allowed and expected to co-operate in it. And, that our views may be enlarged, and our affections engaged, he allows us the unspeakable privilege of considering his kingdom as our kingdom, his work as our work, his glory as our glory, and the happiness and glory of all that is achieved and done, as his joy, in which we are permitted to share. With such a work before us, and such results as our ultimate reward and portion, he calls us to take part in the work, with the assurance that every one shall receive a reward according to his own labor. With our eye fixed on the future joy, he allows us to deny ourselves, to labor, to make sacrifices, and bear his cross, just in proportion to our faith and love; all proceeding spontaneously from our affection for him, and his cause, and the souls of men. In this blessed enterprise, he lays out before us—not only this world—which is the field in which he works and employs us, but heaven and hell, with their eternal realities. Heaven, the dwelling of all that become holy and happy, on the one hand; and hell, with the wicked and the lost, on the other, God reveals to us as the final destination of every soul of man. It is not, then, a mere estimate of our doing a certain amount of labor, or giving a certain amount of contribution, or bearing a certain weight of sorrow and affliction, that is to regulate our action, or our suffering; but it is the worth of the soul, the bliss of heaven, the pains of hell, the example of God, angels, and good men, that are to be always before us. Such are the themes of thought, the expanding, ennobling, and invigorating realities, which are to move us. And with these in view, God allows us to judge and de-

termine how great shall be the amount that we will consecrate to this noble, angelic, godlike enterprise. The purpose and the act are to be our own, in the sight of God, with the glory and joy that are set before us. Such is the DIVINE METHOD.

5. *With order and care.* "Let every one of you lay by him in store." Laborers have store-houses. In them they preserve the fruits of their labor. They also have a place for their money—the iron chest, or some results of their industry and frugality. For what? For the double purpose of order and safe-keeping. On this place of deposit, how much thought may be expended! It is the store, perhaps, laid up for a day of trouble, or for the helplessness of old age, or as an inheritance for children. In view of this store, one may say to his soul, "Thou hast much goods laid up for many years." Another may calculate how much he may gain by the provident use of this store; or he may pride himself on the power he can exert with his wealth. Others may look toward their little store with an anxious eye, unable to tell how their wants shall be supplied amid the vicissitudes of an uncertain hereafter.

But where is the man who keeps a treasury for God? I mean a place of deposit, in which he may lay up in store, as God has prospered him, his contribution for the relief of the needy, especially the needy soul. It would be no great stretch of the imagination to suppose that a pious mind would find as much pleasure in thinking of the Lord's treasury as of his own. It is the testimonial of his Heavenly Father's bounty. Every thought of it calls forth a new emotion of love, with a strong desire to do good to the needy. In this treasury the money is safe, and it is ready. This was one design of the apostle in ordering this deposit—"that there be no gatherings when I come." He was making collections in Asia and Europe, among the churches of the Gentiles, to relieve the poor saints in Jerusalem. He was the general agent in this concern. As he was passing



from one church to another, to promote their spiritual interests, he was willing to take charge of their collections, and be the bearer of them for the relief of the poor. But he did not wish to do what they could do for themselves.—Nor did he wish to be diverted or detained from his great work while their collections were being made. If they would follow his directions, all would be ready. He would receive their bounty, and rejoice with them in their readiness and liberality. Then God would be pleased with their cheerfulness, and honored by the abundance of their contribution and their joy. So in all cases of charitable liberality, if the *DIVINE METHOD* were followed, how pleasant, how delightful would be the aspect of the church! Every member laying by him in store upon the first day of the week, as God hath prospered him—what an abundance would there be for every want! How promptly, how cheerfully, how satisfactorily would every want be met! Then would there be no complaint of hard times; for every one's bounty would be ready.—Then would there be no complaint of too many calls; for on every Lord's day the store would be replenished.—Let there be a call on one Lord's day for the Foreign Missionary Society; on another, for the Home Missionary Society; on a third, for the Education Society; on a fourth, for the Sabbath Schools; and so on, till all the societies, which deserve our aid, have called—and then—what? *Let them call again; for again we shall be ready.*—*Rev. Dr. Yale.*

#### CHALMER'S ADVICE TO MINISTERS.

It is not enough to hold out to the world's eye the mirror of its own imperfections. It is not enough to come forth with a demonstration, however pathetic, of the evanescent character of all its enjoyments. It is not enough to travel the walk of experience along with you, and speak to your own conscience and your own recollection of the

deceitfulness of the heart, and the deceitfulness of all the heart is set upon. There is many a bearer of the gospel message who has not shrewdness or discernment enough, and who has not power of characteristic description enough, and who has not the talent of moral delineation enough to present you with a vivid and faithful sketch of the existing follies of society.

But that very corruption which he has not the faculty of representing in its visible details, he may practically be the instrument of eradicating on principle. Let him be but a faithful expounder of the Gospel testimony. Unable as he may be to apply a descriptive hand to the character of the present world, let him but report with accuracy the matter which revelation has brought to us from a distant world; unskilled as he is in the work of so anatomising the heart, as with the power of a novelist to create, a prophetic or impressive exhibition of the worthlessness of its many affections, let him only give those mysteries of peculiar doctrine on which the best of novelists have thrown the vastness of their decision. He may not be able, with the shrewd and satirical observation, to expose to the ready recognition of his hearers the desires of worldliness—but with the tidings of the Gospel in commission he may wield the engine that can extirpate them.

He cannot do what some have done, when, as if by the hand of a magician, they have brought out to view, from the hidden recesses of our natures, the foibles and lurking appetites which belong to it. But he has a truth in his possession, which, into whatever heart it enters, will, like the rod of Aaron, swallowed them all, and, unqualified as he may be to describe the old man in all the rich shading of his natural and constitutional varieties, with him is deposited that ascendant influence, under which the leading tastes and tendencies of the old heart are destroyed, and he becomes a new creature in Jesus Christ our Lord.—*Thomas Chalmers.*

## SYMPATHY.

BY H. F. HILL, JR.

How natural it is for the heart to crave sympathy. It is its daily food. Without it, it withers and dies. Desolate, indeed, is that heart whose vibrating finds no response in some other heart. Such a heart is ready for anything that is desperate or daring in wickedness. No man liveth to himself alone. We are very dependent creatures. We were made for fellowship. The immortal graces which bloom within our souls, were not "born to blush unseen, and waste their sweetness on the desert air," but to impart their beauty and fragrance to others, and offer up sweet incense to their Creator. If no other eye beholds them, God's does. Ah, sympathy with God! that is the very sunshine which warms our hearts, and causes them to bud, and blossom, and bring forth abundant fruit unto eternal life.

God is the only reliable source of sympathy. All other sources fail us at a time when we most need help. If we expect a satisfactory sympathy from human beings, we shall be disappointed. It is not in their power to give it at all times, if they would. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness," and a stranger doth not intermeddle therewith. The very attempt to gain sympathy from others, often defeats itself. It is generally accompanied with more or less ostentation and display, which, unless deeply concealed by art, are repulsive. At times when the soul goes about her business, seeking sympathy in God alone, we often receive abundant sympathy from others. The more we seek to please God, and seek sympathy from Him, the more artless, guileless and natural and unassuming our manners will be; and this is agreeable to men. When we come before God we do not have to make a parade of ourselves: He knows all about us.

But there are times when we are called upon to stand alone. Like our blessed Saviour, we have to tread the

wine press alone. Yet, like Him, we are not alone, for the Father is with us. There are times when our best friends fail to understand us, and mis-interpret our best motives. By the world, it may be that our names are cast out as evil. All we can do is to lean hard upon the Lord God of Elijah. He will not fail us, bless His name! His grace will be sufficient for us. He will bring us through, glory be to God! O, what a glorious God is our God! "He knoweth them that are His." He understands them. The slightest motion of their heart is not hid from Him. He knows whether it beats true to Him or not: bless His name! He does not leave His children comfortless. They know they are His. He giveth them the witness of the Spirit.

How precious it is to know the love of God which passeth knowledge! How it satisfies all the desires of the soul! When God communicates His loving sympathy, how it thrills our hearts! What holy impulses it awakens within us! What feelings of gratitude! How it fires our hearts with devotion, and our lips with praises! How it nerves us up to deeds of unearthly heroism! What can we not do for God? What can we not dare for Him? What difficulties can we not overcome, and what conflicts not endure for His blessed name's sake?

How blessed it is to drink water from the pure fountain of all sympathy! This will not lead us to despise the sympathy of our brethren, but to prize it all the more; but that will not be our dependence. God Himself will be our strength, our fortress and our deliverer. When our hearts are in unison with the Great Heart, shall we not also deeply sympathize with suffering, sorrowing, fallen humanity, and seek, with all the grace God has given us, to lead souls to Jesus, who alone can satisfy all their longings?

Dear, anxious soul, why do you keep away from Christ? You say Christ is far from you; alas, he has been at your door all day!

## DIVINE MYSTERIES.

It is not so surprising to hear unconverted people speak of their disbelief in much, if not all, of God's blessed truth, as revealed in his word; but it is surprising to hear his professed children—many of them—rejecting the truth and life because they do not understand it; that is, rejecting the revelation of the "life and spirit" of the word of God because their human, finite, and sin-impaired wisdom does not grasp and compass all the Lord so graciously says to us, in a moment. God does not so much say to us, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" as "Believest thou what I say unto thee?" He who waits till he understands, will never begin to live the life of faith; but he who believes what God saith, will soon understand all mysteries.

The word of God is full of hard sayings, to the carnal heart and understanding, and there are not a few of God's people who are yet carnal,—1 Cor. iii. 1., Heb. ii. 12, 13,—though they began in the spirit,—Gal. iii. 3,—and have need to be taught the first principles again. And one of the first principles is to know nothing by ourselves,—1 Cor. ii. 15,—and to say to every word of God, "I believe, show thou it unto me by thy Spirit;"—1 Cor. ii. 10,—and of promises that transcend our thought, the fulfilment of which *seems* to be contrary to reason and nature, "Be it unto me according to thy word."—Luke i. 38. It is the lack of this simplicity, in part, that shuts out the divine mercies from our lives; though there are other reasons why all men who hear the tidings are not blessed by them.

