

THE EARNEST CHRISTAIN AND GOLDEN RULE.

VOL. XXXIV.

OCTOBER, 1877.

No. 4

CHARITY.

BY REV. B. T. ROBERTS.

Success or failure in ordinary affairs often depends upon matters of apparently small importance. A decision, made in a moment, about the sale or purchase of property, settles the question for life, of affluence or poverty. The lack of a single vote keeps the aspirant from the Presidential Chair. Many who were upon the very point of becoming Christians, influenced by a sneer, continue in sin. A large proportion of those who profess to be Christians, will fail of reaching Heaven at last. Some take the wrong road; others fall out by the way. *Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.*—Luke xiii, 24. Does not our Saviour here plainly teach that many who put forth some efforts to gain Heaven, will yet fail because they are not sufficiently in earnest? *Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.*—1 Cor. ix, 24. To run implies a good degree of earnestness. Yet the Apostle teaches that some who even run shall fail. What then must be the fate of those who make no effort?

I. ITS NATURE.

1. We see then that CHARITY does not consist in a blind belief that all who profess to be Christians are in the way to Heaven. We cannot believe this and believe the Bible. Yet this is the popular idea of charity. Let a minister, filled with the Spirit of Christ, with the utmost tenderness, warn professors who do not bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, that **THEY ARE IN THE WAY TO HELL**, and at once it goes out that he is wanting in charity. Such a hue and cry will be raised that even those who believe what he says will not dare to stand by him. Suppose you saw a person taking the wrong road, would it be charity to tell him he is going in the right direction? Suppose you see a friend in the first stages of cholera, would it be charity to encourage him to think that nothing serious is the matter until it is too late for remedies? So it is not charity to change God's truth to a lie,—to cry "Peace, peace," when God has not spoken peace.

2. Nor is charity simply alms-giving. It implies this; but it embraces much more. The Apostle says, *Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.*—1 Cor. xiii, 3. This certain-

ly teaches that one may give for the best of objects and to the fullest extent of his means without having charity. Charity is love—love to God and love to man. As referring to God, it implies a delight in Him and a desire to please Him. As referring to man, it implies a tender compassion for him and a feeling of good-will towards him. As to its character charity is—

(1.) Kind—*Charity suffereth long, and is kind.*—1 Cor. xiii, 4. *Love worketh no ill to his neighbor.*—Rom. xiii, 10. So if you find yourself taking undue advantage of your neighbors—getting out of them all you can, and giving them as little as possible in return, you are fatally deficient in charity.

Those whom you love you can no more injure in reputation than in property. You are ready to make every plausible apology for their actions. You always put the best construction upon their conduct, and credit them with the best motives that the circumstances will allow. If then, you lend a willing ear to a reproach against your neighbor, and take it up and spread it, you certainly are wanting in charity. It matters not what experiences you have had, or what professions you still make, you but deceive yourself, if you think you have charity.

(2.) Not envious. *Charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.*—v. 4, 5.

Do you feel cold towards others because they are prospered, or are preferred to you in any position of honor or trust? Are you ready to leave the church because you are not selected as

leader? Are you boasting about your ability and telling what you can do? Then you are wanting in charity. There is no mistake in the matter. You are a deceived person if you think you are right.

(3.) Patient. *Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.* A lack of patience always indicates a lack of love. The mother bears with the child when no one else will, because she has a love which they cannot feel.

If you love God you will bear without murmuring any burden which He lays upon you. If you will not support the ministry unless your pride is gratified by owning a pew—if you will not give to a deserving object unless in doing it your appetite is indulged, you certainly are wanting in charity. Deceived, by yourself as you may be—assisted by others in the deception as you may be, *thou art weighed in the balance and art found wanting.* He who will do good from any motive, which he would not do out of love for Christ, is no Christian. There is a great deal of charity falsely so-called; but there is such a thing as genuine charity, which is essential to the Christian character.

II. ITS IMPORTANCE.

It is astonishing how many good qualities one may possess, and yet be wanting in that which is essential. How those who have gifts rejoice in their possession! How we admire them in others! How reverently we listen to those who can understand the mysteries of revelation! How positive we are that if we have faith we must be in a state of salvation. Yet the Apostle declares, *Though I speak*

with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.—1 Cor. xiii, 1, 2.

Never was there a religion so exacting as the Christian. It requires of its votaries that they be right—not only in some particulars. The God of the Bible proclaims himself *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.*—Ex. xxxiv, 6, 7. He is a jealous God, and will bear no rival. He accepts no sacrifices or services as a substitute for love.

Beloveds, examine yourselves on this one point, and see if you have charity. Do not take it for granted. Do not reason that you are a child of God, and as a child of God has this grace, therefore you must have it. This is not the way to ascertain the truth in the case. Do not assume that, because you are plain in your dress, and unsparring in your self-denial, and, out-spoken in your testimony, that, therefore, you must have charity. Remember that it is possible for you not only to give up your reputation, but even give your body to be burned, and still not have charity. A plain dress may cover an envious heart, as “costly apparel” certainly covers a proud one. See if you have the feeling of love towards every individual! Is there one towards whom you cherish a

grudge? Is there one from whom you turn in aversion? Does the presence of any one at the altar of God, keep you from the altar of God?

Do you bring forth the fruits of this charity in your life? Are you ready to oblige others as far as in your power? Are you gentle in your tones, and kind in your manners, ready to go out of your way to do a service for others? The roughest deal gently with those whom they tenderly love. You may be loving, yet uncompromising; gentle, yet firm. Love begets love. The Apostle, after exhorting to the discharge of various duties, adds: *And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves.*—1 Pet. xii, 8. If others do not manifest it towards you, still do you manifest it towards them, and you may thus win them to a life of love. But do not profess religion, much less holiness, if you cannot greet every one kindly.

In the Gospel, ample provision is made to supply every deficiency of the soul. If you find you are wanting in charity, do not attempt to cover up the want, nor to act as if you had it. Repent before God; confess frankly your lack of this needed grace, and rest not till God melts you down, and pours into your soul the fullness of His love.

Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: from which some having swerved, have turned aside unto vain jangling; desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.—1 Tim. i, 5-7.

—Doing God's will is food to a healthy soul.

SIN LEAVES ITS MARK.

BY AUSTIN Q. HAGERMAN.

Researches among the graves of an aboriginal race in Tennessee showed that the bones in some instances bore marks that had apparently been made by syphilitic disease, that terrible, wasting malady, which is the fit recompense of the sin against the body. The race, whose graves were inspected, were probably dwellers in this land before the present Indians were here. Pottery, images, trinkets, mode of burial, etc., show traces of customs different from those of the red men of to-day. Where are they now? Perished utterly, it would appear, and perhaps wasted by their own wickedness. Dr. J——, who it seems carefully investigated the remains of this ancient people, found what he deemed to be marks of the foul disease that smites uncleanness with its cankering poison. The people's sin left its mark on the speechless skeletons to preach to future dwellers in the land, and warn them against impurity. Perhaps, as it happened with the old, wicked Canaanites, the land vomited forth the inhabitants because of their iniquities. This warning hieroglyphic mark of sin so indelibly etched upon the bones of a perished race, should be pondered by us in this land to-day. The blasting canker of social impurity seems spreading among the people now. Pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness are fostering conditions that are terribly favorable to Sodomitic abominations among the people of this favored domain.

Unless the saving health of Christ's blood become more abundantly diffused, and a strict, prompt obedience to Christ's commands become more general, more ready and implicit, more pervasive and potential by reason of more honest faith and less sham devotion, we shall see our land mourn and the people smitten and enfeebled under fearful sins.

Uncleanness, deadly and terrible, is working secretly and must be checked and corrected openly.

If sin leaves its scar upon the skeleton of the sinner, it sets its mark upon the soul also. Each kind of iniquity, perhaps, has its own peculiar stamp and fixes it upon the spiritual features of the soul. Let no secret evil-doer think to die respectable and leave no sign. If you have ever broken any of God's laws and have never truly repented and brought forth fruits meet for repentance, and thus become restored by faith and obedience to Christ, the dark mark of your sin will betray you in the light of future investigations. The scar is there, and the wise, keen-searching eyes of God and his holy angels will see and read the mark that truly and legibly sets forth the deeds done in the body. How comforting and satisfying it will be in that day to have on the covering garment of Christ's righteousness and beauty. Christ's pure life-blood will heal sin's corrupting wounds and the scars will be hidden in the light of love.

CONVICTION OF SIN.—When man is taken and lain under the day of God's power, when Christ is opening his ear to discipline, and speaking to him that his heart may receive instruction, many times that poor man is as if the devil had found him, and not God. How frenzily he imagines; how crossly he thinks; how ungainly he carries it under convictions, counsels, and his present apprehension of things! I know some are more powerfully dealt withal, and more strongly bound at first by the word; but others more in an ordinary manner, that the flesh and reason may be seen to the glory of Christ. Yea, and where the will is made more quickly to comply with its salvation, it is no thanks to the sinner at all. It is the day of the power of the Lord that has made the work so soon to appear. Therefore count this an act of love, in the height of love; love in a great degree.—*Bunyan.*

GROWING IN GRACE.

To grow in grace is to increase in a spirit of conformity to the will of God, and to govern our conduct more and more by the same principles that God does. God has one great absorbing object, that controls everything he does. It is the promotion of his own glory by seeking to fill the universe with holiness and happiness. He does this by exhibiting his own character. Our object should be the same, to exhibit the character of God more and more, to reflect as many rays of the image of God as possible. That is, we must aim constantly to be more and more like God. To do this more and more is to grow in grace. In other words, it is to obey more and more perfectly and constantly the law of God. That is growing in grace, becoming more holy, or obeying God more fully and constantly.

It is not a certain evidence that an individual grows in grace, because he grows in gifts.

A professor of religion may increase in gifts; that is, he may become more fluent in prayer, and more eloquent in preaching, or more pathetic in exhortation, without being any more holy. We naturally increase in that in which we exercise ourselves. If any person often exercises himself in exhortation, he will naturally—if he makes any effort or lays himself out—increase in fluency and pungency. He may do all this, and yet have no grace at all. He may pray ever so engagedly, and increase in fluency and apparent pathos, and yet have no grace. People who have no grace often do so. It is true, if he has grace, and exercises himself in these things, as he grows in grace he will grow in gifts. No person can exercise himself in obeying God, without improving in those exercises. If he does not improve in gifts, it is a true sign he does not grow in grace. On the other hand it is not evidence that he grows in grace, because he improves in certain exercises, for they

will naturally improve by practice, whether he is a sinner or a hypocrite.

Growing in knowledge is not evidence of growth in grace. Knowledge is indispensable to grace, and growth in knowledge is essential to growth in grace; but knowledge is not grace, and growth in knowledge does not constitute growth in grace. A person may grow ever so much in knowledge and have no grace at all. In hell no doubt they grow in knowledge, but never in grace. Their growth in knowledge constitutes hell. They know more and more of God and his law and their own guilt; and the more they know, the more wretched they are. They have more and more experience of God's wrath, but they never learn piety from it.

