

The Earnest Christian

—AND—

GOLDEN RULE.

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THE STANDARD.

BY THE EDITOR.

We are firm believers in the Christian religion. We are not troubled with any doubts as to its reality or its divine origin. The gospel that we preach and teach is the Gospel of the Son of God. We have no other to offer. We believe in no other. With us, this is the standard of religious doctrine, and the infallible rule for our conduct. That it should be with all who profess to be Christians would not seem to admit of a question. Practically, but few test the doctrines which they hold by the teachings of the New Testament. They adopt what is popular. They teach what men are willing to pay the highest price for learning.

With regard to their conduct they do not inquire so much what is right as what is agreeable or profitable, or what will add to their reputation.

To pay a decent regard to public opinion is proper. To make it the standard of our religion is all wrong.

1. Public opinion varies. One year it favors one thing; the next year the opposite. A few years ago all

the great churches of the land gave their moral support to slaveholding, as they now give it to pride and fashion.

But God never varies. He is always the same. Right and wrong are immutable principles. They never change. Our ideas as to what is right and what is wrong may change; but moral principles are unchangeable.

2. It is often difficult to find out to a certainty what public opinion demands. Politicians who make this a study are often mistaken in regard to it. A man who can never tell how to vote until the votes are counted often gets his information too late.

3. The only, ultimate standard for the faith and practice of a Christian is, the Gospel of Christ. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."—Jno. 12 : 48. If we are to be judged by the Gospel, then we should live according to the Gospel. To the same effect are the words of St. Paul. "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my Gospel."—Rom. 2 : 16.

THE EARNEST CHRISTIAN.

To every one who professes to be a Christian these passages should be conclusive. Not to receive the words of Christ is not to receive Christ. Still, whether Christ be received or rejected we must, at the last day be judged by his words—that is by His Gospel. We must see to it that our experience and our lives are in harmony with the Gospel. It is not enough that we come up to the standard generally prevailing in our church, or in any church. If that standard is below the Gospel standard it will not relieve our case in the least to know that we are as well off as millions of others.

Does not Christ say "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."—Matt. 7: 13, 14.

All our reasoning about the mercy of God cannot invalidate a single sentence that Christ has left us. All our speculations about the future life cannot do away the fact that in the present life the great mass of mankind make themselves miserable notwithstanding the ample provision which God has made for their happiness.

The declarations of Christ are positive. "Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."—Jno. 3: 3. This covers the case of every person. It is not enough

to have what is commonly called the "Christian character." There is no doubt but that Nicodemus had that when Christ addressed those words to him. All who knew him were satisfied with the Christian character of John Wesley before he was "born of the Spirit." In fact his church was better satisfied with him before than they were after this turning point in his history. So the churches of to-day are better satisfied with a respectable, formal Christian than they are with a true Christian. He is no reproof to them. He does not disturb them in their worldly pursuits and pleasures. He has religion enough to make him agreeable, but not enough to make him offensive to the world.

If a person is truly born of the Spirit it will be manifested in all of his life. It will be seen in his style of living, in his business, in his dress. He will not be "conformed to this world," in any particular which God has forbidden. "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."—2 Cor. 5: 17.

Such a man will carry out all the practical directions for every day life, laid down in the Sermon on the Mount. He will be clothed with humility because he will be "poor in spirit." He will be merciful because he hopes to obtain mercy. He will keep out of all quarrels, because he is a peacemaker. He will be chaste in all his words and actions because he is "pure in heart." In short he will be symmet-

rical in his character and consistent in his conduct because he acknowledges the binding force of the command. *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.*

STRENGTH.

BY MRS. LUCY M. COLEMAN.

Any one who notices carefully the Christian world of to-day, can not but see that there is a great lack of *strong Christians*. There are many in the rear of the army, but not many who *dare* step into the front ranks. In many churches or societies, a large share of the active work is done by the few. The others serve God in their weak way, and must always be helped along, instead of being helpers. It is evident this ought not to be the case.