When our Lord spoke to Nicodemus, John iii., of the new birth, he said, "how can these things be?" This was something his reason or thought did not comprehend. It was not so much an inquiry as an objection. He, perhaps, was in that condition of mind so many are in these days, viz: he wanted to understand this great saying philosophically, and was not willing to receive it until

he understood it, or because it seemed to be contrary to reason and nature. Had he been more simple he would not have fallen into this miserable materialism: "This is a hard saying: who can hear it?"—John v. 60,—said many of his disciples, when he was discoursing of the mystery of his atonement, of "eating his flesh and drinking his blood." If they had been less carnal they would have received it and learned that his words were "spirit and life:" verse 63, but they stumbled and fell because they were trying to put the mysteries of God into the small cup of their understanding, without waiting to have it enlarged by the Spirit. Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that sayest unto thee, Give me to drink, thou would'st have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water."—John iv. 10. But she was carnal, and could think of no water save such as that which "if a man drink he will thirst again," and no well or "fountain of living water" save such an one as Jacob's well; and when her answer came, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw," she was yet carnal, and knew not that he spake of the water of life, of which he was the eternal fountain; and but for the patient, loving tenderness of that tired and weary stranger, "who sat thus on the well," she would have gone away "not knowing" that it was Messiah that talked to her, and that he came to teach that "God is a Spirit, and that they which worship must worship him in Spirit and in truth."—John xiv. 21-29. And when he taught the Jews in Nazareth of God's mercy to Gentiles,—Luke xiv. 25-29,—were they not carnal when they were so enraged that "they rose up and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon the city was built, that they might cast him down headlong?"—verse 20. And wherefore? Because his teaching crossed their prejudice, who would limit the mercy of God to the lines of their own narrow range of vision, whose horizon could include nothing but a Jew.



We might add to the list of illustrations of truth neglected, or rejected, or stumbled at, many other striking examples, but these noticed above are enough to suggest the rest to our readers.

Here, then, we have some of the reasons why the divine mysteries are not apprehended, *e. g.*, because of a dead literalism, such as in the case of Nicodemus; and superficial hearing, as was the case with the woman at the well; prejudice, and mean, earthly jealousy, such as animated the Nazareth Jews. But have we not all these obstacles now? These very teachings of Christ are met in the same way still. We met a gentleman only to-day who told us that he could not accept the teachings of our Lord because they did not commend themselves to his reason. That is to say, unless he could weigh, measure, and judge the Lord, he would not accept him; and if he could, then he would reject him because he could thus measure and find out the Almighty. But we have Christians among us who are carnal and given over to materialism, and who meet the great truths of God's word when they are proclaimed in the power of the Spirit, with very much the same mind as did those of whom we are speaking. If we speak of "being led by the Spirit," we are at once asked how that can be, or if we mean this, or that; or if we speak of the voice of God, or the voice of the Spirit, we are asked if we "mean an audible voice," etc., and "if not an audible voice, then what is it?" In a word, in answer to any of the divine mysteries of the new life, whether stated as a doctrine, or related as an experience, we are often met with the old question, "How can these things be?"

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth;" but would any wise man, because he could not explain the phenomena of the wind, refuse to sit beneath its refreshing breeze? Who can explain the mysterious action of the human heart and lungs? and yet we do not hold our breath, refusing to

breathe, because we are unable to unravel the mystery of this life. Let us draw a few lessons from the foregoing:

1. Do not be surprised if you hear things out of God's word, and out of the living epistles "ministered by the Spirit," that you do not understand, for the wonders of grace are far in excess of those of nature. "Behold I show you a mystery," says Paul; and again, "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church."—1 Cor. xv. 51; Eph. v. 32.

2. Be careful how you reject the word of divine wisdom and mystery, because it is a hard saying. "He that hath an ear to hear let him hear," for there are those who have ears, but *not* to hear; all such become deaf.

3. Do not try to solve the divine mystery with the natural understanding, "for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, . . . for they are spiritually discerned." "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit," so that while the natural man understandeth nothing of these mysteries, "he that is spiritual discerneth all things."—1 Cor. ii. 9-16.

4. Beware of the flippant and impious spirit that is leading so many to denounce what they do not really understand—generally because they are not themselves spiritual—as fanatical, etc. If, concerning any great statement or experience, you are not clear, wait with an humble, teachable spirit before God, and he will reveal even these things unto you.—Phil. iii. 15.—*Rev. G. F. Pentecost, in Baptist Union.*

When Christ shall come in the clouds of heaven, it is said all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. There will not be one unawakened person on earth or in hell. Not the proudest and dearest of you will keep from trembling in that day. But ah! it is only those who believe his word that will flee under his wings. Dear friends, it is not enough that you are anxious about your souls, you must be fleeing to Christ; yea, you must be in Christ, before you are safe.—*M'Cheyne.*

## HAVE YOU FAITH?

"Without faith it is impossible to please God," impossible to receive salvation, impossible to have grace and to reach glory; have you faith? It is quite possible that you can point to the place, and tell the day and the hour when you believed in God and found the pardon of sin. Thousands can do so, and perhaps you among the number. But since past faithfulness will not cover present faithlessness, and since you may have lost what God in mercy once gave you, the plain question I want you to answer now is, "have you faith?"

"All things are possible to him that believeth." There is nothing that Jesus has purchased for you by dying, but the hand of faith may appropriate it for your use. All the grace, all the comfort, all the strength, all the goodness which it is possible for you to have you obtain by faith. "Have you faith?"

But what is faith? It is that action of the soul by which the sinner is united to God. It is not a fickle thing, now in exercise and then not, but a constant action which appropriates Divine grace to those who exercise it. Faith is not always consciously exercised. We are always conscious of the exercise of faith when we approach God for any distinct blessing. But the habit of the true believer is not a series of spasmodic acts, but rather that of a faithful clinging to God, which by continuance becomes almost unconscious. If I am always conscious of the breath I draw, it is because of some functional disorder in my system, which will not allow the necessary operation of breathing to be done without the drawing attention to it. When I am thoroughly healthy and strong, I am not always *conscious* of breathing: often I am so much engrossed in work or worship that I no more think of breathing than if it was never done by me. And yet I could not live without it. Even so, the habit of exercising faith in God for all the blessings of salvation makes the exercise of faith often an unconscious performance. Have you faith?

You cannot exercise faith, if you de-

sire to do so only just when you feel there is a pressing need. If faith were only venturing on God you might, but faith *appropriates* as well as *ventures*. Faith means life—a life of union with God. Have you faith?

Every promise is a pillar for faith to lay hold on, and you cannot go a single step along the path of life without finding a pillar close to your hand.

If you have faith you will give up evil reasoning. Luther well says, "If you will believe, you must crucify that question, 'Why?'"

If you have faith you will ever take God at His word. A child's beautiful definition of faith was, "Taking God at His word and asking no questions."

Have you faith? Is it in lively exercise? Then you may appropriate all blessings God has for you. The loving father will not shake off the trusting child that clings to His arm and asks for help and grace. Difficulties won't overwhelm you. They are "things to be overcome." Opposition won't hinder you. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Dangers won't frighten you. If thou can'st believe, thou shalt see the salvation of God." Neither the world, nor the devil, nor the flesh, will keep you from the enjoyment of "full salvation."

"Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,  
And looks to that alone;  
Laughs at impossibilities,  
And cries, 'It shall be done!'"

—Rev. Wm. G. Pascoe.

The late Duke of Hamilton had two sons. The eldest fell into consumption when a boy, which ended in his death. Two ministers went to see him at the family seat. After prayer the youth took his Bible from under his pillow, and turned to 2 Tim. iv. 7: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness;" and added, "This, sirs, is all my comfort." When his death approached, he called his younger brother to his bed, and spoke to him with great affection. He ended with these remarkable words: "And now, Douglas, in a little time you will be a duke, but *I shall be a king.*"

## THE CHRISTIAN'S SECURITY.

Let us never forget that Christianity was planted and has grown up in storms. Discussion is always favorable to it, and has ever been so. Let the wintry blast come; it will but scatter the sere leaves, and snap off the withered branches; the giant tree will only strike its roots deeper into the soil, and in the coming spring-time put forth a richer foliage, and extend a more grateful shade.

That joy, in some measure or degree, is an essential result of the possession of a true faith, is involved in innumerable declarations of Scripture. Joy is expressly mentioned among the fruits of the Spirit. It is Paul's desire for the Romans, that the God of hope may fill them with all joy and peace in believing. The Psalmist declares that praise is comely for the upright; exhorts all lands to make a joyful noise unto God; prays that the nations may be glad, and sing for joy, and that the daughters of Judah might exult in God's judgments; counsels all worshippers to serve God with gladness, and come before his presence with singing; and gives an explicit warrant to all that seek him to glory in his holy name. It is an apostolic precept to live rejoicing in hope—to rejoice in the Lord alway; and, mark its importance, the injunction is repeated, "Again I say, Rejoice." In a word, the announcement of a Saviour is "good tidings of great joy;" his appearance was to give light to the people that walked in darkness; the very name of his forerunner was one of gladness; and his disciples are directed to the natural issue of their faith, which nothing but its weakness prevents them from reaching, when Peter addresses these words to the children of the dispersion—"In whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory."

Why, then, should our hands hang down, or our knees be feeble? "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not." "We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers God

hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again." "It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again." "In whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."—*Christian Witness.*

## LOSSES.

Upon the white sea sand,  
There sat a pilgrim band,  
Telling the losses their lives had known,  
While evening waned away  
From breezy cliff and bay,  
And the strong tides went out with a weary moan.

One spake with quivering lip,  
Of a fair freighted ship,  
With all his household to the deep gone down.  
But one had wilder woe,  
For a fair face long ago,  
Lost in the darker depths of a great town.

There were some mourned their youth  
With a most loving truth,  
For its brave hopes and memories ever green;  
And one upon the West  
Turned an eye that would not rest  
For far-off hills whereon its joy had been.

Some talked of vanished gold,  
Some of proud honors told,  
Some spake of friends that were their trust  
no more;  
And one of a green grave  
Beside a foreign wave,  
That made him sit so lonely on the shore.

But when their tales were done,  
There spake among them one,  
A stranger seeming from all sorrow free,  
"Sad losses have ye met,  
But mine is heavier yet,  
For a believing heart hath gone from me."

"Alas!" these pilgrims said,  
"For the living and the dead,  
For fortune's cruelty, for love's sure cross,  
For the wrecks of land and sea,  
But however it came to thee—  
Thine, stranger, is life's last and heaviest loss."

—*London Athenæum.*

Expect answers while you are speaking in prayer. Sometimes the vapors that ascend in the morning come down in copious showers in the evening. So may it be with your prayers.



## PLAIN PREACHING.

BY MRS. JANE S. RAY.

There is nothing more important at the present time than the proclaiming of *plain* truths—nothing is more crossing to the natural heart. Consequently the tendency in the priests to prophecy *smooth* things. This course brings no hatred from the world, no persecution, no buffetings from Satan. We read that the world *hated* Jesus because He testified that the works thereof were evil. Had He *praised* instead of condemned their practices, they would have liked Him. He would have been popular, instead of despised. And we read also that the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. When God through some mouthpiece of His, proclaims His searching truths, and wields the two edged sword of the Spirit—the word of God—mark the effect upon an audience. The truly spiritual, obedient ones feel *no alarm* as the destroying angel flourishes the glittering blade. They know the blood has been applied, and its stains are still fresh upon the door posts of their hearts. And while death is reigning around them they are rejoicing in their own safety; their protection is in the cleft of the rock, their fortress; yes and with holy boldness they can ascend and stand erect far above the shot and shell of the enemy, upon the battlements of their strong tower.