It is not evidence that a person grows in grace, because he thinks he is doing so. A person may be favorably impressed with regard to his progress in religion, when it is evident to others that he is not only making no progress, but is in fact declining. An individual who is growing worse, is not ordinarily sensible of the fact. It is common for both impenitent sinners and those who are pious, to think they are growing better, when they are no better. This is so, from the nature of the mind, as any one who will attend to the philosophy of the mind can see. If a person is growing worse, his conscience will become more and more seared, and his mind more and more dark, as he stifles conscience and resists light. Then he may think he is growing better, just because he has less and less sense of sin; and while his conscience continues to sleep, he may continue under a fatal delusion.

Evidences of growth in grace. When an individual finds he has more singleness of heart and more purity of motive in his conduct, it is evidence that he is growing in grace. I will explain what I mean. Even religious men are apt to be influenced in their conduct by a variety of motives, and some of them may be merely selfish. These

motives together make up the complex whole that influences the individual to do a certain act. For instance, suppose a man is asked to give money to build a church in some particular place. He may have a variety of reasons for doing it. He may wish to see a more respectable house there on some account, or it may be so located that if built it will increase the value of his property, or he wishes to be thought liberal, or it may be an object with him to obtain the favor of that church and people. All or any of these may have some influence in determining his mind, and still, after all, a motive of greater weight than the whole may be a desire to save souls and to build up the kingdom of God. Here it is easy to see that some of the considerations which make up the complex whole, are selfish, and so far are wrong and wicked. Now sinners are only selfish—in all that they do. When men are converted, although their leading object then is to glorify God and save souls, yet when they are young in the Christian life, and weak in religion, ignorance and the force of habit will still keep them more or less under the influence of private considerations, and they will be exceeding apt to, perform right things from wrong motives. To grow in grace is to grow in purity of motive, more and more to exclude selfish reasons, and to act more exclusively from a regard to the glory of God.

An individual who grows in grace is more and more actuated by principle, and less and less by emotion or feeling. I do not mean that such a person has less feeling, but that he acts less under the influence of feeling or emotion. He does things less because he feels so, and more because it is *right*. By principle I do not mean a seed, or sprout or root, or anything created and put into the soul. It is all nonsense to talk about such kind of holiness, or such a principle as that. By principle in contradistinction from feeling or emotion, I mean a controlling determination in the mind to *do right*.

Another evidence of growth in grace is *more love to God*. By this I do not mean that there will be in all cases a conscious increase of emotions of love to God. But that there will be a strengthening of real attachment to God's character and government. This may be illustrated by the operation of a growing attachment to our country, or to our families. Very young persons are apt to have but little love for their country. But as they grow older, and have more experience—if the government is good, their attachment increases, until in the decline of life, you will see an aged patriot with his crutch and his gun, ready to turn out and hobble to the field of battle, to repel the invaders of his country's peace. I do not mean by this that increasing love to God leads individuals to use carnal weapons, in either building up or defending his government. But that if they are true friends to God, the longer they live under his government, the more confidence they have in him, and the more attachment to him. This increased attachment will evince itself in a growing veneration for all the institutions of religion, for the Sabbath, and for all the commands of God.

Another evidence of growth in grace is when a person increases in love to men as well as to God. Growing Christians show by their lives that they become continually more and more inclined to do good to men. Their hearts become more and more enlarged in benevolence to all men. Young converts are apt to be chiefly influenced by a special and partial regard to individuals, their relations, or their former companions or neighbors. But as they grow in grace, these circumstances make less and less difference in their feelings, towards their friends and towards others. Their hearts expand, they have more and more feeling for the heathen, and for all the world. As they increase in piety, they feel more and more a desire that the world should be converted to God. They have more and more heart-breaking agony at the

dreadful state of men in their sins. Their views and affections rise and expand, until they feel, like God, their bowels of compassion yearn for all men that they might repent and be saved.

Those who grow in grace feel more and more self-loathing. They have greater humility and self-abasement. I suppose the saints will increase to all eternity. I see nothing in this inconsistent with the happiness of heaven.

An increased abhorrence of sin is another mark of growth in grace. When a person feels day by day less and less disposed to compromise with sin, in himself or in others, it is a sign that he is growing in grace.

He who grows in grace has less relish for the world. He has less and less desire for its wealth, its honors, its pleasures. A desire for these things has less and less influence, as a motive, in his mind. He seeks wealth and honor only as instruments of glorifying God and of doing good to men.

Increasing delight in the fellowship of the saints, is another evidence of growth in grace. The growing Christian loves to unite with others in acts of devotion, and other religious exercises, and loves to enjoy religious intercourse.

He who grows in grace finds it more and more easy to exercise a forgiving spirit, and to pray for his enemies.

Growing more charitable is an evidence of growth in grace. I do not mean by charitable, that he should be more ready to believe every body a Christian who professes to be so. But he is more ready to ascribe a person's apparently wrong conduct to mistake, or misapprehension, or some other cause, than to direct evil intention. Nothing more satisfactorily shows the Christian.

Becoming more ready to bestow property is a sign of growing in grace. If a person is growing in grace he will be more and more ready to give, and willing to give ALL that is in his power. He will rejoice to be called on. He will give more and more yearly. If he

gives from right motives he will be glad when he has given. The more he gives, the more he loves to give. His giving will be a part of his religion, and he will grow in it just as in prayer. The more a person prays, the more he loves to pray.

He feels less and less as if he had any separate interest. It is a great thing, in regard to growth in grace, to feel that all you have is Christ's, and that you have absolutely no separate interests, no private interest in living, or in dying, or in holding property, or children, or character. "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." This is a great and solemn lesson to learn. Persons who grow in grace feel that their time, talents, property, life itself, have value, only in their relation to Christ's kingdom.

It is an evidence of growth in grace where a person becomes more willing to confess faults before men. It is a great thing to be ready to confess to men. It is a point often hard to learn. Men are willing to confess to God, because they have not so far to stoop, to do this. But to confess fully and frankly to men is a great stoop for a proud heart. But when they grow in grace, they would just as soon confess a fault, and confess as frankly to a servant, or to an enemy, or to the lowest member of society, as to the most exalted individual.

Growing in grace raises a person more and more above the world. The growing saint regards less and less either the good or ill opinions of men. He feels that it is of little importance, only as it may affect his usefulness. I do not mean by this, that a person should have a proud contempt for the opinions of his fellow men. He may feel and manifest this, and instead of having more evidence of weanedness from the world, he will have evidence of his consummate pride. But if a person is growing in grace, only let

him see his *duty*, and he will not turn aside although the public opinion should all be against him. He will not do, or omit to do, anything, but from a regard to the glory of God. The frowns or the flatteries of the world will not be taken into the account when he sees his duty. It is amazing to see how much of what appears to be religion, is, after all, a mere obsequious yielding to public opinion, instead of yielding obedience to God. Public opinion requires that those who have made a profession of religion should do so and so, and therefore they do so.—*Finney.*

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 VALUE OF A BLESSING.—Nothing raises the price of a blessing like its removal; whereas it was its continuance which should have taught us its value. There are three requisitions to the proper enjoyment of earthly blessings, viz.: a thankful reflection on the goodness of the Giver; a deep sense of our unworthiness; a recollection of the uncertainty of long possession. The first would make us grateful; the second, humble; and the third, moderate.—*Hannah More.*

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 VAIN CURIOSITY.—Be not curious, nor trouble thyself with idle anxieties. What is this or that to thee? Follow thou Me. For what is it to thee, whether that man be such or such, or whether this man do or speak this or that? Thou shalt not need to answer for others, but shalt give account for thyself; why therefore dost thou entangle thyself. God knows every one; he sees all things that are done under the sun; he also understands how it is with every one, what he thinks, what he wishes, and at what his intentions aim. Unto God therefore all things are to be committed; but do thou keep thyself gently at peace, and let go the unquiet, to be as unquiet as they will. Whatsoever they shall have done or said, shall come upon themselves, for God they cannot deceive.—*A' Kempis.*

LUTHER ON THE PSALMS.

The heart of man is like a ship on the wild and stormy ocean, which is driven by the winds from the four quarters of the heavens. Now, fear and anxiety, for future disasters, beat upon the bark, or affliction and distress, for present troubles, threaten to overwhelm it. Then, dazzling hopes, or arrogant pretensions to future prosperity fill the sails; and here, the high presumptuous notes of unchanging happiness are borne upon the gale. But the storms of life speak seriously to the soul; they lay bare the heart and try its foundations.

What is the subject of the principal part of the Psalms? Do they not solemnly speak of the storms and tempests of life? And where can we find such feeling expressions of joy and gratitude as in these songs of praise and hymns of thanksgiving? We find in them all the graces of holiness, as in a garden planted with the richest fruits; we see them strewn with the glowing blossoms of every pious wish and thankful feeling towards God, for his unbounded goodness; and in others again we meet with the cry of sorrow, the deep accents of complaint, and the mournful plaint of woe. We see pictured in them the heart of the saint, in life, in death, and on the borders of the grave. With what dark and melancholy coloring is the anger of the Almighty depicted! But whether the subject be fear or hope, no painter could delineate it with greater truth, or even a Cicero describe it with greater eloquence. In short, do you wish to see the representation of a Christian church in living colors portrayed as in a picture? Then take the book of Psalms, and you will find them a beautiful, clear, and perfect reflection of what is true Christianity; you will also find a description of yourself; you will learn to know yourself, as well as God, and all his creatures.

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 —To be with Jesus is Paradise.

FAULTS.

BY REV. L. KELLY.

We never can be so perfect in this life as to be wholly free from infirmity. Our faults never have the consent of our will. The unregenerate man is more ashamed of his faults than of his sins. He considers sin an accomplishment, and deplores his faults as an excrescence of his nature. The good man deplores his sins, and strives earnestly to correct his faults. Though grace does not totally remove them, yet the "Spirit helpeth our infirmities."

It is a fault if we unconsciously—and a sin if we intentionally—adopt the gestures and expressions of another in holy ministrations. It is safe to follow the good we see in others, but we are more aptly inclined to admire their faults than imitate their virtues. The spirit of pride suggests to us that another man's manners and ways would be becoming in us, but the contrary is the truth.

In some we see much to praise, that on better acquaintance, shines with less luster; while a long acquaintance with others, increases our admiration of them. Our judgment is not always correct, in judging of the faults of others. We are more inclined to excuse the faults of one from whom we receive favor, than of one who is our enemy. He who believes, thinks and acts in harmony with us, may have many faults which we are not capable of seeing.

If we only can persuade ourselves that our faults are many, and are as readily seen by others as theirs are by us, it would prevent much uncharitable criticism and strife among brethren. A self-approving spirit shields our own faults and greatly magnifies those of others; while we fail to appreciate the good in them.

Unless we are guarded, we will publicly denounce the faults of our brethren, rather than administer private rebuke. Even though we may think

we are publicly rebuked for our faults, we should not attribute a wrong motive to the brother, for he may not have reference to us. In any event, we should not become exasperated because our wrong-doing has been reproved; but on the contrary, humble ourselves in the dust.

It is not wise in us to seek for faults in our brethren. If this is our mission, it will be a fruitful one. We shall find none who please us fully. We will soon learn to magnify every fault into a crime; and soon we will distrust all the people of God, while at the same time we are astonished that our enjoyment is so small. The soul needs heavenly food, and cannot feast on the infirmities of others. We may talk much of the short-comings of our brethren, and do so truthfully, but who is especially benefited by it?