The Bible is full of commands to be strong in the Lord, and of promises of strength to the Lord's children. In 1 Chron. 16 : 11, we are exhorted to "Seek the Lord and *his strength*." If we were to depend upon ourselves for strength, then there would be an excuse for weakness ; but if we are to "Be strong *in the Lord*, and in the power of *his* might, (Eph. 6 : 10), then the weakest may have strength. When persons are first saved, we generally say of them, "they are weak—have not been in the way long, and need to be helped." This is true, but even for such, we have the passage, "Let the weak *say* I am strong."—Joel 3 : 10. Some will ask, "How can I *say* I am strong when I know I am weak?" We can say it *in faith*, trusting the Lord for strength, and just as often as we declare it, we shall find our strength increased. Those who look for strength of body from the Lord, would find it well to say, "I am strong," even when they *feel* nothing but weakness in their bodies.

Perhaps you say, "that is telling a lie, and I must be truthful," but let us remember that God calls "those things which be not, as though they were," (Rom. 4 : 17), and we are to do the same. If we believe, according to God's word, that we have a right to look for *his strength* in our bodies, then, though Satan may make us feel weak, and try to get us to believe his lie about it, rather than God's word, let us meet every weak feeling with the passage, "I am strong." If we do this we shall find the weakness giving place to the strength which God gives. "The Lord will give strength to his people."—Psalms 29 : 11.

The Lord intends that, as Christians, we should "go from strength to strength."—Psalms 84 : 7. Why is not this the case with the Lord's children. One reason is, they do not work for the Lord. Any of our powers of soul and body are strengthened as we use them. There is work for every one, and that, too, right at our door. There are souls who are waiting for us to speak to them about seeking the Lord. Will we do our work and have our crown, or will we let some one else take both? We often find that the Lord's children are weak because they are led to a certain line of work, and they hesitate and doubt over the matter. There was a young lady attending school at the seminary last year. She always seemed weak as a Christian, and was ever needing to be helped in her experience. One evening she came forward for prayers, and after seeking the Lord's help for some time, she said she wished to confess. She got up and stated that she had felt she ought to have some children's meetings here, but, as she felt so weak, and was so young, she *reasoned* that it must be a mistake,—that the Lord would give the work to some one else. Is it any wonder she lacked strength? No matter

how small our work may seem, it is for us to do service for God if we are to become strong Christians.

Another reason why we do not become strong Christians is, because we do not go through the trying places—those that would develop our strength—as we ought. God allows some fight of faith, or severe trial, to overtake us, and instead of keeping our eyes on Jesus, our Deliverer, without for a moment letting in a complaining spirit, we begin to wonder and question, to pity ourselves, and we go around as though we were martyrs; thus we fail of the strength God wanted to give us, and the battle must be fought again.

There is not the *strong faith* among God's children which there ought to be. Many get in a *habit* of *unbelief*, and, because they cannot see with their outward eyes, that their prayer of faith is answered, they let in a spirit of doubt, which will kill all true faith. We ought to have as much confidence in God and his word as the little boy had in his mother. He said "It is so, because mother said so, and if it was *not so*, and mother had said so, it would be so." For many years the Lord gave me the privilege of living in Chili, now The A. M. Chesbrough, Seminary, and through the teachings of our superintendent and his wife—Bro. and Sister Roberts—I learned to look to the Lord for strength of body as well as of soul. This was when I had no strength of *my own* left, and I felt that I must have God's strength in body, or go under. Since then as I have trusted for strength to do needed things, it has come. But where we look to the Lord for strength, we can not go according to the natural order of things. I will illustrate this by some of my own experience. One morning I had planned to go to the dentist's, to have a long, tedious job of work performed upon my teeth. The thought came to me, now