There is another class of God's children, who through their *lack of light* find themselves far below the requirements of God. This plain teaching received into their honest hearts produces a Godly sorrow, which worketh repentance unto salvation, and like the vine, though they may bleed some they stand the trimming, and the result is—not foliage merely—but *fruit*. There is another class, who love the world and love not God's law, who teach for doctrines the commandments of men, who are turned aside from the truth unto a fable. A pleasing story to the carnal heart, of salvation by faith with *evil* works, instead

of that which produces good works purifying the heart, who trust without the Spirit's witness to an inheritance among the blest. They expect a bright crown preceded by no cross—that the broad way of self-indulgence leads to heaven—that the gate is wide enough to admit them with all their unholy passions, evil thoughts, words, and deeds. And as to the fire of God's truth, the hammer of His power breaks in upon and disturbs the quiet complacent foundation of their false hopes. Ah! now *beware*, you have routed the lion in his lair, now war wages, the powers of darkness arrayed against the kingdom of light. Oh! how many are *deceiving* and being deceived, blind leaders of the blind—by far the most dangerous state of all. Jesus said to such, the publicans and harlots will enter into the kingdom of God before *you*. O! for a raising of the standard until such shall see their *double* danger of being ensnared, and deceived, and flee for mercy to the extended arms ever open to receive the penitent.

But says one, the truth must be spoken in *love*. We most heartily admit it. And none but those who have the "love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost" will continue through evil report to follow in the footsteps of their Master, and pluck perishing souls as brands from the eternal burnings. Would we deem the physician wise and kind who would flatter his patients instead of dealing faithfully with them? Who would administer the cordial and opiate when the nauseating cleansing drug was required? who would apply the healing plaster without having probed the wound—neglect the principal amputation necessary to save life?

O! what fearful responsibility rests upon, and what accountability awaits the ministry.

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 PRAYER.

Prayer is an action of likeness to the Holy Ghost, the spirit of dove-like simplicity; an imitation of the holy Jesus, whose Spirit is meek. Prayer is the

peace of our spirit, the stillness of our thoughts, the evenness of recollection, the seat of meditation, the rest of our cares, and the calm of our tempest; prayer is the issue of a quiet mind, of untroubled thoughts, it is the daughter of charity, and the sister of meekness; and he that prays to God with an angry, that is, with a troubled and discomposed spirit, is like him that retires into a battle to meditate, and sets up his closet in the out quarters of an army, and chooses a frontier garrison to be wise in. Anger is a perfect alienation of the mind from prayer, and therefore is contrary to that intention, which presents our prayers in a right line to God. For so have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and, soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven, and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back with loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconsistent, descending more at every breath of the tempest, than it could recover by the libration and frequent weighing of his wings; till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over; and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing, as if it did learn music and motion from an angel, as he passed sometimes through the air about his ministries here below. So is the prayer of a good man; his duty met with the infirmities of a man, and anger was its instrument, and the instrument became stronger than the prime agent, and raised a tempest, and overruled the man; and then his prayer was broken, and his thoughts pulled them back again, and made them without intention; and the good man sighs for his infirmity, but must be content to lose the prayer, and he must recover it when his anger is removed, and his spirit is becalmed, made even as the brow of Jesus, and smooth like the heart of God; and then it ascends to heaven upon the wings of the holy dove, and dwells with God, till it returns, like the useful bee, laden with a blessing and the dew of heaven.

—*Jeremy Taylor.*

## BEAUTIES OF THE BIBLE.

The Bible indeed is no ordinary book, and must be studied with no common diligence, no slight reverence, and no trivial assistance; but when so studied it opens a field alike rich and inexhaustible. It comprises the largest variety of materials, with the closest unity of design, and the most majestic harmony of proportion. All tends to one purpose, all centres in one object, the glory of God, in the salvation, the sanctification, the perfection of his intelligent creatures; or, to speak all in one comprehensive phrase, the final union of all things in Christ, and under Christ, as head over all things to the church. And be it observed, that throughout the announcement of this vast design, no capacity, or taste, or disposition of man, is left without its proper food, its just excitement, and its full employment.

But Holy Scripture is not only or chiefly the instruction of our souls—it is also in a just, though limited, sense the very life of our souls. "The words that I speak unto you," said our Divine Redeemer, "they are spirit and they are life." It is by this truth that we are to have our hearts purified. It is by this incorruptible seed that we are to be born anew. It is by this heavenly nutriment that we are spiritually to increase in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. Happy are they who have acquired a relish for this food of angels! Happy are they who drink of this pure water of life, which proceedeth from the throne of God and the Lamb; and which, while it softly floweth, maketh their wilderness an Eden, their desert as the garden of the Lord! To them the Sacred Scriptures are indeed a refuge from the heat, a shelter from the storm, a covert in a waste and weary land; affording that green pasture, those still waters of comfort, beside which we may be also led by our ever present and ever-watchful Shepherd.—*Bishop Jepp.*

If God's earthly presence is so good, what is his heavenly presence.

## THE DOCTRINE OF FAITH.

One of the best methods of arriving at a correct understanding of it, is to notice how Christ, the Great Teacher, awakened the true idea of it in the minds of his disciples. We find he did not in his earliest instructions allude to faith. They were not prepared to appreciate it. In that comprehensive Sermon on the Mount he describes a perfect man, the elements of whose character are to be "poor in spirit" or humble towards God, and teachable; to "mourn" over sin; to be "meek," not proud or ostentatious; to "hunger and thirst after righteousness;" to be "merciful," "pure in heart;" the firm advocate for truth; and to endure "persecution for righteousness' sake." Beyond all this, the perfect man is to even "love his enemies," and to be prayerful; and to encourage this last practice Christ gave his model prayer. Then to crown the whole he indirectly teaches the doctrine of faith in the words, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" This is the first mention of the cardinal doctrine of faith in Christ's great sermon—and here it seems to mean a simple confidence in God that he will perform what he promises, or gives us good reason to expect.

The disciples were, however, now prepared better to appreciate this deep truth, and consequently as soon as he came into Capernaum he wrought a miracle, perhaps with the express purpose of showing the power of faith. We allude to the healing of the centurion's servant. The centurion besought Christ to save his son. Christ replies "I will come and heal him." The centurion immediately responds in deep humility, "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof; but speak the word only, and my servant shall be

healed." The continuation of the centurion's reply is the most important part, and yet to some its force is all lost unless the reflection is given to it. "For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man Go, and he goeth: and to another, Come, and he cometh: and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it." It might be asked, What has that to do with Christ's coming to his house to heal his servant? Could not Christ just as well come to a man who had soldiers under him as to any other man? Certainly, but the Centurion wished to be understood thus—Why dost thou, O Master, wish to come to my unworthy house? It is not necessary. Speak but the word, and the work is done. My commands are always executed. I say to this one, Do this, and he doeth it, and to another, Come, and he cometh. Thy commands, then, certainly will be executed. Just say then of my servant, He shall be healed, and I know the work will be done. "When Jesus heard this he marveled, and said, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." Now, from this it appears that the centurion believed that Jesus had divine power, and that if addressed in prayer he would exert it.

That lesson, and especially the explanation given to it by Christ, was not lost on his disciples. They could not fail to have seen that if the centurion had not believed, his servant would not have been healed, and they doubtless committed to memory these words of Christ, "As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee." This is God's rule of proportion in conferring spiritual blessings.

Still, these disciples needed line upon line and precept upon precept, for but a day or two afterwards they were on the Sea of Galilee in a ship, and a tremendous storm arose. Jesus was asleep. His disciples awoke him in an agony of fear, exclaiming, "Lord, save us, we perish!"—And he said unto them, "Why are ye so fearful, O ye of little faith?" And he caused it to be calm. But might they not justly be alarmed?



Certainly not, if Jesus was on board. They ought to have believed that he who had healed the sick, and previously exhibited his divine powers, could save them, and they should have been calm in faith. Had they approached him in resignation and peace, and gently inquired how they were to be saved, he would have still shown them his power, but instead of reproving he would have commended them.—*Zion's Herald*.

### EXPERIENCE.

BY MRS. E. J. KRAFT.

Blessed with a praying mother, who was taken from me in infancy, leaving me in the care of God and a praying father, who ever kept us in the Sunday School and strove to guide us in the paths of righteousness, I was subject to religious impressions very early in life, under the efforts of Bro. Terry at Springville, my native place. When ten years of age I *understandingly* went forward for prayers. My stepmother, a Methodist in good standing, fearing I was too young, persuaded my father to detain me from attending the meetings. With tears I obeyed, which moved my father to give me permission to go and do my duty, but being young and willing to please, I gave up the meetings, still living under deep conviction. About two years later under the labors of Bro. Curry, my convictions seemed too much for me, and while there was turmoil and strife in the church—for Bro. Curry stood for God—my thirsty, starving soul was in agony. One Sunday I saw Bro. Curry go to class, and child as I was I straightway left Sunday School and went into class, hoping to receive some help to satisfy my immortal longings. Having great strength of will I could easily appear to be at ease when I was far from it. When the man of God asked me if I had a word to say, I looked at him and said no sir. I shall remember to all eternity the pale trembling lips and the power with which the words they spoke came to my heart, while I plainly saw that he felt the worth of the im-

mortal soul. The devil hindered the work of salvation because he had a good foothold in most of those hearts that had their names on the book that should contain the names of the blood washed alone. Christ was insulted in his own house. Bro. H. Butlin was sent to us. The compromising was done—deadness followed. Zion was barren, and my poor world sick soul said, I will in spite of the devil and all his angels take a stand for God. A few others did the same. In due time I was baptised, joined the M. E. Church in full connection and was at every means of grace determined to be just right. With the exception of two or three old pilgrims I enjoyed as much of God as any appeared to, which was no more than restraining grace. In about a year my father said to me "It will be up hill business unless you get *savingly converted*, and you will know it when you do. Dont you think of getting along without a thorough work." By this time my brother had been converted. I had supposed that as I had taken up my cross from time to time and had been encouraged by a sense of having done right, that when I said the most for God and consequently felt the best, that this must be conversion. But I determined to settle the matter with God. I remained at home with my infant sister, the rest going to church Sunday evening. There it was I pleaded with God. God heard me. The light came, I saw it, asked for it, received it, praise God forever. The woods, the fields, the gardens, all looked more beautiful than they ever had done. God was seen in every plant and blade of grass.

Fourteen years passed. I heard very little about perfect love and saw no one who enjoyed it to my knowledge. Trials came. God led me because at times I went to God as my only comfort. By the rich mercies of God I was brought to reside near the Buffalo Free Methodist Church where Bro. Wm. Gould was then laboring. Eternity alone can reveal the strivings of God's Spirit with me during the few months that I listened to those words sent from God's Holy mountain through Bro. Gould to me.