If we were as much disposed to speak well of one another as we are to find fault, we should soon see the blessed fruits. We may inconsiderately speak of another's fault in his absence, which we would not do to his face. It seems just, when we have no words of commendation, to be silent altogether. By this course we, at least, keep our own conscience pure, and are not guilty of defiling others. But whose lips are clean from this filth of the flesh?

If we see anything in another which we condemn, and perhaps justly, would it not be well to examine ourselves whether the same faults do not exist in us, or something equivalent? If we exercise ourselves as diligently in searching out our own faults as we have the faults of others, we shall soon arise where we wish others to be. Example in this case as in all reforms, is much better than precept.

We have need of much patience towards all, as they in turn are just as much taxed with us. As long as we inhabit this body, we shall not be fully delivered from the effects of the fall in our mental and physical derangement. There is no perfection needed, but that

of love, for which the atonement provides. He who seeks for any other, seeks but in vain; and he who seeks not solely for this will miss the design of his creation.

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TO BACKSLIDERS.—Backsliders render themselves the most despicable of all people. Both sides condemn a backslider, and both despise him. And they have good reason for it, for he is a deserter from both. He first deserted from the world to join the church, and then he went back and tried to join the world again. Who can trust such a character? Who can help despising him? The ungodly despise him; he never can recover his former standing among them. The church distrust him and set him aside as a broken reed. I know that the ungodly will sometimes praise a backsliding professor. They puff him up and say, "We like such a Christian as that; he is consistent, he is charitable, he is a liberal man, such a Christian, is what we like." But they are not sincere in this. Let a man be as bad as the devil, if he is sick, which will he send for to come and pray with him, one of those backsliders, or a consistent Christian? Mark that man who puffs up the backsliders, and at another time you will hear him call them all hypocrites, and laugh at them: "Pretty Christians these; they love the world as well as I do!" Whatever they may say, when it suits their turn, it is plain they do not respect backsliders. You are greatly deceived if you think you will get the good graces of the world by conformity to their ways. You are despised, and must be. It is not in the nature of man to respect such conduct.—*Finney.*

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—Peace does not dwell in outward things, but within the soul; we may preserve it in the midst of the bitterest pain, if our will remains firm and submissive. Peace in this life springs from acquiescence, not in an exemption from suffering.—*Fenelon.*

PREACH THE GOSPEL.

I thank God that Christianity can meet argument with argument, and philosophy with philosophy; but I have far more faith in the native force and adaptability of the cross than I have in the learned defences of Christianity. The Gospel comes to hearts as well as to intellects. There is something in human hearts which answers to what the Gospel has to say; that is the reason why men who cannot see the force of our arguments, feel the power of a living Christ, and say, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." The masses know nothing about your philosophical doubts, and they care less. Go to the masses as philosophical speculators, and they will laugh you to scorn, or turn away from you in disgust. But go to them and preach Christ unto them; tell them of the Divine compassion, and of the undying love of the Son of God; tell them how ready he is to pardon them, and how willing he is to help them, and you will hear publicans crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." You will see pardoned penitents creeping to Christ's feet to wash them with their tears, and to wipe them with the hairs of their head. This is no speculation. We speak of what we know, and we testify of what we continually see. Seek for truth, and you will fail; but preach the truth as it is in Jesus, and you will succeed. Defend Christ, and you will be defeated; but preach Christ, the Prophet, the Priest, the King,—Christ the only Saviour, and the Saviour of all men, and Christ will defend himself, and conquer his foes. Be counsel for Christ, and you will be thwarted; but be witnesses for Christ—testify of what you have heard, and seen, and handled of the word of life, and Christ will plead his own cause. To look for the Gospel, or to prove the Gospel, you might just as well stay at home; but

preach the Gospel, and the hand of the Lord will be with you, as it was in the olden time, confirming the word with signs following. The men who shake the souls of the people, are not your whining doubters, speaking in hesitating tones out of the mists which surround them; but they are men who know in whom they have believed, and who speak out from their hearts what they have believed. The men who strike and conquer are not your ponderous polemics, who prove everything until their hearers wonder if they believe anything; but they are men with souls burning with love to Christ, and compassion for men, and who strike with the hammer of God's word under the influence of a living faith in a living Christ. As you have the opportunity, preach the Gospel. On Greenland's icy mountains, preach it; on India's coral strand, preach it; amid Afric's sunny fountains, preach it; to the shepherds and miners of Australia, preach it; to the settlers in the backwoods of Canada, preach it; to the dwellers in your back slums, and the dwellers in your costly mansions, preach it. Preach it to everybody; preach it everywhere.

Preach it until every moral desert springs into beauty, and every barren hill-top is covered with golden grain. Preach it till heaven comes down to earth, and earth climbs up to heaven. There is power in the cross yet. "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." And they are coming—from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south; they are coming in trooping thousands to crown him Lord of all! The voice of the Master comes to us across the centuries, "Go and disciple all nations, and lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."—*Rev. J. Travis.*

—To-morrow! It is a mysterious possibility not yet born. It lies under the seal of midnight, behind the veil of glittering constellations.

PREDESTINATION.

Call it, therefore, by whatever name you please, "election, preterition, predestination, or reprobation," it comes in the end to the same thing. The sense of all is plainly this: by virtue of an eternal, unchangeable, irresistible decree of God, one part of mankind is infallibly saved, and the rest infallibly damned; it being impossible, that any of the former should be damned, or that any of the latter should be saved. But if this be so, then is all preaching vain. It is needless to them that are elected; for they, whether with preaching or without, will infallibly be saved; therefore the end of preaching, to save souls, is void with regard to them. And it is useless to them that are not elected, for they cannot possibly be saved; they, whether with preaching or without, will infallibly be damned. The end of preaching is therefore void with regard to them likewise. So that in either case, our preaching is vain, as your hearing is also vain. This then is a plain proof, that the doctrine of predestination is not a doctrine of God, because it makes void the ordinance of God; and God is not divided against himself. A second is, that it directly tends to destroy that holiness which is the end of all the ordinances of God. I do not say, "None who hold it are holy;" for God is of tender mercy to those who are unavoidably entangled in errors of any kind but that the doctrine itself, "That every man is either elected or not elected from eternity, and that the one must inevitably be saved, and the other inevitably damned," has a manifest tendency to destroy holiness in general; for it wholly takes away those first motives to follow after it, so frequently proposed in Scripture, the hope of future reward and fear of punishment, the hope of heaven and fear of hell. That these shall go away into everlasting punishment, and those into life eternal, is no motive to him to struggle for life, who believes his lot already

cast; it is not reasonable for him so to do, if he thinks he is unalterably adjudged either to life or death. You will say, "But he knows not whether it is life or death." What then? This helps not the matter; for if a sick man knows that he must unavoidably die, or unavoidably recover, though he knows not which, it is unreasonable for him to take any physic at all. He might justly say (and so I have heard some speak both in bodily sickness and in spiritual,) "If I am ordained to life, I shall live; if to death I shall die." So directly does this doctrine tend to shut the very gate of holiness in general, to hinder unholy men from ever approaching thereto, or striving to enter in thereat.

No Scripture can mean, that God is not love, or that his mercy is not over all his works; that is, whatever it proves beside, no Scripture can prove predestination. This is the blasphemy *for which (however I love the persons who assert it), I abhor the doctrine of redestination—a doctrine upon the supposition of which, if one could possibly suppose it for a moment (call it election, reprobation, or what you please, for all come to the same thing), one might say to our old adversary the devil, "Thou fool, why dost thou roar about any longer? Thy lying in wait for souls is as needless and useless as our preaching. Hearest thou not that God hath taken thy work out of thy hands? And that he doth it much more effectually? Thou with all thy principalities and powers, canst only so assault that we may resist thee; but he can irresistibly destroy both body and soul in hell. Thou canst only entice; but his unchangeable decree, to leave thousands of souls in death, compels them to continue in sin till they drop into everlasting burnings. Thou temptest; he forceth us to be damned, for we cannot resist his will. Thou fool, why goest thou about any longer, seeking whom thou mayest devour? Hearest thou not, that God is the devouring lion, the destroyer of*

souls, the murderer of men? Moloch caused only children to pass through the fire, and that fire was soon quenched; or the corruptible body being consumed, its torment was at an end; but God, thou art told, by his eternal decree, fixed before they have done good or evil, causes not only children of a span long, but the parents also, to pass through the fire of hell—the fire which never shall be quenched; and the body which is cast thereinto, being now incorruptible and immortal, will be ever consuming and never consumed, but the smoke of their torment, because it is God's good pleasure, ascendeth up, for ever and ever." O! how would the enemy of God and man rejoice to hear that these things were so! How would he cry aloud and spare not! How would he lift up his voice and say, "To your tents, O Israel! Flee from the face of this God, or ye shall utterly perish." But whither will ye flee? Into heaven? He is there. Down to hell? He is there also. Ye cannot flee from an omnipresent, almighty tyrant. And whether ye flee or stay, I call heaven, his throne, and earth, his footstool, to witness against you, ye shall perish, ye shall die eternally. Sing, O hell; and rejoice ye that are under earth! for God even the mighty God, hath spoken, and devoted to death thousands of souls, from the rising up of the sun unto the going down thereof. Here, O death, is thy sting! They shall not, cannot escape; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. Here, O grave, is thy victory! Nations yet unborn, before ever they have done good or evil, are doomed never to see the light of life, but thou shalt gnaw upon them for ever and ever. Let all those morning stars sing together, who fell with Lucifer, son of the morning! Let all the sons of hell shout for joy! For the decree is past, and who shall disannul it!—Wesley.

—Jesus can not only sanctify, but sweeten affliction; not only render it profitable, but palatable.

DEAD TO SIN.

Mrs. Hannah W. Smith, in a convention in England, told the following interesting story:

I knew a lady who was a Christian, but a very uncomfortable and unhappy Christian, and who made everybody unhappy around her. She had the special peculiarity that, while she kept good enough in her own room, when she went out to the family all her prickles came out and she was exceedingly disagreeable. She knew it was wrong, but she did not know what to do, and thought she would lose her reason.

One day she had been as cross as she could possibly be all day; and in the evening she met a gentleman friend, who said to her, "If you will only take the sixth chapter of Romans, and kneel down with the open book on the chair before you, and read it verse by verse, and ask the Lord to show you what it means, and if you understand it and believe it, you will get deliverance." She promised to do so, and when reading in her chamber that night, she came to the 11th verse—"Likewise reckon ye yourselves dead unto sin;" she could not understand that. "I am not dead," said she, "it would be telling a story if I said that. When I go out of my room I know I shall do just the same as I have been doing all day." But the blessed Spirit would not let her rest, and at last she made up her mind to obey this command, and to reckon herself on that authority dead to sin. She turned to Gal. ii, 20: where Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." She repeated it over and over, and although she could not understand it she claimed it by faith continually, and asked the Lord continually to enable her to understand it. She went to sleep doing it; she got up in the morning doing it; she did

it as she went down stairs. "But how will it be," she thought, "when I get in the dining-room?" But she went into the dining-room saying it, and the Lord made it true—she was dead to her old temptation. After the breakfast was over, her mother said to her, "What is the matter with you! Has anything happened? You seem to be so happy?" She replied that it seemed as if her soul had sailed out into heaven. Since then, for three years, she has been living the overcoming life, reckoning herself dead to sin and alive to God in Christ; and not for one moment has the old temptation troubled her. Any Christian can do that, no matter what his present condition may be. At the very moment when we are in the worst possible condition we stand most in need of it. Hence in the religious world, this faith will sweep before it all the opposing forces of evil. Here we have in the Christian's "life hid with Christ in God," the key to successful influence in one's spiritual life. Alas! how few who find and use it as they might?

