

THE
Hearnest Christian
AND GOLDEN RULE.

VOL. XLII.

NOVEMBER, 1881.

No. 5

UNDER THE CURSE.

BY REV. B. T. ROBERTS.

"Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."—Gal. iii, 10.

1. Law is a rule of action. Moral law is a rule of action for moral beings. God is the great Lawgiver.

2. We are all under the law of God. As Creator he has the right to impose law. There is an absolute necessity of our having a law. It is essential to our happiness. Human passion needs to be restrained. Society cannot exist without laws. Bandits, mutineers and pirates are compelled to impose laws upon themselves.

3. The excellence of this law of God found in the Bible, must be acknowledged by every intelligent person. The ten commandments were given about 1490 years before Christ, at the time the Assyrian and Egyptian monarchies flourished. Of their laws we know but little save what we gather from the Bible. But as John Quincy Adams says, "The laws given by God to his ancient people, not only have survived the wreck of those empires, but remain to this day rules of faith and prac-

tice to every enlightened nation in the world, and perishable only with it." The more you meditate on the laws of Moses, the more striking and brighter does their wisdom appear. Says President Gorget of France, "The precepts of the decalogue alone disclose more sublime truths, more maxims especially suited to the happiness of man than all the writings of profane antiquity put together." This law contains rules for the government of the heart. Men legislate for the conduct only; God for the motives and feelings.

OBEEDIENCE REQUIRED

1. From every individual—"Cursed is every one."

(1.) The disobedience of others cannot justify ours. How ready almost all are to find examples of disobedience!

(2.) The obedience of others cannot be placed to our account—not that of our parents nor even that of Christ.

Obedience must be

2. Universal—"all things."

(1.) Every negative precept or prohibition must be observed. "Thou shalt not bear false witness." "Thou shalt not covet."

(2.) There must also be absolute obedience. "To do them." "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve."

(3.) The obligation to keep every precept is the same. "The will of God." One precept is as much an expression of that will as another.

(4.) If we can set aside one command of the Almighty we may all.

(5.) God requires unlimited submission to his will. Obedience is to be fairly and fully tested. One disobedient act shows the want of an obedient spirit.

Obedience must be

3. Perpetual—"continually."

1. Past obedience cannot atone for present transgression. The murderer may have been a good citizen up to the time of his shedding blood. His past innocence does not acquit him.

2. Present obedience cannot make satisfaction for past sins. It may procure something like peace of mind but cannot procure pardon.

3. Who is under the curse? All who are in a state of nature.

1. Have you done *all things* that are written in the book of the law?

2. Have you continued in them from your youth up?

3. Have you perseveringly and continually kept one of the commands of God for no other reason than because it was the will of God? If not how do you avoid the conclusion that you are cursed? "Cursed is every one," "that continually not in all things;" then you are cursed. Almost every precept of God's law cries out, "damn him for he has broken *me*."

4. How the curse may be removed.

1. We have seen that no future obedience can avert it.

2. No self inflicted penances will avail anything. Luther tried it in vain.

3. "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." His atonement removes all the legal difficulties. It places all in a condition in which they may be saved.

4. Notwithstanding the death of Christ many are still under the curse. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maran atha,"—cursed with a curse. We have much to do that the curse may be removed. We must accept the offers of salvation.

We must repent of all our sins and throw ourselves on God's mercy for forgiveness.

The death of Christ removed the disability resulting from the fall of Adam. But it leaves man still under obligation to obey the law of God. He who violates it in any particular, brings the curse upon himself by his own transgression. He is under the law!

He who repents and believes in Christ is no longer under the curse of the law but under grace. His relations are changed. He no longer seeks to be justified on his own merits but by the mercy of God. This mercy is extended to all who will accept it.

Thus the salvation or damnation of every person is thrown back upon himself. He may be saved if he will. He may remain under the curse if he will. It is for him to say. Every man makes his own choice. It is a choice for eternity.

What choice do you make?

THE PASTOR'S WORK.

A pastor is put over the flock. It is his business to direct, feed and comfort God's sheep. It is his special duty to attend to the "perfecting of the saints."

The pastoral idea does not include ambassadorship to lost men, for their reconciliation to God. Nevertheless, he who is properly a pastor is also, by virtue of his general ministerial office, charged with saving duties to sinners around him. He is expected to give a portion to each in due season.

The pastor is one whom the Holy Ghost has made an overseer. "None others need apply." The owner of the flock must appoint his own under-shepherds. Men may as well appoint stewards in their neighbors' secular affairs as over their souls.

With divine responsibilities—those looking to the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls—and with responsibilities looking to the flock itself and to sinners, how great the office of a pastor! The Lord give his pastors manifold love, wisdom and power.

The pastor, if faithful, will have a glorious reward of the Chief Shepherd. But the Lord says: "Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture."

No man is quite fit to be a pastor without a pure heart. His first duty, therefore, is to himself. Without a pure heart and sanctified affections he cannot be expected to lead others into purity and full salvation. He either stands directly in the way, preventing the work purposely, or, endeavoring to get others sanctified, he is unable to do much, but is like a doctor, so weak and sick himself that he is only fit to be under another doctor's care. How many a sickly Christian has died to his remnant of salvation because his appointed pastor has been weak and sickly in God, though strong and healthy in ambition and pride! O pastors,

pastors, pastors! "take heed therefore unto yourselves!" By all means see that you have "clean hands and a pure heart," so you will be fit to "ascend into the hill of the Lord," and "stand in his holy place." A Sinai thunder comes rolling down the ages to you: "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord!"

Real pastoral work begins in the closet. A pastor, as such, is a kind of mediator, and takes the case of his people directly to the great Mediatorial Throne. He is a pleader, by instinct, for others. Imbuing his own spirit with the necessities of others, at the common Mercy Seat, he finds the promises, devours them, and carries them in his own heart to the promise-keeping God. With his own soul he calmly and fearlessly expects answers to his prayers; and studies, and preaches, and exhorts, and visits, glowing with the kingship of a holy unction from on high.

Brother pastor, perhaps you are just entering on a new year. It may be a new field to you, or an old one—it matters not. But how are you starting in? Are you measuring yourself for a salvation-winter, a salvation year? You may be calculating on building a church-house or a parsonage; but are there no others to "serve tables," and leave you, untrammelled, to the ministry of the Word? You may have so much studying to do; but be careful how you hoist study into the place appointed for God's throne. Are you disposed to preach finished sermons, scholarly and beautiful essays? rather, see to it, by all means, that you "have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."

Go in, dear brother, for revival, a holiness revival, a soul-saving season. Put all your available assets into pure divinity stock. Calculate on no possible defeat. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come

again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."—*Christian Harvester.*

TAUGHT OF GOD.

A personal experience of the teaching of the Lord had been foretold by the greatest of the prophets as one of the glorious privileges of the New Covenant—"They shall all be taught of God," said Isaiah. "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it on their heart," said Jeremiah. The language of our Saviour is explicit—"The Comforter, the Holy Spirit, will teach you all things, bring all things to your remembrance; receive of the things of mine, and show them unto you, and guide you into all truth." Not less clear is the testimony of the Apostle John—"Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. The anointing that ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but his anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth and no lie." The predictions of the prophets, the assurances of Christ, and the experience to which the Apostle testifies, all correspond, and are in glorious harmony.

The Israelites in the desert had the pillar of cloud and fire.

"Its moving signal summoning when best

Their host to move, and when it stayed to rest."

It was a safe and blessed guide, but how circumscribed was the range of its guidance, compared with the loving voice and influence of Him who, to those who receive him, is a spirit of wisdom and understanding, counsel and knowledge. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God," and only those thus led receive the full measure of Gospel blessing. And who are they who are thus divinely led and instructed? Not the self-asserting and vain-con-

fident; not those who, puffed up with spiritual pride, deem themselves better and wiser than their fellows, and cannot brook to be called in question or controlled,—but the babes on whose behalf Christ gives thanks, who, having in God's mercy brought the sacrifice of the broken heart, are made little in their own eyes and willing to be so in the eyes of others. "I went out poor," said Stephen Grellet, at the close of a journey in which the evidences of divine leading had been marvellously great, "I return poor, very poor in spirit, and yet I can truly say that I have not lacked anything."

When the missionaries had been expelled from Madagascar in 1835, the native converts still kept up their meetings with undiminished refreshment. "The Queen does not know," they said, "that although she has banished the foreign teachers, the best of all teachers, the Holy Spirit, is with us still."

"Where did you get all your knowledge that you are able to speak as you do, and to give such good answers to the priests?" asked some Syrians of a native Christian.

"I have been in the school of Jesus Christ," was the reply, "and it is his Spirit who has taught me."

The doctrine of teaching and guidance is as eminently reasonable as it is distinctly revealed.

There is something like an inconsistency in acknowledging the efficacy of prayer and refusing to acknowledge the reality of divine communications to the soul. Is the door open from man to God, but closed from God to man? When a word from him would be of such infinite value to his children, will the Father of mercies fail to give it? Does he permit us freely to speak to him and will he altogether refuse to speak to us? He who tells us, that he does not deal with us as with creatures that have no understanding, that can only be controll-

ed with the bridle or the whip, and who at the same time gives the promise, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go, I will guide thee with mine eye," does speak undoubtedly; but too often the noises of earth drown the voices of heaven; sin dulls our hearing, and our attention gets diverted by worldly things.

Unbelief, too, is another hindrance; for the Saviour's saying applies with full force in this matter, "According to your faith be it unto you." We must honor the doctrine of guidance by putting it to the proof, and raise the prayer, "For thy Name's sake lead me and guide me," in the full assurance that it will be answered.

Let us also avoid assuming that the leadings of God will only be given in special religious matters. The question put by Manoah and his wife to the angel, "How shall we order the child, and how shall we do unto him?" is a fitting one for every Christian parent; and the character of the home training, the choice of a school or situation, and a hundred other things, may be trustfully brought to God. The young man starting in life may ask guidance in the choice of his home or his companion; the tradesman or the merchant may ask it in the manifold perplexities of business; and he who is called to a post of public trust does well with Hezekiah and Daniel to spread his difficulties before the Lord.

It may be remarked here that guidance often comes in a shape that seems to have little of the supernatural about it, and that it is not at all designed to supersede the diligent use of our natural faculties, and powers of observation and reflection. The path of duty is constantly indicated by outward circumstances, and a hindering providence may often manifest the will of God.