Every sermon was just what I went to hear. I often wonder how I could endure such awful conviction and still resist the strivings of the Spirit, and sink under the awful shrinking which would come upon me. When I would be about ready to decide to be strange to the world, to live in the world and yet be *dead* to it and alive to God, the Spirit did not leave me. I told God I had rather live in all that agony than be left in my former state of formality. It seemed to me that I could see Bro. G. at the judgment standing against me with thousands of precious souls that I might have seen saved. This was too much. I began in earnest, I went to the parsonage, thence to the meeting, thence to God, and received the blessing of entire consecration—setting myself apart for God's service—but thought I would leave out the hobby of Holiness. Two weeks of joy and peace followed, except a suggestion of Satan—you did not ask for Holiness and may be you did not obtain it. I was at a meeting appointed for Holiness and was asked to give close testimony relating to my experience in this work. I frankly told what my state was. Bro. Gould then said I had received the blessing of entire consecration, which often preceded the blessing of entire Holiness, that my only remedy was to settle the matter with God, ask for what I now see my need of, and obtain it quickly. I bowed before God and asked and received as plain as I would take a book from the hand of a friend. No more doubts; I was in the land of Beulah, praise God forever. This work took place one year ago the third day of last July, and I have found that the blood of Jesus has cleansed me continually and kept me clean—clean from the garments spotted with the flesh. God has used me as I had not expected, but He is formed within, has taken His abode in me, and I am no more my own, therefore it is not for me to question what God's design is, believing that He has an undisputed right to use His own as He pleases. Children of the Lord Jesus, All Hail the power of His dear name.

## JESUS MANIFESTED.

BY MRS. C.

"Your young men shall see visions."

A little time ago in visiting, I met with a Christian who seemed to have on him the mark of deep consecration to God. His whole conversation seemed to speak as of one who had "fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." After meeting with him two or three times he gave me an account of his conversion and religious experience. Thinking it might interest others as it did me, I forward it to you. He said, "my name is H. E. E.—I was born in North Carolina. At the age of nine years I was powerfully awakened. I saw myself a poor lost sinner. These convictions deepened for four months, until the burden became so great I could neither sleep, nor eat. One day I went out alone; I felt if I could not obtain relief I must die; I could do no more. Throwing myself down on the ground in utter helplessness; while I was praying, a light above the brightness of the sun shone round about me. Everything glowed with light. It shone into my soul and the burden of my sin was gone, and "the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ" was there. My soul was filled with the love of God and man. I walked with Him; "glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will to man" breathed through me. After a time I began to long for a fuller manifestation of Jesus to my soul. I could not read, and we had very little religious instruction. I wanted to see Jesus, and I began very earnestly to plead for this, often with tears. One day I was working in the field with others, my heart engaged in prayer, when in a moment the Saviour was revealed unto me. He hung upon the cross. So vivid was the sight, the agony depicted on the countenance, that at the sight I fainted and fell prostrate on the earth. My soul seemed then to be caught away from the body, and I was in the midst of a glorious company. They seemed innumerable, extending in every direc-

tion, and all engaged in commemorating the death of our Lord. There were also beings glorious, passing and re passing us. I said to my guide "Who are these?" and he answered, these are the angels ascending and descending from the throne of God. I looked up from whence they came: it was glorious. I saw no form, but glory inexpressible; no mortal eye ever saw such scenes as I saw that day, no ear ever heard such music. I knew the moment when my soul again entered the body; they carried me home for I could not walk. He now told me to go and preach the gospel, and I went the Lord blessing my labors. My soul was filled again with love to God and man." When I last saw him he said, I have an unconverted son; I am going to do as Samuel did, pray three times a day for twenty one days, and if he is not converted then, I shall renew the time till God saves him. O! I thought as he told me, would that we had more such wrestling Jacobs.

### TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS.

BY AUSTIN Q. HAGERMAN.

Paul, in one of his forcible figures of speech, says, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." When strength comes out of weakness, and riches from poverty, then we know that there is something above nature at work. Earthen vessels are weak things. Men do not associate ideas of excellent power with brittle earthenware. Bright gold coin in a dingy clay bowl will attract more attention to its preciousness, than when seen in a gilded, jeweled casket.

When a man of profound and varied acquirements and transcendent genius, and uncommon eloquence, advocates a cause, and it wins its way, not a few would be ready to think that a large share of the success was due,—not to the goodness of the cause—but to the ability of the advocate.

God could have preached a gospel to

all the world by the mouths of angels. But it would have seemed an angel's gospel to us. We would have lost sight of God's glory, in viewing the glory of the angels. The wisdom and goodness of God are seen where He, as far as possible, leaves out the qualities in his servants that would tend to draw men's attention to these qualities, and divert the thoughts from the true source of power and effectiveness. Men are prone to attribute results to visible means, in the work of soul saving. If there is occasion, they will glorify the vessel at the expense of the treasure within it. And so it oftentimes pleases the Lord to use plain and weak instruments to accomplish mighty results.

If we would reform the earth and move men Christ-ward, we must have Christ dwelling richly in our hearts by faith—the heavenly treasure in the earthen vessel. We must intensely believe in Him. We must have an anointing from the Holy One, so that we may know the things of God. Self must be swallowed up in self-denial, and in meekness and lowliness. Pride, strife and vain-glory must be abolished. Moneyed power, and worldly grandeur, and gaudy fashion must not be mixed up with the treasure. These must be put away, else the glory and power of Jesus will be marred by the egotism of his ministers, and the self-sufficient haughtiness of His servants.

No matter how poor, or ignorant, or awkward a disciple may be; no matter how contemptible in speech, or weak in bodily presence, if he loves and obeys Christ's commandments day by day, he will show that the excellency of the power in him is of God and not of men.

Learn of Jesus to be meek and lowly in heart. Then you can work. Said an earnest laborer once: "When we get little enough, then God will use us. He proposes to do the work and He must have the glory."

God is a great God, and, therefore, we should wait upon him; he is a good God, and, therefore, it is not in vain to wait upon him.



"I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT MASONRY."

BY GEN. J. W. PHELPS.

There are some men who have undertaken the solemn duty of expounding the Christian religion, the basis of our republican institutions, and yet make it a merit that they know nothing about one of the chief enmities of the Christian religion. They are peaceably disposed men who seem to think that ignorance is bliss.

But this position is not in accord with that assumed by St. Paul, who thought it best not to be ignorant of the devices of Satan, lest Satan should get an advantage over him.—2 Cor. ii. 11. A servant cannot disregard the wiles of his employer's enemies and at the same time be faithful to his employer's interests. The Saviour Himself earnestly warned His followers against the leaven of the Pharisees.

A minister of Christ, therefore, who does not warn his followers against the leaven of Masonry, which, instead of being a leaven of sincerity and truth, is a Pharisaical leaven, of cunning, guile, deceit and falsehood,—proves false to his trust, and is one of the many who corrupt the word of God.—2 Cor. ii. 17.—by making it a mere means of getting a living. He who shuts his eyes to a reputed evil or danger, cannot possibly be a safe guide. He willingly makes of himself a blind guide that leads into the ditch.

Is it not a sense of his own personal safety rather than a sense of duty to Christ, that prompts the shepherd of Christ's flock to say, "I know nothing about Masonry." Is it not his duty to inform his flock, and put them on their guard against wolves in sheep's clothing. Here is a new and strange religion growing up in the land, with the pretension of being a better religion than that of Christ, which erects temples costing in some cases over a million of dollars, and yet ministers of Christ consider it a worthy trait in their character to know nothing and to say nothing about it.

Young men may be drawn away to perdition by thousands; the Church of Christ be taken possession of by violence and craft; the wine of its holy supper be drunk by sots, its rite of baptism be practiced in burlesque by infidels, its confirmation be parodied by "Sublime and perfect Masons" professing the faith of Jews, Mohammedans, or Pagans; its entire organism be turned into mockery and jest; and yet the sentinel on the watch tower is to give no alarm! He is to know nothing about it!

Verily, if political reform is needed among our political office-holders, much more is needed a reform among our preachers of religion. They ought to know something about what they pretend to preach.

And what are we to think of pretended reformers who aim at getting up revivals, and who leave their converts in the damning delusion that they can be Masons and still become new creatures in Christ. A revival that leaves a community under the impression that Masonry is compatible with Christianity, lacks the first element of being truly religious. Mr. Moody says that "the devil never sets himself to work until he has been routed." If this is the case then the devil never sets to work in our revivals, for he is never routed by them so long as they fail to reach the subject of Masonry. The Devil must quietly laugh at a revival which is so shallow as not to touch upon that egregious, religious imposture.

The duty of Christ's ministers is to preach the truth, and the truth cannot be known by hiding the eyes to facts. The practices of Masonry are terrible facts; they are subtle, deceitful tricks, at enmity with Christ, and to shut the eyes to them is to play the ostrich that hides its eyes in the sand, rather than to play the part of a man, who has undertaken the serious duties and responsibilities of the Christian religion and republican government. To bury one's talents in ignorance, may please the Masons and other ring-men, but it cannot serve the Lord.

Pitiable, indeed, is that spirit which

is so overshadowed by the gloomy dangers threatened from a secret and wicked institution, that it dares not even look to see wherein those dangers lie. Untruthful to a painful degree, is that mind which will not investigate all things, but will let the waters of truth stagnate, and, as Milton says, "sicken into a muddy pool of conformity and tradition," such as Masonry is, to infest society with its malarious influence. How unworthily servile in a minister of that Christ who died that all men might be made free, to stand so much in fear of an institution of man, and that too in a free country, that he refrains even from looking into it and forming his own opinions! How vain to think that he can serve Christ, and yet stand in such dread of men!

There was a time,—and indeed, that time is hardly yet past,—when Masonry, in all the arrogance of power, asked its opponents with supercilious surprise, if they expected ever to be able to put a stop to an institution so "ancient and honorable"; for it preposterously assumed all the virtues of the Church, and felt that the powers of hell could not prevail against it. But a change is taking place in this state of things, so that we anti Masons may now ask, if Masons ever expect to put a stop to anti-Masonry. Not until true religion and true republicanism are both dead. Already a dividing line has been run among our ministers of religion. There is a class of preachers who are entirely opposed to Masonry, as an abominable blasphemy; another class believe in it, as better and broader than Christianity; and still a third class, who "know nothing about it." One of these classes cannot possibly be right, if the others are; and Christian society, for the sake of its own respectability, will have to decide between them. Society at large cannot long shut its eyes to damaging facts, as some recreant ministers do.

When society will have given in its decision on this question, as it finally must give it, there will then be found few ministers who will make it a virtue of prudence to "know nothing about

Masonry." Until then, and so long as the people of the United States remain, as they now are, subordinated to the sophistries of the Masonic lodge, their republican genius, their manhood, their power, and dignity, must remain subjected to shame and depreciation.