ENTHUSIASTIC WORKERS.—Enthusiastic Sunday-school teachers rarely fail to hold the attention of their pupils. Enthusiasm impels the teacher to prepare for teaching. Enthusiasm vitalizes the knowledge he acquires. Enthusiasm is ingenious, and devises ways of "putting" the lesson which interest pupils. Enthusiasm aids the memory. Enthusiasm lights up the countenance. Enthusiasm forgets to depend upon the lesson-leaf, or question book. Enthusiasm is contagious. It is life and power in the Sunday-school. Christian enthusiasm is the right kind of enthusiasm. It is enkindled by the Holy Spirit, and fed by the truth of God, and strengthened by prayer and effort.

—While Christ represents us in heaven, it is our duty to endeavor to represent him on earth; and thus to be "living epistles of Christ,—known and read of all men."

THE BIBLE WAY TO HEAVEN.

Some people seem to think that there are many ways to heaven. They appear to fancy that it matters little what a man believes, so long as he is in earnest. They tell us we have no business to be so particular about doctrines. We are to be satisfied if people go to some place of worship. We have no right to doubt then that all must be right.

All this would be very good if we had no clear account of the way of salvation in the Bible. But we have such an account—plain, unmistakable, and easy to be understood. Let me tell you what it is.

All through the Bible, from Genesis down to Revelation, there is only one simple account of the way in which men must be saved. It is always the same—only for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, through faith, not for our own works and deservings.

You see it dimly revealed at first. It looms through the mist of a few promises, but there it is.

You have it more plainly afterwards. It is taught by the pictures and emblems of the law of Moses, the school-master dispensation. Every Old Testament sacrifice was a confession that a Saviour was expected, who should die for sinners.

You have it still more clearly by-and-by. The prophets saw in vision many particulars about the Redeemer yet to come.

You have it fully at last in the sunshine of New Testament history—Christ incarnate, Christ crucified, Christ rising again, Christ preached to the world. The gospels are Christ living, speaking, and moving among us. The Acts are Christ preached, published, and proclaimed. The Epistles are Christ written of, explained, and exalted. All through, from first to last, there is but one Name above every other, and that is Christ.

But one golden chain runs through the whole Bible: no salvation except-

ing by Jesus Christ. The bruising of the serpent's head, foretold in the day of the fall, the clothing of our first parents with skins, the sacrifices of Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the pass-over, and all the particulars of the Jewish law—the high priest, the altar, the daily offering of the lamb, the holy of holies entered only by blood, the scape-goat, the cities of refuge—all are so many witnesses to the truth set forth in the text; all preach with one voice, salvation only by Jesus Christ.

In fact, this truth appears to me the grand subject of the Bible, and all the different portions of the book are meant to throw light upon it. I can gather from it no ideas of pardon and peace with God, excepting in connection with this truth. If I could read of one soul in it who was saved without faith in a Saviour, I might not perhaps speak so confidently. But when I see that faith in Christ—whether a coming Christ, or a crucified Christ—was the prominent feature in the religion of all who went to heaven; when I see Abel owning Christ in his better sacrifice at one end of the Bible, and the saints in glory in John's vision rejoicing in Christ at the other end of the Bible; when I see a man like Cornelius—who was devout and feared God, and gave alms, and prayed—not told that he had done all and would of course be saved, but ordered to send for Peter and hear of Christ: when I see all these things, I feel bound to believe that the doctrine of the Bible is this: no salvation, no way to heaven excepting by Jesus Christ.

I do not know what use you make of your Bible—whether you read it, or whether you do not, whether you read it all, or whether you only read such parts as you like. But this I tell you plainly: if you read and believe the whole Bible, you will find it hard to escape the doctrine, that there is no other name given under heaven whereby we can be saved, but only the name of Jesus. I do not see how you can consistently reject what I have been

endeavoring to prove; Christ is the way and the only way; Christ is the truth and the only truth; Christ the life and the only life.

I conclude with words once preached by John Owen before the English House of Commons, which I commend to your serious attention:

"Christ is the way: men without him are Cains, wanderers, vagabonds. He is the truth: men without him are liars, like the devil of old. He is the life: men without him are dead in trespasses and sin. He is the light: men without him are in darkness, and go they know not whither. He is the vine; men that are not in him are withered branches, prepared for the fire. He is the rock: men not built on him are carried away with a flood. He is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the author and the ender, the founder and the finisher of our salvation. He that hath not him hath neither beginning of good, nor shall have end of misery. Oh, blessed Jesus; how much better were it not to be, than to be without thee! never to be born, than not to die in thee! A thousand bells come short of this, eternally to want Jesus Christ."

Reader, may you and I be able to say Amen to the spirit of this passage, and then it will be well with our souls.
—J. C. Ryle.

HUMILITY.—Humility is perpetual quietness of heart. It is to have no trouble. It is never to be fretted, or vexed, or irritated, or sore, or disappointed. It is to expect nothing; to feel nothing done against me. It is to be at rest when nobody praises me; and when I am blamed and despised. It is to have a blessed home in myself, where I can go in and shut the door, and kneel to my Father in secret, and am at peace as in a deep sea of calmness, when all around and above is troubled. Let us bear in mind that, "Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."

AVOID EVIL.

The line that separates the lawful from the unlawful, the line of demarcation between what we may do, and what we must not do, is after all, but a line: it is a geometrical line, as it were, and it is almost impossible to toe that line, and not to run the risk of going beyond it. And so the wise man is he, who having said in his heart that he will not sin, is wise enough not to go so near to that line that it would be almost a miracle, if at some time or another, in some unguarded moment he should not overstep it. He is a wise man, then, who says—"I hate so much to transgress that line, that I shall give it a wide berth; I fear so much that terrible precipice that is worse than death—the mere approach to which makes me dizzy—that I shall take great care never to come near it."

Travellers in the Western Territories, when they approach those wonderful ravines that are dug out by the course of rivers, thousands of feet below the level of the plains, even while yet a considerable distance off, already begin to dread because of their immense depth. They fear as if some strange fascination would drive them to throw themselves over, and they shrink far from that terrible precipice. So should it be with us, in the matter of the use of intoxicating drink. Because of the horrid character of the abuse, we should dread the use where such abuse is so easy.

It is a mathematical conclusion, that where the abuse precipitates us into an abyss, which is literally a pit without a bottom the proper proportion of *none use* should be a *none use* without end, and that is no use at all. It is then a virtue not to use it, unless there be some positive necessity.

But where can be the necessity? Does the law of God command us to use it? And if God does not command, where is the necessity? It may, perhaps exist, but it will be very rarely, to save life or preserve health.

Yet I am sure that in most cases even the physician, who prescribes that remedy could, if he would, prescribe some other equally effectual. If he can not, it might be well worth your while to go to one who can.

I would here advert, in passing, to the terrible responsibility of the physician, who presents the free use of a remedy that so often turns out far worse than the original disease."

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FAITH AS A SHIELD.—A shield is a piece of armor that soldiers were wont to carry with them into the field of battle; so is faith a part of the Christian's armor, with which he fights in the soul's warfare. A shield is not a fixture for any particular part of the body, as the breast-plate, the helmet, etc., but was for the hand, to be moved about according to the direction in which the darts came; so is faith a shield against the fiery darts of the wicked, coming to whatever part of the Christian they may. A shield doth not only defend the whole body, but it is a defence to other parts of a soldier's armor also; it keeps off the dart from the helmet and breast-plate likewise: so faith is not only a safe guard to the whole soul, but to all the particular parts of the Christian life and character. The shield of faith protects the girdle of truth, the helmet of salvation, and the breast-plate of righteousness. A shield hath been of wonderful advantage to soldiers in former times. What wonderful things can be said of faith as a shield in the hands of God's people in all ages.—*B. Keach*

—♦♦♦—
 —Holiness is strong; holiness is fierce; holiness is tremendous. The God-life waxes strong; it bursts forth; it snaps asunder the green withes of earth; mountains melt in its presence.

—Where are your thoughts? Are they fixed on Jesus, on his person, his presence, his power, his love and salvation? Surely these are sufficient and suitable for all times.

COME NOW.

Perhaps you think it will be as easy to repent at any future time as to-day. This is a most dangerous delusion. Impressions of all kinds wear away by repetition, unless they are made permanent by being acted upon. If you ever lived near a noisy mill, a roaring river, or the sea, you have found that the sound, which at first disturbed you, was afterward scarcely noticed. Just so the truths of religion may deeply impress the mind; but if those impressions are not cherished by acting in accordance with them, those truths will affect the mind less and less, till they are heard with total indifference. Jesus says, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock." He knocks by sermons, books, conversations, conscience, solemn warnings. The sound startles you; but if you do not rise and open the door, it will startle you less tomorrow, till at length you will not hear it at all. How many who once felt deeply about religion, now feel nothing, and are quickly and quietly traveling down to hell.

On the ledges of the steep cliffs of the Yorkshire coast multitudes of sea-fowls lay their eggs, by gathering which, some persons obtain a perilous livelihood. It once happened that a man, having fixed in the ground his iron bar, and having lowered himself down by the rope which was fastened to it, found that in consequence of the edge of the cliff bending over the part below, he could not reach the narrow ledge where the eggs were deposited, without swinging himself backwards and forwards. By this means he at last placed his feet on the rock, but in so doing, lost his hold of the rope. His situation was most dreadful. The sea roared hundreds of feet below. It was impossible to climb either up or down. He must soon perish from want, or fall and be dashed to pieces on the rocks. The rope was his only way of escape. It was still swinging to and fro; but when it settled, it would be out of

reach. Every time it approached him it was farther off than before. Every moment he waited his danger increased. He made up his mind. The next time the rope swung towards him he sprang forward, seized it, and reached the top in safety. Sinner, your salvation is farther off every moment you wait. Hell is below. Death will soon cast you down. But Jesus is near to save you. He invites you to lay hold on him. It is your only hope. Grasp him by faith. You cannot miss your hold. He will hold you, and draw you up to heaven. But the difficulty and danger are greater every moment you delay. Come to Jesus now.

You have perhaps resolved to come to Jesus, but not just now. Like Felix, you say, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." Satan knows that if you put religion off, he is likely to keep you captive for ever. God says, "To-day if ye will hear my voice, harden not your hearts: behold, now is the day of salvation." Satan whispers, "Not to-day, but to-morrow." He promises you shall give to God all your future days, if he can only secure for himself the present. Oh, beware of to-morrow. Souls are generally lost, not because they resolve never to repent, but because they defer it till some future time, and still defer till it is too late. To-morrows have crowded hell.

