

THE

Earnest Christian

AND GOLDEN RULE.

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LAMPS GONE OUT.

BY REV. B. T. ROBERTS.

The parable of the wise and the foolish virgins, recorded in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, is full of instruction.

1. For a season there was no perceptible difference between them. They started out on the same mission; they were in company; there was no want of harmony in their appearance, or in that of the lamps which they carried.

So we may be in the company of Christians, they may reckon us as of their number, we may be zealous, irreproachable members of the church, and yet be wanting in that which is fundamental and vital. Saints are the best judges as to who are saints, yet they may be mistaken. Judas was in full fellowship with the apostles up to the last; the minister of the Laodiceans had the reputation in the church, of being spiritually alive; only He "whose eyes are as a flame of fire," saw that this popular preacher was dead. "Then," says the Prophet Malachi, "shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked," implying plainly that we cannot do it now with accuracy.

Some think that they can determine, without failure, the spiritual condition of others; but such persons are most woefully ignorant of their own. While true piety always has the appearance of piety, yet there may be the almost perfect appearance of it, without the reality. He who is most experienced in detecting counterfeit money, will sometimes fail. Our Saviour tells us that many will not only deceive others, but deceive others up to the very last, till they hear their final doom pronounced. The foolish virgins kept in the company of the wise as long as they could. So many who pride themselves with remaining in the church, will find themselves cast out in the day of judgment. Christians seek the company of Christians; but all are not Christians who associate with them. There will come a time of final separation. The chaff and the wheat that grow together, do not remain together after the harvest and the threshing are over. The foolish virgins were left outside when the door was shut. Many who have sympathized with saints, and even passed for saints themselves, will be with them no more when the Master shall at last take to himself his own.

2. There was no fault found with the outward behavior of the foolish virgins. They did not appear in the gay attire of the fashionable and the worldly. It is not said of them that they were at places of amusement instead of at the house of prayer. They did not keep bad company.

To say that there is nothing wrong in one's conduct is a great commendation. But few church members of the present day would claim even this degree of piety. Yet it may be conceded, but this does not settle the question of one's preparation for eternity. This is important. It is necessary. The sons of God should be "blameless and harmless in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation." But something more than a blameless life is wanting to constitute one a child of God. Nicodemus was an "Israelite indeed in whom there was no guile," and yet, resting in that, he could never "see the kingdom of God."

3. These foolish virgins had what is commonly called faith. They had a good deal of it. They had no fears as to their final salvation. They came to the door saying, "Lord, Lord, open unto us."

This is precisely the character of a very large proportion of what passes for faith at the present day. The main ingredient of it is a feeling of security. It serves as an anodyne to the conscience, it stifles conviction, drives away fear, and makes its possessor feel safe, even when standing upon the verge of eternal death. The faith of the foolish virgins does not lead to the sacrifice required to

obtain the grace necessary to carry one through. It takes things easy, under the plausible excuse that there is time enough yet. But the faith that will finally save, leads to sacrifices and self-denials. It takes up crosses, and bears reproaches. It "counts all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, our Lord."

So then, it is not a conclusive proof that you are ready to die because you are not afraid to die. Multitudes are resting in a feeling of false security. Their confidence is without foundation; their faith is presumption. "Many are called; but few chosen." Weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, churches and ministers are alike "found wanting." They do not come up to the standard of the foolish virgins. They have not even "The form of godliness"—the vessels in which to put their oil. Their appearance, their outward life, their voluntary associations are not those of saints; these are idle dreamers of a heaven which they shall never see; false worshippers of a Jesus whom they "call Lord, Lord, while they do not the things which he commands them," deceived souls, led astray by false lights which Satan holds out to lure them on to ruin.

What is wanted is *the oil*—the material out of which the light is made—the grace in the heart which produces holy tempers, edifying words and godly actions. We *must have humble love*. Without this, all outward piety is a mere semblance which may delude, but cannot save.

But right here is where many are

terribly deceived. They think they have scriptural love, when they have not even a just conception of what it is. To those who belong to the same church that they do, and who adopt their views and stand by them, they are bound by partisan ties; and this, they call "loving the brethren." There is nothing of Christian love about it. It is the same feeling that a clansman has for those of his clan, or a partisan for a fellow partisan. We are told in the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians what the love does which we must have, or, whatever else we have, we cannot be saved. This takes the precedence of all outward conduct; for it is the spring from which all right, outward conduct proceeds. It is of greater consequence than belief in any doctrines, for without it, no doctrines can take us to heaven. It is of higher value than all the sacrifices which we have made or can make, for without it, "though I give all my goods to find the poor, and though I give my body to be burned it profiteth me nothing."

Not only does this selfish affection pass for Christian love; but a sensual feeling between those of opposite sexes is sought to be sanctified by calling it Christian love. Thus many are led astray. Satan, despite the maxim to the contrary, quite as frequently transforms himself into an angel of love, as into an angel of light. We must see to it then that we have true Christian love, a love that takes in those who differ from us but a little, and those who differ from us widely; those who injure us, as well as those who benefit us:

a love that not only bears some things, but bears all things, a love that does not injure by flattery any more than by injustice or unkindness.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven."—Mat. v, 44-45,

THE BIBLE.—This book was written by not less than thirty different persons. The writers were men of every rank and class of society. One was a lawgiver; one was a warlike king; one was a peaceful king; one was a herdsman; one had been brought up as a publican, another as a physician, another as a learned Pharisee, two as fishermen, several as priests. They lived at different intervals, over a space of 1500 years; and the greater part of them never saw each other face to face. And yet there is a perfect harmony among all these writers. They all write as if they were under one dictation. The handwriting may vary, but the mind that runs through their work is always one and the same. They all tell the same story. They all give one account of man, one account of God, one account of the way of salvation, one account of the heart. You see the truth unfolding under their hands, as you go through the volume of their writings; but you never detect any real contradiction, or contrariety of view. Tell us not that all this might be the result of chance. The man who can believe that, must indeed be a credulous person. There is only one satisfactory account of the book: *It was written under the direct inspiration of God.* ✓

—A moment's divine recognition is the sweetest of all self-justification.

TRUTH.

BY HANNAH PFLTON.

"I am the way, the truth and the life."—Jesus.

To the moral and religious world, truth is as the sun. From this source comes the light the Saviour alluded to when he said, "Walk in the light; if that light in you become darkness, how great is that darkness."

As the light and heat of the sun of nature promote life, growth, health, and indeed the existence of all things, so will truth, if received, light up the spiritual darkness, and the Christian may have life, and daily grow in grace and wisdom. He will have spiritual health and bring forth much fruit. Truth is the opposite of sin and error. It is of righteousness, holiness, and purity. It is as unchangeable and fixed as is God, and belongs to him, as do mercy, goodness and long-suffering. It appeals to the hearts and consciences of men, and if they obey, will lead them to purity of soul. "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth."—1 Pet. i, 22. It is the food of the soul, and by feeding on it the Christian becomes strong. He grows bold, and is full of courage and daring. He is not afraid to venture on God's promises. He loves to deny self. He loves to work for God, and hesitates not to carry heavy burdens, if it is required of him.

Truth will not and cannot compromise. It is like unto pure gold—trample it in the mud and filth, and still it remains pure. So with the child of God who has this truth—under whatever circumstances, or provocation, he is still untarnished. It is this that causes the Scriptures to glow and burn.

Whoever enters heaven is invested in this wonderful armour of Christ, having the white stone, given to overcomers, in which is written the new name, which no man knoweth,

saving he that receiveth it. Pilate did not know the truth, many of this day do not know it, though they profess to be Christ's disciples. Let the light of truth shine, and they say at once in their hearts, Away with it! Of such the Saviour says, "Let them alone; they be blind leaders of the blind."

Let us cherish every ray of truth, that we may be the children of light and not of darkness.

THE DOOR UNLOCKED.

Some time since I wished to enter a strange church with a minister a little before the time for services. We procured a key, but tried in vain to unlock the outside door with it. We concluded we had the wrong key, and sent to the janitor for the right one. But he came and told us that the door was already unlocked. All that we had to do was to push, and the door would open. We thought ourselves locked out, when there was nothing to hinder us from entering.

In the same way we fail to enter into love and fellowship with God. The door we think is locked against us. We try to fit some key of extraordinary faith to open it. We try to get our minds wrought up to some high feeling. We say "I have the wrong key; I must feel more sorry; I must weep more." And all the time the door is ready to open if we but come boldly, with humble earnestness, to the throne of grace. We may enter freely, at once, without having to unlock the door.

Christ is the door, and His heart is not shut against us. We may enter without stopping to fit our key of studied faith, for his mercy is not locked up. We must enter boldly, trustingly, not doubting His readiness to receive us "just as we are." He is willing already, and we must not stop to make Him willing by our prayers or tears.—*Guiding Star.*

EXPERIENCE OF T. L. CADMAN.

BY O. D. ROOD.

I was born in County Montgomery, North Wales. I was a member of the Baptist Church for fourteen years before coming to America, but had no evidence of a new birth, though I loved the Church. I came to America in 1842. My wife died the same year, in Cleveland, Ohio. After the death of my wife, I was not in a church for twenty-five years. I tried infidelity, free thinking, and Universalism; yet I found no rest—no peace of mind, but kept growing worse. I was three months in despair, without hope.

On the morning of the seventeenth of November, 1867, I threw myself down at my bedside in despair, and cried out that God would have mercy on me and pardon all my sins and accept of me for Jesus' sake. I was at once filled with an overwhelming power of love, and my prayer was changed to praise. I received the witness that my sins which were many, were forgiven. I still continued on in prayer; the answer came, "My grace is sufficient for thee." I have not language to express the peace, joy, and happiness which I felt. At this time I was nearly sixty years of age, and was living all alone at St. Anthony Falls. No Christian had ever asked me for twenty years whether I was a Christian, or whether I would like to be one.