On the 17th of June of this year, a long procession wound through the streets of Boston, and went up to Bunker Hill to re-dedicate a monument there. At an earlier period, on the 2d of the same month, another procession, more formidable than the other for discipline and show, and perhaps for numbers, wound through the streets of New York, and marched up to a corner on Sixth Avenue to dedicate another monument. The first monument was a patriotic one, commemorating the struggle of a Puritan people for freedom and equality. The latter monument was a temple, erected to Masonry—an un-American institution, invented in a London grog-shop in 1717, and claiming to be a better religion than that of Puritanism; which imposes assessments under duress; administers oaths, and punishes with death those who violate them; which secures neither freedom nor equality; whose officers are appointed, and whose charters are granted, no outside citizen knows how or by whom, but whose members are known to hold a large percentage of all the political offices of the country; and yet there are ministers of the gospel, who commend themselves for Christian peace and meekness by making it a point to know nothing about Masonry. This foreign religion takes root and grows among us, in overwhelming proportions, within the period of one short generation, and yet we have ministers who "know nothing about it!" A deadly rival of the Christian religion, and an insidious foe of republican government, flourishes in our midst, and there are ministers of the gospel, and pretentious political leaders, who are as innocent as doves of any knowledge of its character!

He who knows nothing of the history and workings of organized secret associations, against the principles of which

the Christian religion has held a long struggle, and in which it is at best, soiled, smirched, and defaced, can form but a faint idea of the real force and application of the New Testament, and should not at this day undertake to expound it to his fellow men. If he boasts of knowing nothing of such associations, whose books are scattered throughout the land, he simply shows himself unfit for his profession.

### MY EXPERIENCE.

BY VIRGINIA M. WALTER.

I have been blessed with religious parents who taught me the fear of God. In early childhood I felt myself a great sinner, and was under such bitter condemnation that in time of supposed danger I would call upon God to spare my life and I would devote it to His service; but in safety I was prone to forget my vows. At the age of eleven years I yielded, and was saved on gospel terms. Instead of darkness and condemnation I realized an indescribable quiet, with an assurance that my sins were forgiven. From this time I *tried* to follow Jesus, yet many times found me a penitent at His feet. At one time I made a public confession of my deviation from the path, by presenting myself at the altar for prayer, where the Lord received and blessed me.

In my seventeenth year, through the labors of G. W. Friend who was then our Pastor, I was awakened to the necessity of entire sanctification, saw what consecration meant, and knew that in dress I must be conformed to the Divine will, "adorning myself in modest apparel" and "not with broidered hair, or gold or pearls or costly array." Though I was strongly urged by the Spirit to yield, yet from unbelief I was unable to enter in, so, like the Israelites, I was doomed to wander, to my own peril, in the wilderness, until by faith I should "believe and enter in." This I did on the morning of the third day of December 1871. For about a year previous to this date I was clear in my apprehension

of the justifying grace of Christ, but let it be remembered that I was earnestly seeking the second blessing. In the latter part of the year mentioned, one of my sisters attended a Free Methodist camp meeting, where a holy life was so plainly marked out that she with many others entered in and found that there was indeed "a land of corn and wine," and that it was not only every believer's *privilege* but his *duty* to be wholly the Lord's. Her account of the Lord's wonderful workings at the meeting, together with what God had wrought in her soul, filled me with renewed longings to be perfectly free. I began to pant after God. Day and night and at almost every breathing for two long months I ceased not to call upon God for this baptism. At many times I was greatly blessed, but still the blessing I sought was delayed. I at first sought it by works. I sought the help of man but learned that "vain is the help of man" when, at the moment that despair began to stare me in the face and I thought myself about to be captured by the enemy, my mother read to me the incident of a small bird chased by a hawk, which in a moment of extremity took refuge in the bosom of a tender hearted man. The Spirit applied this simple incident to my soul in a most wonderful manner, and in the same moment, by the help of God, I was enabled to enter into the most holy place with Christ Jesus. The perfectness of that rest is indescribable, and with it a sense as though soul and body were transparent, cleansed from all idols and from all sin.

### MADE WHOLE BODILY.

"He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind."—*Jesus*.

In my twentieth year, two years before my sanctification, my health failed and in a short time I was compelled to keep my bed. In addition to my helplessness I lost the use of my eyes, and was in that situation with but little relief for five years. O! the bitterness of that cup. For me, so full of life's happy anticipations, to be thus cut down



was no trifling matter. But praise God, the severity of the correction has yielded in proportion the peaceable fruits of righteousness. I enjoyed the blessing of holiness some six months before feeling at liberty to pray for the healing of my body, fearing I should desire it without due submission to God's will, and it was with fear and trembling that I first made known this request. Though my pleadings in this direction were earnest and often agonizing, yet I could say with a fervor as never before, "Not my will but thine be done." I once realized that the Saviour's back was turned toward me in the presentation of this petition, but like the Syrophenician woman I continued calling, "Jesus thou Son of David have mercy on me."

About the end of Nov. or early in Dec. 1873 I realized that my faith was perfect, that I was ready *now* to be healed, that by the hand of faith I touched *now* and *momentarily* the hem of the promises. From this time my faith, with one exception, remained fixed.

During the time between Dec. 1873 and July 1874 I was healed to such an extent I could walk some and see more or less every day, though sometimes only with one eye. A portion of this time I felt as though in a furnace of fire, but amid the flames I realized the presence of one like unto the Son of God, who said, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." This for a time seemed answerable to my petition, and I thought it my life work to suffer. For a while my faith became inactive and I almost ceased praying for my health, though I felt perfect submission, yet somehow I was soon crying and that most instinctively, "Thou Son of David have mercy on me." After this my faith was settled, knowing that God did indeed hear my prayer. O! the lesson of patience I learned in thus waiting God's good time. With what comfort could I present my body an offering to Him, realizing that as soon as consistent with His will I should be healed. I had an assurance of this, but did not know whether it would be during life or accomplished only at death. In this man-

ner I waited before God until the morning of the 29th of July, when, without ecstasy of joy or extra illumination there came a sense of the presence of the Saviour and a presentation of the gift of health, accompanied with these words, "Here is the gift for which you have been praying, are you willing to receive it?" Accompanying this was a preternatural perception of the misrepresentation and misunderstanding following such confessions, how I should be deemed a hypocrite etc., which might be my portion. But I set my face against the flood and said, "Thy will be done." The love of Christ constrained me. I know that He is a wise master builder, and is not mistaken in His work. At this point my request was granted. Forever to be remembered moment! I at first felt the incoming of divine power at the parts diseased, steadily driving out the disease until death was swallowed up in victory. I at once, by faith more than feeling, arose from my bed and proceeded to work about the house, to the great astonishment of my friends, some of whom thought me wild, but I continued my work assuring them that Jesus had healed me. My healing took place on Wednesday; on Saturday I was persuaded to lay down, which I did, but I found the bed no place for me. I thought of Peter's wife's mother who "arose and ministered unto them." To her, strength as well as health was instantly given, as was the case of the palsied man, who rose, took up his bed, and walked. I returned to my work, backing my experience with those in God's word, and did not lie down any more during day time. My friends could not realize the completeness of the cure until I had read a full hour, and that by lamp light, the first opportunity after being healed. A week from this time I discharged the hired girl, taking charge of the household work, which I have continued with ease. About four weeks after my healing I had occasion to walk four miles, which I did with little or no weariness.

Let me add, to the praise of God, that I have no disease whatever. I am able to do more work with less weariness than

at any other period in my life. And Jesus is the balm that made me whole. As He, in the end, did unto His servant Job, so hath he done unto His handmaiden. Greatly to be praised is the name of our Saviour.

Van Buren Co., Iowa.

### THE PURE IN HEART ARE HUMBLE.

We sometimes hear it said that if any one is made *perfect* in Christ,—is wholly sanctified,—he cannot be *abased* in his own eyes, for he is *perfect*.

How far is this from being the case. We may illustrate what we would say in answer to the objection, by the case of the penitent sinner. When he is brought to see and apprehend fully his condition as unreconciled to God, as *lost* in sin, utterly and *hopelessly lost*, forever lost, for all that human aid can avail, and then has a view of *Jesus* as an almighty Saviour, the one, and the only one adapted to his necessity, and sees how *freely* and how *fully* he will save; when, with all his soul, he receives him as his Saviour, and feels how *great* the *grace*, the unmerited favor shown to him, is his heart lifted up within him, to glory in himself? None will admit it. Then, "as ye have *received* Christ, so *walk* in him." In deep loathing of self and sin, earnest faith, which holds with an unyielding grasp, and a quenchless love to the great Deliverer, who is "strong to save, and mighty to redeem," and whose *love* is equal to his power.

When the Lord promised by Ezekiel that he would cleanse his people from all their filthiness, and all their idols, that he would *save* them from all their uncleanness, etc.,—Ezek. xxxvi., from the 17th verse to the end,—he says: "Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall *loathe yourselves* in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations. Not for *your* sakes do I this, saith the Lord, be it known unto you."

Shall we ever lose sight of "the rock

whence we were hewn, or the hole of the pit whence we were digged?" Shall we ever cease to magnify the riches of that abounding grace, which has taken our feet from the miry clay and set them upon a rock, and put a new song in our mouths, even praise to our God?—and shall we now "*continue in sin* that *grace* may abound? God forbid! How shall we who are *dead to sin*, *live* any longer *therein*?" It is "*by grace* we are saved through *faith*, and that not of *ourselves*, it is the *gift of God*."

Hence the necessity of prayer without ceasing, of continued, abiding faith, and a present salvation, moment by moment. When trials come, as come they must, "for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth," shall we suffer our hearts to quail? Rather let us hear the Saviour saying to us, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." His prayer is always answered. When the waves roar, and we are beginning to sink, thinking we see evil and nought but death, let those sweet words, "It is *I*, be not afraid," from the same blessed voice again re-assure us, and calm all our fears, for we shall obtain "the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

EVERY CHRISTIAN SHOULD LABOR.  
—DR. WAYLAND, speaking of the Christians who were dispersed by the first persecution of the Church at Jerusalem, says, "This little band accomplished more for the conversion of the world than all the Christians of the present day united have done;" does any one ask why? "Because," says he, "every individual felt that the conversion of the world was the work to which *he himself*, and not an abstraction called the Church, was responsible. Instead of relying on man for aid, every man looked directly up to God to forward the work. God was thus exalted, His power was confessed; and very soon, in a few years, the standard of the cross was carried to the remotest corners of the then known world."