The life of John M. Whitall, the

father of Hannah Whitall Smith lately printed, furnishes a fine illustration of the faithful carrying out of the principles we have been considering. Whether as a sea-captain with a crew under him who were often hard to manage, or as a merchant in extensive business in Philadelphia, or as a director of some of the leading institutions of his city, or as a religious teacher laboring among the poor, he habitually sought the Lord's direction, waiting upon him in secret, day by day, and it was his testimony that his blessed Master never failed him. He believed he would have escaped the greatest troubles of his life had he on one important occasion been true to his principles, and patiently waited till he could move forward in the light.

Upon the tomb of one of the greatest men of our century, the Chevalier Bunsen, the sentence of inspired invitation is engraved, "Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord." Must we not believe that, as this invitation is accepted, light will be given for all our need by him who is the light of men? If the light does not always lead us in paths of outward prosperity, it will lead us in what is far better—the paths of holiness and peace. It will lead out of self-will and self-indulgence, out of pride and strife, out of envyings and surmisings, out of injustice and hardness, out of discontent and disobedience; and it will bring us into a good and large land, where our souls will dwell at ease, and where the secret of the Lord's presence will be reached with joy.—*Friend's Review*.

—Cease not to pray.

—It is sad when believers are off their guard—when they profess like Moses to have been on the mount, and yet like him no sooner come down than they break the commandments.

THE FAKIR'S ANSWER.

It is related that in one of the countries of the East there lived a Fakir or Dervish,—a man who lived in voluntary poverty and asceticism. Some of the Fakirs of the East are simply fanatical and disgusting. But others are of a higher type; men of deep earnestness and thoughtfulness, who are really seeking God, and striving after the attainment of inward purity and perfection in a mistaken way. Such as this was the man we speak of. Giving himself to religious contemplation, he was exceedingly chary of words. As long as he could make himself understood by signs, nothing would induce him to open his lips. And he was highly esteemed for his piety, being generally called "the holy Dervish."

In the same town lived a rich man, famous for his lively, social qualities, and his amiable ingenuity in finding amusement for his friends. One day he had a numerous company at his house. They freely enjoyed the pleasures he offered them, and then, as usual, looked out for some novelty to crown the entertainment.

"Come, let us see our old friend, the holy Dervish," said the host: "I have three questions to put to him. Let us see how he will answer them."

The proposition was received with enthusiasm, and all the company set out gaily towards the hut of the poor Fakir.

They found him quietly seated beside a freshly dug field. The leader of the party composed his laughing face, assumed an expression of profound humility, and addressed him thus: "Holy father, my soul is in anguish because of three deep and difficult questions which exercise it. Will you deign to come to my assistance, and help me with your wisdom to answer them?"

The Dervish made a sign in the affirmative.

"Well then," said his visitor, "the first of these questions relates to God. They say that there is a God; but I cannot see him, and no one can show him to me. How, then, am I to believe that he exists?"

The Dervish only answered by a sigh expressive of profound attention.

"My second question relates to Satan. We are taught that Satan is an angel of fire. If, then, he is fire himself, what has he to fear from the flames of hell?"

Another expressive and impressive sigh.

"And now for my third question. It is written that all our actions are fixed and decreed by God, even before we commit them. How then can God call us into judgment for acts which do not depend upon our free will? How can we be accountable? Holy father, I implore you to answer me."

Another sigh. Then, suddenly seizing a sod of earth, the Dervish threw it with all his force full in the face of his questioner.

Transported with rage at this unheard-of insult, the rich man instantly had the Dervish seized, and the whole party appeared before the judge.

The plaintiff made his statement, and added that the assault was a serious one, as the pain in his head from the blow he had received was almost unbearable.

The judge, turning toward the accused, asked what he had to say in his defence.

The Dervish made a sign.

"Explain yourself intelligibly, if you please," said the judge, severely; "I will not put up with signs."

"Be it so," said the Dervish. "I have only to say that this gentleman came to ask me three questions, and that I fully answered them all."

"Answered them! What! by

throwing a sod of earth at my head ! Oh ! this dreadful pain. No one knows the pain I suffer !"

"Explain yourself further," said the judge to the Dervish, impatiently.

"I will do so," said the Dervish, with perfect calmness. "The gentleman asserts that there is no God, because he has never seen him, and because no one can show him to him. Will your excellency have the goodness to ask him to show me the pain he feels in his head. Not having seen it, I cannot believe that it exists."

The company smiled, and even the stern features of the judge relaxed a little.

"The gentleman also asked me how it is that Satan, who is an angel of fire, should have anything to fear from the flames of hell. Now, we all know that our first father was formed of the dust of the ground, and that we are composed of the same. Dust we are, and to dust shall we return. I am sure the gentleman will admit this. Then, if he is earth himself, what harm can a sod of earth do to him?"

"And now for my third answer," said the Dervish, drawing himself up with dignity ; "here it is. Since it was decreed that I should strike this gentleman with a sod of earth, why has he brought me before the judge?"

Here every one laughed, and it was generally agreed that the Dervish had defended himself well with his adversary's own weapons.

"I admit," said the judge, "that your sod of earth contained these three answers. Your reply was ingenious, but rather too forcible. In future, holy father, you must answer the questions proposed in a different manner. Another time you might not escape as well as to-day."

Such is the Eastern story. It teaches a lesson as suitable for our Christian lands, as for the Moham-medan East. Plausible objections

against Bible truths are easily raised, but are in many cases capable of being answered by a simple appeal to the analogy of facts of daily experience ! Thus it is, for example, with the doctrines of the Trinity, of Divine justice, of the atonement by Christ, of justification by faith, of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, of eternal life. There are mysteries above human comprehension connected with each of these ; but he who will not believe what he cannot comprehend, ought not to believe even his own existence, or a thousand facts connected with his own wondrous nature. How then can he expect to comprehend the nature and the ways of the self-subsisting, infinite God, his Creator ? He cannot comprehend ; but the humble man will restfully believe, and be blessed in thus leaning upon God.

The child leans on its parent's breast
Leaves there its cares, and is at rest ;
The bird sits singing by his nest,
And tells aloud
His trust in God, and so is blessed
'Neath every cloud.

He has no store, he sows no seed,
Yet sings aloud, and doth not heed,
By flowing stream, or grassy mead
He sings to shame
Men who forget, in fear of need,
A Father's name.

The heart that trusts, forever sings,
And feels as light as it had wings ;
A well of peace within it springs ;
Come good or ill.
Whate'er to-day, to-morrow brings,
It is his will.

—*British Messenger.*

—So run that no man take your crown of Christian perfection in this world, and that you may obtain the crown of angelic perfection in the world to come. Still keep your body under ; still guard your senses ; still watch your own heart ; and steadfast in the faith still resist the devil, that he may flee from you.

WINNING SOULS.

"He that winneth souls is wise."
 "I will make you fishers of men."

It is an awful fact that men are lost. They are dead in trespasses and sins. Yet they are alive to sin and Satan, and to any attempts that are made to save them; some of them are as sly as partridges. Some of them are as cunning as the fox. Some are as slippery as the eel; when you think you have them fast they will slip out of your hand. So that in winning souls we need the wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove.

The fisherman does not study his own convenience, but how he may catch the fish. Hence he will deny himself, and expose himself to all manner of perils, so that he may succeed. So it will be or should be, with the fishers of men. They should be ready to do all in their power to win men from hell and get them to heaven. Fishermen use different kinds of bait to catch the various kinds of fish. So must fishers of men. A sermon may win one man, and a song may win another. A tear may turn one to Christ, while a sharp rebuke, uttered in the Holy Ghost, will turn another.

Some men are crooked and crabbed in their nature and determined that they will not yield. These must be met with the same determination that they shall yield, and if one line of effort fails, then try another, and do it all in faith, and in the Holy Ghost.

Some men are leaders in a community, and if they were converted they would be leaders in the church; but nobody goes after them and nobody wins them, and so they go to perdition, and drag others with them.

Men will fish all day in a brook to catch a six pound trout, and think they have done well if they catch him. So let some one lay himself out to catch this leading man and get him converted.

The great want of this world, among Christians, is sympathy for souls. A deep, undying love for perishing sinners.

"A yearning pity for mankind,
 A burning charity."

"A love that many waters cannot quench." A love that pushes men out after others when all manner of difficulties are in the way. Keep this sympathy as a focus upon the soul of another, and it will tell. Let ardent prayers be offered to God, while wise and constant love is manifested to the sinner, and the victory is sure.

"He that winneth souls is wise." Then he that is wise will win souls. Then he that does not win souls is not wise. Lord have mercy on the multitudes of ministers and members that never win a soul from one year's end to another. What account will they give in the day of judgment?

How many can truly say: "No man careth for my soul; no one ever speaks to me about the salvation of my soul." The blood of souls will be found on the garments of many, unless they wake up and go to work for others in the spirit of heavenly wisdom. Then alas! it is quite possible that some are already lost forever whom we might have led to Christ if we had been faithful.

A certain minister writes on this subject as follows:

"It seems to me that, ordinarily speaking, while there are exceptions, every man has got to prove that his case is an exception. The presumption is that every man ought to be a watcher for some soul. Some men have many souls that they watch for.

"This recalls the case of my old friend, the engineer, who is now in heaven. He used to run from Boston on the morning express train. I have forgotten just how our acquaintance came about; but it did come

about. He was a big man; I think he would weigh about two hundred and fifty pounds. A very faithful man he was in his business; and he was a man of ardor and enthusiasm for souls; after he became a little acquainted with me he used to make me ride with him; and he would give me an account of his hunting and fishing for souls. I suppose he was the means of rescuing fifty men from the devil, clothing them and getting them into business. Even while he was running his engine he was thinking of his work—for his real work was among souls. The moment he got into the depot off went his engineer's clothes, and on went his ordinary dress, and he started around town to look after some of his cases, to inquire about them, to speak with them, and to say something which kept them warm all the time. He never left his eggs long enough to get cold. He drew out his praying list one day; I found that he had a strip of paper on which were written ten or fifteen names; and said that each day he prayed for every one of them. Sometimes he was more particularly moved in behalf of this one, and sometimes in the behalf of that one. Said he, 'as soon as one of these is converted I put another on the list. There are ever so many waiting to get on the list, but I cannot put more than fifteen on.' He was always praying somebody on or somebody off from that list of his. He gave me some of the most affecting accounts that I ever heard in my life.