From the time God converted my soul, until the ninth of November, 1868, every time I knelt in prayer, there appeared a hand-writing before my eyes. But I could not read a sentence of it. It was in a language that I could not understand. I would sometimes stop while praying, and try to read it.

On the morning of the ninth of November, 1868, I felt wonderfully happy, and I prayed God that he would either remove it from me or

show me the meaning of it. After I was through my morning prayer, and going back to my chair, a voice spoke to me, and asked if I would like to know what the handwriting was. I turned back and said I would. The answer came that it was my sins and they were blotted out, and my name was written in the Lamb's Book of Life. I turned and fell on my knees on my bed-side, and praised God with all my ransomed powers. I had a full assurance of my adoption into the family of God. Going back again to my chair, a voice spoke to me, saying, "Thomas, reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing." Then I fell on my knees right there, and prayed that Jesus would take me home right then. I did not want to live another minute, and I continued to pray until the answer came, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." I have never had any doubts or fears as to my full salvation from that time until the present moment, nearly twelve years.

Previous to December, 1870, for about two weeks I had been afflicted with inflammation in my left eye. I had been under the doctor's care during this time, but kept growing worse. The pain was so severe that I could not sit up. This was in the evening about sundown. I went to bed, and it still grew worse. Sometime about ten o'clock I felt that I could not lie in bed any longer. But when I tried to arise I could not get up, being helpless. A thought came across my mind of the fifteenth chapter of St. John's gospel, and that verse, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." I considered that promise mine, and I remembered that St. Paul said "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever." And my thought was that Christ never refused any one when he was on earth. I was prompt, and by a sim-

ple, child-like faith believed that he would answer my request, and I commenced praying that God, for Christ's sake, would save my eye, (at this time I thought it would burst) and heal me of my pain. It still grew worse, and I tried to stop praying, but could not, for I was forced to cry out for mercy and help. A thought impressed my mind, "Am I pursuing the right course?" The answer came, "No, thou art not." I then said, "O Lord, what course shall I pursue?" The answer came, "Hast thou fully consecrated thyself to God?" I said, "I have; all I have and am is thine." Then why did I ask for my eye, and why did I ask God to heal me of my pain? Why not say, "Thy will be done." As I spoke the word, I was healed at once; in a moment, all inflammation and pain were entirely gone. I felt that God was right over me. Then I wept like a child, and praised him and thanked him, and was filled with his love and the power of the Holy Spirit. It seemed that Jesus was present right at my bedside, and I held converse with him. I dropped into a sound sleep until morning, being entirely free from pain.

Next morning I went down to see the doctor, (Dr. Talbott, a member of the Society of Friends,) and told him that I had found a better than him. That the Lord, in answer to prayer, had healed me in an instant. He saw that I was well, and rejoiced with me.

—He that seeketh liberty and ease, shall ever live in disquiet; for one thing or other will displease him.

—A fervent, religious person taketh and beareth all well that is commanded him. But he that is negligent and cold, hath tribulation upon tribulation, and on all sides afflicted; for he is void of inward consolation, and is forbidden to seek external comforts.

STRAIGHTNESS.

"Straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Straightness, the quality or state of being straight; rectitude. Straight, then, means, in a mathematical sense, passing direct from one point to another by nearest course.—*Webster*.

The word, uprightly, has a similar meaning. To walk uprightly is to walk honestly, with strict observance of rectitude. "He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely.—Prov. x. "Also, integrity in principle or practice." He, then, that is morally or religiously straight in the Bible sense, has been converted and sanctified to God. To retain this grace, then, and keep in this blessed state, he must "walk, continually, in the light as God is in the light." To be straight, then, according to the teaching of the Master, is to be saved according to the rule or standard of his word, and to walk by the same, having all our actions, spirit, thoughts, motives, in perfect harmony with what he hath taught.

But can all be saved up to the standard set up in the word of God? We affirm that all may be saved up to that standard. But what is the standard of God's word? To be saved from sin, from all sin. The lowest state of a believer is expressed in Rom. viii, 1: "No condemnation to them that are in Christ." The next step in God's order is to be cleansed from inbred sin—the impure nature inherited. What follows? Going on, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord; and to get more religion is to get more of the love of God shed abroad in the same sanctified heart; knowing more of the heights, and lengths and breadths, etc. If an individual is saved up to this point, and walks in the light as God is in the light, is he not straight? In the sight of God, there is not a stain of sin upon him. He has been made pure through the

blood of a crucified Saviour, and is accepted of him. This inward straightness, uprightness, produces a wonderful straightness in the life. "Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good. But how straight and how good will the life be? If saved according to the Spirit and word of God, for, they agree, he will be straight on that line.

But is there not a straightness prevailing among some that the Bible does not warrant? If a person is plainly dressed, with a good many he is at once, so far as they are concerned, noted for piety, while perhaps the venom lies deep within. But what does it mean to be straight on dress? Where is the line? What is the rule? To dress, of course, according to the teachings of God's word. Paul says, in "modest apparel." Webster says modest means "properly; restricted by a sense of propriety." Not loosely or wantonly, but following the line of decency, cleanliness, plainness; not running wild, or becoming reckless, slovenly, but having always an eye single to God's glory. But some say, you can not be too straight. Yet it is possible to have a line more than straight—bending the other way. Some people's straightness is simply negligence, and their idea of straightness is having everybody think, act, dress and do according to their notion of things. One is said to be straight who has courage enough at a public meeting to lift up his voice like a trump against wearing paper collars. Another is said to be straight that will preach dress and Masonry in every sermon, regardless of what the text may be, or the interest of the cause demands. Another is said to be straight who, in wild criticism, will fire at some one in class-meeting or love-feast, while at the same time he has not courage enough to approach the individual when alone. A sister is straight because she has worn a bonnet from five to eight years, and can

get a pattern for a dish apron out of a yard and a half of calico. Another is said to be straight who wears the same suit to church that he wears on the farm or in the stable. Another is said to be straight who will neglect the duties of home, wife and children, house, barn and fences, to attend meetings. Another form of straightness consists in not insuring property, nor taking shelter under a lightning rod, nor using pork, tea or coffee. Another is straight if he is able to give an anti-tobacco testimony at any meeting.

I am in for the straightness that is found in the Bible. I do not get grace to follow twenty-five different standards, set up by so many different ones. We have one Bible, one Discipline, one theology; only one rule of faith and practice. We do well to follow it. I am in for keeping to the "old land-marks." But there is so much straightness that needs to be straightened; so much wisdom that is not wise; so many standards set up that the word of God does not confirm. Let us keep to the real issues—fundamental principles; keep on the track. "The devil goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." The Apostle says, "We are not ignorant of his devices." We have too many whims and notions. Oh, for a wind strong enough to blow them all away. And may we all have the straightness of love; a right conception of the word and will of God; a clear sense of duty concerning ourselves and others; a charity that "suffers long and is kind;" a firmness that is unshaken amid the winds and storms of life; a religion that lasts all the year around—that has a sure and abiding foundation, and a crown at last.—*A. V. Leonardson in American Wesleyan.*

—Anxiety about future contingencies will bring sorrow upon sorrow. "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof."

FAITH.

BY MRS. H. E. HAYDEN.

From the earliest period of my recollection, the subject of faith has been a matter of controversy and argument among Christian ministers. One has said, "Faith is the gift of God." Another says, "We can believe we can exercise faith ourselves." The controversy has been incessant, while neither party has gained the victory. The minister's work is to explain the word of God. But I ask, Is this controversy among God's ministers best? Is it necessary?

If a man asks God to explain a text, he will show him. If another asks light on the same text, God will give him the same light. If all of God's ministers went to him for instruction, this controversy upon Scripture would cease. Then indeed would we "walk by the same rule, mind the same thing, and teach the same doctrine."

Now let us look into the law of the Lord, and see what it says about faith. There are some texts that seem to prove that God is the author of our faith—that he gives us faith. I will quote some of the best. "According as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."—Rom. xii, 3. "To another is given faith by the same Spirit; to another the gift of healing by the same Spirit."—1 Cor. xii, 9. "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."—Eph. vi, 23. "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."—Heb. xii, 2. "And exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith, which was once delivered to the saints."—Jude 3. Then there are other texts that seem to teach that we can always exercise faith ourselves, without the help of God. "Then touched he their eyes, saying, according to your faith be it unto you."—Matt. ix, 29.

"He saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe." Mark v, 36. "Whatsoever things ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."—Mark ii, 24. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."—Acts xvi, 31. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."—Rom. iv, 5. "That ye stand fast in one Spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel."—Phil. i, 27.

Now shall we allow these texts to contradict each other, as theologians have for many years past? Or shall we try to harmonize them by the light of the Spirit? There are some things that we can believe without the help of God; for instance, when Jesus was here upon the earth, healing those that came to him, a man could believe that he would heal his sickness, without divine help; but when a Christian tries to believe for the blessing of sanctification, for the cleansing blood right down on his own heart, he will need the help of the Lord before he reaches the fountain. To illustrate: a father takes his little girl and leads her out into the orchard; they pass under a tree loaded with beautiful fruit; the little girl reaches up her hand and stands on tiptoe, and tries hard to pick an apple, but her arm is too short; the father, willing to gratify his child, takes her in his arms, lifts her up, and she picks the apple. Just so it is with the Christian when he tries to believe for any great blessing from above. He reaches up the hand of faith, and tries hard to grasp the thing that he asks for. God lifts him up (in other words, helps his faith) and he takes the desired boon. And he thinks that by his own faith he brought the blessing down. We must always struggle to believe; and if we ask for a proper thing, God will always, (if necessary,) help

our faith, and give us whatever we desire. So we see all the texts quoted are true, and harmonize. We believe, and God gives us faith. Hence faith may be defined, as an effort of our own will, aided by the Spirit of God; St. Paul says, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."—Eph. iv, 11-13. That is what we want, unity of faith, all believe the word of God alike; then what harmony there would be among the children of God.