## REV. WM. TENNENT'S TRANCE.

A correspondent of the *Springfield Republican*, writing from Freehold, N. J., says:

"Little need be said about Rev. Wm. Tennent; he is nearly as well known in America as Whitefield and Wayland. He was a characteristic American minister of the 18th century, and the like of him we do not see in these days. He was a noble, holy man, but he did not really live in this world. His conversation was in heaven. His was an eloquence of a powerful sort, and he was capable of making it very uncomfortable for the sinner. Born in Ireland, he came to this country when thirteen years old, and after a severe course of training, under which he became an accomplished scholar, he took charge of the First Presbyterian Church in Freehold. A tablet in the meeting-house tells us that he ministered to this parish forty-three years and a half, and died in 1777 at the age of 71. The most noted event of his life was a three day's trance, during which, he afterwards asserted, he visited heaven. He had been in ill health for some time, and became very despondent in regard to his prospects for eternity. He was conversing with his brother in Latin on the state of his soul, one morning, when he fell and seemed to die. He was duly laid out, and the people were invited to the funeral; but the physician, seeing signs of life, in spite of the fact that he had every external appearance of a dead man, induced the friends to postpone the obsequies to the third day. The third day came, but no life to the corpse. The guests were assembled, but the physician begged for an hour, then half an hour, then fifteen minutes, the brother of Tennent getting very angry meanwhile at the efforts to restore him. The brother had given a positive command that the ceremonies should proceed, when the candidate for burial gave a terrible groan and attempted to rise. The good people of Freehold were cheated out of their funeral. It was several weeks before

Tennent fully recovered, and it was found that he had lost all he ever knew, so that the work of teaching him reading and writing had to be commenced; but, one day, he felt a sudden shock in his head, and all his Latin, and Greek, and theology came back to him. Tennent's description of the region into which his spirit went, while his body lay dead, is simply that of heaven. He saw the happy throngs, heard the sweet music, and was just asking permission to join the angel bands, when he was sent back to earth. He never would talk much about his celestial journey, but said he would leave a full account of it among his papers when he died. Unhappily his story has not been found to this day. He had one or two other experiences of the same sort, though none so remarkable. Tennent is buried under the very center of the church, and everybody who passes up the broad aisle treads above his head. The old church is much as it was when he preached in it, the seats having been changed a little, to make them less like instruments of torture, and the luxury of a stove having been introduced; our severely pious forefathers having no fire in church, outside of their own ribs, you know. The building has been much mutilated by lovers of relics, and the walls are now protected by a layer of shingles."

## THE BEAUTY OF THE LORD.

There are moments in the life of every Christian, when the name and cause of Christ are more precious to him than gold; when the Divine character appears ineffably glorious; when a celestial beauty adorns the sacred page, and the everlasting truths of the gospel are sweeter to him "than honey or the honeycomb." He beholds "the beauty of the Lord" in everything. Wherever he turns, he sees some thrilling manifestation. Even the wickedness of the wicked suggests to him that God is holy and will punish sin. If he looks upon the wonderful works of art, he experiences a thrill of delight at the diviner



beauty which they image forth, thus beholding "the beauty of the Lord." If he glances at history, and gathers in a single panorama all that the world ever called beautiful or great, in science or literature, still is he reminded of the great Creator and Upholder of all things. If he he gazes at the sky when the meek stars are shedding their silver light upon the world, again does this utterance within him declare that all this is the "beauty of the Lord." But above all, when he looks into the works of redeeming love, and beholds the mighty workings of benevolence there; when he stands on Calvary, and sees Him who hangs there, the just for the unjust; when he sees the stone rolled away from the sepulchre, and the linen clothes lying, and the Saviour gone; when he beholds the ascending Redeemer, and hears the man in the white raiment, saying, "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven," then indeed, he sees "the beauty of the Lord." And he sees "the beauty of the Lord" in all the ordinances of religion, in the sabbath, in the gospel, the meeting for prayer and the communion of saints. He no longer wonders at David for saying, "One thing have I desired of the Lord; that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."—*Christian Witness*.

#### CHARLES G. FINNEY AS A PREACHER.

One of the greatest preachers ceased from among men when the patriarch of Oberlin died. I question, indeed, whether any human being ever preached during a long series of years with greater power than did Charles G. Finney. A little attempt at analysis of his eloquence may be interesting as well as profitable. It will not be unseasonable either, although made now, while the public heart is still vibrating with the

shock communicated by the news of his sudden departure.

Sudden his departure was but it was not premature. His sun did not go down until the long, lingering day was complete. It hung soft and splendid on the horizon, shedding a full, though mellow light through the unclouded air, not as if reluctant to descend, but as if loving yet a while longer to bless, until now, at last, by the abrupt refraction of death, it is hidden forever from our eyes. Besides this, President Finney's moral and intellectual quality was such that we honor and not wrong his memory when we try, in whatever way, to turn his example to useful, practical account.

It so happened that I was a student in the University of Rochester when, in the winter of 1856-7, President Finney held the last of his remarkable series of preaching services in that city. Preaching services, I say; but I am immediately in doubt whether I ought not equally to characterize them as praying services. For it was an essential feature of Mr. Finney's method as a revivalist, to establish daily prayer-meetings at the outset, in connection with his preaching; and even the coldly rationalizing observer of his work would have been forced to confess that the praying, if only as a means of human excitation, was, not less than the sermons, the secret of his wonderful success. In 1825, upward of twenty-five years before, while Rochester was still a village and while Mr. Finney was still a young man, he had made that place the theater of his efforts as a revivalist. Some of the most prominent citizens of the town, converted at that time, especially from among the lawyers, were in 1856 yet living to welcome Mr. Finney back to Rochester as their spiritual father.

The interest was extraordinary. The city was taken possession of. Scarcely anything else was talked about. The atmosphere was full of a kind of electricity of spiritual power. The daily papers all reported the meetings at great length. Strangers casually visiting the city, were unable to resist the infection

of the prevailing religious influence.—The railroads at one time, I remember, were obstructed by a snow-storm, which detained large numbers of passengers temporarily in the city. A large proportion of these were attracted into the meetings. The result was that a great many, during this brief interval, were converted. People accosted each other in the street, and began an exchange of question and reply on the subject of personal religion, as naturally and easily almost as in a time of commercial distress they would talk of the financial condition of the country; or, to use an apter illustration, as in a time of epidemic disease, they would talk of their own health and of that of their families and friends.

Leaving out of account the supernatural element that wrought in the Rochester movement, we see Mr. Finney standing in it apart and alone, as its single master spirit, as the Prospero—if such an application will not be deemed unworthy of the theme—the Prospero of the mighty moral tempest.

I am profoundly persuaded that Mr. Finney was a man of God, in the antique scriptural sense of that expression. I have no doubt he derived, through prayer and obedient living, from the Holy Ghost himself, that extraordinary, that supernatural power which he wielded—if it did not rather wield him,—in his preaching. This is my unwavering conviction. I record it as my own joyful, personal testimony to what I believe to be in his case the strengthening and inspiring truth, and in the case of us all the strengthening and inspiring possibility.

But the divine, supernatural factor of Mr. Finney's influence as a preacher is, of course, beyond our exploration and analysis. We have done our duty and exhausted our privilege concerning it, when we have devoutly acknowledged its presence and noted, besides, the human conditions of its presence. These conditions are, in fact, one condition. They may all be summed up in a single word—obedience. Mr. Finney obeyed God. His obedience was the conduct-

ing medium that drew down the power of the Holy Ghost upon him. If his obedience had been still better than it was, it would have drawn down upon him the same power in still greater measure.

When I use the word obedience thus, of course, I do not mean a conformity merely in act. I mean a voluntary in being as well as in doing. I include faith, or trust, as a part of obedience. Mr. Finney's faith, which some, no doubt, would make to be the prime element of his power, had nothing of vagueness or of mysticism in it. It was practical. It was obedience rather. It did not seek to exist by itself and exert, as it were, a magical influence, a kind of self-flattering, miraculous power. It was content to take God at his word, and act accordingly. It went right on and *obeyed*. This, I think, on the side of personal piety, and on the side, too, of the divine factor in pulpit power, is the great lesson to us of Mr. Finney's life. According as our obedience matches Mr. Finney's, God will make us strong like him.—*Wm. C. Wilkinson, in Independent.*

Be persuaded to travel in the way that leads to heaven, viz: in a way of holiness, self-denial and mortification, in a way of obedience to all commands of God, in a way of following Christ's example, in a way of heavenly life, or imitation of the saints and angels that live in heaven. Be content to travel on in this way, in a laborious manner, to endure the fatigues of it. Begin to travel it at once, if you have not already begun it, and travel it with assiduity. Let it be your daily work from morning to night, and hold out in it to the end. Let there be nothing that shall stop or discourage you to turn aside from this road. Labor to be growing in holiness, to be growing nearer and nearer to heaven, in that you are more and more as you shall be when you get there (if that ever be), and let all other concerns be subordinate to this great concern of getting forward toward heaven.—*Edwards.*

## EDITORIAL.

## RELIGIOUS PLAYS.

Christ says, *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.*—Jno. xii. 32. The preaching of the cross is the greatest attraction that this world ever saw. Other sources of interest lose, with their novelty, the power to please; but the more thoroughly we become acquainted with the Gospel, the greater is its influence over us. The story of the cross never grows old. The Gospel cannot be preached in its purity—in the power of the Holy Ghost—without drawing the people to listen to its offers of mercy. But as Christianity degenerates, it loses its hold upon the people, and the preachers resort to worldly artifices to secure the attention which their message, of itself, fails to receive. In the twelfth century the ecclesiastics resorted to theatrical exhibitions to instruct the people in the mysteries of religion. W. Fitz Stephen, who wrote a description of London in 1160, says, "London, for theatrical spectacles, hath religious plays, which are representations of the miracles which holy confessor had wrought, and of the sufferings by which martyrs had displayed their constancy." The principal events of the Old and New Testament were dramatized. These dramatic spectacles were first exhibited in the open air. Afterwards they were performed in the churches, and sometimes on the Sabbath. The priests were the actors. These practices became so enormous that they were prohibited by Pope Innocent 3d, in the beginning of the thirteenth century. He says, "Shows and theatrical entertainments are sometimes exhibited in the churches, in which not only the most monstrous masks are introduced, but even the deacons, priests and sub-deacons have the effrontery, on certain festivals, to practice these follies and buffooneries."

We are gradually coming back to the rejected follies of the dark ages. Camp-meetings at first were the most simple and unostentatious of religious gatherings. One great argument in their favor was

reached who seldom entered a church. But a change is coming over the character of these meetings for the worse. In some places they are turned into the means of gratifying a love of pleasure, and of making money. At the Sunday School Camp-meeting, held near Chautauqua Lake, Palestine was exhibited in miniature, and an admittance fee was demanded, as at any other show. At the Silver Lake Camp-meeting, of the Western N. Y. Conference of the M. E. Church, they charged for admission, Sunday and all. It is said that one poor fellow who climbed over the fence, alleged, as an excuse, that he wanted to get religion but had not the money to pay for admission. In view of this mitigating circumstance the tender hearted justice let him off with the fine of a dollar. We wonder if they sung on that ground the good old Methodist hymn,

"The happy gates of Gospel grace  
Stand open night and day."