"Now, this qualification was simply that he had good sense, great heartedness, and unbounded faith in working for men with sympathy and determination, and he never let go. He never gave up. He pursued men as one would pursue game. He was a genuine hunter. He was like the hound that seeks the boar in the forest or on the mountain. He was like a hunting

dog at the squirrel's hole. Let him once go in where there was a soul to save and he never forgot that there was one there; and he hunted for him, he watched for him, he set traps for him.

"A man may hunt men, not for any purpose of his own, but to raise them out of sin into righteousness, out of unbelief into faith, out of loneliness among men into intimate relation with God, and loving companionship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

"This is the work that does not even require that men should agree in respect to church doctrine, although I think there are many church doctrines which are eminently favorable to it. A strong desire that men may be purified, consoled, lifted up through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ—I think this is the main qualification; and I think that is the respect in which every one of us should put the question to himself, whether he is faithful to his Saviour and faithful to his fellows in being a fisher of men.

"When a man begins to work in this way, he comes to look upon men's sins and wants and miseries as a surgeon looks upon the wounds of his patients. It is astonishing what gentleness, what charity, a man has toward men whom he is trying to save; what wonderful revolution his feelings undergo respecting them. The whole attitude of his soul is changed. Instead of criticising and blaming them he says, 'How shall I rescue them? How shall I cover their multitude of wants? How shall they be redeemed?'

Where that spirit has existence the church cannot be other than growing all the time; and where the church does not grow it is because that spirit does not exist within it. That instrument by which more than any other God brings men to the kingdom is personal effort."—*Living Epistle.*

WORKING FOR GOD.

If we truly love God, we realize in our inmost soul an earnest and a growing solicitude for the prosperity of his church, and are eager for suitable opportunities to labor for the promotion of his cause. This truth we find aptly demonstrated in the disposition and conduct of King David. The house of God was to him an attractive place of worship. One day there was to him better than a thousand elsewhere. Thus prompted, he proposed to build to the glory of God a magnificent temple at Jerusalem. Although it was revealed to him by the prophet that he should not build the house, but that his son and successor, Solomon, should carry out the project, David nevertheless collected abundant material, and directed his son to undertake the enterprise, impressed upon his mind the importance of seeking wisdom from God, to be obedient and courageous, assuring him that God would abundantly prosper him, and concluded his solemn charge with these words: "Arise and be doing, and the Lord be with thee." King David had his allotted work, and Solomon, too. We all have our work to do in life. We are created to be active, and to be constantly engaged in some sphere of usefulness. Labor, in fact, is the law of nature, and industry the normal condition of man. Our Saviour evidently felt the impulse of nature when he exclaimed, "My Father worketh, and I work." In the promulgation of the moral law this point was prominently adverted to, inasmuch as it was made incumbent upon man to work, and under the Christian dispensation the inspired apostle affirms, if any man would not work he should not eat.

For our own sakes we should work with all our capabilities. Experience teaches most vividly that our natural, intellectual and spiritual endowments can only be success-

fully developed by industrious and persevering application. It is only by industry that nations pass from a savage to a civilized state. It elevates character, gives vitality to the physical and intellectual powers, and secures contentment.

For God's sake we are to work. He has given us the earth, and has entrusted to our care the development of its resources. There is dignity in labor, because in it there is the recognition of responsibility, and a return to the beneficent Giver—the fruits of our intellectual and physical toils. Whatever our occupation may be, we should in it cherish the true spirit of homage, and do all things as unto the Lord. While we are busily engaged with the duties of life, we must not for a moment forget that our chief calling and special work, to which God called us, is the spiritual work. Although David, as king, had the arduous and perplexing duties of government resting upon his shoulders, yet he fondly contemplated building the temple, and but for the intervention of God, he would have executed his design. David would not permit the affairs of state to absorb his mind so fully as not to find time to serve his God. He would have found time to honor his God with a gorgeous temple, dedicated to his glorious name.

We likewise have our call to build the spiritual temple of Christ. In this work, duty first commences with ourselves. We have our own personal work, responsibility and capabilities. Our personal salvation claims our first attention. When we are converted to God and redeemed from sin, we must seek the development of grace, that we may be adapted and fitted for the work of saving others. Christ nowhere teaches that we have done all he requires us to do when we ourselves are saved; but, as our brother's keeper, we are to labor for his salvation as time and circumstances

permit. We are to be heartily engaged in whatever has a tendency to advance the cause of Christ and win souls for him.

There are many requisites for the work of saving souls. The presence of God is essential, for without his favor and power we are utterly incompetent for this great work. A call from God to this work must be recognized. We must understand the nature of the work, and ask wisdom from God to do it, and then be strong in faith and full of courage. If we are by nature timid and weak, we must by action and the help of God overcome it. Should we be tempted by apparently unfavorable circumstances to excuse ourselves, we should notice how others, under similar and even worse circumstances, have accomplished so much for Christ. Should domestic duties and business concerns seem to deny us the time, then let us think of Harlan Page, a carpenter, who, by his faithful labors in Sunday-schools, prayer-meetings, by letter and conversation, won so many precious souls for Jesus. Do you consider yourself incapacitated to work for Jesus by bodily infirmities, then think of Harriet Stone-man and Sarah Price, both invalids, and confined to their sick-rooms, and yet, under these adverse and melancholy circumstances, constrained by the love of God, became instrumental in leading many lost ones to a kind Saviour. Shall we, while there is so much to do, remain idle? Impossible! The world must be conquered for Jesus, and much depends upon our individual exertions. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."—*Evangelical Messenger*.

—Secret prayer is the life of the Christian.

—If it be true that a silver lining is in every cloud, why not welcome the cloud?

A MESS OF POTTAGE.

It was a small price that Esau took for his title to the inheritance, and his right as Isaac's first-born son. One savory meal, one hour's gratification of appetite, a piece of bread, and a few beans or lentiles, a brief refreshment, longed for, enjoyed, and gone,—and for this he sold his birthright, and lost his heritage.

But foolish as men may count this ancient sensualist, who gave his inheritance for a single meal, the pottage business is by no means obsolete,—nay, it seems to flourish greatly in modern days. And the trade in birthrights is also extensive and active.

Manhood, honesty, nobility, purity of soul, fellowship with God and with his kings and priests whom he has already anointed and whom he soon will crown; the heavenly hope, the eternal inheritance, the joys unspeakable, and the bliss immeasurable,—all these things are the birthrights which men barter away, the treasures which they squander, the priceless gifts wasted by foolish hands.

And what messes of pottage Satan furnishes, savory and smoking hot, to tempt the appetites of gluttonous fools! To one he gives wealth, gilt playthings, toys and trinkets. To another he flings the sop of luxury, and bids him eat and drink and riot on. Here, for a moment's sensual pleasure, a man perils his all: there, for an hour of wild exhilaration, another drains the cup that biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder. Here, for the kiss of a painted prostitute, or the harlot's vile embrace, the fool sells his birthright, and takes disease into his body, rottenness into his bones, remorse into his heart, death for his doom, and perdition for his portion.

In an hour the pleasure is past. In a day all has faded away, and loathing comes to take the place of lust. But in that short hour, inno-

cence, purity, peace and honor,—all are gone. Tears cannot efface the stain; regrets cannot obliterate the dark memories that haunt the soul; years cannot unburden the conscience of its load. The pottage was savory, but the birthright is gone!

Ah, how many to-day curse the pottage, and wish their birthright back once more! How many others go to sell their birthrights, and taste the hellish compound that Satan brews. To-day warnings are useless; to-morrow regrets will be vain. Now Satan says, "No danger;" to-morrow the sneering fiend hisses in our ears, "Too late!"

Bitterly did Esau rue his brief indulgence. Earnestly did he seek to undo the fatal act; but he found no way to change the settled purpose, though he sought it day and night with tears. Bitterly have others lamented the same fatal error. Peace gone, innocence gone, purity gone, honor gone, the birthright gone, and nothing to show for it all but loathsome memories, broken health, and a conscious meanness and self-adorrence, which makes life a burden and death a leap in the dark.

And for all this misery there is but one possible remedy, but one relief. The good God pities even such lost men as these, and offers to purge and cleanse and pardon even them. Will you come to him? "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Pour out the sins that burn within your tortured breast, and give yourself forever to the Lord. This is your only hope. You have sold yourself for nought, you shall be redeemed without money. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. By that alone you can regain lost innocence and peace and rest.

But beware of sensual delights. Flee youthful lusts. Hate even the garment spotted by the flesh. Sol-

emn is the apostolic charge, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently lest any fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."—Heb. xii, 14-17.

Never did sensual pleasure hold supremacy sway than amid the proud and idle gluttons of the cities of the Plain. Their filthy conduct daily vexed the righteous soul of Lot, and their unlawful deeds made sad the hearts that yet remembered God. But when the sulphurous cloud of smoke and the lurid storm of fire came down, what availed it all? Where were the rioters, the adulterers, the gluttons, the harlots, then? What availed the memory of guilty pleasures, amid the tormenting vengeance of eternal fire?

And what shall guilty pleasures avail men, when all the world shall be overwhelmed as was Sodom, and destroyed like Gomorrah? These cities are set forth as an example to other sinners, that they may know their swiftly approaching doom. For, "as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."—Luke xvii, 28-30.

"Thus shall it be," when, in the midst of the world's high carnival of pleasure, shall burst the awful terrors of the day of doom. Too late will men curse the fatal pottage, and seek with tears the birthright of the sons of God. But all in vain.

The decision made in an hour of sensual pleasure is bound as with the chains of destiny. The inheritance is lost. The birthright is gone. The crown shines upon another's brow, and for the poor, degraded sensualist, there only remains abiding shame, everlasting contempt, and the dread perdition of ungodly men. O man, young man, take heed to your ways, while you walk earth's perilous paths. One fatal step, and you are gone! Beware how you dally with sin. Beware how you trifle with temptation. Beware how you boast of your strength. Beware how you confide in your safety. "Happy is the man that feareth alway." Flee from every taint and stain of sin. Hide yourself in the everlasting Rock.

Trust in the Saviour and in his cleansing blood and all-sufficient grace, and you shall be a conqueror in the fight of faith, and wear the crown of victory at last.—*The Layman's Christian Advocate*.

—Faith is the source of works and works are the evidence of faith.