Cawker City, Kan.

—"Do you believe the Bible? Then depend upon it, hell is real and true. It is as true as heaven, as true as justification by faith, as true as the fact that Christ died upon the cross. There is not a fact or doctrine which you may not lawfully doubt, if you doubt hell. Disbelieve hell, and you unscrew, unsettle, and unpin everything in Scripture. You may as well throw your Bible aside at once. From "no hell" to "no God," is but a series of steps.

—"Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked;" the failing again of his expected comforter caused him to be up and doing. Probably he had not as yet uncovered the ark, that is, to look round about him, if the dove, by returning, had pleased his humor; but she failing, he stirs up himself. Thus it should also be with the Christian now. Doth the dove forbear to come to thee with a leaf in her bill as before? Let not this make thee sullen and mistrustful, but uncover the ark and look; and by looking, thou shalt see a further testimony of what thou receivest by the first manifestations.

"GOD IS NOT MOCKED."

A CAMP MEETING INCIDENT.

Saturday, at 10.30 A. M., on the St. Charles camp ground, in 1863, I had been appointed to preach. My text for the occasion was, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."—Gal. vi, 7-8. In developing the subject, it came in my way to remark that the Scriptures, mental philosophy, and my own observation of men, taught me that infidelity of the heart preceded and was the cause of intellectual infidelity. Among other Scripture evidences, I quoted Rom. i, 18-21: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest unto them, for God hath shewed it unto them. . . . Because that when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." Also 2 Thess. ii, 11-12: "And for this cause, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie."

As I was dwelling upon these passages, I noticed that a more than ordinarily fine appearing man in the congregation became deeply interested in the subject. With his eyes fixed upon me in a manner I shall never forget, he listened to the close of the discourse. When the service was over, he came rapidly to me, and requested an interview. A friend (to myself) drew nigh, and invited us both to his tent, to dine. We went. After dinner he asked me to walk with him in the grove. As soon as we were by ourselves, he said:

"I was much interested in your discourse this morning, and I wish to talk with you about one point in it." He then called my attention to the thought I have already mentioned. Said he, "I am a Methodist preacher of the——Conference. Some years since, I was led to seek and obtain perfect love. My eyes were opened to see the worldliness of the church, and my duty to do what I could to arrest it. As I pressed forward in the discharge of duty, the blessing of God rested upon me. I soon met with much opposition. I soon saw that my course would keep me in constant warfare. I began to hesitate. I relaxed my efforts, and at last gave up the struggle. This grieved the Spirit. I lost my experience—my communion with God—my relish for the work of the ministry. I became thoroughly professional in my feelings and work. I had good appointments—no persecution—but was forsaken of God. I became ashamed of and disgusted with myself, and at last I made up my mind that I would act the honorable part by abandoning the ministry. I am now a supernumerary. I am working life insurance, and have been for some time. But what I want to tell you is this: I am being assaulted with skeptical thoughts as never before. I shudder when I think of the probabilities of the future. I am drifting away from shore, on an unknown sea, without chart or compass. By invitation, out of courtesy, I preached last Sunday at——. It was a mere performance. I was disgusted with it. I wanted to tell you this in corroboration of what you said in your sermon. I have never mentioned it before. But this is the first time I have seen my state so vividly."

I said, "Thank God, then, that He has come to lead you back to Himself. Yield to Him, and all will be well." He replied, "I can't; I am palsied, helpless, indifferent." We

had reached a secluded spot. I said, "Let us kneel down here, and pray." He answered, "You may, but I can't." He knelt with me—I prayed. I asked him to pray, but he refused. I looked at him in astonishment. He was of commanding presence, intellectual, cultured, capable of doing glorious things for the Master. We returned to the camp ground. All efforts to arouse him were unavailing. We have not met since, and whether he is dead or alive I know not.

Is it not to be feared that more than he, are wandering from God and truth? Does not the above explain the strangeness of conduct and opinions of some who are still in the ministry?

IT IS DANGEROUS TO HOLD THE TRUTH IN UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.—*Rev. J. G. Terrill in Banner of Holiness.*

—He that avoideth not small faults, by little and little falleth into greater.

—It requires wisdom to keep silence in an evil time, and inwardly turn thyself to God.

—Soft words do more than hard speeches; as the sunbeams without any noise will make the traveler throw off his coat, which all the blustering wind could not do.

—Let Christians beware that they set not times for God, lest all men see their folly. "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power;" yea, I say again, take heed lest, for thy setting of God a seven-day's time, he set thee so many as seven times seven. God's time is the time, the best time, because it is the time appointed by him for the proof and trial of our graces, and that in which so much of the rage of the enemy, and of the power of God's mercy, may the better be discovered unto us. "I the Lord do hasten it in his time;" not before, though we were the signet upon his hand.—*Bunyan.*

THE BIBLE ROCK.

BY EMILY S. MOORE.

A little child of six years, while conversing to herself, was overheard to repeat several times the words, "The Bible rock;" which, upon reflection, seemed suggestive of some rich ideas, as the following: Though many rocks exist, and many kinds are abundant, yet there is a rock which is more distinguished in every respect than any other rock—the Bible Rock.

It is a great Rock. Though rocks vary in size and appearance, this is uniformly a great rock. Its dimensions are so extensive that it fills the whole world. As the Prophet Daniel saw it, so it is, "a stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which shall destroy other kingdoms, but shall itself stand forever, while it shall fill the whole earth."—Dan. ii, 34-35.

It is a high rock. It stands fixed above every other point, a prominence in the low lands of earth's wilderness—a tower in the spring-time of life—a shadow from the scorching rays of a midsummer sun—a protection from the fitful gales of life's autumn, and a security amid the bleakness of its winter.

"A rock in a weary land,
And a shelter in a time of storm."

It is a solid rock. Unlike earthly material, that is liable to crumble and decay, or become injured by the floods or the fire, it will always stand. It will ever endure the same; when the world is on fire, and when "the elements melt with fervent heat, and all nature is rolled together as a scroll," it will remain unchanged.

It is a durable rock. Though other rocks may be shaken or dissolved by the action of the elements, this rock stands forever indissoluble and eternal in its duration; it is the basis of the blessing of all who are blest; it is the source of all the joy

of those who rejoice; it is the messenger of peace to all those who have peace; it is the revelation of comfort to all those who are comforted; it is the only way whereby a soul can be redeemed from sin, or saved from certain destruction, to enter the gates into Paradise.

It is a rock of offense. Notwithstanding all the greatness, and height, and solidity, and durability, and abiding qualities, and completeness, and chief position, and spirituality of this rock, yet it is a rock of offense. Multitudes will reject it, and perish forever. Many will accept the comforts and blessings afforded thereby for a time, then will turn away after the vain delusions that stand opposite, though in sight of its proffered advantages and forsaking this richest of all riches, will die for the want of the aid kindly and graciously proffered, will make this a means of offense not only, which is the source of all good, but will be offended with those who do make this their rock.

Finally, Christ is this rock, and if we have this Bible Rock, this great rock that fills the whole world not only, but whose greatness occupies the heavenly paradise also, we shall have a greater possession, and a more enduring substance than all this world can of itself afford, or many worlds like it confer, if procured from like resources. And concerning this rock, we can gladly say, amid the exhausting influences of life's toils, with the Psalmist, "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I." And while on this solid rock I am established, I can declare with the poet,—

"On the solid rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand."

If we have a portion in this durable rock, we shall be kept from the hands of the destroyer, and our protection will be, "No weapon formed against thee shall prosper," and in the abiding rock we can continue, for "though heart and flesh fail,"

yet we will see the rock, for abiding mansions are prepared above where he dwells, and we shall be able to remain steadfast, though heaven and earth pass away, and are no more.

In this complete rock is a fulness and completeness that saves to the uttermost. And if we build on this chief corner-stone, we shall have a firm foundation, which all this world nor any of the powers of the enemy cannot misplace.

In this spiritual rock is our salvation, which will bring us all the comforts it promises to afford, if we keep it, and this rock will not be a rock of offense to us, but we will be enabled to say, with a good sister in the Bible, "Neither is there any other rock like our God;" and we shall be fully persuaded that on this rock—not on Peter—he has successfully and forever founded his church.

And when this rock—Christ—appears in majesty and great glory to judge the world, those who remain on the earth having him for "the rock of their inheritance," will have no cause to "call on the rocks and mountains to fall on them to hide them from his face," while their requests prove fruitless, for the rocks and mountains will flee away, but they will be enabled with joy to meet him "when he comes." Then who will say with us, We will have this Bible Rock to be our rock?

—♦♦♦—
 HOW TO OBTAIN PARDON.—"Do not trust in your own works, endeavors, your virtues and good deeds, your prayers and your alms. They will never buy for you an entrance into heaven. They will never pay your debt to God. They are all imperfect in themselves, and only increase your guilt. There is no merit or worthiness in them at the very best. 'When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you,' says the Lord Jesus, 'say we are unprofitable servants.'"—Luke xvii, 10.—*Exchange.*

EXPERIENCE.

BY T. F. DOLAN.

I was born of Romish parents and reared in the Romish faith. I heard about Jesus Christ (*with the unction of the Holy Ghost*) for the first time, in the early part of 1871. I commenced at once to honestly and earnestly seek and obey the light.

Immediately on my conversion, the Lord called me to work in his vineyard. The devil hindered me somewhat. I was afraid of the lions. But *Jesus* often appeared to my fainting soul, ever commanding, Go forward! Be strong! Be very courageous! I was enabled by faith, after a full consecration to lay hold on the promise for cleansing and power! "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." First of all I fell among holiness people. This was a great start and help to me. Some say this doctrine is too strong for babes; but I can say from experience that it did not hurt me. I saw clearly and gave glory to God.