Perhaps you mean to wait till disease assails you. But a sick bed is the very worst place for repenting. Your mind may be so distracted by delirium, fever, or pain, or may so share in the weakness of the body, as to be unable to think. The peace in which multitudes seem to die is only the apathy of disease. Many who when ill have professed to repent, on recovery have become more careless than before. It was not true conversion; and had they died, they would have been lost. There is little hope of salvation during sickness.

But such a season may never come.

You may die without a moment's warning. Though in health to-day, you may be dead to-morrow. And are you when life is so uncertain, putting off salvation? A prisoner is under sentence of death. He knows not the fatal hour, but is told that if before it strikes he petitions the governor, his life will be spared. He says, "I'll send to-morrow." And when to-morrow comes, says again, "Oh, there's time enough yet: I'll wait a little longer." Suddenly his door opens, and behold! the sheriff and the executioner! "Oh, wait, and I'll write the petition." "No," they say, "the clock has struck—it's too late—you must die." Poor sinner, you are condemned. You know not when you may die. It may be this very day. You put off repentance till to-morrow; but to-morrow you may be in hell. Christ knocks to-day; but remember, death may knock to-morrow. Though you keep your best Friend outside, death will burst in, and hurry you away to the Judge. Come to Jesus to-day. He is willing to save to-day. Heaven's gate is open to-day. To-morrow may be too late.—*N. Hall.*

—The beautiful reply of a child when asked, "What is faith?" was, "Doing God's will, and asking no questions."

—Enough for us that we have taken ourselves out of the world's hand, and out of our own, and put ourselves into the hands of God, and we have felt those hands—O happy we!—gently but firmly close over us and hold us fast!

—Whosoever will go to heaven must have a faith of his own. In Gideon's camp, every soldier had his own pitcher; among Solomon's men of valor, every one wore his own sword; and these were they that got the victories. The five wise virgins had every one oil in her lamp; and only these enter in with the bridegroom. Another's eating of dainty meat, makes thee none the fatter.—*T. Adams.*

TO THE OVERCOMERS.

BY NEWMAN CHAMBERLAIN.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

Go among the mountains and you will see that it is the living spring that flows away, and where it flows the grass is green, and the flowers bloom, and the cattle drink, and the children linger to dip the foot, and to hear the sweet song of the little rill. Yet the spring itself is in no way exhausted by all this; it is fed by the drawing sun, by the condensing mountains, by the beautiful clouds, by the great and wide sea. When the sea is empty, and the heavens are dry, the little fountains of the earth will yield no more. Well up without stint ye springs, send your waters into the valleys among hills; give drink to every beast of the field; let even the wild asses quench their thirst; go murmuring into rills of laughter, and rolling into rivers of song, and never be afraid, or give one backward look. You have the sun above you, and the hills around you, and the great oceans of earth behind you, all holding themselves bound, and ready to serve you, if you continue to serve others with your flow. Brethren, let your inner life be fed and nourished by the indwelling word of Christ, so that light will come to you from the land of lights; so that you will draw from the infinite ocean of divine love. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another, in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." "We are to return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon our heads."

We can "serve God without fear: we are delivered from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us." "Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the

kingdom." "Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world." "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

We are, if faithful, as sure to overcome as if already in glory. These words, "Never leave thee," reach through the darkest hours of temptation; the deepest waters of affliction; the hottest fires of persecution. They reach unto death, through death, and unto eternity. He saves us from six troubles, yea, the seventh: No evil shall touch us; no weapon formed against us shall prosper. We are to condemn all tongues that rise against us at the judgment. His presence goes with His word when we speak it, or when it is in our hearts and we do not speak it. David did well when he found it in his heart to build the house. His presence goes with us to the house of God, and to the prayer-meeting. "The just shall live by faith." "If any man draw back, my soul shall take no pleasure in him."

All excuses for not going through to God are taken out of our mouths. "My grace is sufficient for thee;" "All my springs are in thee." God will take us all through if we will let him. "Our fellowship is with the father, and with his Son." The blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all sin. When we walk in the light of God—when we are consecrated by the blood, how quick we know when we are walking contrary to God, for God walks contrary to us. Brethren, may your peace be like a river, and your righteousness be like the waves of the sea.

"They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars, forever and ever. All the promises of God are very encouraging. I am no Mason, no Granger. I am the Lord's, and washed in blood divine. The Holy Ghost has taken away my tobacco, beer, tea and coffee. I just trust the Spirit of God to help all my infirmities. I am on God's side with his blood on my heart, and the mark of God in my forehead. There is no

power that can pluck me out of my Father's hands. In my flesh I shall see God.

Joy.—That joy, in some measure, 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 always; and, to 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 their 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 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 fullness of the Godhead bodily."

ALAS! HOW MANY SUCH.

A funeral in the country! We have all been present at one, and are familiar with every thing that precedes or attends it. Was it not something like this?

A man has lived and grown old in the village. He was there before the minister was settled, before the meeting-house was enlarged, or the new school-house built. When Squire —, the lawyer, moved into the place, he found him there, and it was to him the doctor brought letters of recommendation.

He had children, some of whom died in infancy, and one, the most promising of all, faded, one autumn with the leaves, and was laid away with them in the earth. Of those who survive, the sons have gone to the city "to buy, sell, and get gain;" the daughters live at hand in the homes of their husbands.

He was not an unkind father, and his wife was of a submissive temper, so strife did not dwell in his habitation. Regular was he at meeting, at meals, and at his counting-room. He kept his ledger carefully, and duly read his Bible, beginning with the Old Testament, and going through in course. While diligent in business, he was cautious in expenditure, and laid up riches on the earth. His judgment disapproved of poverty, but he sometimes gave a trifle from his abundance to relieve the poor and his own conscience.

Candor sat not on his brow and lips, but none detected him in a decided falsehood. Nay, did he not frown on a joke, because he loved the truth? Keen was he at a bargain, rejoicing to buy cheap and to sell dear. Owing no man anything, he liked man to be his debtor, but sitting amid his notes, bonds, and mortgages, with complacent emphasis he used Paul's words, "I have wronged no man."

And so he lived.

When he was sick, his neighbors spoke of him with pity; his children

came daily to visit him, and his wife waited on and watched with him. Then the minister was sent for, to converse with him, and, on the next Sunday, "a note" was read:—

"A——B—— and family desire prayers for him, being very weak and low, that God would restore him to health, or prepare him for his holy will and pleasure."

Prayed for in the congregation, he prayed for himself as he had seldom done before, for earthly things began to seem less real and imperative than they used to, and he wished he had thought more of God and duty while in health. He grew weaker day by day, and though he seemed much the same to those friends who were admitted to his chamber, he told his wife that he feared he had lived too selfish a life, and she felt, though he did not say so, that the spirit of her husband shrank from death and judgment.

And so he died.

The third day came, and neighbors and neighbors' children, assembled at the house that had been his. He looked stern and still, but not much more so than when in life, and the composed face seemed to have lent its composure to the faces of those who had gathered there. All were serious, *but only his wife wept.*

The minister and his family arrived and were shown into the room with "the mourners." Then all who had been standing outside the house came in and prepared to listen. A few words of counsel and of warning; a prayer was offered to Him who had taken away, and then they all left the house, bearing the dead with them.

And so he was buried.

To what end did this man live? Who missed him when he died? Reader, are you like him? What are you doing for your neighbors, what for your fellow-men, what for God? Search and see.

—♦♦♦—
To the soul resting on Jesus there is always peace in believing.

INDIVIDUALISM.

Every man, singly and for himself, is held accountable to God. He is a distinct being. Born apart, apart he dies, and he stands apart at the judgment seat of Christ.

And so of everything pertaining to religion. A man's acts are reckoned as his own, though he were influenced never so much in their performance by others. His duties may not be laid over upon another; nor can there be a transfer of conscience. Between his own spirit and his God, no one may interpose, no one can assume responsibility. He is to repent for himself, believe for himself, live for himself, and finally for himself stand or fall.

It is precisely in this light that Christianity contemplates man. It views him in his individual capacity. The Gospel comes to one alone, and saves that single man, and holds him responsible for certain duties. It converts the individual. Other religions seek to convert men by masses. Resort is had to the edict, and the sword, that as nations they may at once submit. But the religion of Christ converts men one by one,—sanctifying a single heart, reforming a single life, elevating a single character,—and thus operates upward and outward through the mass of humanity; just as the particle of leaven, to which it is likened, operates upon the particle lying next to itself, and it upon another, until the whole lump is leavened.

Each individual has assigned to him of God a given position and specific duties. The Church of Christ contains within itself a post for every man, which he has no right to abandon. There is no provision made for idlers. The men of wealth may not "buy off their personal services by the bribe of large donations," nor may the indigent or "men of low estate," because of the "one talent," refuse to occupy till the Lord shall come. There is no provision by which a man may depute another to serve God for him, and thus

be released from personal duties. He might as soon pray by proxy, and delegate to another the act of repentance. He is to be himself a disciple, and with his own body and spirit glorify God.

Such is the individualism which constitutes a fixed principle in Christ's kingdom. It is known to be such from the Scripture of divine truth, the only standard of appeal. There the accountability of the individual is everywhere recognized.

Now let it be carefully observed, that, as long as this principle obtained in the early church,—as long as there was kept alive a sense of individual responsibility, and religion was considered to be a personal matter, or, in the affecting language of one of the Platonists, "The flight of one alone to the only one," and as long as it manifested itself in individual activity,—so long was the church characterized for its purity and prosperity. But just in proportion as the opposite principle gained the ascendancy, and the individual became absorbed in the community, the private member into the official, and men began to serve God by proxy, just in that proportion the church became powerless and corrupt.

A learned writer remarks, that if he were asked, "to what it is owing, chiefly, that the early triumphs of the Gospel were arrested,—how it was that Christian usefulness died out of the world, and piety out of the church,"—he would suggest that it was to be ascribed "principally to that master device of Satan by which the Christian professor was led to suppose that he could do everything by proxy; that there was an order of men, on whom, for a certain consideration, he could devolve his duties both to God and man." Who needs to be told that this is nothing more nor less than the germ of popery?—that thus early, and in precisely this way, "the mystery of iniquity" began to develop itself?

That there does exist a lamentable deficiency of this kind of Christian

effort, is painfully obvious. Its evidence is furnished in the fact that the masses of men, in immediate proximity to the church of Christ, are still unsanctified and unrenewed. Is there any defect in the glorious Gospel of the blessed God? Is not its adaptedness, to the end designed, the same in all ages? Does it not ever remain the wisdom of God, and the power of God unto salvation? Is there any unwillingness, or want of power, on the part of the Spirit, whose office work it is to renew the soul? As in his first descent to our guilty world, is he not almighty to save? And if neither in the word nor the Spirit, then is the defect in the churches. Their ministers are doubtless responsible, in part, for the existing state of things; but in the bosom of the churches themselves lies a principal fault. And that fault is a lack of personal consecration to the one work of leading souls to Christ.