A LAMP is a very small thing; it burns calmly without noise, and giveth light to all that are in the house. So there is a quiet influence, which, like the flame of a scented lamp, fills many a home with light and fragrance. Such an influence has been beautifully compared to a carpet, soft and deep, which, while it diffuses a look of ample comfort, deadens many a creaking sound. It is a curtain which wards off from a beloved form the summer's heat and the winter's wind. It is the pillow on which sickness lays its head and forgets its misery. It falls as the refreshing dew, the invigorating sunbeam, the fertilizing shower. It shines with the mild lustre of moonlight, harmonizing, with its pale, soft tints, many of the discordant hues which the strong light of day reveals.—*McCheyne*.

DOES GOD ANSWER PRAYER?

When President Garfield lay at Long Branch, heroically struggling against disease, and the whole Christian world praying for him, a Christian man said to me: "If he dies, it will shake my faith in the efficacy of prayer!" And after the fatal 19th of September, a Christian woman exclaimed in my ear: "What is the use of praying?"

These are but specimens of what many hearts are saying behind dumb lips; and it may be well to review briefly the whole "doctrine of prayer." Many of us unconsciously and inadvertently, stake our practical confidence in prayer upon a single issue. Our faith in the power of supplication is made to hang upon the answer of a given case, instead of the character of God and the sure promise of his Word.

Now, mark, if the death of the President shakes our faith in prayer, or casts real doubt upon the practical utility of prayer, it is because we have a partial, or, it may be, a radical misconception of the nature of prayer, and the conditions within which acceptable and prevailing prayer is possible.

True prayer is not simply the breathing of desire, but of right and holy desire. It is the very breathing of the Spirit of God, who maketh intercession in us, sometimes in words, sometimes in unutterable groanings. At the very bottom and basis of all real prayer there lie two divine yearnings which qualify and modify all specific requests: "Thy will be done!" and "Father, glorify thy name!" Deeper than all that devout lips ask, is the habitual longing of the devout heart, that God's will may be done, and his glory be advanced. Whatever would be contrary to that will and glory, no true disciple desires. Hence in any doubtful case there is always a "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt!"

God promises to answer prayer, indeed, most repeatedly, emphatically, unequivocally. Yet observe that wherever a blessing is conditional, the promise is conditional; *i.e.*, if what we ask is good for us under certain conditions, God promises to grant it only when those conditions exist. God's fatherhood and fidelity demand that there should be no unconditional promise to bestow, in answer to prayer, a conditional blessing. If he should give us just what we ask in every case, we should not dare to pray. It is our confidence that he "knows how to give good things to them that ask him" that emboldens us to pray. Prayer is no "magic mirror," in which we look to get just what our capricious wishes fancy: else far better that the magic mirror, like that in the fable, were shattered! Human caprice would work too often only a curse, and not a blessing.

Whenever we ask for something whose nature as always and necessarily a good is positively known, such as holiness of heart or usefulness of life, we know that it is according to the will of God and for his glory, and we may ask confidently. No such prayer ever went unanswered. But, in asking for a temporal good, like the recovery of the sick, we have no certain revelation of what is ultimately best, and hence we say, "Nevertheless, thy will be done." No such temporal good is unconditional; hence, in the nature of the case, the answer cannot be unconditional. We may insist on "flesh to eat," and God may "give us our request and send leanness to our souls." But better for us that the flesh were withheld, and that he, in refusing our actual request, should answer our virtual prayer, that what is best for our whole nature may be given, and that only.

God's answer to all true prayer is as sure as that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are one: for the Holy Ghost intercedes within, while the

Son intercedes above. "By him we have access through one Spirit unto the Father."

God will give us what we ask, or he will give us something better. He may withhold what we think would be a blessing, because he knows it would not be. He withholds in order that he may bestow a higher good. Paul besought the Lord thrice that the thorn in the flesh might depart from him. The Lord left the thorn, that, in its presence, Paul might have a richer experience of sufficient grace than he could have had in its absence. Monica early and earnestly and long besought God not to let Augustine go to Rome, lest he be confirmed in skepticism and unbelief; but Augustine went to Rome, and so heard Ambrose of Milan preach, and was converted. God fulfilled Monica's desires in denying her request! And so God is always truthful and faithful to the praying soul. He may not grant our request, but he grants the deep desire of our hearts for the highest good, which he only knows or can know; and he will do for those who trust his unerring wisdom and unfailing love "exceeding abundantly above all we ask or even think."

In the case of the President, the prayers of thousands of believing disciples were offered for his recovery, and the confidence was felt by many of the most devout that he would be raised up, even after physicians had given him up, as was the case with the Prince of Wales, in answer to prayer, and as a signal mark of divine power. But the disappointment of such expectations should have not the slightest effect upon our faith in prayer. No true praying soul has ever assumed to decide that it would, on the whole, be best that the President should be restored; and no disciple has ever pretended to an infallible interpretation of the divine will. Bowing beneath the crushing burden of a national bereavement, let us be

"dumb," and "open not our mouth, because thou didst it." God is on the throne, though "clouds and darkness are round about him." He makes the wrath of man to praise him and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. To our human eye it may seem dark :—

"Right forever on the scaffold,
Wrong forever on the throne;
But that scaffold sways the future,
And, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God amid the shadows,
Keeping watch above his own."

If we lose not our faith in God, we shall know hereafter what we know not now, and find that he has in store for us something better than what we asked, and what, for some wise, inscrutable purpose, "Our Father" chose in his love to withhold.—*New York Observer.*

—"The law of God is perfect, converting the soul."—*Psalmist.*

—Afflictions are God's messengers to draw us nearer to himself. The souls that recognize and entertain them royally, know, by sweet experience, the fragrance they bring.—*M. H. L.*

—God takes away what we most desire, perhaps to unloosen our feet from earth; he takes up the anchor of earthly hopes and sets us sailing heavenward, when otherwise our frail craft would sink into self and be lost forever!—*M. H. L.*

EFFECTIVE RETALIATION. — A friend had a quarrelsome neighbor, whose cow, being suffered to go at large, often broke into the friend's well-cultivated garden. One morning having driven the cow from his premises to her owner's house, he said to him, "Friend T., I have driven thy cow home once more, and if I find her in my garden again—" "Suppose you do?" his neighbor angrily exclaimed, "what will you do?" "Why," said the friend, "I'll drive her home to thee again, friend T." The cow never troubled the friend.—*Exchange.*

BELIEF IN THE HOLY GHOST.

"I believe in the Holy Ghost." Thus say all the churches that accept The Apostles' Creed. But to say we have a belief in a given truth that the creed may assert, and to believe with the heart so as to enter into the experience of said given truth, are two things that are very different.

It is to be feared that the modern church's belief in the Holy Ghost is a mere speculative assent to a point in the creed, without any real, truthful vital experience of the blessing and benefit which a living experimental faith in the Holy Ghost always and infallibly produces.

If there were deep, searching inquiry into the case, as the churches all through the land stand related to it—yes, and as individual Christians too, stand related to it—would it not be discovered that well nigh all have practically ceased to believe in the Holy Ghost? We say, practically ceased to believe therein. That is, they have ceased to look to, and practically depend upon Holy Ghost grace to energize and make efficient the means of salvation as once they did. Upon this subject, has not a settled skepticism crept into the churches? Have they not fallen into a blighted, withering unbelief as to the matter in question? And may we not find the sad proof that this is so by referring to the former and latter state of the churches; by thinking what they once were, and what they are now?

For instance: Is it not a matter that all can see, that the types of so-called religious experience are not so palpable, plain, distinct, sharp cut as in the earlier days of the church's better faith on the subject of the Holy Ghost? Is not the type of religious experience that the churches are now giving the world, in the main noticeably tame, shallow, insipid? Is it not manifestly, wanting in emphasis, vigor and stalwart-

ness? Is it not too aimless, æsthetic, artificial, sentimental?

Take the experience of conviction for sin. Are the characteristics of that definite Bible experience, as they now appear in connection with our so-called revivals of religion, as prominent and palpable as formerly? Do sinners now seem as pained and agonized on account of their sins as in the earlier times of the church? Do penitents seem so stricken through and through with the sharp, barbed arrows of real Holy Ghost conviction for sin, as was common and usual some years ago? Do such convicted souls suffer as once they did from a soul-stricken fear of imminent damnation, and from the getting hold upon them of the very pains of hell? Every one says, no. We hardly see an example now, of such real, soul-piercing, heart-rending Holy Ghost conviction for sin. The whole matter of conviction now-a-days seems to be concreted into a few polite requests for prayer, with an affected declaration of a lazy, languid wish to become a Christian.

So of the experience of conversion. It does not now bear the plain, palpable, outstanding marks of Holy Ghost genuineness that once it did. There seems in the process of modern conversion, no such noticeable transition of the sinner from wickedness to godliness as formerly. The new heart, inwrought by the all-quickenening energy of the Holy Ghost, does not show itself as it once did. The new life seems in the general hardly so much a new life as the continuation of the old, pretty much upon the same plane, with perhaps a few of the more notorious dishonoring vices dropped off. There comes a suspicion, with most of the latter-day professions of conversion, that they will not vindicate themselves as genuine; that they will not hold out; that they are spurious. And truly, in most cases, the suspicion passes into ver-

ification, for what is first put forth as a profession of religion, soon detects itself as a mere personal self-deception, or worse yet, a purposed and shameless hypocrisy.

Nor is an exception found to the fault we are animadverting upon, in the experience of sanctification. Without many words about this, we are frank to say that in our sober conviction, the work of sanctification as it is going on among us, very often takes on a type of shallowness, of mere sentimentality, for the very reason we are noticing, viz: the want of a clear, definite, bold recognition of the personal Holy Ghost as the Sanctifier. For this cause, we doubt not, many are weak and sickly among even our so-called sanctified people. Many of them do not stand in the evil day. Many fail to stand tests—particularly the test of persecution. They seem to be lacking in the very root of the matter. They fall away.

Herein has the church declined from the primitive faith, and hence from the primitive experience—it has ceased to believe in the Holy Ghost. That is, it has ceased to give to the divine, adorable person of the Holy Ghost that due and definite recognition which a right experimental faith in him demands. Here, we doubt not, lies the first step in the path of the church's return to primitive grace and power. Its first quest must be for its long-missed and long-absent unction—for the recoming of the Pentecost, and the re-descent of its tongues of flame. May the Holy Ghost come, as in the beginning!—*J. P. Brooks.*

—I will never forget thy precepts.

—The nearer we get to God, and realize what purity and goodness is, the more effectually shall we see our own imperfections, the deeper consciousness shall we have of the immeasurable distance between us and God.—*M. H. L.*

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PRAYER.