Oh! how surprised I was, after searching the Scriptures, and reading the works of Wesley and others, at the opposition to Holiness in the M. E. Church. "The works of the devil are manifest." And the 3d of John xx, clearly explains the whole matter: "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd." The Lord has led me to be an offence to many. (Rom. ix, 33.) But although my trials have been severe, and my buffetings many, he has sustained me in bearing the cross among false prophets, in the office, in street preaching, and in all good works. I have found my sorest trials, where they have ever been found by those fully determined to please God, among false brethren. I see the need of a Free Church everywhere, without "lords," wherein we can all be brethren in

the peace, love and unity of the Gospel. May God shake terribly the sandy foundations, and sanctify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works!

God has written on my heart; To be temperate in eating, speaking and acting—to fast—to divest myself of all worldly conformity, in word, act or dress—to “live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world”—to “avoid the very appearance of evil—to be open, frank and honest, with nothing hid—to avoid as the bite of a serpent, all secrets.”

“The world hateth me, because I testify of the world that the deeds thereof are evil.” The world opposes me; Christ loves me! If I would compromise, and act in a genteel and smooth manner, and hide about three fourths of my light under a bushel, I would no doubt be tolerated in their communion; but now, because God has put into my hand a sharp, piercing sword, the carnal mind is stirred up on all sides. But as I value my soul, and heartily desire to save it alive, I must “walk in the light as he is in the light,” in order to be clean. This I will do, at any cost, God being my helper.

The graces or fruits of the Spirit, and the charity of Cor. i, 13, are mine. Bless the Lord!

Washington, D. C.

—There are two ways of destroying Christianity—the one is to deny it, the other to displace it.

—“Most people believe there is a hell, but never allow that any body is going there. All people with them are good, as soon as they die, all were sincere, all meant well, and all they hope, got to heaven. Alas! what a common delusion is this! I can well understand the feeling of the little girl who asked her mother where all the wicked people were buried, for she found no mention on the grave-stones of any except the good.”

KNOWING GOD.

“To know God is eternal life.” Therefore to know God as personal, living in you, is to live his eternal life. The Scriptures do not say to know doctrines, to know creeds, to follow leaders, to know about the Bible or all it contains, or know opinions of good men, or follow good authorities; but eternal life is yours only when you know God.

If you know of him through books, or any medium that tells concerning him, and yet do not know him beyond the book or authority you adopt, then you have not gained eternal life. Your authority gives you the promise of eternal life; but life is more than a promise, it is a reality. Eternal living with God is beyond all that was or can be written. It is personal contact with God, personal communion with God, personal knowing of God as present with you, guiding you, controlling you, speaking to you. This is eternal life—to know God.

Until then, you can say and know beyond doubt you have been baptised by the Holy Ghost, who alone gives the personal knowledge of the presence of God; then you have not gained eternal life.

You are simply resting on a promise, when you should press on to gain the reality.

Knowing God is never gained by striving and getting, nor by efforts to know about him or his wondrous works. God is above all works, all of his gifts, all knowledge, all possessions. To know God then, is not to know things, but to consider things as stepping-stones to the higher ground, where God shall be our “all in all.”

Knowing the Bible is not the same as knowing God. God is beyond the Bible. He wrote it. Eternal life does not come from knowing the Bible. The Bible is but a stepping-stone, a holy instruction book to point the believers to God.

Knowing Jesus is not the same as knowing God. Jesus ascended to "your Father and my Father," and from the Father comes "eternal life," first manifested in his Son Jesus, next to be given by Jesus to you. But the life comes from God only. We must, therefore, look beyond Jesus to God, and know God over all as the giver of his life to be our life. Also, to know God is a gift, therefore no effort will gain it but faith, and that degree of appropriating faith which accepts and there rests.

When do we know God? There is but one answer—when we receive the Holy Ghost, who after sanctifying us, cleansing us, and redeeming us in every part of our nature, delivers up the kingdom in us to God the Father, that God may be all and in all. Adam knew God, for God walked with him. Enoch walked with God, for God took him to walk alone with him. Enoch did not cease to live on the earth, but he became like God, of a new nature. He had come into the perfect knowledge of God.

To know God then, is to be fully redeemed, living the pure life of the original Adam.

To know about the Spirit is yet not "perfected in the knowledge of God," for God the Creator, the Almighty, the Omnipotent, is higher than his occasional manifestations to the flesh. To realize God as the Sovereign of the world, in all his immensity of power, and yourself as a little atom, yet able to hear his faintest whisper, your heart opened to receive his Spirit's communion, your intellect redeemed, and no other power but his able to direct it, your body renewed and transformed, and made "like unto Christ's most glorious body," a spiritual body, free from all corruption, sin, disease, beyond all death—this is the life eternal, ever knowing God.—*Glad Tidings.*

—“The love of God is strength.”

TO THE METROPOLIS.

A young man had been preaching in the presence of a venerable divine, and after he had done, went to the old minister and said :

“What do you think of my sermon?”

“A very poor sermon, indeed,” said he.

“A poor sermon!” said the young man. “It took me a long time to study it.”

“Aye, no doubt of it.”

“Why, did you not think my explanation of the text a good one?”

“Oh, yes,” said the aged preacher, “very good, indeed.”

“Well, then why do you say it was a poor sermon?” asked the young man.

“Because,” said he, “there was no Christ in it.”

“Well,” said the young man, “Christ was not in the text. We are not to be preaching Christ always; we must preach what is in the text.”

The old man replied :

“Don’t you know, young man, that from every town and every village, and every hamlet in England, wherever it may be, there is a road to London.”

“Yes,” said the young man.

“Ah,” said the aged divine, “so from every text in Scripture, there is a road to the metropolis of the Scripture, that is Christ. And, my dear brother, your business is when you get a text to say, Now, what is the road to Christ, and then preach your sermon, running along the road toward the great metropolis—Christ. And,” he added, “I have never found a text that had not a road to Christ in it, and if ever I do find one that has not, I will make one. I will go over hedge and ditch, but I will get at my Master, for the sermon cannot do any good unless there is a savor of Christ in it.”—*Gospel Banner.*

TAKE THE BLESSER.

Jesus wants us to embrace him, in his solitary, personal glory, grace and power. He will not allow worlds, or churches, or creeds, or friends, or joys, or hopes, or abstract ideas, or crowns, to come between us and himself. He will not even let the thought of a "blessing," or of "sanctification," or of "heaven," get between us and himself. We must empty our hearts of all desires, empty our hands of all gifts and treasures, empty our minds of all ideas, philosophies and opinions, and then embrace Jesus, the Infinite Blessor, as over and above all blessings.

If you were to approach the sun, you would find that the nearer you approximated his blazing orb, world after world, and star after star would disappear behind the waves of solar light, until, lost and drowned in a sea of splendor, you could see nothing but the solitary sun.

In seeking holiness, Jesus draws you to himself. As your panting, thirsting heart gravitates towards the Blessor, through a wilderness of surrounding objects and ideas, you will find those multitudinous objects and ideas will one by one drop behind you, until you let go the created universe, and take him for your portion, who made the universe.

When you let go yourself and everything else, and fall by your own specific gravity into this bosom of love, and see "no man, save Jesus only," then you will be wholly sanctified by an act of the Divine will.

Quit trying to do the Lord's work; quit trying to make yourself feel, or make yourself holy. Do not be gazing around for "signs," and "sounds," and symptoms; stop fishing in the channel of your heart for "moods," and "frames." Do not attempt to manufacture flashed or celestial lightning in the sky of your moral nature. Let the Lord Jesus take the entire management of you,

within and without, now and forever. Wed yourself to Christ, and be content with him! He will take the responsibility of cleansing and keeping you.—*Christian Standard.*

HEAR MY CRY!

O strong to save and bless,
My rock and righteousness,
Draw near to me!
Blessing, and joy, and might,
Wisdom, and love, and light
Are all with Thee!

My refuge and my rest!
As child on mother's breast,
I lean on Thee.
From faintness and from fear,
When foes and ill are near,
Deliver me.

Turn not away thy face,
Withhold not needed grace,
My fortress be!
Perils are round and round,
Iniquities abound,
See, Saviour, see!

Come, God and Saviour, come!
I can no more be dumb;
Appeal I must,
To thee the gracious One,
Else is my hope all gone,
I sink in dust!

Oh, answer me, my God,
Thy love is deep and broad,
Thy grace is true!
Thousands this grace have shared,
O let me now be heard,
O love me too!

Descend thou mighty love,
Descend from heaven above,
Fill thou this soul!
Heal every bruised part,
Bind up this broken heart,
And make me whole!

'Tis knowing thee that heals;
'Tis seeing thee that seals
Comfort and peace.
Shew me thy cross and blood,
My Saviour and my God,
Then troubles cease.—[Bonar.

—As thine eye observeth others,
so art thou also noted again by others.

WATCH THY MOUTH.

See the sentinel, as with measured tread, he guards the entrance to the officer's quarters. His duty is to keep out those who have no business to enter there; and to forbid any to go out from the lines not authorized. You can see him at the entrance of the Navy Yard. See, he does not take a leisure stroll of a mile or two, looking here and there, absorbed with sight-seeing. He is not seen in flippant chat with a bystander. He dare not sit down, much less talk of sleep. He is not found playing checkers or croquet. O no; his business is to watch the entrance of his employer, and he does it faithfully. At the close of his watch, he can tell you for a certainty, whether any unqualified have gone out or come in.