All of these exhibitions are wrong. It is a perversion of the Gospel to make it a means of extorting money. Those who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. Their bread shall be given them, and their water shall be sure. But they have no right to make the Gospel chargeable to any. *He that giveth let him do it with simplicity*, that is, with the one object of glorifying God. Combine with this motive the love of pleasure, and the heart is divided, and spiritual blindness results. *If, therefore, thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness.*—Mat. vi. 2, 3.

If you hold a Camp-meeting let it be to do good, and not to make money. Do not let the mercenary motive have any—the slightest place in your calculations. Let your expenses be as light as possible. Let there not be a single item for anything which ministers to pride, or for any thing which is not strictly necessary. Instead of making it a place where the worldly resort for pleasure, let it be a battle-field where the hosts of God take their stand



uncompromisingly for the truth as Jesus. Then you will have no trouble to raise what money you need.

Begin to cater to pride and covetousness and there is no consistent stopping place. The love of the world grows as fast as it is indulged. One concession makes the way for another still greater. Soon there will be no perceptible difference between the church and the world.

#### QUIET MEETINGS.

Naturally we love quiet. In itself we dislike noise. But we like spiritual meetings. Of all formal meetings we dislike noisy ones the most. If no one in a meeting can speak, or pray, or sing *in the Spirit*, for our part we would prefer that they should, like the Quakers, sit still. If we cannot be edified, let us not be disturbed. But it is the duty of all Christians to BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT, not sometimes, but at all times. Can a large number of people assembled together be filled with the Spirit of God and there be no excitement?

It is reasonable that men should be excited when they see eternal things in the light of the Spirit. When was there ever an assembly where important temporal interests were discussed, and there was no excitement? But are not questions relating to our eternal destiny of vastly greater consequence than these questions of railroads, or questions of finance?

The Scriptures teach plainly that men should be full of zeal in the service of God. They should go about it deliberately, but deadly in earnest. *The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.*—Mat. xi. 12. But men are never violent until they are excited. *Therefore also now, saith the Lord, Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.*—Joel ii. 12, 13. Can this be done sincerely by a great number without excitement?

Was not the revival in the day of Pentecost a model for revivals under the Christian dispensation? It seems there was at first but a small congregation—only about one hundred and twenty disciples. They had been together before and no marked results followed. But “suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.”—Acts ii. 2-6. Do you imagine that here was no excitement? Was all quiet and orderly? How, then, came Peter to defend their conduct, saying, *For these are not drunken, as ye suppose.*—Acts ii. 15.

There is nothing calculated to stir man's nature to its lowest depths like the religion of the New Testament. It takes hold of every part of our being. Its motives are the strongest that can impel a human being to act. Let us, then, not be afraid of excitement. Let us look for revivals carried on *by the power of the Holy Ghost.*

#### LIVE PREACHERS.

It is not a little remarkable that those qualities which make preachers most in demand, are precisely those qualities which every one called of God to preach the Gospel may possess. These are, in brief, FIRE, FAITH, FIDELITY.

A small sermon all on fire with love to God and man, is far more acceptable to the ordinary congregation than a great sermon very cold and very dry. If your gun is of small calibre, fire your bullets red-hot, at short range, and they will do far greater execution in the hay and stubble entrenchments of the enemy, than will a cold cannon ball fired out of range. You may be ridiculed at first, but those who are in earnest to storm the strong holds of hell,

seeing the execution you will do, will give you their preference.

You may not have great talents and learning, but you may have the fire of the Holy Ghost. If you cannot speak with the tongues of men and of angels, you can peak with the *other tongue*, as the Spirit gives you utterance. The command is, *Be filled with the Spirit*.—Eph. v. 18. The promise is, *How much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him*. Then ask until you receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Do not attempt to preach without the holy fire. Insist upon having it. Plead until you are filled. Then out of the abundance of the heart your mouth will speak.

You need, also, faith for your work. It is unpleasant having one around who is always looking at the dark side of things. They are always obstacles in the way of the work of God. If you look at these chiefly you will get discouraged. Then your languid manner will discourage others. You must have confidence in your principles, confidence in your own integrity, and confidence in God if you would succeed.

If, added to these, you are possessed of unswerving fidelity to God and man, you will make an acceptable preacher. There are great trusts reposed in you. See that you do not betray them. Be true to God. He will uphold you. Be true to your people. Labor faithfully for their good. Give them your time, your energy, your love. Do the best you can to promote their eternal interests. Be faithful in every particular. Do not be afraid of work. *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*.—2 Tim. ii. 15.

#### CHOIR SINGING.

One of the officers of a church visited the choir during service. The leading singer was engaged reading his newspaper during sermon and prayers. When remonstrated with, he said, "his course was entirely proper. He was ready to sing

when the time comes. Meanwhile it was his privilege to enjoy himself as he pleased, so he made no disturbance." The man was right. He was hired to sing, not to worship God. His part was as mechanical as that of the organ. How can people of intelligence call such performance worship? Would a fellow-man think well of you if you approached him seriously with words of friendship, when he knew that you did not mean a word of it? Is it less a mockery to approach God with words of devotion, when there is not the slightest intention to serve him? Is such singing any less an insult to God because it is done in a scientific manner, pleasing to the ear of the ungodly? Do we come to church to please the people, or to worship God? *God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth*.

#### FASTING.

Fasting, as a religious exercise, is an extraordinary means of grace. It is appropriate to times of affliction and suffering. The Pharisees reproached the Saviour because his disciples did not fast, while their disciples, and those of John the Baptist, fasted often. The Saviour answered, *Can ye make the children of the bride-chamber fast while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days*.—Luke v. 34, 35. From this we learn that fasting is not in order in times of rejoicing, when the Master is manifestly present with us.

When needed victories over sin cannot be obtained by prayer alone, then fasting should be added. *Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting*.—Mat. xv. 21. This shows that when prayer fails we should try fasting also.

Fasting should never be resorted to as a substitute for doing right. *Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burden, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover*

*him ; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh ? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily : and thy righteousness shall go before thee : the glory of the Lord shall be thy rear-ward. Then shalt thou call and the Lord shall answer.*—Isa. lviii. 6-9. It is of no use to try to obtain blessings by fasting that come only through confession, restitution, and a spirit of real consecration to God.

Fasting, ordinarily, should not be longer than from morning to night. When in our minds we associate with it a degree of merit, instead of a blessing it becomes a snare. If carried to an extent that it unfits us for duties incumbent upon us, and impairs our health, it becomes a sin. When God gets through with us He will take us out of the world without our help. He will give us no more to do than will be for our good. Moses, Elijah, and our Saviour fasted forty days each, but these were miraculous fasts, and not intended as examples for us to follow.

No where in the New Testament is fasting spoken of as one of the regular, ordained means of grace. If used as our Saviour intended, for special purposes, on special occasions, it is a help ; if it becomes a form, and brings us into bondage, or is carried to an extent that impairs our health, it is a hindrance.

#### COMMUNION WINE.

A young man of fine education, moving in the highest circles of society, contracted a love for strong drink. He was sent by his friends to the Inebriate Asylum at Binghamton. Here he reformed, entered into business, united with the Presbyterian Church, and married an amiable and accomplished young lady. He led an upright life until one Sabbath, a short time ago, he went forward to the communion. The intoxicating wine aroused the dormant appetite, and the next night he was brought home helplessly drunk. His devoted wife watched over him. He became delirious, and imagined that burglars were trying to get into the house. He insisted on having his revolver brought, and his wife, hoping

to quiet him, and supposing it was not loaded, handed it to him. He soon fired at a burglar, as he supposed, but the ball entered his own body and inflicted a mortal wound. The loss of blood brought him to his senses, and in deep anguish for what he had done his agonized spirit passed away, leaving a heart-broken companion.

Here is one case, where, without doubt, drunkenness and death have resulted from the use of intoxicating wine at the communion. How many have taken their first step downward at the table of the Lord, eternity alone will reveal.

There is no need whatever of using intoxicating wine at the communion. With a little pains, in any place where grapes grow, the pure juice of the grape may be obtained. Grapes may be canned as other fruit is canned, and preserved, unfermented, until wanted for use. Where they cannot be had, dried grapes, or raisins may be procured, and from them an excellent substitute for alcoholic wine may be made.

But if you cannot get wine that will not intoxicate, then use none at all. Better go without the communion than to make drunkards. Drunkenness is desolating the land. Let the Church of Jesus Christ steadfastly refuse, directly or indirectly, to swell the number of its victims. *Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its color in the cup,—even though it be the communion cup—for at the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.*

#### TEMPTATIONS.

The quality of a ship is seen by the way it bears itself in a storm. The test of our grace is our behaviour under temptation. Most people are good natured and pleasant when every thing goes according to their wishes. It is impolite to be otherwise.

But how is it with you when you are tired, and hungry, and tempted ? How do you act when you are misrepresented and misused ? What appearance do you present to others when your plans are thwarted, your services not appreciated, and your motives misunderstood ? Are you still



meek, and calm, and quiet? Do you in peace and patience possess your soul?

We venture a few suggestions as to how you should act when under the pressure of temptation.

1. Consider that you are tempted. Take time to think. Do not be hurried. Satan, like a pickpocket, takes advantage of a rush. Be more slow to speak and to act than common. Make no more decisions than is absolutely necessary.

2. Act as nearly as possible as you do when not tempted. Enter not into the temptation. Stop at the threshold. Turn away. Use the strength you have and it will increase. Let your words be mild and few.

3. In the depths of your soul cry to Christ for deliverance. Be not content to remain in bondage. He who is mighty to save is near at hand, and He will come at your call. He will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able to bear.

#### ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

"Is it right for a Christian to marry a sinner?" The word of God answers. *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.*—2 Cor. vi. 4. Marriage yokes two persons together more closely than any other known relation. Business associations may be dissolved at pleasure—this union is for life. So that, whatever else may be included in this prohibition, it is evident that marriage between believers and unbelievers is forbidden.

Such marriages often result in great unhappiness. Solomon was a man of uncommon strength of intellect. His religious experience was deep, his moral perceptions clear, and the Lord appeared unto him twice.—1 Kings ii. 9. Yet his wives turned away his heart after other gods.—1 Kings xi. 4. Is it not so to-day? Have you not seen those who, with godly companions, walked in the ways of the Lord: but when the saint was taken home and the survivor sought another partner who was proud and worldly, the other soon became a partaker of the same spirit. Diseases are often contagious—health never.

**MISTAKES.**—We are anxious to avoid them. We take all possible pains. But, do the best we can, they will sometimes occur. When informed of any, we are more than ready to correct it. So, if we fail in any respect, do not hesitate to tell us. A postal card costs but a cent, and it is better to send us one and tell us what you want, than to complain where it can do no good.