I will *save my strength* this morning, and not do any work that will tire me. I sat down to read my Bible, when the Lord began to talk to me in this way: "Where do you get your strength?" I said, "from the Lord." Then came the words, "Do you think I am so stingy of *my strength* that you must save it up so niggardly?" I had heard enough, and as there was plenty of house-work that needed to be done, I went to work at one of the hardest things I could find. As I worked God filled me with strength and glory, and when the task was finished, I felt more rested and stronger than when I began. "Labor is rest," if done for the Lord, and *in him*, and if we would know God's strength, let us not be afraid to do service for him. Any work done with the hands for the Lord, is just as true service as working in meetings, and personally for souls. I cannot close this article without saying a word to our sister Evangelists, especially those who have taken the Lord for their physician of body as well as soul. When you go into the different places to work for the Lord, you are invited into the homes of the saints, here and there. While you are a transient guest in a house, take hold and help in the household matters. Do not say, I must *save my strength* to go out and visit the people, to read and pray with them. You do not know how much good you may do by helping some tired housewife with her cares. Then as you go out to visit and pray, you will be doubly strengthened. God has strength enough. Do not bring a reproach upon his healing power by being unable to lend a helping hand when it is needed. "I can do *all things* through Christ which strengtheneth me."—Phil. 4: 13.

To give up struggling is to give up God.—*Faber*.

TO A FALTERING DISCIPLE.

BY M. H. MOSMAN.

MY DEAR FRIEND.—You have given yourself to be educated for God, and desire to do all his pleasure. You are living up to all the light you have; but at times the way seems so obscure, you are in great perplexity and restlessly grope about for the open way, forgetting that the blessed leader is calling you to stand still and see his salvation. "The battle is not yours, but God's." He is showing you that earthly streams will no longer satisfy the thirstings of the immortal soul, and is calling you to take fuller, deeper, draughts at the wells of salvation. He is calling you from living after the flesh, that you may rise in the life and strength of God, and thus enable you to walk in the energy of the Spirit, so that you may, as never before, exclaim, "Old things are passed away, and behold all things are become new."

You may, in the extremity of your sufferings, be tempted to feel that you bear your crushing burdens alone, and, in anguish of soul, cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." You say that these last drops are the most bitter of all, and seem so needless. My dear, this is precious bitterness to you, let it all be added. 'Tis this that reveals the last remains of self, and will urge us to plunge deeper and deeper into the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, and we more fully partake of Jesus' purity and nature. You are very sensitive, and in the retirement of your own room have to encounter many a struggle ere self is laid low—nay is utterly cast aside that you again may rest in God, and reflect his calmness. You feel, that but for this keen susceptibility, you could rise above all that now seems crushing, but this is overwhelming to

you. Remember that God gave you this temperament, and is watching to see you hold it as one of his gifts, nor would he have you repine under it. He knows it calls forth suffering, but it does not necessarily lead you to sin. He does not ask you to go above suffering, or above being tempted; but you are not to fall under these. When we yield ourselves fully to God we allow our minds to be exercised and our susceptibilities to be called forth as *He wills*, and if he permits faith and hope to be clouded in, let us, in a state of submission and quietness, still say "Be it unto me as Thou wilt." Still "rejoice in the Lord," knowing that the darkness and the light are "both alike" to Him. Believe God, and, by faith, see all things working together for your good, and bow before the Sanctifier and wait there until you can "*in everything give thanks*." Just on this point let grace triumph, that you may become strong, and of good courage. Then will you be able to prove that grace, all sufficient, in all things, is provided; and you will abound therein. These seasons, known only to God, do much toward rendering us pliable to his monitions and teachings. By this deeper resignation we are so brought into harmony with him that we die to all *preferences* and in holy submission, say, "The cup that my Father hath given me shall I not drink it?" and our one cry becomes, "Thy will, thy will be done."