O ye people! thus guard your mouth. Keep out intruders. There are rum and tobacco and their kin—suffer them not to pass. They will try to outwit you, but be vigilant. Challenge them with all the shining steel at your command. They have no business within. Accept no parleying; no excuse. Guard the sacred entrance of your soul in all the dignity thereof; it may be once crushed, but it is now a risen manhood. If you have not already, let the Spirit of the living God dwell within; for then you will have a double zeal to keep out these imps of pollution. He will not dwell in aught but a sacred enclosure. Challenge every one who essays to enter, in your weakness; and, if need be, God shall send the seraphic host to your assistance. "Hold the fort!" "Jesus signals still." A reinforcing host lies just outside the garrison.

Let none in, we say, but above all let none out, who by all means should be prevented. Here is a vigilant eye needed. Ten thousand a day are surging, plotting and struggling for egress, whose only business is to return equipped of the devil for your destruction. Who? What? Words

man, words! Once out they mean your destruction—evil words we mean. Good words you must take special care to let out. That is what the door is for—somebody to go in and out; for good servants. "But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words [good words] thou shalt be justified, and by thy words [evil words] thou shalt be condemned." Matt xii, 36-37. Many words—good words—must needs go out in a day on their holy mission of comfort, joy and gladness; but examine well; see they bear the right password; see that in their faces beams love—heavenly love—and peace. Let none pass in whose eye a bit of anger lies. Keep thy lips with all thy diligence. Pace up and down the path of power with patient tread; nor be for a moment diverted. Carry against your breast the sacred steel—the Word of God—polished with personal application. Hug it to thy bosom, Christian sentinel, as you walk the beat of life's watchfulness. A mighty noble dwells within—guard well. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth within you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." 1 Cor. iii, 16-17.—*Bible Banner.*

—The fervent and diligent man is prepared for all things.

—The man who denies the universal necessity of regeneration, can know very little of the heart's corruption. He is blind indeed who fancies that pardon is all we want in order to get to heaven, and does not see that pardon without a change of heart, would be a useless gift. Blessed be God that both are freely offered to us in Christ's Gospel, and that Jesus is able and willing to give us the one as well as the other.

OBJECTIONS TO HOLINESS.

And they are not very hard to find. All justified persons sooner or later see the necessity of holiness of heart, and if they are not willing to pay the price—give up all they have or are for Jesus—then “they with one consent begin to make excuse.” And these are some of the excuses they make:

1. “We sin every day in word, thought and deed, and cannot help it.”

Ans.—“He that committeth sin is of the devil, for the devil sinned from the beginning.” 1 John 3, 8. No sin is compulsory, for sin implies probation, and probation implies the power of choosing between good and evil.

2. “We cannot live without some sin.”

Ans.—“If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanses us from ALL sin.” Whosoever is born of God DOETH NOT commit sin.”

3. “There is none righteous, no one not.”

Ans.—Why? Because there were none who sought after God, as the context states. John says, “He that doeth righteousness is righteous.”

4. “We cannot be sanctified till just before death.”

Ans.—“Behold now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation.” We remember to have heard an anecdote of a good Presbyterian brother, who thought as above stated. Being brought very low by disease, and thinking that he should die, he prayed very earnestly that he might be sanctified, preparatory to that event. His prayer was answered in the sanctification of his soul, of which he had clear, unmistakable evidence. But (unfortunately for his theory) he recovered, and strange (?) to relate, he had still the evidence of his sanctification—the preparatory dying

grace. But what to do about it the poor fellow did not know. He finally concluded to do the best thing he could under the circumstances, viz., to give God the glory for what he had done for his soul.

5. “We are sanctified by obedience, to the law.”

Ans.—“By grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.”

6. “We are purified by trials.”

Ans.—“And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us: and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts BY FAITH. Acts xvi, 8, 9. If both Jews and Gentiles are to have their hearts purified by faith, to what class do they belong who are to have their hearts purified by trials?”

7. “We are purified little by little.”

Ans.—The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth (present tense) us from ALL sin.”

8. “No one is perfect in this life.”

Ans.—Job was a perfect man. Paul says, “Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect,” &c., &c.

9. “But some who profess to be holy commit great sins.”

Ans.—“Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?” Who ever thought of charging the doctrine or example of Jesus with the horrible crime committed by Judas, one of his followers? And yet it would be as reasonable as to charge the doctrine of holiness with all that is done by its professed adherents. The Judas of the New Testament is not the only Judas who ever lived in the world.

10. “But these people say they cannot sin.”

Ans.—We have heard this charge repeated over and over again, and yet, strange to say, we have never once heard the original claim put forth, we believe. And if we should,

what would it prove? Simply that some one had misapprehended the doctrine—not that it was at fault itself, for the original and generally accepted doctrine teaches nothing of the kind. True, John says, “Who-soever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is of God. 1 Jno. 3, 9. But that it is only relatively or morally impossible, will appear from the fact that this would place us beyond probation; and this not only when we are sanctified, but when we are born of God. But we see by the text (Dan. 12, 10) that those participating in this work were to be “tried” after having been “purified and made white;” hence there must be a probationary state subsequent to sanctification.

11. “Holiness people have but one idea; they are hobby riders.”

Ans.—Hear St. Paul: “This ONE THING I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

12. “But you are one dispensation too soon.”

Ans.—Before another dispensation opens, it may be said, “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” He that waits till the next dispensation to obtain holiness of heart, will find to his utter and irretrievable ruin that he is one dispensation too late!! Morality and uprightness of character, apart from saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, will avail nothing: for “without holiness no man shall see the Lord.”—*A. J. Dennis.*

—“It is a good thing to make a profession of religion, if we have any religion to profess.”

A PRACTICAL SERMON.

BY A CHINESE MINISTER.

TEXT.—“Go.”

“Leave thy father, mother, fields; preachers go thus; world-men don’t like to go in that fashion. Where must we go? To the sea; go for the fish; they are not on the surface, they are in the depths. We may find shrimps in shallow water, but we must go to the deep water for the large fish. Go to the mountains to seek the lost sheep. There are lions and tigers and snakes in the mountains; but we must go, not to find sport, but to find the sheep. Go to the vineyard, to work, to watch, to plant, to water. Go to the field to sow seed. Study the soil, and sow accordingly. Field work is not play. Go to the market-place and bid guests to the Master’s feast. Go into the army, to fight, to wrestle with the devil, to put forth your strength, and to come home singing songs of victory.

“Ask the master for Peter’s hook, to bring up the right fish; for David’s crook to guide the sheep aright; for Gideon’s torch, to light up the dark places; for Gospel seed, without any tares in it; for Moses’ guiding rod; for the brazen serpent, to cure the bites of the world’s snakes; for David’s sling to prostrate your giant foe; for the armor inventoried by Paul in the last chapter of Ephesians; but above all, for the wonderful Holy Spirit to help at all times. If we have all these, it is no matter where we go. We will come with rejoicing to Conference next year, with songs and shouts of victory.”—*Living Epistle.*

“We cannot carry any worldly thing out of the world; but by worldly things we can lay up treasures in heaven—good deeds, noble character, love to God, may be carried with us.”

DIVINE INTERPOSITIONS.

As a testimony to the continuance of Divine Revelation, I would relate the circumstance of ten infidels, in or near Westchester Co., N. Y., who practiced clubbing together to strengthen one another in Atheism. To one of their meetings, Daniel Haviland, a minister of our Society, with whom I was well acquainted, was constrained to go, and to warn them to repent of their wickedness, assuring them "that there verily is a God who judgeth in the earth." and by his mission was led to tell them that if they did not repent they would be made such an example of God's displeasure, as that scarce an individual of them should be permitted to die a natural death. But this message was not proved to be true by any miracle wrought at the time, but by its subsequent fulfillment upon every one of them to the letter. See Cunningham on Revelation.

Again, David Sands, a minister whom I well knew, during his travels in Ireland, on a certain day felt a strong impulse in his mind, to stop and hold a meeting that evening in a barn, near the place where he was, and it proved providential, for a certain man had selected that night for the execution of a premeditated purpose to take his own life; and soon after the meeting was convened, he was for that end passing near the said barn, and seeing a light was led to step in, and very soon after, David Sands rose and declared that his mind was remarkably impressed with a belief that there was an individual present who was under a temptation to take his own life, and had now left his home for the purpose; and expressed the conviction, that he then had the instruments of death about him, but told him, if he would resist the temptation now, that Satan would never be suffered to tempt him any more.

After the meeting closed, a person

came to David Sands and acknowledged the truth of the testimony, and that he was the man; and then on his way for the execution of his fatal design. And the account states that he was never so tempted afterwards, and was inexpressibly thankful for the interposition of a Divine Providence for his escape. See David Sands' Journal of travels in England and Ireland.

John Fletcher, a minister of the Church of England, entered the pulpit at his own place of worship at Madely, intending to preach a sermon which he had prepared. But his mind became confused—he could neither recollect his text nor any part of his discourse. In his distress and perplexity he knew not what to do, and thought he should be obliged to leave the place. Becoming somewhat composed, his mind turned to the account in the 3d chapter of Daniel, of the three worthies who were cast into the fiery furnace. On this subject he commenced speaking, and received singular enlargement of heart and extraordinary assistance from his Divine Master. Believing there must be some peculiar cause for his being thus led and aided, he desired, if any of his congregation met with anything particular, they would acquaint him with it.