On one occasion a number of Episcopal ministers were collected together in an English Parish Rectory. The Rector presided, and the subject under consideration was the nature of prayer. After continued deliberation, and the expression of various opinions, there was one point of agreement in this conference,—they all decided that a liturgical form of worship possessed greater advantages than any other method. However, an incident during their deliberations caused diversity of opinion, even on this point, which had been unanimously agreed to.

An old servant whose name was Mary, who was cook in the Rectory, entered to replenish the fire. The Rector knew her to be a devout Christian, and it struck him that he would ask her opinion concerning the matter in hand. He therefore said,

"Mary, I want your views about a subject that has been giving us some trouble."

The aged cook looked up and waited. The Rector continued :

"We have been considering the difficult subject of prayer; and though we differ in many points concerning its nature and results, we are in agreement concerning the necessity of possessing a sound form of words. Will you, Mary, be kind enough to say what you think about it?—for you know as a Christian woman, I value your opinion."

Mary, after thanking the Rector for his goodness to her, replied : "You know, sir, you and I do not see alike on that matter; and if I may make so bold as to speak in the presence of so many of the clergy, I think you all have made this mistake,—you have been considering the best way to say your prayers, but the subject of praying has been left out of your discussions."

The ministers were startled at this condemnation by the cook; but the Rector gave her a genial smile of encouragement, and asked her for further explanation of her meaning.

"Well," continued Mary, "Paul says, 'pray without ceasing;' and, you know, sir, the dear Lord condemned the heathen for their many prayers. Indeed, sir, I do not think that he told any one even to say prayers until they asked him; and his answer then was, 'when you pray, say Our Father,' etc. I know, also, sir, that you teach us that it is our duty to pray; but I never got any good of saying prayers from a sense of duty, because I have got to feel that prayer is a necessity, and that I could live no more spiritually without prayer than I could live physically without air."

By this time the look of wonder on the faces of the ministers present changed to that of deep attention, while the Rector, speaking to the cook, said :

"Why, Mary, these are some of the difficulties which have been troubling us, and which seem so plain and simple to you; but how about God not answering our prayers?"

"Ah," replied Mary, "there is where many people are mistaken. God is our Father, and he always answers our prayers, but he does not always give us the answer we desire. He even refused our dear Saviour himself the most earnest prayer of his life; but he answered it in a fuller and clearer manner. He would not and did not let the cup pass from him. You see, sir, even the dearest and best of the Father's children cannot change the Father's will or purpose, because whatever that is must be best for the child. And then, sir, if you look into the Scripture, you will find that instead of the dear Lord changing the Father's mind, the act of praying changed the dear Lord's mind; and the second time he went

to pray, while the disciples slept, he found his will and his Father's will the same. So, instead of asking for the cup to pass from him, he said in substance, he was willing to drink it according to his Father's will. You see, sir, that the efficacy of prayer does not consist so much in changing God as in changing ourselves. The alteration is less outward and more inward. There is a mystery here which works like the thunder storm in clearing the atmosphere, since by the act of prayer calm and peace follow; for we are brought into harmony with the mind and will of God. The work of prayer is really more on us than on God, until our prayers are so completely the utterances of his will that they become — to use a word which you have taught me — a dynamic force in the universe."

After a pause, the Rector said: "Mary, what you say so interests us all, that I would like you to tell us what is your understanding of Paul's statement, 'Pray without ceasing.'"

"Why, sir," said Mary, "that is very simple; for Paul could not mean that we were always to be saying prayers. Prayer is the spiritual atmosphere in which the Christian lives; but most Christians are suffering from spiritual atmospheric malaria. I have shown, sir, that man's wish or desire in prayer cannot determine or change God's will. Those of us who think this, must have very limited ideas of God's love and wisdom. Sir, such a notion, in my opinion, must, even in our own thoughts, degrade God, and corrupt us by feeding our vanity and pride. Christ prayed to escape the cup, and his Father refused to grant this prayer; but he prayed on until his own mind was in accord with God's, and then the answer came. He was not permitted to escape the evil, but his prayer brought him strength to meet it. The angel that came to comfort him was the Father's answer to his pray-

er. Now, as to the statement, 'Pray without ceasing,' I can only say that it is an experience. For example, sir, when I get up in the morning, the first thing I have to do is to dress myself; then the thought comes—oh! how grand it is to wear the robe of righteousness this day. Then, sir, I go to wash myself, and my thought is that I may be cleansed by the Blood of the Lamb,—that is the life, and purity, and goodness of Jesus. My next duty is to light the fire; and so I seem to thirst for the fire of God's love in my heart. When the food for breakfast comes, I am reminded of the heavenly food of truth and righteousness; and so all the day long, everything reminds me of God's love in Christ Jesus, my Saviour. I think this is 'praying without ceasing.' You know, sir, the highest and best prayer is when you are not asking God for anything, but waiting on him, and in communion with him. I used to ask God for earthly blessings, but if any thought of this kind comes now, it is in the shape of a desire to know how to do without them. I feel not so much wanting from God, as wanting himself and his communion. I seem to be in that state of mind intimated by the words of Jesus,—'In that day ye shall ask for nothing.' My thought is that all my wish may merge into God's will."

After this the cook left the room; and when she was gone the ministers, as by one impulse, knelt down, and with burning hearts thanked God for this solution of the mystery of prayer, which his humble servant had made so plain to their minds.

THE POWER OF PRAYER.

Hast thou climbed ambition's height,
Man of genius, man of might?
Seeing from thy lofty seat
All life's storms beneath thy feet,
Empire spread before thine eye,
Homage, fear and flattery?—
Amid the sounds that reach thee there,
Kneel, and seek the power of prayer.

Hast thou, in life's loneliest vale,
 Seen thy patient labors fail,—
 Felt ill-fortune's daily thrill
 Waste thine energy of will?
 Yet without revenge or hate,
 Wouldst thou stand the stroke of fate?
 Wouldst thou bear as man should bear?—
 Kneel, and seek the power of prayer!

Hast thou, man of intellect,
 Seen thy soaring spirit checked,
 Struggling in the righteous cause,
 Champion of God's slighted laws,—
 Seen the slave, or the supine,
 Win the prize that should be thine?
 Wouldst thou scorn, and wouldst thou
 spare?
 Kneel and seek the power of prayer.

Hast thou stood beside the bed,
 Where the gentle spirit fled?
 Sharer of life's hopes and fears,
 Youth's first passion, love of years,
 Saint on earth and saint above,
 Life of life and love of love;
 Wouldst thou shun the last despair?—
 Kneel, and seek the power of prayer.

—*The Literary Microcosm.*

—The way of peace is often through storm; to meekly yield for the sake of peace or to save ourselves anxiety and work, is a sure way to make trouble at last. — *M. H. L.*

—We ask God in our closets to guide us in all things aright, and ask sincerely. But how seldom do we trust that he is leading us. Perplexities arise and then we question his methods and think he is leaving us to ourselves. Instead of trusting him in all things, self-will is so strong in us that we are not willing to trust when we cannot understand. — *M. H. L.*

—Troubles from external causes, over which we have no control, may and do constantly arise. But if the soul rests in a conscious innocence of wrong, and a sincere desire to avert all evil, these things need not greatly distress us. They can only ruffle the surface a little; for our spirit like ocean depths hidden from all but the eye of God, remains calm and undisturbed. — *M. H. L.*

WHY NOT NOW?

There is only one little point of time at which any one can receive salvation, and that is the point now. We are justified only by a present faith that God does now, for Jesus's sake, forgive all our past sins of every sort. In like manner we are sanctified only when we believe now that Jesus does cleanse us from all indwelling and heart sin. The territory on which saving faith must firmly stand is indeed a narrow neck of land 'twixt two unbounded seas of past and future; yet it is as deep and sure as it is narrow. If you want to get free from inbred sin and enter into deep soul rest, you must utterly drop the entire past out of your hands, and let it fall just as it is into the hand of God. Then you must utterly commit the entire future, just as it may be, into the hand of God. You have nothing left but the space of a moment—now. On that little narrow now you must fix the foot of faith and claim Jesus just now, just as you are, as your full salvation.

Are you sure you have given up everything to the will of God? Faith is very easy when perfect submission has taken everything out of its way. Believing is the last thing to be done. Do not struggle for faith, do not try to believe, You have tried a hundred times and never succeeded. Faith comes in the very absence of effort.

Believing is that thing you do when you quit doing everything else. So that, if you have submitted all to God, what else can you do? Why not calmly, firmly settle your soul down on the rock of God's promise, that the blood of Jesus actually cleanseth you from all sin? You say, "How can I say that, how dare I believe, when I feel the presence of sin in my heart? It looks like gross absurdity and contradiction for me to believe that Jesus cleanseth now, when, at the same

time, I now feel the root of evil in me." Yes, it seems like an absurdity, but the seeming is only a witchery of Satan. Open your eyes and look at this now cleansing a little closer. How long will you have that root of sin in you? Just as long as you doubt. How long will you have unbelief? Until the very moment you believe. Doubt is the seed of all sin, and nothing can remove your doubt but your faith; and do you not see that your unbelief—the seed of all sin—must, in the nature of things, remain in you, on and on up to the very instant that you quit doubting and believe that Jesus cleanseth? At the very moment you fully trust, at that moment sin and doubt are removed. The fact that you doubt, is the very reason why you ought to believe right now, and thereby get rid of doubt.

The very fact that you now have sin in your heart is the very reason why you ought, right now, just as you are, to reckon yourself dead to sin, and claim Jesus to cleanse you now from sin. You say, "Oh! it is all so dark I do not see a step before me, my mind is so confused and my heart is in a sea of commotion." Well, I have been in that position. The clear light will never come till you believe. Your heart can never sink into a sweet tranquillity till you believe. God pushes us into a narrow place. Sooner or later we must every one make the alternative either to believe or to be damned. Suppose you keep refusing to believe that Jesus cleanseth you, will it do you any good? You have tried nearly everything except faith; now quit all else and believe. Why not do it now? in spite of your feelings and all things, just believe God now, and leave results to him. After you have read, and prayed, and wept, and struggled, and done a thousand good works at last you will be absolutely compelled to quit all your own works

and settle down on the naked word of God, and by simple trust assert that he cleanseth. God cannot make you holy so long as you keep attempting to do it yourself. He is only waiting for you to quit the task in order that he may do it. Why not let him do it now?—*Highway of Holiness.*

FAITH.