Where are the pious lawyers, physicians, merchants, mechanics, farmers, and statesmen, who daily, hourly watch for opportunities of doing something for Christ? True, here and there one of this character appears, and we have a Williams, Page, Cranfield, Mary Lyon. But the very prominence of such individuals is proof of the inactivity of those around them. How many pastors mourn over the want of that co-operation which they might enjoy! How many irreligious men and neighborhoods need the pious efforts which might be bestowed!

Societies are too often looked upon as substitutes for personal labors. It has been remarked that no illusion is more common, both in civil and sacred things, than for membership to weaken the sense of responsibility, and even to cause an oblivion of individuality. But, was it the design of Christ that the church should absorb the individual? For what are any combinations formed? Not to neutralize the personal element, but to render it more effective. Does not the efficiency of the whole body depend upon that of its several parts?

Men talk of the religion of the church, and the duty of the church; but what is this, if you seek intelligently, but speaking of the piety and obligations of the individual members of which the church is composed?

And yet under this very illusion, that the church has some responsibility, separate from that of its individual parts, many excuse themselves from personal labor. This is one of Satan's deep devices. For, let it not be forgotten, the adversary of God and man is still plying his devices for the overthrow of Christ's kingdom. Instead of abating his efforts, they are more artful and persistent, as he knows his time is short, and not seldom as an angel of light. Alas! that he should succeed so well as to blind the eyes of men to the very fact of his existence; and induce, even in Christians, a forgetfulness, if not a distrust of the fearful truth that as "a roaring lion," he walketh about "seeking whom he may devour!"

Besides this practical error in reference to church-membership, there is one equally prevalent and pernicious, as regards the relation of ministers and private members in the work of the Gospel. The error consists in looking upon ministers as principally, if not exclusively, intrusted with the concerns of religion. Under the old, preparatory dispensation of Christianity, this was truly the case. Here, a ceremonial holiness and exclusiveness belonged to the official persons; and it was "profanation for any mortal, save the anointed son of Levi, to touch the vessels of the local worship." In the Romish creed, too, and in those which are patterned after it, the clergy are a class above and aside from all other men. To their medium of conveyance is restricted the communication of all grace. According to this theory, God bestows the Spirit through sacramental channels, and has placed in priestly hands "the exclusive patent for saving souls."

When primitive piety shall once more prevail, how marked, and how

pleasing shall be the change! Then no professor, lay or clerical, will desire exemption from this responsibility and labor. Then, like Simon and Philip, will converted men say, "We have found the Messiah," and like him from whom the evil spirit was cast out, "go home to their friends, and tell how great things the Lord hath done for them."

The happy results of such universal activity, who can fully appreciate? How blessed in its influence, both upon unconverted men, and individual Christian character! Personal piety will thereby be greatly promoted; for, by no other method is it so effectually advanced, as by thinking, and praying, and acting, for the eternal salvation of those perishing in sin. Christians will then possess a breadth, and depth, and strength of character—a manliness and maturity—now seldom witnessed. They will become healthful, energetic, animated followers of Christ. The "weak in Zion" will become "as David; and the house of David as the angel of the Lord."

Believer in Christ, whose eye now rests upon this page, are you acting a faithful part in the great work of bringing back to Christ an estranged world? Perhaps you are a "private member" only, of the church, and on this account are accustomed to suppress the uprising of an occasional and troublesome sense of neglect of duty, it may be toward a beloved child, or companion, or friend, for whose conversion you have at times felt somewhat concerned. But you are, with great earnestness and affection, entreated to consider well whether God does, or does not accept the excuses which you are wont to render for such neglect. Will your plea, that you lack the means, or the time, or the opportunity, or the gift that is necessary, be acknowledged valid in the judgment? How many are the opportunities of usefulness, if you had but a heart to embrace them? There is the unconverted member of your own household,—there, the Sunday

school, and the tract district,—there, a destitute neighborhood and an afflicted family, and a group of fatherless or motherless children,—there is a dying couch and a disconsolate widow, a burdened inquirer, a thoughtless sinner, a cold backslider,—and where you will you may do good. Is it not possible that some unconverted individual is surprised that you do not speak to him as to the interest of his soul? Has not some one, partly through your neglect, been led substantially to say with a certain young man, "I have always been in the habit of attending church on Sabbath. For nearly two years I have been constant at a particular meeting, but who of the entire congregation knows whether I am a professor or non-professor? How many of this large congregation have spoken to me upon this subject, or shown any desire to know my feelings upon it? Not one. Who cares for me whether I be eternally saved, or lost?"

Wait not for opportunities to do some great work. Use such as now present themselves. Seize every favorable moment to drop a word for your Master,—to impress a soul with saving truth,—to bring back a wanderer to the favor and the fold of God. Do it with a gentle, tender, earnest spirit. Do it with much prayer for success. The carrier-pigeon first flies directly upward, and then outward to its destination. So in your errands of mercy; first mount upward on wings of faith toward heaven, and then haste to do the Master's bidding. And be not weary in well-doing; for, in due season, you shall reap, if you faint not.—
Henry C. Fish.

—Rowland Hill used to say: See there be no sermon without *three R's* in it: *Ruin* by the fall, *Righteousness* by Christ, and *Regeneration* by the Spirit. Preach Christ for awakening, Christ for comforting, Christ for sanctifying. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"I'LL TRY!"

As the sun rose on one of those sweet mornings in October which render the early autumn so delightful on the southern shore of the beautiful Ohio, I took my leave of the home of my youth, and departed for the village of —, in the State of —. I had been appointed by the — Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church to preach to the inhabitants of that little town. On the evening of the third day I arrived at the place, and found a home in a very plain, but truly pious, family. After the lapse of a few weeks an unpretending, but agreeable man, called on me, and said: "I have been raised a Friend, and you know Friends do not pay for the ministry. But my wife and only child are members of your church, and I go with them to the public meeting, as I have not much preference and no bigotry. Your society is weak, and as I do not give money for the Gospel, perhaps it might be some relief to the church for me to afford you a home in my house, which I will very gladly do, if it please you to accept it." I replied I would give him an answer in a few days.

Upon inquiry, I found he was the principal merchant in the village, much respected by the people, and that his wife was one of the excellent of the earth. His daughter was about twelve years of age, a sweet, meek child, and much given to her books and her devotions. I concluded to accept his invitation, and sent him word accordingly. On Monday following I removed to my new abode, which I found to be quiet and neat, and the family very agreeable. The mother, and daughter, and myself worshiped together morning and evening, but the father made a good apology by being always at the store. Yet on all suitable occasions he manifested his respect for religion, and his public conduct, it appeared to me, was unrepachable.

Toward the middle of December he

was engaged in filling his ice-house, which was in the yard in the rear of his dwelling. He was in the sunken chamber, directing the storing away of the ice which a man slid down on a long, broad plank. A piece of the ice struck him on the foot, and he swore violently and profanely at the man above. As he uttered these imprecations I looked in, and heard him without his seeing me. If I had witnessed a flash of lightning from a clear sky, I could not have been more astounded. I had never dreamed that he ever uttered an improper word. I felt confounded and grieved, but passed on without saying a word.

It was Saturday afternoon. After tea, as was his custom, he came up to my room to spend an hour in conversation. The first proper occasion that offered, I said:

"Mr. —, did I not hear you swear to-day?"

"Perhaps you did," he replied; "for I often swear and do not know it. It is a bad habit I have fallen into, and I should be glad to quit it."

"Suppose you try," said I.

After pausing a moment in reflection, he said:

"Well, I will."

"But," I replied, "you will not succeed unless you pray for strength: the habit is too strong for you to break without divine aid."

"Why," said he, smiling somewhat quizzically; "I never prayed but once, if that might be called prayer when I knelt down on one knee when Parson W. visited my family and requested permission to pray with us. I am sure I cannot pray."

"Well," said I, "then I am sure you cannot quit swearing."

At this he seemed surprised, and a little grieved; but after a moment's hurried reflection, he said:

"If you will not tell anybody *I will try and pray*, and quit swearing too; and I will come up and tell you next Saturday evening."

"Very well," said I.

Next Saturday evening, after tea, he came to my room and seated himself in silence, apparently waiting for me to speak to him. But I determined that he should open the subject, which he did by raising his eyes to mine, and with a slightly disturbed smile, saying,

"Well, I told you I could not pray. I knelt down twice, and I could not utter a word. My tongue was stiff, and my mind fainted and wavered. I had no strength or heart to pray. Besides," he added, "I have sworn twice since last Saturday. Once when a man forced a barrel on my hand and almost broke my finger, as you see," (holding up the wounded limb.)

"Well, Mr. —," said I, "what must be the fearful condition of the man who cannot pray to his heavenly Father!"

At this he seemed sensibly moved, and, after some reflection, replied:

"*I'll try once more to pray* if you will not tell any one."

I smiled encouragingly, consented, and he left my room.

On the following Saturday evening he came to me, sat down, and seemed somewhat embarrassed. At length he said:

"I told you I could not pray—I cannot pray."

But the utterance of these words gave him evident distress, and afforded me an occasion to press upon him his utter spiritual destitution, and to explain to him his great need of Divine aid, which I insisted he could obtain only by prayer.

"Then," said he, with deep emotion, "*I'll try again*," and left the room.

On the following Saturday evening he sat down by me, and said:

"I have ceased to swear."

"Then," I replied, "you have learned to pray."

"A little," said he, and the tears came to his eyes; "but, O! how little! how feeble are my prayers! But one thing comes of them; I begin to feel I am a sinner, and I must be pardoned."

"Then," said I, "you must pray

always and not faint."

Putting his hands firmly together, and fixing his eyes intently on the fire, he said:

"*I'll try again,*" and departed.

The following Saturday evening I heard him approaching with a lighter and quicker step, and entering, he said with eagerness, and yet with a tinge of sorrow:

"I have been *praying*. Yes, I *tried*, and tears came to my relief, and words followed tears, and *I can pray*. But I have no answer to my prayer, no peace."

"Well," said I, "you should not expect an answer until you have asked faithfully and penitently. Have you prayed in faith, nothing doubting?"

"O!" said he, "all I endeavored to do was to pray. Is not this enough?"

"No," I replied, "you must *believe* as well as *pray*."

Upon hearing this, I found he fell into the same desponding tone of feeling as when I first spoke to him of prayer; but I rallied him by saying:

"*Try to believe*; prayer will give you confidence, and confidence will lead to faith."

A new light seemed to break in upon him, and he exclaimed, "I'LL TRY." I let him depart to make the experiment another week.

At the close of the next week he came to me, and said:

"I do believe, but only for a minute at a time, and then doubts obtrude; but *I'll try to overcome these, God being my helper*."

I now perceived that he was not far from the kingdom of heaven, and exhorted him to lay hold on the hope set before him.

"O!" said he, "*I'll try,*" and rose to depart.

"No, no," said I, "do not go; *I'll help you now*:" and we kneeled down to pray.

I need not tell the reader the conclusion. In less than three months from the time I heard him swear in the ice-house, he was a living member of the church of God. Oftentimes after-

ward I heard him say, "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth." And when anyone would complain that he could not pray, could not believe, could not become religious, he would exclaim, "O, TRY! from the depth of the ice-house I began by TRYING, in the feeblest manner possible, and, lo! I have proved that the 'bruised reed' He will not break, the smoking flax He will not quench, until He send forth judgment unto victory!" Reader, say to thyself—if but in the lisping accents of helpless infancy—"I'LL TRY," and God will help you.