During the ensuing week he received the following information: A woman of the name of K—, the wife of a butcher in the neighborhood, was under deep and serious convictions. Her husband was exceedingly enraged at her becoming religious, and uttered many vindictive threats as to what he would do to her if she did not cease going to hear John Fletcher, or to any meeting for worship whatever. On her telling him she could not in conscience refrain from going, he swore dreadfully, that if she went any more he would cut her throat as soon as she came home. This drove her to look to her Heavenly Father for help,

and to cry unto him to be with her in the trying hour. Being favored with some confidence in her Almighty helper, she concluded to continue faithful in the performance of her duty. The next meeting day, after many struggles against the suggestions of Satan, and with the fears of her own heart, she came down stairs prepared to go the place of worship. Her husband enquired if she was going thither; and on her replying in the affirmative, said, "I shall not as I intended cut your throat, but I will heat the oven and throw you into it the moment you return home." This threat he enforced with many a bitter oath; but she was not deterred by the fear of personal violence; she went on her way with her heart humbled in prayer, endeavoring to seek strength from the only sure fountain. It was the day already described; and as J. Fletcher was speaking of the Hebrews whom Nebuchadnezzar cast into the fiery furnace, she felt every word applied to her heart, and as if all belonged to her. Strengthened and animated she felt the love of God flowing into her soul, and a willingness wrought in her to lay down her life for his sake. She hastened home, nothing doubting, but that some way would be opened for her deliverance, as had been for the three children; or that if burned to death that her immortal spirit would be gathered in mercy into her eternal rest. On opening the door of her dwelling she found her husband's wrath abated, and he under a fresh visitation of divine love which had awakened in him a concern for the salvation of his soul. John Fletcher concludes his account of this occurrence with these words: "I know now why my sermon was taken from me, namely, that God might thus magnify his mercy."—*The Friend*.

—It is always safe to leave results with God.

REFLECTIONS.

BY REV. E. P. MARVIN.

This year has witnessed an increase of ministerial and ecclesiastical vacations, in number and length.

Mr. Murray's Music Hall views of this question are evidently gaining ground. Let us sum up and reflect a little. Whenever a minister is sick, or honestly tired out in gospel service he should cease work a while. Pulpit exchanges will often furnish the needed rest from study. Besides if ministers would preach the Word as given them and not do so much of the polished essay business, they would not find it so difficult to find matter and form for sermons. The true apostolic idea of a sermon is not a fine polished address, prepared and delivered with "excellency of speech and wisdom," but a plain exposition of divine truth in the power of the Holy Ghost. It is interesting if not amusing to observe how convenient our jolly clerical friends at the Springs, the sea-side or in the woods, find the words of Jesus in Mark vi, 31, calling his disciples aside from almost incessant preaching to rest a few hours. Not a few observers are skeptical as to whether the pastors of rich and popular churches who "richly earn a vacation," and are sent off to play from one to three months, really work any harder, or even as hard, as pastors of smaller and weaker churches, most of whom toil twelve months in the year.

It is easier to lead a giant than a child. Many of the former class abandon pastoral visitation; some preach but one sermon; some change places often; some repeat their sermons once in two or three years, and some live in elegance and luxury. On the whole we incline to believe that the pastors of weak and struggling churches work the harder. Scarcely any other class of men are taking the vacation time that minis-

ters of the gospel take. Money-makers generally cannot spare the time. Physicians do the most business during the heated term. The poor toil on and sweat through the whole. Satan takes no vacations, but works with increased activity and success while the churches are closed.

Death is at work, and the people have more need of a pastor at their homes in midsummer than at any other time. The absence of pastors and closing of churches has been one cause of the unprecedented increase of Sabbath desecration during the past summer, by both saints and sinners. When Dr. H. M. Scudder condemned the Coney Island Sunday excursions, the *N. Y. Sun* pointedly asked him where he was spending the summer, and why his church was closed.

The church changes as much as the world. The Jews originally had a daily service in the temple and in the synagogues. The Romish churches are never closed even on a week-day. Surely no Christian church should be closed, or Sunday school adjourned on the Lord's day. What a humiliating spectacle many of our churches have presented to the world during the past summer—doors closed, and members lounging at home and reading secular papers, or off on pleasure excursions, children turned loose to Sabbath desecration, the sacredness and spiritual profit of the day almost wholly lost, all forms of evil in a ferment, preachers off at play, stalling, preaching for pay or a new pulpit, and perhaps returning more weary than when they left. But the subject is a sad one to dwell upon, and it will require much more talent than has yet been shown, to vindicate vacations.

—By the translation of Enoch and Elijah, God showed how men would have left the world if they had not sinned—not by death, but a glorious translation.

JUST SAVED.

BY MRS. N. FRANCE.

In December, 1873, I was called upon to stand by the bedside of a dying sister, whose experience and death was certainly remarkable, and which I believe God designed should be published to the world, but I never supposed I should be the one who should have it done, as there was one particularly requested by her to perform this duty faithfully. But as no account of it has ever been made, God has given me very clearly to understand that I must do this work.

Sister Root was born in Schuylerville, Saratoga Co., N. Y., in 1828; was the daughter of N. Seelye, one of the oldest members of the M. E. church in this place, and for many years a local preacher, who departed this life five months before his daughter. Our father, I believe, was a Christian, and we were taught to fear the Lord from our youth. Sister Root experienced religion (or professed to) when 15 years of age, and joined the M. E. church. A few years later she became the wife of a class leader, and a member of the choir, and both herself and her husband always had their house, hearts and hands open to the cause, so that none doubted but she was a Christian, (of the modern type, at least,) and was very highly esteemed by all who knew her.

She was taken suddenly ill, which terminated fatally in one week. Three days after she was taken sick she felt sure she would not recover. Her husband was watching with her at the time, she talked freely, and made all her requests in reference to their secular affairs, after which she wished him to call the children and those in the house, and those of the friends who could be called in that night, together with the pastor and a number of the neighbors. She said she wished to speak to them and bid

them farewell, lest she should not be able to speak after. She had spoken to all, and the pastor had sung and prayed with her; she seemed quite composed and said she *hoped* it would be well with her. But, oh, what misgivings we felt, but we kept looking to God for her, when suddenly she sank away, and it was difficult to determine her state; but, after lying quite a length of time, she just as suddenly came to herself, opened her eyes, and asked for water. When she had partaken, she said:

"I have been permitted, through the goodness of God, to come back to make a confession for myself, and to warn the people not to do as I have done. I have been passing all these years for a Christian, and in heart I have not been one. I have not obeyed God, and this has been my great sin; for he says, 'If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments.'" Then she reproached herself, and besought God to have mercy upon her yet. "Now," she said, "I want to tell you where I have been and what I have seen. When I left you, I stepped aboard of something like a stage or car, and glided away until I found myself in a large crowd, in a spacious room, elegantly furnished and beautifully lighted. The ladies were gaily dressed, carrying high heads, and with their trains trailing in the filth which the gentlemen were making with their tobacco, and the smoke was very offensive. There was a great number of church-members in this crowd; this is the church and the world united—how I saw it there. Then I passed out of this into a dark place, where seemed to be many others, and I was crowded to the very brink of an awful pit, and I said, 'Must I go in there?' and I shrank back with such alarm that I came to you again, to tell you that I am not prepared for heaven, nor have I seen it; but I *have seen and smelled the awful pit*, and but just missed going into it."

Then she prayed and exhorted with powerful language, such as she never before was capable of, after which she seemed exhausted, and remained quiet until the afternoon previous to her death, when she called for me. I was out of the room at the time, but immediately hastened to her bedside. As I approached she put up her arms to embrace me, saying, "Sister, praise God, *Jesus saves me now!* Glory to his name!" and she continued in this happy state until the end, praising God for salvation, even at that late hour, and exhorting those present to meet her in the better world. She said she "should soon join in the song of redemption, which would be far sweeter than any she had sung here." She continued until about twelve o'clock that night, when she peacefully passed through the portal of death, and we all felt that "*it is well with her.*"

—What will become of us in the end, who begin so early to wax lukewarm!

—A gentleman said to me in New York, "I was a sad drunkard: I became a Christian. Well, I believed and boasted that the love of Jesus had taken away all the appetite for drink. Three weeks ago there was the Communion Service in Dr. Tyng's. I smelt the drink and wanted it. My fingers began to tingle. There was an itching, burning, dry sensation in my throat. I wanted it. I tried to pray. I tried to think that I had come there to show forth the 'Lord's death till I come.' It was no use. I gripped the seat. I ground my teeth. I sat in perfect agony. The wine approached me. I shuddered from head to foot. If I had taken it in my hand there would not have been a drop of it left. I know it, and I have been fighting that appetite for three weeks with all the power I had to fight anything.—*John B. Gough.*

FRIENDS OR SLAVES.

God never meant that we should serve him as slaves. Our Saviour has clearly taught us that we are to be actuated by pure and lofty motives. As love prompted the plan of salvation, so love is to prompt us in our acceptance and compliance with all that we find in the working of that plan. Jesus said, "Henceforth I call you not servants, . . . but I have called you friends."

If our love to Christ and our obedience to his precepts is simply kept up because we fear hell, we are slaves. A slave serves his master because he is compelled to do so, a friend labors because he loves to. Our Saviour by comparison here makes obvious how much better it is to labor as a friend than it is to work as a slave. There is a vast difference between enduring religion and enjoying it.

If we feel that God is all powerful, can do with us as he pleases, and in wrath can and will send us to endless woe, hence we will obey him, we are slaves. If we sing and pray because we must do so, our religious life is a burdensome one.

On the other hand, where love to the Master is the motive power, we do just what we want to do when we serve and obey him whom we love.

The only constraint such an one feels is that of which Paul speaks when he says, "The love of Christ constraineth us."

Willing, cheerful obedience, freely doing our duty from the promptings of love, makes the most arduous task a pleasure.

Let love once become the prime factor, and we will ever be ready to work heartily for the Lord. The Christian life of many would be marvelously changed if they recognized this principle of friendship. The individual who obeys the laws of the United States because he fears the penalty, is not so good a citizen as he who obeys them because he loves

that which is just and right. One labors under bondage, the other is doing just what he wants to do. So with a man whose "citizenship is in heaven," his greatest pleasure consists in doing right because Jesus has set us the example, and love to him prompts us to take him as our ideal and exemplar. "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."

Reader, are you a friend of Christ? If so, do not talk and act as though his commands were an unpleasant restraint, and his religion a thing you would dispense with if it could be safely done, but rather let love, gratitude and the higher motives govern you, and you will rejoice in the freedom the Son gives.—*Bible Banner*.