In the Lord's work of evangelizing the world you must have a downright, practical faith. Not a faith which sings,

"Fly abroad thou mighty Gospel," but never lends a bit of down to make a feather for its wings.

Let us hear the Scripture, as it says, "hearken!" If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, "hearken!" for you may hear the Sabbath bells ringing in the everlasting peace, and the angel songs welcoming the reign of grace over all nations.

Then look! till you see the temples of false gods crumbling into dust. See how the shrines are tottering and the idols breaking as though smitten with a rod of iron. Mohammed's crescent wanes, never to wax again; and she, of the Seven Hills, is hated of the kings, and they burn her with fire. "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he has made in the earth?" Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. They fall! They fall! They are as the slain. The day breaketh, and the shadows flee away.

O ye watchers that look for the dawning, fall not asleep through sorrowful weariness. The morning cometh. It shall not tarry. Do you doubt it? Know ye not that the Lord reigneth? Is he not the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle? "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

RELAXATION—AMUSEMENT.

I think many things which custom pleads for will be excluded from suitable things to a Christian, for this one reason, that they are not consistent with the simplest notion of the redemption of time. It is generally said, we need relaxation; I allow it in a sense; the Lord himself has provided it; and because our spirits are too weak to be always on the wing to meditation and prayer, he has appointed to all men, from the king downwards, something to do in a secular way. The poor are to labor, the rich are not exempted from some equivalent. And when everything of this sort in each person's situation is properly attended to, I apprehend, if the heart be alive and in a right state, spiritual concerns will present themselves, as affording the noblest, the sweetest and the most interesting relaxation from the cares and business of life; as on the other hand, that business will be the best relaxation and unbending of the mind from religious exercises; and between the two perhaps there ought to be but little more leisure time. A life in this sense, divided between God and the world, is desirable; when one part of it is spent in retirement, seeking after and conversing with him whom our souls love; and the other part of it employed in active services for the good of our family, friends, the church and society, for his sake. Every hour which does not fall in with one or the other of these views, excepting the season needed for sleep, I apprehend is lost time.

The places and amusements which the world frequent and admire, where occasions and temptations to sin are cultivated, where the law of what is called good breeding is the only law which may not be violated with impunity, where sinful passions are provoked and indulged, where the fear of God is so little known or regarded, that those who do fear

him must hold their tongues, though they should hear his name blasphemed, can hardly be a Christian's voluntary chosen ground. Yet I fear these characters will apply to every kind of polite amusement or assembly in the kingdom.—*The Friend.*

OUR RESPONSIBILITY.

BY B. W. JARNAGAN,

It is often said that the solemnities of death are great. This is true. Yet it is also a solemn matter to live. The Psalmist was doubtless considering, not only his own responsibility, but that of others when he said, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."—Psa. xc, 12. "Wisdom is the principal thing." "True wisdom cometh from above." Not to be born of God, is to be lost; to become his child, brings with it duties and privileges of the greatest importance. We are not simply to be converted to God and then settle down at ease.

We must be active in the service of the Lord, working out our own salvation "with fear and trembling." Listen to the beloved Paul: "Ye know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you and have taught you publicly, and from house, to house testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."—Acts xx, 18-21.

Oh! that every minister and worker in the vineyard could truthfully give such a spotless testimony. If there were more preachers like St. Paul in this day, sinners would be led to cry out, "What must I do to be saved?"

After we pass from "death unto life," we are to keep "filled with the Spirit" in order to do effectual work for the Master. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, hat he would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;" "that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God."—Eph. iii, 14-16, 19.

St. Paul's charge to Timothy is applicable to pastors, evangelists and other laborers. "I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine;" and he gives his reason, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."—2 Tim. iv, 1-4. And immediately after this he gives the admonition, "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." Oh! that ministers would consider these things, and live by "every word of God." God in speaking through his prophet says, "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord; is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"—Jer. xxiii, 28-29.

We must abide in Christ, and his words abide in us. "Abide in me, and I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, ex-

cept ye abide in me. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered. If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you."—John xv, 4, 6, 7.

Dearly beloved, let us be sure that we abide in the Lord Jesus every moment, and we will be enabled to do much for him. We are to warn the wicked on every possible occasion. "When I say unto the wicked, O, wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul."—Ezek. xxxiii 8-9.

Reader, is your account with God all right? If not, ponder well this Scripture: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works, and death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."—Rev. xx, 11-15.

—Character must stand behind and back of everything—the sermon, the poem, the picture. None of them is worth a straw without it.

FOR YOU NOW.

Be ye holy now. Now is the day of your full salvation. Let nothing hinder you from grasping now all your Lord offers to give you now. But some are disputing as to what holiness is. Let them dispute, but be ye holy. If you wait until they cease, you will die without the blessing. The feast is spread now. Do not stop to wrangle about the order of the different courses; only come, and the Master himself will attend to that.

It is well enough to know chemistry, but the unlearned must eat whether they can analyze the constituent element of their food or not. So the soul that would be holy may have its aliment even if the polemics fail to settle their disputes.

It is the will of God that you should be holy now. This lays upon you the weight of imperative obligation. His will is the law of your life. You must obey or be condemned. No excuse will avail. No delay can be justified. Duty or disobedience is the plain issue. Listen to no sophistry, whether from man or devil, that would tempt you to doubt or to delay; the will of God is your sanctification.

In saying it is God's will that you should be holy, the attainability of the blessing is affirmed. Nothing can thwart his work in the willing soul. He can work, and none can hinder. Are you unworthy? So much the more is his grace magnified in making you holy. Are your associations inimical to holiness? They should but drive you closer to the blood that makes you whole. Are you fighting a hard battle with adverse worldly conditions? That only shows that you are planted in the soil in which it pleases God that the heavenly flower of holiness shall take root and bloom in its divinest beauty.

The Lord will not take you out

of the world, but he will help you to put it under your feet. He will not exempt you from care, pain and sorrow, but he will make all work together for your growth in the new life. Jesus is head over all things to the church, and by him all things are made tributary to the growth, security, and full salvation of his followers. It is his voice that says, "Be ye holy, for I am holy;" let your empty vessels be filled, for the fountain is full and free forever. All mine is yours. You are a joint-heir with me, and you may be filled with all the fulness of God. Holiness is union by faith with this living Vine, which imparts life, growth, fruit—life more abundant, growth unceasing, fruitfulness ever increasing.

Holiness is an experience within the reach of every believer, not a theory to be mastered only by a few skillful anatomists. It is a blessing for the Lord's little ones, many of whom, we may hope, grasp the prize while the gladiators are filling the polemical arena with the dust and noise of their strife. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." While partisans are saying, "Lo here, or Lo there," the child of God has an infallible Guide. And he has an infallible Witness. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." That satisfies, let the din of disputation rage as it may. The believer knows that he is a child of God in the new, sweet sense. And if a child, then all else follows in the orderly evolution of the true Christian life. Sonship and heirship are inseparable now and forever.

Yes, now is the day of this complete salvation. "Now are we the sons of God," may be the grateful, joyful echo of every earnest soul to the apostle's triumphant paean, rejoicing in the believer's heirship of both worlds and of all things. Every one of us may share in the blessing

and join in the rapturous strain.
We may be holy now. Amen.

BELIEVING AND RECEIVING.

A notable instance of praying to God, and resolving to take no denial, and prevailing when hope seemed gone, was that of the pious wife of a hard drinking man named Martin, in West Riding, Yorkshire, England, who prayed twenty-one years for his reformation and conversion.

When that long time had passed, and no answer had come to her prayers, she went one night, at midnight, to the "public" where her husband spent much of his time, and found him sitting in the bar-room with several other men and the landlady.

"You go home," said Martin roughly, when he saw his wife enter.

"Wait a little, and your husband will go with you," said the landlady.

"Mrs. Tolman," replied the poor wife, advancing to the table where they were sitting, "I have waited twenty-one years for my husband to 'go with me'—and all that time I have prayed for him."

She steadied her voice and added:

"I am certain, too, that God will answer my prayers. As sure as he is sitting in your bar, I shall live to see him pass your house and have no inclination to go in."

She turned to go out, and Martin rose and followed her, saying not a word.

That night was the turning-point in his life. The long felt promise to the heart of the pious wife that her husband should "go with her" began to fulfill to her patient waiting.

He went to meeting with her, and was melted by a sermon on the words, "Where thou goest, I will go, * * * thy people shall be my peo-

ple, and thy God my God;" he went with her to the family altar; he went with her on the road to life, and helped her to lead their children in the narrow way.—*Monthly Cabinet.*

CHRISTIAN MEekNESS.

"The world may hate and may despise
The humble sons of love and peace;
But God will estimate their price
And bless them with abundant grace."

"A meek and quiet spirit is in the sight of God of great price." This is a lovely trait, a most estimable grace in the full, well-rounded Christian character. To the meek and lowly in heart God ever delights to manifest himself as he does not unto the world. Many sweet, consoling and precious promises are made to all such. "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth." It is a boon much to be desired; a crowning grace among the bright and beautiful galaxy of graces. For "the meek he will guide in judgment."

Notwithstanding its loveliness and worth we fear it is rather a rare acquirement among professing Christians. Yet we should not cease to covet chief gifts such as this, to fit us in his image to shine. Its rarity perhaps among God's saints may attach to it the more value. For it is always and everywhere in "the sight of God of great price."

Some may be ready to say, "I have known among my own numerous friends and saints of God but few cases of true Christian meekness." Still God ever enjoins it, and we should carefully and earnestly seek it till we obtain and rejoice in its happy possession. Among the other Christian graces this is our privilege to enjoy, and short of its possession we should not rest. O may we by the possession of this beautiful grace become shining lights indeed, "thoroughly furnished unto every good work!" The

meek shall not only inherit the earth, but "shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."

"O let us take a softer mould
Blended and gathered into Thee!
Under one Shepherd make one fold,
Where all is love and harmony."

CASTING CARES ON HIM.

For, though you cannot always prevent burdens being laid upon you, yet you may refuse to carry them. Indeed you ought not to carry any burdens, for it is not becoming in the King's children. You have a great Burden-bearer; one who has borne your griefs, and carried your sorrows; one who bore your sins in his own body on the tree. Now, he bore your sins, the guilt and the punishment of them, that you might never bear them. He sighed that you might sing; he sunk under the weight of your sorrows that you might rise and taste his sweetest joys. And now, when he sees you burdened with care, grief, anxiety or worldly trouble, he sweetly says, "Let me take thy burden and carry it for thee; my strength is greater than thine. Bring it to me! cast it on me! leave it with me."