A PHYSICIAN'S PRAYER.—The following prayer was found among the papers of the late Dr. Crouch, of Petersburg, Va., and is published in the *Purish Visitor*. Dr. Crouch was in the habit of using it every day: "O thou great Bestower of health and comfort! grant thy blessing upon the professional duties in which this day I may engage. Give me judgment to discover disease, and skill to treat it; and crown with thy favor the means that may be devised for recovery; for with thine assistance the humblest instrument may succeed, as without it the ablest must prove unavailing. Save me from all sordid motives, and endow me with a spirit of pity and liberality toward the poor, and of tenderness and sympathy toward all, that I may enter into the various feelings by which they are respectively tried, may weep with those that weep, and rejoice with those that rejoice. And sanctify their souls as well as their bodies. Let faith and patience, and every Christian virtue they are called upon to exercise, have their perfect work, so that in the gracious dealings of thy Spirit and thy providence, they may find in the end, whatever that end may be, that it has been good for them to be afflicted.—Grant this, O Heavenly Father! for the love of that adorable Redeemer, who, while on earth, went about doing good, and now ever liveth to make intercession in heaven. Amen.

JOSIAH.

BY S. K. J. CHESBRO.

Certain peculiarities distinguish each of the noted Bible characters. The kings of Judah and Israel are worthy of our study.

It is said of all the kings of Israel: "He walked after the sins of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin. He departed not therefrom." Although nine different families were represented among the line of Israel's kings, yet every one was a worshipper of "Jeroboam's calves."

Twenty different kings ruled over Judah, each one a lineal descendant of David. Of this number, some followed after Israel, and some were followers of God, and were noted for their fidelity to Him.

Israel had already been in captivity eighty-one years when Josiah was made king. His elevation to the throne was a fulfilment of one of the most remarkable prophecies on record:

As Jeroboam (Israel's first king) stood at his altar, offering incense to his "calf," a stranger appears. (How frequently does God speak to man in the midst of his iniquities, amid his carousals, and pleasures of sin.) The stranger approaches, and cries out: "O altar, altar! thus saith the Lord: Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee; and men's bones shall he burn upon thee."

Three centuries and more passed away. Jeroboam's kingdom, which he had founded, also passed away. But God's word never fails. Judah had, under the wicked reign of Manasseh, fallen into the grossest idolatry. God's temple was defiled, His worship forgotten, His wrath about to fall upon the devoted city.

Under these adverse circumstances, Josiah, when but eight years of age, ascended to the throne. When but

sixteen, he began to seek after God. The work wrought in him was a thorough one. The peculiarity that marks his Christian character, and distinguishes him from all before or after him, is this: he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, *and turned not aside, to the right or to the left.* He fulfilled the command given by Moses, —Deut. xvii, 20.

In the eighteenth year he commences a thorough reformation. The temple was cleansed and repaired. Idolatry was destroyed. The prophecy was fulfilled; he burned men's bones upon their altars. The passover was kept in a manner unlike any had kept it since the days of Joshua.

He was in earnest. He placed his eye upon the mark God had set, and turned not to the right or left. Josiah loved the straight way. He found no difficulty in obeying God. Whatever opposition he met, God was with him while he was in the path of duty.

He was also constant in his service of God. His religion was not spasmodic,—dependent upon popular favor. He started out and continued until death, *in the straight way.*

We may learn from this, that no matter, under whatever circumstances we may be placed, we may still be true to God. A time-serving policy finds no congenial feeling in the heart of one who has "turned to God *with all her heart.*" Duty first, duty last; follow God, obey Him. God honored Josiah, as He has promised to do, all who honor Him.

Reader, follow God, and you will find that His ways are ways of pleasantness, His yoke easy; His burden light.

"Straight is the line of duty,
Curved is the line of beauty,
Follow the first, and you shall see
The second always following thee."

Conference resolutions, or laws, nor our own desires, will not avail. We must settle it in our own hearts. I will obey God. Get your eye upon the mark; close your ear to all but the voice of the Shepherd, and then move

forward; turning neither to the right
nor to the left.

THE CHRISTIAN'S WANTS.

I want that adorning, divine;
Thou only, my God! can'st bestow;
I want in those beautiful garments to
shine,
Which distinguish'd Thy household be-
low.

I want, O! I want, to attain
Some likeness, my Saviour, to Thee,
That long'd for resemblance once more to
regain—
Thy comeliness put upon me.

I want to be mark'd for Thine own—
The seal on my forehead to wear—
To receive that "new name" on the white
mystic stone
Which none but Thyself can declare.

I want so in Thee to abide,
As to bring forth some fruit to Thy
praise;
The branch which Thou prunest, though
feeble and dried,
May languish but never decay.

I want Thine own hand to unbind
Each tie to terrestrial things—
Too tenderly cherish'd—too closely en-
twined,
Where my heart too tenaciously clings.

I want, in my aspect serene,
My actions and words, to declare—
That my treasure is placed in a country
unseen,
That my heart and affections are there.

I want every moment to feel
That Thy Spirit does dwell in my heart,
That His power is present to cleanse and to
heal,
And newness of life to impart.

I want, as a traveler, to haste
Straight onward, nor pause on my way;
Nor forethought, nor anxious contrivance
to waste
On the tent only pitched for a day.

I want—and this sums up my prayer—
To glorify Thee till I die;
Then calmly to yield up my soul to Thy
care,
And breathe out in faith my last sigh.

MINISTERS.—"He maketh his spir-
its, his ministers a flame of fire." You
know that a heated iron, though blunt,
will pierce its way, even where a much
sharper instrument, if it be cold, cannot
penetrate. So if our ministers only be
filled with the Spirit, who is like fire,
they will pierce into the hardest hearts,
where the sharpest wits cannot find
their way. It was thus with White-
field; that great man lived so near to
God, he was so full of heavenly joy and
of the Spirit of God, that souls were
melted under him like snow in spring-
time. John Newton mentions it as a
fact that, in a single week, Whitefield
received no fewer than a thousand let-
ters from persons distressed in con-
science under his preaching. Oh pray
that we may not be "clouds without
water," which indeed have all the ap-
pearance of clouds, but have no rain in
them. Pray that we may come to you
as Paul came to the Corinthians, "in
weakness, and in fear, and in much
trembling;" and that our speech and
our preaching may not be "with entic-
ing words of man's wisdom, but in dem-
onstration of the Spirit and of power."
—1 Cor. ii, 2-4.

—David Brainerd said, that when
God awakened his whole congregation
of Indians, he stood by amazed, and
felt that he was as nothing—that God
alone was working. Oh, it is this, dear
friends, that we desire and pray for;
that the Lord, the Spirit would himself
descend, and with his almighty power
tear away the veil from your hearts,
convince you of sin, of righteousness,
and of judgment; that Jesus himself
would take his sceptre, and break your
hard hearts, and take all the glory—
that we may cry out, "Not unto us, O
Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name
give glory."—*McCheyne*.

EDITORIAL.

WATCH.

Abraham watched his sacrifice till the going down of the sun. He kept beasts and birds away, and saw that it was preserved entire for the purpose intended. So when we present our bodies a living sacrifice to God, we must watch the offering till the going down of the sun of life, and see that no beasts; no vile appetites or affections pollute it; that no birds; no spiritual influences—apparently from above, but really from beneath—carry away the offering, piece by piece.

Among saints and sinners the common feeling is that of security. There are but few to sound the alarm in God's holy mountain; but few who preach Christ as Paul did—*warning every man*. It is difficult to realize that one is in peril when those whose duty it is to stand upon the watch-tower and give timely warning of approaching danger, cry *peace and safety*. Then watchfulness appears like distrust; and a proper caution, like the needless alarms of a cowardly spirit. Our Saviour, who knows our danger, and who never gives a needless caution, bids us *watch!* Again and again is the command repeated; and sleeping disciples are reproved because they cannot watch with Him the brief hour of life.

Many appear to think that great blessings and wonderful manifestations of God's love to the soul, render watchfulness less necessary. This is a great mistake. A thousand dollars needs to be guarded more carefully than one. The greater the treasure, the more tempting it is to great thieves. Satan is the chief of robbers. His most skillful attacks will be made when we are rejoicing in some special manifestation of God's love. It was immediately after there was heard a voice from Heaven, saying: *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased*, that Jesus was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. So, after great blessings, you may expect temptations.

As the necessity of watching exists in every stage of religious experience, so it does in every possible condition in life. You are never in greater danger than when surrounded by your friends. The citadel which cannot be successfully assaulted, may be opened to the gentle knocking of a friendly hand. As heat opens the pores of the body, so do the warm words of affection open the avenues of the soul; and unless you are on the watch, the first you know, you will have lost some of your uncompromising determination to stand by your principles—some of your hatred of sin, or some of your breadth or tenderness of conscience.

When in company you need to watch both the Spirit and matter of your conversation. Many grieve the Spirit by their exaggerations or by saying smart things. You have not intended to do any thing wrong; you only wished to make yourself agreeable, and yet you find you have suffered loss in your soul, but hardly knew why. It is not wrong to show ourselves friendly; but we must watch, lest, in doing this, we are shorn of our strength. Many, too, in speaking of others, make remarks that charity would not make. They may be true. But he who makes them would not make them, though true, of one whom he tenderly loves. Christian perfection embraces a great many particulars. Among the thousand items of correct conduct which it implies, only one is chosen as including all the rest. That is not giving, nor even praying. But St. James says, *If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body*. Jas. iii. 2. We see then the importance of watching our words.

We must watch our thoughts. *Let the unrighteous man forsake his thoughts.*—Isa. lv. 7. Sin outwardly committed is first acted out in the thoughts. The enemy can suggest evil thoughts; but he cannot compel us to welcome or harbor them. We cannot help thinking; but we can control the direction of our thoughts. Then we should watch over them with jealous care, especially when alone. With

the Psalmist let us say, *I hate vain thoughts*. The easiest time to crush a viper is when it is in the egg. The best place to fight sin is when it first intrudes itself into the thoughts. Then be ever upon your guard. You have a vigilant foe seeking to destroy you. Therefore you must watch. You have a priceless treasure of which he would despoil you. Then you must watch. **WHAT I SAY UNTO YOU, I SAY UNTO ALL, WATCH!**—Mat. xiii, 37.

CHOICE OF EVILS.

Nothing suits the devil better than to make maxims for religious people. These corrupt them by the wholesale. It is poisoning the wells at which the people drink. One of his maxims, taking the word evil in the sense of moral evil, is: "Of two evils, choose the least." This is crouched in artful language. It would not do to express the maxim in unambiguous terms. This would rob it of its force. It would cause every honest man to reject it. Say to any person, "Of two *sins*, choose the least," and you excite his indignation. But put it in its ambiguous form, and many are led to do a wrong act who would not do it on its merits.