—A willing and obedient heart—how pleasing to our heavenly Father! It is more acceptable than offerings of gold and silver; more fragrant than frankincense or myrrh. It is odorous of love, which is what pleases him best, whose nature it is to love.

—"If ever your sins are forgiven, it must be now; now in this life, if ever in the life to come; now in this world, if they are to be found blotted out when Jesus comes again. There must be actual business between you and Christ. Your sins must be laid on him by faith; his righteousness must be laid on you. His blood must be applied to your conscience, or else your sins will meet you in the day of judgment, and sink you into hell. Oh, how can you trifle when such things are at stake? How can you be content to leave it uncertain whether you are forgiven? You may not feel your danger now. You may not see the necessity of seeking forgiveness at once. A time may come when you will alter your mind. The Lord in mercy grant it may not then be too late! Once more I say, take warning!"

A SOLEMN QUESTION.

BY H. A. CROUCH.

Life is too short, and its opportunities too precious to waste. Heaven is a place too blessed to lose, and eternity too long to spend in hell.

The husbandman that went out to hire laborers into his vineyard, said to those unemployed: "Why stand ye here all the day idle." The unprofitable servant that was cast into outer darkness, was not openly wicked, but had simply failed to use his lord's money. He buried the talent given him in the earth. To lose our own souls, and be the means of others losing theirs, is to fail of entering in ourselves, thereby hindering others.

God has so interwoven our eternal well-being with that of our fellows, that we can occupy no neutral ground. Jesus said, "He that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." The present is pregnant with future. The steps we take here bear us on towards eternal destiny. There is a point of time somewhere in probation's hours, when we make the final decision, from which we rise to heaven, or sink to hell. Solemn hour! The Judgment Day will be a solemn day, when the dead—small and great—shall stand before God, and the books are opened. The hour of death will be a solemn hour, when we bid farewell to time, and launch out into eternity; but the hour when the soul poises between two worlds, an eternity of blessedness and an eternity of woe is more solemn. There comes an hour sooner or later in the experience of every individual when the Spirit presses home: to the heart eternal things, and says to the soul, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." The final decisions of the Judge on the throne, "Come ye blessed," or "Depart ye cursed," will be according to the decision we made then.

"A point of time, a moment's space,
Removes me to that heavenly place,
Or shuts me up in hell."

We may greatly enhance our eternal reward by the improvement of present opportunities. Every soul won to Christ will be a star in the crown of our rejoicing forever. "The righteous shall shine as the firmament, and they that turn many many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever; not even a cup of cold water, given in the name of a disciple, shall lose its reward."

Heaven is a blessed place, the final abode of the redeemed. It is within our reach, but it cannot be gained without earnest effort on our part. Jesus said, "Strive to enter in at the straight gate; for many, I say unto you will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Eternity is too long to spend where "Their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched." "Where they have no rest, day nor night. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever." To fail of heaven will be to reach hell. Since there is crowded into our existence here, interests so vital to our eternal well-being hereafter, the question should come home to those who are making no effort to gain eternal life, with awful significance, "*Why stand ye here all the day idle.*"

—THE PRESENT MOMENT.—There is no moment like the present; not only so, but, moreover, there is no moment at all, that is, no instant force and energy, but in the present. The man who will not execute his resolutions when they are fresh upon him, can have no hope from them afterwards: they will be dissipated, lost and perished in the hurry and skurry of the world, or sunk in the slough of indolence.

God helps those who will to be helped. He who *wills* to be helped, will exhaust every means to help himself.

DEATH IN THE CUP.

A few days ago, we attended a meeting in a church in New York. After the opening exercises and addresses by two of the ministers in the altar, one of whom was the pastor, the meeting was open for Christian testimony. One or two in the congregation had spoken, when a sister, a member of old John street church, arose, and with deep emotion and intense earnestness, said she believed that the Lord had sent her there to deliver a solemn warning. She said that her husband had been a hard drinker, and in his drunken fits had often fearfully abused her, and on one occasion while beating her, had struck one of her eyes, bruising it fearfully, causing her much suffering and the entire loss of sight in that eye, and affected the other, so that the sight of it was also nearly gone. In that condition she had to work for her living, while her husband spent his money for drink.

Some time after, both she and her husband were converted at Jerry McCauley's mission, and her husband was saved from the appetite for drink. She tried medical aid in vain for the recovery of her sight, and was pronounced incurable by the doctors. In her distress they went to the Great Physician, and in answer to their united prayer, the Lord restored her sight.

But about a year ago she and her husband attended a sacramental service in this church. When they came to the altar she perceived that the wine was intoxicating and would not touch it; but her husband partook, and through tasting it, relapsed into the craving for strong drink, and fell, causing her great trouble and sorrow. But through all she held on to God through faith and prayer for him till he was again restored. "And now," said she, "we are so gloriously saved. I have no unkind feeling for any one, and do not wish to offend you, but I felt impressed

that I must come now and tell what happened to us by taking alcoholic wine in this church."

A touching narrative and solemn warning is just like a message from God, and this made an impression, I think, on the minds of all present; and if I had not previously decided and solemnly promised to the Lord that I would never either administer or partake of the abominable stuff in the Lord's Supper, I should have done so then. Ever since we took this decided stand against the use of alcoholic wine at the Lord's table, we have been led to see the inconsistency of the practice, and we wonder why Christians can be so blind with all the light recently shed on the subject, as to use intoxicants, which many would justly shudder to place before their families at their own table, in the most solemn ordinances of our holy religion. It is clear that fermented wine, called in Scriptures, "The wine when it is red, when it giveth its color in the cup," and "that biteth like a serpent," is forbidden by the word of God, and we are informed on the best authority that it is not now, nor ever has been used by the Jews, at their sacred feasts, nor at their weddings. This ought to settle the question of communion.

If the passover wine was unfermented wine, Christ, no doubt, used the same in the institution of the sacrament; and if unfermented wine only was used at weddings, Christ did not make fermented wine at the marriage feast at Cana.—*Exchange.*

—When the Lord reigns supreme in the heart, how easily, how naturally holy aspirations arise, at all times, in all places, and in all circumstances.

—"We must be content not only without what we cannot have, but with what we do have. He who does not use well what he has, is content without it, not with it, and that is not true contentment."

EDITORIAL.

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR.

Love admits of degrees. There is an almost measureless distance between a feeling of interest just arising above indifference, and the sublime affection which leads a man to lay down his life for his friend. But in its lowest possible degree, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor."—Rom. xiii. 10. Here is a simple text, and one easily applied. No one need be deceived in a matter so plain. Yet many are. They profess to be Christians, that is to love their neighbor, when they are talking against him, circulating slanderous reports about him, and doing all they can to injure him without exposing themselves to danger. Such persons have only to take a concordance and examine those passages which speak about loving our fellow-men, to see that they are most awfully deceived. Yet some such not only profess to be right, but also to be, with their sympathizers, about the only ones that are right. *For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?*—Matt. v. 46.

But love does not call darkness light, nor light darkness. It has nothing of a compromising spirit. If it sees one wrong it tells him, and does all it can to set him right. He who loves his neighbor, tells him when he is convinced he has done wrong. If he makes amends he rejoices over it, but if not he withdraws his fellowship, but not his love. He does not follow him up in a spirit of persecution, but lets him alone as far as the safety of others will permit. "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."—2 Thess. iii. 14-15.

Because a man does wrong, "walks disorderly," and is "a busybody," that

is no reason why you should go to fighting over him, and backslide. Do your duty to him in love, and then, as the Apostle says, *have no company with him*. Do not encourage him in his wrong course, by acting as if you thought he was right. You weaken your own faith by putting on a semblance of Christian fellowship when you know it does not exist, and ought not to exist. You do him an injury by strengthening a proud, stubborn spirit, when you ought to make him ashamed. Some keep on indulging in an unchristian spirit from year to year, simply because they are propped up by those who know they are wrong. Sometimes the whole strength of a strong church is neutralized in this way, by a single person.

"A hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbor."—Prov. xi. 9. Whatever else we have, we must see to it then, that we have a genuine love for our neighbor. *For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*"—Gal. x. 14.

CONSISTENCY.

There is often found among sinners a consistency which professed saints would do well to imitate. Christians are often told that if they would have good men nominated for civil officers, they must attend the caucuses. Suppose they do, and secure the nomination of men of good principles and sterling integrity. Though their party may be largely in the majority, it will generally be found that rum-sellers, "free-thinkers," and their adherents will, in sufficient numbers, go over to the opposing party to secure the election of their candidates. The balance of power between the two parties is held by men whose anti-Christian principles are stronger than their political principles.

Robert G. Ingersoll is an influential, prominent Republican. But he is also a very out-spoken, decided infidel, if

not atheist. He, with many others of similar sentiments, requested President Hayes to pardon a man who has been convicted by an intelligent jury of twelve men, before a United States Court, of sending immoral publications through the mails. These publications were not only immoral, but atheistic. Hence the sympathy of free thinkers for this monstrous criminal. The papers report that when Ingersoll was asked by Secretary Sherman to take the stump for the Republican party, he answered with an oath that he "would never make a speech for the Republican party while D. M. Bennet lies in jail." For this reason he has joined in a call for a National Liberal Political Convention. It is not probable that they will nominate candidates, but will give their votes to whichever party will make to them the largest concessions.

Unless Christians would see the Sabbath turned into a day of revelry and dissipation, and the destinies of this country controlled by liquor-sellers, beer-drinkers, atheists and communists, they must imitate the consistency of Ingersoll, and give fealty to Christ the precedence over fealty to any political party. Though in the majority, yet as long as they divide up about equally between the two leading political parties, a comparatively small number, without conscience, bound together by depravity, fretted by restraint, and going to whichever party will serve them best, can open more and more widely upon the well-disposed, the flood-gates of iniquity.