Oh, Christian, what a Saviour thou hast! He so cares for you, that he desires you not to have a care; and he so loves to see you happy, that he proposes, yes, asks you to let him carry your burden for you. More than this, he will not only carry your burden, but he will carry you; he will place his everlasting arms beneath you, lift you out of every difficulty, and set you before his face forever.

—If we would appreciate the good and pure about us, we must have the key which unlocks to the inner life of such; and that key can only be obtained by a like goodness and purity of living.—*M. H. L.*

TRUTH.

BY MRS. THIRZA S. HUTTON.

"Behold thou desireth truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom."—Psa. li, 6.

There is very much said in the Word of God concerning truth. It is the great platform on which Christianity is built. God abhors deceit in every form. The first approaches of the sinner toward Christ must be in sincerity and truth.

"Blessed are they who keep his testimonies and that seek him with the whole heart."—Psa. cxix, 2. He is a jealous God and will not accept an imperfect offering or a divided heart. How true and faithful is God to his children. "And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord."—Hosea ii, 19-20.

In faithfulness. What blessed comfort and assurance we find in these words. No matter how full of infirmities, no matter how ignorant we are God has betrothed us unto himself in faithfulness, and what we know not now we shall know hereafter. Just as we can bear it will be revealed unto us, and the need of all he has died to purchase for us. It is natural for humanity to justify itself. We see in our first parents an unwillingness to acknowledge their individual transgression, but both were guilty and both alike suffered for their sin. Human nature is the same to-day, unwilling to see the depth of its own depravity.

Truth as it is in Jesus admits of no policy spirit. The eye must be single to God's glory alone, the motive pure and unselfish. There are some laborers in the work of the Lord who seem to be full of zeal. They are instant in season and out

of season, always abounding in work. And so absorbed are they in labors, it would seem they had forgotten to grow themselves, but have stopped in the beginning of Christian experience. Such individuals fail to receive the richest and best of their inheritance, the truth as it is in Jesus. There is no stopping place in Christian experience, and those who are failing to go on themselves, are unfit to be teachers and leaders of others. It is much easier sometimes to labor than to wait, but the richest and best experiences come to us not so much through labor, as by our entire surrender of self and a perfect submission to God in all the deaths and crucifixions he sees fit to lead us through. When all the earth becomes silent before him, then can the Son himself be glorified in us. It is Christ in us that must conquer the world, not our puny efforts mixed with self. It is truth that must and will prevail. We are living in days when the spirit of anti-Christ is filling the churches. People are satisfied with having a little truth and a great deal of error. Many prefer it to the humble, unselfish life of being all the Lord's, and of following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

"Verily I say unto you they have their reward," for "how can ye believe which receive honor one of another."

"Truth in the inward parts" is the preparation all the way through for the entrance of this wisdom. It cannot be had without it.

— "Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all things." — *Proverbs*.

— The little daily actions of life, moment by moment, are the stones with which we build a temple of lovely symmetry and beauty, or a building which, at the end of our pilgrimage, will look deformed and misshapen; which shall it be? — *M. H. L.*

SIGNS OF SPIRITUAL DECLINE.

1. When you are averse to religious conversation or the company of heavenly-minded Christians.
2. When from necessity, and without necessity, you absent yourself from religious services.
3. When you are more concerned about pacifying conscience than honoring Christ in performing duty.
4. When you are more afraid of being counted over-strict than of dishonoring Christ.
5. When you trifle with temptation or think lightly of sin.
6. When the faults of others are more a matter of censorious conversation than secret grief and prayer.
7. When you are impatient and unforgiving toward the faults of others.
8. When you confess, but do not forsake sin; and when you acknowledge, but still neglect duty.
9. When your cheerfulness has more of the levity of the unregenerate than the holy joy of the children of God.
10. When you shrink from self-examination.
11. When the sorrows and cares of the world follow you farther into the Sabbath than the savor and sanctity of the Sabbath follow you into the week.
12. When you are easily prevailed upon to let your duty as a Christian yield to your worldly interest or the opinions of your neighbors.
13. When you associate with men of the world without solicitude for doing good, or having your own spiritual life injured.

— If when trouble comes, as it comes to all, we would fix our eyes by faith on Christ, drinking with him the cup of bitterness, waiting patiently the unfolding of his will, how much sooner the clouds will be dispelled than if we yield to gloom and despondency. — *M. H. L.*

THE WALK OF FAITH.

In walking as Jesus walked, we have to lay down our lives, and for the brethren too, and as we go, we learn more and more of what our salvation cost the Son of God. And to me it reveals the depths and hatefulness of self. Oh! how full of it I am, for when death comes in on one point, self-life is manifested in another; and yet, God in his unwearied patience leads on through experience after experience, giving the daily death, and will in love continue to do this until he sees us to be "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." Let others point the finger in derision, if they can afford to, but let us not be intimidated and led to loiter in the way because of it, but like Bunyan's Pilgrim, with our fingers in our ears, let us run, crying, "Life, eternal life." Many question other leadings, and we may often incline to it, but I am satisfied it is an individual walk with God and he must and will give each one the first lesson, most needful for each in their present development. Oh! to keep hands off the ark and let God jostle it as he will. Oh! to let him jostle me as he will and I still fear no evil, but in the spirit of Jesus, walking in the obedience he knew, give myself out willingly to die, nay, heartily, for God loveth a cheerful giver.—*M. H. M.*

—What dignity is given to our most insignificant acts when they are done for Christ. And why should we not consecrate every act to him?—*M. H. L.*

—To shirk work and care, thinking thereby to gain ease, is a fatal mistake. A lady of great wealth remarked to me lately, "When I feel despondent, I get up and go to work." Work is a great blessing. Find out what work you are best adapted for, and then go at it with a will. The Almighty wants no drones for his children.—*M. H. L.*

THE LUXURY OF GIVING.

This is probably the greatest luxury on earth. Truly did our Saviour say it is more blessed to give than to receive. This every one has experienced in some degree in making gifts to children. Still higher is the gratification of making judicious gifts to well-conducted schools, colleges, hospitals and asylums. Highest of all is the luxury of giving to diffuse the gospel either by the living voice or printed page. The luxury of giving is proved by the repeated and increasing gifts of those who begin to give liberally. This luxury is not known until tasted by making some liberal gift, which, perhaps, costs a great effort, but as in other things, it is only the first step that is hard. After that giving becomes not only easier and easier, but more and more delightful. What shall we think, then, of those rich men and women who deny themselves this luxury, or are content with the shadow of it obtained by putting their gifts into their will instead of the substance by real, actual giving with their own hands?—*N. Y. Witness.*

—“Enter ye at the straight gate.”

—If your cause is good, be sure you do not injure it by a bad spirit; if it is bad, give it up at once.

—It is one of the precious mysteries of sorrow that it finds solace in the unselfish thought.

—The chains which cramp us most are those that weigh on us least.

—To have Christ within us! Do we realize what we say? Christ in us speaking, acting, loving. If this thought takes possession of our minds, that Christ is indeed found within us, and that our bodies are indeed temples of the Holy Ghost, what manner of lives ought ours to be?—*M. H. L.*

EDITORIAL.

LOST GRACE.

When one has lost grace he may ordinarily regain it. God says, "Return unto me and I will return unto you and will heal your backslidings and will love you freely." This is a very encouraging promise. The Bible contains many more like it. He that comes to God with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, will again find the joy of salvation. God is merciful, full of compassion and long-suffering.

But many who have lost grace do not seem to know that they have lost it. They do not return unto the Lord, for they do not seem to be aware that they have wandered from him. There is no very marked change in their outward appearance. As the world estimates they are moral. They observe all the forms of Christianity by which they have been accustomed to express their devotion to God. In many things they seem more determined than ever before. But their tenderness of spirit, their gentleness, their humility is gone. They may even profess holiness while they are lacking in the essentials of holiness. They are partial in their treatment of others. Toward some they are over-indulgent, toward others equally meritorious they are harsh, severe and over bearing.

They judge of the piety of others by the deference which they pay to them. They are self-willed and count those who oppose their measures as enemies of God. They manifest the spirit of the Pharisee but call it perfect love. What they would call "a bitter spirit" when seen in others they account zeal for God in themselves. They say they "are rich and increased in goods and have need of nothing, and know not that they are poor and blind and miserable."

This is one of the most deplorable conditions in which a human being can be. They might be recovered if they would, but they think that they are all right and

everybody else all wrong. They resemble a nut the shell of which is all sound, but open it and the meat is dried up, bitter and unsavory. Plant it and it never grows. If a preacher gets in this condition, as he may, he attributes his want of success to the people and not to himself. He is domineer, hard and censorious; and because it is not received, consoles himself with the reflection that the people will not bear the truth.

Beloveds, let us inquire if this is not our spiritual state! Let us see if we have not lost the grace of God from our hearts. It is important that we know—for we are losing opportunities for usefulness,—and a loss of grace ends in the loss of the soul. Let us be as severe in our judgment upon ourselves as we are towards others.

There are three marks by which we may generally know if we have lost our grace.

1. A loss of patience. We cannot be in a state of salvation without charity; and "charity is not easily provoked." If we are fretful towards those who may be under us in authority; if the husband cannot bear little things that he deems out of the way in his wife, or the wife in the husband; if we are continually giving way to an impatient spirit we need inquire no farther; there is evidently a loss of grace.

2. A want of humility. This is not a shining grace but it is essential to the Christian character. All saved persons are humble. The lack of humility may be seen in a disposition to dress richer, to have fine things. It may be manifested in a great deal of seeming zeal for God—a zeal that pushes self forward, and demands recognition, and a complacency with our own opinions. It may be manifested in professions of piety which are not warranted by the life.

3. A lack of self-denial. If a self-indulgent spirit is growing upon us, we are in that degree getting away from God. Some who think they are high in spirit—

ual attainments are in reality gross and carnal in their natures. "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." If the enjoyments you seek are fleshly, if you are morose and ill-natured when your bodily appetites are not gratified, then you have lost grace if you ever had it.

If you find you have lost grace, do not be discouraged on that account, but thank God for the discovery. Your condition is far more hopeful than when you were self-deceived. Give yourself to God, repent in the dust before him, ask for his mercy, rely wholly upon the intercession of the all-prevailing Saviour, and you shall regain your lost enjoyment. God will give you all you have lost. Follow him and he will keep you unto eternal life.