There are two parties in a town—one of these is in favor of licensing one hundred men to poison and madden and rob their fellow citizens, by the sale of intoxicating liquors. The other is in favor of licensing two hundred. This is the issue. The religious people, forming the balance of power,—if not an actual majority, under the plea of "choosing the least of two evils," by their votes actually license one of the great esterimes against humanity that was ever perpetrated under the cover of law! Why can they not see, as an indignant voter, who refused to be led in this way any longer, expressed it: "As long as I choose one of two evils, the devil will see that I have two evils from which to choose. I will choose neither!"

When it is clearly settled that an act is wicked in the sight of God, that should end the matter with every honest man. He should not give it his consent under any

pretext, however plausible. Our daily petition is, *Deliver us from evil*. We should then not run into it, nor be led into it by scheming politicians.

HOW TO ELECT TEMPERANCE OFFICERS.

Osage is a flourishing town—the county seat of Mitchell Co., Iowa. Though the town is only about twenty years old, the ravages of intemperance were such that the best citizens took hold in good earnest to *regulate* the traffic in intoxicating liquors. They did not dare to prohibit it for fear it would hurt the business of the place. Some of the leading citizens, in favor of reform, were elected to office. Men of as "good moral character," as will engage in a business so thoroughly immoral, were duly licensed, and the restrictions of law, which forbid the sale of intoxicating liquors by even licensed vendors to minors or habitual drunkards, were placed upon them. The opportunity was as good a one as could be desired. The effort was honestly and ably made to regulate the traffic and keep it within the bounds of decency. It is the climax of absurdity to suppose that a man who will sell liquor at all as a beverage will be scrupulous as to whom he sells it. Why should the common liquor-sellers be expected to see that it is worse to sell liquor to an habitual drunkard and finish him off as speedily as possible, than it is to sell liquor to a sober man and make an habitual drunkard of him? Such nice discriminations of ethics, legislators alone are capable of making. So the attempt to regulate the traffic in intoxicating liquors in Osage proved an acknowledge failure. Drunken men and boys by scores were turned out nightly into the streets from the saloons, to fight and swear and insult the peaceable citizens.

The men had confessedly failed. The ladies took it up. They went to work with the energy, good sense and pluck, characteristic of the true Western woman. They nominated for Mayor and Common Council, some of the best men of the city, without respect to party, who

pledged themselves, if elected, to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors. They then went to work to elect their tickets. The rum-sellers, with their adherents, stood on the opposite side, and gave out their tickets. At first the rum-sellers were confident. But they soon saw that the odds, as well as the argument, was against them. One by one their adherents dropped off—ashamed of their associations, and of the cause in which they were engaged.

The ladies also prepared an excellent dinner, to which all the voters were invited. They saw that no one with the instincts of a man would eat their dinner and vote against them. Long before night, it was evident that the ladies had won the day. Their officers were elected. Prohibition was vigorously enforced, and for two years there has not been a bar or a saloon in Osage. It is also conceded that the legitimate business of the place never prospered before as it has the past two years. Such streams of wagons, loaded with wheat, we never saw before pouring into any place. One of the bankers said they were paying out daily on an average \$20,000 over their receipts for wheat. It is a town of about three thousand inhabitants; but there are more fine dwellings now going up than there are in the city of Rochester. To the ladies of other rum-cursed towns we say, *Go and do likewise!*

SACRAMENTS.—The sacraments should be held in high esteem, but they are not saving. If saved at all, we are saved by the risen Christ, and not by the emblems of his death. If we are cleansed from sin, it is by the *washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost* (Tit. iii, 5), and not by water baptism. It was after Philip, the Evangelist, had duly baptized Simon, the sorcerer, that Peter said to him, *Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.*—Acts viii, 21. Said a man in Kansas who had been taught to place great dependence upon baptism as a means of getting deliverance from his

sins, "I went into the water a dry sinner; I came out of the water a wet sinner." He afterwards found that the blood of Jesus Christ alone cleanses us from sin. You should not neglect the sacraments. They are ordinances of Christ. You should not depend upon them. The means of grace are all intended to bring us near to God. Christ is our only Saviour.

SUFFERING.

It is blessed to do God's will; it is often quite as blessed to suffer God's will. Our place in glory will not depend so much upon our place on earth as upon the manner in which we fill it. Sufferings borne for Christ, in patience and sweetness will burnish our crowns more than the most heroic deeds cherished in a spirit of exultation. Even those who lie helplessly upon beds of suffering have their opportunity to win eternal triumphs. Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, the great teacher, had a sainted sister who, for twenty years, was confined to her couch. In all that time she was so helpless that she could not once change her position. Her brother writes:

"I never saw a more perfect instance of the spirit of power and love out of a sound mind. Intense love, almost to the annihilation of selfishness; a daily martyrdom for twenty years, during which she adhered to her early-formed resolution of never talking about herself; thoughtful about the very pins and ribbons of my wife's dress, about the making of a doll's cap for a child—but herself—save as regarded her improving of all goodness—wholly thoughtless; enjoying everything lovely, graceful, high-minded, whether in God's works or man's, with the keenest relish; inheriting the earth to the very fullness of the promise; and preserved through the very valley of the shadow of death from all fear or impatience, or from every cloud of impaired reason which might mar the beauty of Christ's glorious work. May God grant that I might come but within one hundred degrees of her place in glory."

Certainly such a life was true and beau-

tiful. But the radiance of such a life never cheered this world by chance. A sunny patience, a bright-hearted self-forgetfulness, a sweet and winning interest in the little things of family intercourse, the divine lustre of a Christian peace, are not fortuitous weeds carelessly flowing out of the life-garden.

It is the internal which makes the external. It is the force required in the atoms which shapes the pyramid. It is the beautiful soul within which forms the crystal of the beautiful life without.

CONFERENCES.

We never enjoyed a Conference more than we did the last session of the KANSAS CONFERENCE. It was held in connection with a camp-meeting in a beautiful black walnut grove, on the east bank of the Neosho river, about two miles from the city of Emporia. The people came from all parts of the country. There were over twenty-five covered wagons—sometimes called at the West, "Prairie schooners." Seen at a distance over the plains, the white covers look as if they might be the sails of a boat. A seat, about a foot or so wide, is constructed on the top of the box, around the sides. This makes the box wide enough for the length of a bed. To the outside of this seat the bows are fastened, and over these a strong, canvas, water-proof cover is secured. In these wagons families travel hundreds of miles, living in them by night and by day. Many came to the camp-meeting in this way, over two hundred miles, and some three hundred miles.

We have never seen the work of God in Kansas, in so prosperous a condition. There is a spirit of self-sacrifice and devotion among both preachers and people that cannot fail in spreading the work. A good degree of the Spirit of Pentecost was manifested. All the hay needed for the teams—and there was tons—for the teams were many—was had for drawing. Loads of corn were hauled on the ground, and the announcement made: "Here is a load of the Lord's corn. It is all free. Help yourselves. Feed your teams."

There was a deep interest in the meetings from the first. The preaching, singing, exhortations, testimonies and prayers were in the Spirit. Many were saved. It was thought there were as many as twenty-five converted on Sabbath and Sabbath evening.

Five preachers were admitted into full connection, and seven on trial. They gave all, whom they felt satisfied were called of God to the work, a hearty welcome; and where they had no organized society to which to send them, a county was assigned to each preacher, with instructions to go and make a circuit.

Kansas is a most beautiful country. The past few years have been years of trial and suffering for the people, owing to the drouths and the grass-hopper scourge. But this year is a year of plenty. Everything which the soil produces is in abundance. Splendid grapes were selling in the market of Emporia for three cents a pound; and peaches for thirty-five cents a bushel.

We expect to hear a good report of the work in Kansas another year.

THE IOWA CONFERENCE held its session at Walker, Linn Co., Iowa, a station on the Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern Railroad. The soil is fertile; the country new and flourishing. It is rapidly filling up with a thriving population, which, in a few years, make good homes for themselves.

The sessions of the Conference were most harmonious. A spirit of devotion and of brotherly love prevailed.

The work is in a prosperous condition. There is a steady, healthy growth. There were several valuable accessions to the working force of the Conference. New ground was taken up and their borders enlarged.

The preaching services were largely attended, and conviction rested upon the people generally.

THE NORTH IOWA AND MINNESOTA CONFERENCE was held at Osage, Mitchell Co., Iowa. This is a new, enterprising city. It contains about three thousand

inhabitants, and is rapidly growing. There are more dwellings now going up, we judge from what we saw, than in Rochester or Buffalo. The territory around is the lower part of the great wheat-growing country, which stretches north through Minnesota. This year the yield of wheat is enormous, beyond any former precedent. Thirty bushels of wheat per acre of an excellent quality is common. Single farmers have raised this year four or five thousand bushels, and some a great deal more.

The Conference was most hospitably entertained at Osage. Many of the leading citizens, without respect to denomination, freely opening their doors.

There is a small increase in the membership of the church—four preachers were received into full connection. A good degree of the Holy Spirit's influence was felt in all the meetings. The preachers go out full of faith, and hopeful for the future of the work. They have an interesting field, and may God give them the coming year a great harvest of souls.

ALL FOR GOD.—They have a forcible way of saying things in Kansas. Said a young lady, gloriously saved, at the recent camp-meeting, "I used to have a hand, in everything that was going on, for the devil. Now I mean to have both hands and feet for God." How few of God's children there are who serve him as faithfully as they served the devil. Beloved, half-hearted service will never answer. He calls upon you to use all your powers in His work. It is not enough to keep you from hell even, to do no wrong. You must be intent upon doing good. To shun the narrow way is to take the broad way. To lay down the cross is to lose the crown. We run no risk in risking all for God. The danger is in withholding the least service for which He calls. A life of self-sacrifice is a life of peace and triumph. He who lives to do good to others does the greatest possible good to himself. An eternal crown is not won by indolence and indifference. The mastery over the world, the flesh and the devil, is not

gained in a holiday parade. The race for life is not won by dancing gaily along. *The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence; and the violent take it by force.*

Beloveds, see to it that you use both hands and feet for God.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LOVE FEAST.

MARK HARRISON.—I am here in England—3,000 miles from my Free Methodist brethren and sisters; but Christ is present and very precious. I am alive and well in body and soul, and living and walking under the rays of the Sun of Righteousness. I am all the Lord's to-day. He has got fast hold of me. I am up in the chariot; it is moving—rolling on. We shall soon roll it over the threshold of the golden city.

We are having blessed times here and many of my English brothers and sisters are enlisting with Jesus to fight against sin. We have had some Pentecostal seasons, and the people are marching onward and upward into the land of perfect love. A great deal of pride, worldliness, and formality reign here; but these things give way now and then when the mighty Spirit comes down. "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty."—Zeph. iii, 17. This text is filling me up to-day. Praise the Lord! My brothers will you meet us where parting is no more.

Shevington, Banbury, England.

E. R. MANTZ.—I am still in the narrow way. Praise the Lord! I find, by experience, it needs close living to God to keep blessed; but the great secret is—obedience to God. The least shrinkage from duty brings leanness and loss to the soul. "The willing and obedient eat the good of the land." I feel I dare trust God for all things—spiritual and temporal, willingly submitting to the will of God. I can exclaim with David, "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer."

Rochester, N. Y.