They that fear God should come back to Bible principles, and select for their rulers, "*able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness.*" They should not vote for criminals, or immoral men to make or administer the laws, even though they represent their own political principles. Nor should they allow the great

issues of temperance, of the Sabbath, of public morality, to be lost sight of in issues of infinitely less importance. Do not serve God at other times, and the devil on election day. Let God and a good conscience control you in your business, in your conversation, in your domestic life, and in your duties as a citizen.

SUSTAINED.

A note was left at our office, requesting us to call at the hotel upon a brother whom we had met in former days as an active, stirring man. He was now a cripple; one foot wholly, the other partially amputated. He was on his way to New York to get artificial limbs. We went with mingled feelings, of joy at seeing our brother, of sorrow and pity for his loss, and of anxiety as to how it was endured.

His greeting was cordial and pleasant, his tone full of peace and joy, at once put to flight our anxiety. It was apparent that human sympathy and condolence, though appreciated, were not needed here. In a two hours conversation the theme was, not the affliction that had come upon our brother, but the blessings that had come from this visitation of Providence—the unwonted nearness to God that had resulted, the increased power, given from above, to lead men to Christ.

Instead of repining at his misfortune—for who, in the prime of manhood, with a family to support, would not count it a misfortune to be thus maimed?—he sought at once in what way he might secure to his soul the good to be gained from his suffering.

Is not this the wise way? Does not God mean good to his children, and not evil? Surely the peace of heart, and quiet of soul which our brother had, could come from but one source—from God our Father. Though he chasten, yet he sustains and supports his children by a strong arm. When he sends sickness, or when by acci-

dent we are compelled to remain quiet, and cease from our ordinary avocations, is it not that we may turn our hearts and thoughts to him? He can make the sick room a place of joy, and in the night-watches he will draw near the sufferer, who will draw near to him. Though pain come upon our members, he will send peace to the trusting soul.

Our brother has gone on his way, carrying a message of peace and love, and the light of the Holy Spirit to all whom he meets. By a quiet submission to God's providence, and a sincere seeking to know God's will concerning him, he has gained a rich blessing though by affliction, and through sorrow is made rich in the knowledge of Christ, unto everlasting life.

ENVY.

Guard carefully against an envious spirit. Great deference is paid to worldly prosperity, and you are in danger of enjoying a greater measure of it than God has seen fit to allot to you. Even the Psalmist confesses to having sinned in this direction. *For I was envious at the foolish when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.* We have heard many confessions, and yet we do not remember to have heard one of this particular sin. And yet there is no doubt but that it is much more common now, than it was in the Psalmist's day.

If you find yourself ready to believe everything that is said to the disadvantage of a brother, and incredulous as to everything that may be said in his favor, you may be certain that envy is at the bottom. Envy cannot bear to hear its rival praised.

Envy is a fruitful breeder of discontent. No one can possibly possess all good qualities and all good things. In some respects, others will surpass you. If that makes you unhappy, then you will be ever unhappy. You cannot enjoy what you possess, because some one else has something which you

judge to be better; or if not better, still you esteem its possession necessary to your happiness. Ahab is heavy at heart and displeased—not because he has not possessions in abundance; but because he cannot obtain the vineyard of Naboth. But his wicked wife helps him out, and Naboth is slain under the forms of law, and the coveted inheritance is possessed but not enjoyed.

Thus envy not only produces unhappiness, but it leads to injustice and crime. It was the moving cause of the first murder, and its character has not improved by age. Watch against it then, with the most jealous solicitude. If it pains you to hear a commendation of the piety or usefulness of others, then be sure that envy is making its way into your heart. You are in a dangerous condition. As you give way to that, you will lose the spirit of holiness. You may keep up the profession—many do who are not justified—but the power will be wanting. “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.” “CHARITY ENVIETH NOT.”

REPENT.

The requisite effort often fails to accomplish its object because it is not put forth in the right direction. The farmer who should harrow his field before he breaks up the fallow ground, would fail of a crop, not for the want of industry, but of common sense. The scholar who rushes into the intricacies of science, before he has mastered the fundamentals, makes slow and toilsome progress, notwithstanding his hard study, in consequence of his want of familiarity with first principles. It is so in religion. There are many who are trying to work out their salvation at so great a disadvantage that their failure is almost a certainty. They pray enough to make them saints, and yet they are but little

better for their devotions. They give, up to the demand of charity, but their benefactions profit them nothing. They are yet in the flesh, and so they cannot please God. They love the world. They are acting all the while from selfish motives. They run as uncertainly; they fight as one that beateth the air. The trouble with them is, THEY WERE NEVER CONVERTED. There has been a change in them; but it is not sufficiently radical to make them Christians. Their lamps burn for a season, but they have no oil in their vessels, with which to replenish them. There has been a fashioning over of old materials, rather than a new creation. With them old things have never been done away. Their feelings, their habits of life are the same as ever, save that they have undertaken the performance of a few of what they call religious duties. They are not dishonest, but deceived. Their perseverance in endeavoring to live religion without enjoying it, entitles them to commendation. After the unsuccessful attempts to lead holy lives without holy dispositions, to "gather figs of thorns and grapes of thistles," they give up in despair trying to live religion. They were taught wrong. They followed blind guides. They were taken up into the mountain when they should have been led into the valley. They were encouraged to believe when they should have been required to repent. There is a great amount of superficial piety occasioned by wrong teaching on this point. A man who has been dishonest and wronged his neighbors, becomes convicted. He manifests in a religious meeting his desire for salvation, perhaps by rising up, perhaps by going forward. Friends, desirous of encouraging him, tell him, one after another, "to believe." "It is wicked not to." "You must believe that God accepts you—that you are now a Christian." "But I do not feel any different," says the bewildered seeker. "Never mind

your feelings," reply the instructors, "go on and do your duty, and you will feel better." "You are so good, so moral, that you must not look for any marked change." He yields at last, and, contrary to his convictions, tries to persuade himself that he is a Christian. A belief in one's safety, whether true or false, produces comfort, and so he cherishes it. His skeptical neighbor says, "I shall believe there is something in it if he pays me what is honestly my due—perhaps the usury he extorted from me." But there is no confession, no restitution, and no perceptible difference in his spirit and general demeanor. But is the man really converted? By no means. It is plain and palpable that he has not complied with the conditions of salvation. God is not deceived. He receives none that do not come fully and heartily to his terms. *Repentance is indispensable to becoming converted to God.* Nothing will be accepted as a substitute. There is no such thing as getting into the way of life without passing through the gate of repentance. You may as well undertake to learn a strange language without a knowledge of the alphabet, as to become a Christian without repentance. This bitter cup must be drunk by all who would taste of the sweets of salvation. This cross must be borne by all who would wear the crown of life. You evade it at your peril. You shun it at the risk of your eternal ruin. Jesus says, *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* Then offer no substitute. Make no delay, but humble yourself before God and make a penitent confession of your sins.

This is a duty incumbent not only upon open sinners, but upon professing Christians. They should be always in a penitent frame of mind. But if you have lost your first love, there is no regaining it without repentance. Going forward to seek the blessing of holiness will not answer. If you would build your house so that it will abide

the terrific storm of the last day, let the foundations be deeply laid in heartfelt repentance.

FRIENDLY.

The spirit of Christ is a friendly spirit. They called Christ, when on earth, "a friend of publicans and sinners." The reason was, not because he associated with them as a friend and enjoyed their company, but he sought to do them good, and spoke kindly to them and accepted their hospitality, and instructed them in the way of life and salvation.

Every disciple of Christ, and especially every minister of the Gospel, should be friendly. His spirit should be patient and gentle and kind. He should have a friendly disposition. In this there should be no pretense, no insincerity. If he is naturally selfish and distant, he should pray for a friendly spirit, until God gives it to him. Without it a preacher, whatever his talents, can do but little good. A church destitute of it repels instead of attracts. Strangers are not apt to go to it often. When there really is a friendly spirit it will manifest itself in a friendly manner. The most uncultivated, as well as the most refined, can act friendly when they feel friendly. True politeness is simply showing a Christian spirit to others. We should be thoughtful and considerate of others, and seek to make an impression that we feel friendly towards them and not indifferent, much less hostile.

When one attempts to confer upon us any favor, even though it may be of no advantage to us, we should appreciate the intention and express our thanks for the attempt. Some persons have such an ungracious way of receiving an intended favor as to make the one who tried to confer it feel as if they had offered an insult. There is enough grace to be had to cure one of such unamiable manners.

As sunshine and showers soften the

frozen ground in spring and prepare it to receive the plow, so does the proper manifestation of a friendly spirit by Christians towards sinners, open their hearts to receive the truth. But we should be careful and not compromise. We should not in being friendly, become "friends of the world," or join in with its amusements or spirit or fashions. This would not only neutralize our efforts to do good to others but would destroy us. He who talks politics hears and tells jokes, or attends places of amusement with the ungodly, can do but little good in the pulpit or in the altar until he repents of his folly and confesses it freely. He has overdone the matter. He has not exhibited the Spirit of Christ, but the spirit of the world. Instead of capturing the enemies of the cross he has himself been captured.

But there is not the slightest necessity of running to the extreme. We can maintain our integrity as Christians and yet be friendly to all. He who was "undefiled and separate from sinners" has set us the example. We need to take lessons from Christ. Obedience to Him will remove the peevishness from our spirits and the roughness from our manners. His Spirit will set us right. *He that hath friends must show himself friendly.*

LIVE BY FAITH.

You must not only be pardoned by faith and be sanctified by faith, but you must also live by faith. If you do not, you will die a spiritual death. *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* You must believe God's word. Rely upon it just as much when it promises temporal as when it promises spiritual blessings. Let it be to you, the word of God who cannot lie. Examine carefully, and see to it that you sustain the character of those to whom the promises are made, and if you do, appropriate them to your use just as you would a

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