REFORMATION.

What are now called revivals used to be called reformatations. Both names are good. Revive is from the Latin *re*, again, and *vivere*, to live. A revival means, that souls dead in sin are made alive to God. It implies a radical change in those who are the subjects of the revival.

Reform is from the Latin *re*, and *formare*, to create, to shape. Hence a reformation implies a change for the better, an amendment of the life and manners.

A revival of Christianity, if genuine, is always attended with a reformation. The subjects of it are made better outwardly as well as inwardly. There is a marked and visible improvement in their conduct generally. There is more happiness in the family, and peace in the neighborhood. The state of things in the community is improved. Men become more honest and trust-worthy.

There is great need of a reformation all over this country. The churches need to be reformed. Generally they take the lead in fashion. They could not do otherwise than they do if God commanded, *and be conformed to this*

world. Many preachers explain away the plainest precepts and prohibitions of the Bible. Church gambling gives sanction to gambling in general.

Church members are encouraged in the most ruinous self-deception. They are induced to make a Christian profession when they are not even spiritually awakened. Some are told by their religious teachers to claim to be sanctified when they are lacking in almost every element of true holiness.

Let the ministers then weep over the desolations of Zion, and in God's name go forth and scatter the precious seed of Bible truth. Give no countenance to the superficial revivals of the day. Have no part in them. Do thorough work for God. Put the plow in deep. Break up the fallow ground. Get people converted so they will bear a true and full testimony for God wherever they are. Rely on the Holy Ghost. Do not be afraid of persecution. Let it rage. You have a shield that will cover and protect you.

THE ECUMENICAL COUNCIL.

This great gathering was held as appointed. Rev. A. Atwood, an old, devoted preacher of the Philadelphia Conference, in an article in the *Christian Standard*, says that he read carefully the accounts of the proceedings which were published in this country. He asks this very appropriate question, "With all the expenditure of time, money and talent, what good has the Conference done?" Such a gathering ought to show some tangible, good results. He says, "Fruit may yet appear, but it has not so far." He says if he were to suggest a name it would be "A Mutual Admiration Association."

We did not attend though we strongly desired to meet with the representatives of the various Methodist churches. But after praying over the matter a good deal we finally decided that it would not be consistent for us to attend for several reasons.

1. The Methodist Episcopal Church was prominent in getting it up, and there was but little doubt but that it would, to a great extent, control its action. It was expected that Bishop Simpson would be the leading spirit.

Our Annual Conferences by a small majority voted to send delegates. But since they took such action and before the session of the Conference, events transpired which, we feel confident, would have reversed that decision. Many of our best and most intelligent people, as well as preachers, were, from the first, opposed to our sending delegates. They felt that we ought to keep free from every semblance of entering into any thing like denominational alliance or fellowship with a church whose past action and present condition is that of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The Free Methodist Church, as is well known, owes its origin to the perpetration, by the Methodist Episcopal Church, of acts of ecclesiastical oppression and injustice without a parallel in modern times. These persecuting measures we felt that we could forgive. But when, after the lapse of twenty years, those high in influence in that church, published or indorsed, as history of these events, accounts which were utterly false, we felt that it was our duty to make the necessary corrections, and to ask them to do the same. Bishop Simpson promised to do it in the Cyclopædia which bears his name as editor, should a second edition of the book be called for. Since our appointment as delegates the second edition of this book has been put in circulation. No proper correction has been made.

The slight change adopted but adds insult to injury. It implies that we were playing upon the meaning of the word organize. The Cyclopædia article, in the face of the most conclusive evidence to the contrary* still carries the idea that the Free Methodist Church originated "in an association of ministers

... who privately adopted a platform, and in this organization were known as Nazarites."

As long as Bishop Simpson manifests no disposition to do us justice, we do not see how we can, with propriety, join in a movement largely under his direction and control.

3. We were not pleased with the lack in the delegation of the M. E. Church of prominent representatives of the holiness wing of that church. Our mission is to promote the spread of scriptural holiness in the earth. It does not seem consistent for us to enter a conference called to secure the co-operation of the different branches of Methodism, when the body that called it has failed to place in its delegates the more prominent workers in the holiness movement.

4. The M. E. Church has widely departed from its primitive spirit and teachings and usages—from everything that gives to it any apology for existence. It has become a worldly conformed, compromising, pleasure-loving church. There is not the slightest hope of its becoming any better. God has, by unmistakable providences called us to a complete separation from it. This separation should be marked, distinct, entire. The crushing hand which the M. E. Church lays on those within its pale who have the courage even to attempt to carry out the object for which it was organized, cuts off all hope of doing it any good, or of getting any good from it, by uniting with it in any sort of an ecclesiastical association. Our only consistent course is to fulfill, the best we may, the mission to which we are providentially called.

For these reasons, and others that might be added, it appears to us that we had better apply ourselves to the work which God has given us to do.

While we have sympathy and fellowship with all the ministers and members in the M. E. Church who "follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord," yet we do

not see how we can consistently fraternize with it as an ecclesiastical organization.

* See "Why Another Sect."

SAFETY IN CHRIST.

No man because of Adam's sin will be damned. What was lost by the fall was more than gained in Christ. "Where sin abounded grace doth much more abound."

But he who bases his claims for salvation upon his good works, that is by meeting the demands of the law, voluntarily puts himself outside the kingdom of grace. He undertakes to keep the whole law. Of course he fails. And the curse of the broken law rests upon him.

There is safety then only in Christ. There is salvation in no other. But in him there is pardon and peace. He saves all who come unto God by him. Why then do you stay away? Saved by your own merits you cannot be — you have no expectation of that. Why not, then, be saved by Christ?

DEAD.

When people talk so much about their being dead, it is an infallible sign that they are mistaken. A dead man never says, "See how dead I am." The old man dies very hard. He loves to be talked about. He will even thrive upon abuse. The one great thing that he delights in is to be noticed. If the notice is friendly all the better; but if it is hostile it still affords delight.

The old man, the carnal nature, will die soonest of neglect. The successful way to kill him is to starve him to death. Give him nothing to feed upon. Resolutely refuse to gratify his desires, his pride, his vanity. Go to work earnestly for others. Strive in every possible way to do them good. Take no credit to yourself for any good God may accomplish through you. When your actions are misrepresented, your motives misconstrued do not be in haste to defend your-

self. Imitate the Master who, when he was reviled, reviled not again. Thus by neglecting self, by taking reproaches patiently, you may die to self, but if you say much about it self will again come to life.

CONFERENCES.

THE NORTH IOWA AND MINNESOTA CONFERENCE is steadily gaining ground. It is pushing its way towards the North Pole in one direction, and towards the Rocky Mountains in another. The preachers sometimes encounter fierce storms in the winter. These storms are called blizzards. The wind blows fiercely, the air is full of fine snow and it is impossible for one to see but a few feet ahead of him. Persons have been lost and have perished within a hundred feet of their own house.

This Conference is aggressive, and so of course is gaining ground.

There was a good degree of the Spirit's influence at the session and in the religious meetings.

THE WISCONSIN CONFERENCE has been about at a stand-still since it was first organized. It has just about held its own and is the only Conference that has not made decided progress.

The territory is inviting, the country rich and the people intelligent and moral. The preachers are laborious, gifted, well-informed and thoroughly pious. Why then does not the work prosper? Simply because wrong methods are adopted. Preaching may be too dogmatic, too driving, and too little persuasive. There may not be enough of the joy of salvation. Good seed may be sown; but if the plants are pulled up too often to see if the roots are all sound, they will not make a rapid growth. A tree may be vigorous, but the limbs may be trimmed so close that it will bear no fruit.

The late session of the Conference was pleasant, harmonious and deeply spiritual. We look for the most salutary re-

sults. We shall be greatly disappointed if the Conference does not enter upon a new career of prosperity.

THE ILLINOIS CONFERENCE is the mother of several prosperous Conferences. But none of them is more aggressive than itself. It is making new appointments and reaching out into the regions beyond. The late session was held at Elgin, a thriving, growing city on Fox river, about forty miles west of Chicago. There was a deep religious interest, both in the Conference and in the meetings. Many were awakened and probably a dozen or more were converted.

Mainly through the energetic labors of the pastor, Rev. Thomas Fluck, a commodious, pleasant brick church has been built and paid for. The Conference held its sessions in it, although it was not quite ready for dedication.

THE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS CONFERENCE held its third session at Jacksonville. Already it has quite doubled in the number of both its ministers and members. It has a great work to accomplish and it goes at it with determination and in faith. The preachers are mostly young, but God is with them and gives them victory as they go forth in his name.

We were greatly encouraged at all of the Conferences. The work is in a prosperous condition.

FIGHTING HOLINESS.

In many churches let a leading, popular preacher get his eyes opened and his heart sanctified, and it is truly wonderful how soon his brethren will open their batteries upon him. Men who had stood by him before become his most bitter opposers. They are not willing to acknowledge that they are fighting holiness. But this is what they are in reality doing. They do it in the persons of its advocates and representatives.

Dr. Adam Clarke says:

"If men would spend as much time in frequently calling upon God to cleanse

his heart that he has not cleansed, as they spend decrying this doctrine, what a glorious state of the church should we soon witness. Instead of compounding with iniquity, and tormenting their minds to find out with how little grace they may be saved, they would renounce the devil and all his works; and be determined never to rest till they found that they had bruised him under their feet, and that the blood of Christ had cleansed them from all unrighteousness. Why is it that men will not try how far God will save them? nor leave off praying and believing for more, till they find that God has held his hand? When they find that their agonizing faith and prayer receive no further answer, then, and not till then, they may conclude that God will be no farther gracious, and that he will not save to the uttermost them who come to him through Christ Jesus."

LITERARY NOTICES.

WILFORDS LITERARY MICROCOSM is the title of a new eight-page monthly, devoted to a condensation of knowledge on all subjects, religious, scientific and literary of general interest. Its special feature is a discussion of such religious, scientific and philosophical subjects as will tend to throw light on the origin, nature and destiny of man.

The editor is A. Wilford Hall, the well known author of *THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN LIFE*—the most remarkable production of the day; a book which deals death blows to the atheistic science of our times.

The subscription price of the *Literary Microcosm* is fifty cents a year. Address, Hall & Co., 130 East Eighth street, N. Y.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LOVE FEAST.

PHEBE LANGHAM.—I feel real good in the Lord. Glory to God! It pays to keep under the blood!

East Randolph.