**BUSINESS LETTERS.**—In writing us on business, tell us plainly, in as few words as possible, just what you want. Do not take it for granted that we know anything about it. Do not render it necessary for us to look up any former letter you may have sent us. Be sure and give in plain letters your name, and the name of your post office and State.

**DUE US.**—We have a great deal due us—mostly in small amounts. All the bills that we make must be promptly paid.—Unless our friends help us, we cannot meet them. If all that is due us were paid, we could get along without embarrassment. If you owe us—be the amount ever so little—will you not please forward it as soon as possible? Drops make rivers.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

*My Dear Earnest Christian:—*

Thy monthly visits are indeed comforts to my soul. It is a draft from the fountain of life to have the sweet joy of communing with fellow-pilgrims far away. How my soul longs for the sight once more of a real, lively meeting among holy, happy, shouting brethren. But being called by the Spirit into this wilderness to preach the glorious Gospel of the crucified and resurrected Saviour,—Jesus—to the dry bones in this valley of the Rio Grande, I can only rejoice to know that the brethren at home are praying for me. But some one says: "But what are you doing, then? Are you preaching without fruit?" Well not altogether; we have converts, thank the Lord! but not like those happy souls in the States. We have now a membership of forty-six, though I do not think all

are converted at heart as yet, but still they are no longer under the bondage of Rome. They have come out, and, I am glad to say, they are all trying to serve Jesus. Then, by constant urging, teaching and encouraging we live in hope of seeing them sometime a holy people. Then we have some good, faithful followers of Jesus, who daily work and act for the salvation of souls.

When I came here—twenty months ago—we began our work on the circuit with sixteen members,—all from the Baptist Church. But most of them were really Methodist converts of some pioneer preachers who traveled through here some twenty years ago. Our circuit extends from La Joga to Palomas, a stretch of 117 miles: indeed sometimes to Mesilla, which makes the length 170 miles, with a break of about 30 miles. We have four classes, viz: at Socorro fifteen members and prob., Escondida twelve, Valverde seven, Palomas twelve. Most of these are truly converts from the Roman Catholic faith, though some of them had formerly Protestant ideas. We have a kind of class-meeting: but it is hard to teach these people the real glory of experience-meeting. At our last Quarterly Meeting we had a real break-down Love Feast. It was a glorious time; some weeping, some rejoicing, others penitent. Sixteen joined the church—nine in full connection and seven on probation; one of the latter a little boy only nine years old, but truly a little soldier of Jesus. O for an outpouring of the Spirit on this people! One man joined who formerly studied for the Roman Catholic ministry. His wife, mother and sister are all against him, and now try to do us all the harm possible.

Now, dear reader, whosoever you are, I have told you a little of my experience in this least enlightened country. I require your help to carry on this work successfully to the glory of King Jesus. And you can help me greatly by your praying, yes, and without ceasing, too, for the Lord to bless my feeble efforts to bless the people here. Pray for an outpouring of God's Spirit, a baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire to burn up sin and iniquity, and establish the kingdom of Emmanuel.

I am also a strong anti-mason, and none

of our members are members of any secret society, nor ever shall be as long as I can prevent it. Intemperance reigns to a great extent in this country. The Lord's day is terribly profaned. The name of the Lord is taken in vain on every occasion. Theft is no sin. Adultery is as common, if not more so, than among the Mormons. Ignorance rules over knowledge. Laziness is practiced winter and summer. Yet I have seen and known some of these people who would go to law for five cents. Brethren, pray for us.

*Socorro, New Mexico.*

MATTHIAS MATTHIESON.

### DYING TESTIMONY.

MARGARET F. FISH, youngest daughter of George and Harriet Fish, Perry, Wyoming Co., N. Y., passed from earth to her heavenly home July 31st, 1875, aged nineteen years.

Sister Fish was converted a few years since, but, like many others, she did not long retain the assurance of the divine favor; and, though exemplary in her outward life, lived destitute of experimental religion. But she was ill at ease. God, by his Spirit, troubled her. The past winter, during a series of meetings, she was frequently found at the altar for prayer. Though at times she seemed much in earnest, she did not find peace. There was not an entire willingness to separate wholly from the world and sin. This she afterward acknowledged to be the cause of her not finding salvation.

In March she was taken ill and was obliged to leave school. From this time she rapidly declined under the wasting hand of consumption. In the former part of her illness she was in great spiritual darkness and discouragement, almost feeling "the harvest is past, the summer ended,"—the door of mercy closed. "I ought to have been saved during the meetings," was her bitter lamentation; and for many weeks scarce a ray of hope lighted the gloom that gathered about her. A few days before her departure light and peace came to her soul, giving her victory over death, hell and the grave. She earnestly longed "to depart and be with

Christ," yet feared she might be too impatient to go. These lines, found in her Bible, can be appreciated when we consider the circumstances of one, in the morning of life, with bright earthly hopes, amidst weariness and pain sinking down to the grave:

"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;  
Winding or strait, it matters not,  
It leads me to thy rest."

Her favorite songs during the last of her sickness were, "The cleansing wave," and "Whiter than snow." She said of Bro. Wm. Fell, who assisted in the meetings referred to, "He labored faithfully for my salvation;—*Tell him I have got religion and have gone home.*" To her weeping mother she said, "If permitted I shall often look down upon you from my heavenly home." She sent messages to several of her young associates, members of the church, urging them to lay aside all worldly conformity and be wholly devoted to the cause of Christ. May God help them to heed the admonition!

After a day of much suffering the closing scene drew near. About an hour previous to her happy release she asked her father to read to her from the Bible. After listening a while she said, "That will do; I want to think," and for a while appeared in deep meditation. Just before the dawn of the Sabbath she calmly entered into the "rest that remaineth for the people of God," closing her eyes on earth to open them amid the glories of the eternal Sabbath above.

M. C. BURRITT.

MRS. JOSEPHINE PARKER.

SISTER JOSEPHINE PARKER, wife of Charles Parker, died very suddenly at her home near North Otselic, July 28th, 1875, of congestion of the lungs, aged twenty-four years.

She left a little boy two weeks old. She was taken away in a spasm, and so suddenly that she had no time for any parting

words. But she has left behind what is far better—the influence of a godly life. She was devoted to God in a very remarkable degree, for one of her age, and death found her fully ripe for the kingdom of God.

She was converted between five and six years ago, under the labors of Rev. Chas. J. Howe, and united with the Free Methodist Church. She did not hesitate to take the narrow way. Idol after idol was given up; the vain trappings of the world were laid aside, and she became a plain, uncompromising child of God. After walking faithfully for about a year in the light of justification, she sought and obtained the blessing of entire sanctification, when she received a glorious baptism of the Holy Ghost. Since that time she has suffered much affliction with the people of God, and even vile persecution, on account of her fidelity to the Holy-Ghost power which God had put upon her soul.

In all her duties at home she was extremely faithful. In order to relieve others of their toil she would often undertake more than she ought. While she had strength her energy never flagged. But alas! her life's energies were being consumed too rapidly.

The family altar was a means of grace greatly prized by her, and one of great blessing to her soul. She had learned by grace the luxury of denying herself for the sake of others. Though very social, yet she would always check her companions in whatever she believed to be wrong, and make them respect her religion. She was singularly gifted in exhortation and prayer: her words seemed like inspiration, and rarely ever failed to make a strong impression on those that heard them.

She is lamented by the whole community; and, now that she is gone, there are few who think that she was too earnest in the service of her God. Placed in peculiarly trying circumstances, she met her responsibilities like the truly brave woman that she was. Pure, noble, self sacrificing, heroic, she was too delicate a plant of grace to be left long exposed in a world where cold storms beat upon her, so God has transplanted her to the genial climes above.

H. F. HILL, JR.



MRS. C. E. CHILDS had, for about two years, been a member of the Free Methodist Church. For many years she had been an invalid, but was not wholly confined to her bed until three months previous to her final departure, which took place on the 8th of June, 1875. During her last illness she was a great sufferer, and at times her pain seemed too great to endure. Then she would pray for rest and lie quiet for a while, then her voice might be heard repeating,

"Let patience have its perfect work,  
Entire and wanting nothing."

She gave us many assurances that her peace was made with God. When it had become difficult for her to speak, one said, "It is too bad you must suffer so, is it not?" Firmly closing her lips she shook her head. Another, divining her thoughts, said, "You would say, It is all right." To this she gave assent, faintly smiling. It was her last smile. We can but think of her as "one of the great multitude standing before the throne, and before the Lamb, with palms in their hands, crying, Salvation unto our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

#### LOVE FEAST.

L. S. NESMITH.—I am on my pilgrimage still. I have not crossed the river yet. I feel sometimes as if the crossing was very near. I am trying to shun all the shoals and quicksands and keep out in the deep water, for I do not find any safety in the shallows. I have been looking at others who have been shipwrecked, until sometimes my faith has begun to falter; and, like Peter, I have cried, "Lord, save or I perish!" Oh, how kindly the blessed Jesus has taken me by the hand, and has raised me above the rolling waves, and placed the soft hand of bleeding mercy upon the billows, and has said, as they seemed ready to go over my head, "Thus far shalt thou go and no further." I have heard his blessed voice above the s, saying, "peace, be still;" and then what a sweet, heavenly calm has come over my spirit as the dear Jesus has pressed me to his bosom! I am asking God to help me

make for the harbor, and he does help me wonderfully. When I feel the everlasting arms around me, the arms of my *living Christ* enfolding me, it makes me feel my own nothingness wonderfully; so much so that I seem to lose myself entirely, and feel that Christ and I are one, and that the I is lost in the living Christ. The *living Christ*! The Christ that died and rose from the dead, and lives forever more, is my own indwelling Christ to-day—I in Him and He in me. Bless His dear name! My longed desires are going out for others, that they may be saved from their sins and rest with me in Christ.

AGNES LAMBERT.—I am glad that I have found a people that will stand up and preach the Bible truth. I thank God, that, through the preaching of His word, the convicting power found its way to my heart; and, thank God! I sought and found Him a satisfying portion to my soul. To-day I do praise God for a free and full salvation. It lifts me above the vain things of earth, and sets my affections on things above. O, there is power in Jesus' blood to wash us whiter than snow!

Coopersville, Mich.

CHARLES B. MANSELL.—It is wonderful to know the power of God through Christ Jesus to save—not partly—but fully. Glory, glory to the Lamb! I have this blessed knowledge and experience. I am a saved man; ready to live, ready to die, ready for trials, ready to suffer, ready for joy! His will shall be mine, by His help. The cross may be heavy, but the crown I soon shall wear.

Evansville, Ind.

S. H. POTTER.—Early in life my mother taught me that prayer, so familiar with mothers, "Now I lay me down to sleep." While young we moved away from church and remained there for some time. A Sabbath School was started. The instructions there received will never be forgotten. In November, 1872, I was arrested by the Spirit of God. I sought and found a Saviour who is able to save to the uttermost. To all who need a full and free salvation I would say, come to Christ.