Thank God, then, for this sensitiveness. Thank him for these trials, but so yield to him in all, that you only suffer according to his will, and you shall continually find yourself drawn heavenward, and increasing in that susceptibility of soul that renders you more impressive of the Spirit, quick to detect his monitions. If watchfully obedient you will constantly receive more of his power, and become more ap-

preciative of his goodness.

Will you not trust God, and so trust him as to obey the command, *Be careful for nothing*, then rest back in him, fully yield yourself, saying, "I sacrifice myself to thy will, O God," and having done the will of God, patiently wait until you inherit the promise. Truly in this you have need of patience, but let it have its perfect work, that you become "perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

Following Jesus you will often be called into ways you have not known, but he who has said, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee," also promises to make darkness light before you, and the crooked things straight. He declares, "I will strengthen thee," "I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." Only believe, and in soul, continue *waiting, waiting upon God*, and you will find his grace is sufficient, and that he is like a wall of fire round about you. His purposes will be accomplished, his power thus made known, and he glorified. May you accept the grace given, and ever live,
LOOKING UNTO JESUS.

HOW TO DO GOOD.—Dr. Johnson wisely said, "He who waits to do a great deal of good at once, will never do anything." Life is made up of little things. It is but once in an age that occasion is offered for doing a great deed. True greatness consists in being great in little things. How are railroads built? By one shovelful of dirt after another; one shovelful at a time. Thus, drops make the ocean. Hence, we should be willing to do a little good at a time, and never "wait to do a great deal of good at once." If we would do much good in the world, we must be willing to do good in little things, little acts one after another; speaking a word here, giving a tract there, and setting a good example all the time; we must do the first

good thing we can, and then the next, and the next, and so keep on doing good. This is the way to accomplish anything. Thus only shall we do all the good in our power.

MY EXPERIENCE.

BY MARIA HEYLAN.

As I grew in years and in grace, I received greater illumination in regard to the business in which I had been engaged for twenty years. From the time I became converted, I could not knowingly make any ball or theatrical dresses; but still I made dresses which I could not wear myself. As the light shone on my heart, it became a great trial to me; for I had no other means of support. I took my case to the Lord in prayer and I was assured that he would not leave me, nor forsake me. While visiting my brother in 1866 the Lord revealed to me that I must give up my business for greater usefulness. After some hesitation I determined to go forth and do His bidding, as the way was opened before me, and I was greatly blessed of God in coming to the decision. While I continued in W—, I visited all the M. E. Churches, for at that time I was still connected with them. In the fear and love of God I was sent with messages to the people, exhorting them to take a bold stand for truth and righteousness. I found very few living in the clear light of justification. Others had to go back and do their first works over again.

One of the legacies which our Saviour gave to his disciples before he ascended to his Father, was this, "In this world ye shall have tribulation; but in me ye shall have peace." Again, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my

Father, and I will love him, and manifest myself to him." In going home from an evening meeting, a friend handed me a book saying, he thought I would be pleased with its contents; without ascertaining the title, a voice was heard, saying, it is the Lord! In perusing it my own soul was much strengthened; and in handing it to others, it was made a great blessing to many souls, especially those whose minds were greatly agitated in regard to the work of entire sanctification.

THE "GUIDE" ON DRESS.

1. A sister in Texas writes: Please explain that rule in our discipline which says, Doing what we know is not for the glory of God, as, "The putting on of gold and costly apparel"—1 Tim. 2:9; 1 Pet. 3:3. As gold is costly, does not the Holy Spirit mean that we should not put it on?

Answer.—Mr. Wesley held, and we think rightly, that all the directions given in the General Rules, "the Spirit of God writes upon all truly awakened hearts." Observe! "*All truly awakened hearts.*" Hence, at the gate of *repentance*, before conversion, not at the gate of *entire sanctification*, there was a putting off of the garments and ornaments of the world. And the old preachers required this. And we do not believe that the Spirit teaches differently now. A genuine conversion will now lead to the same results as in the days of Mr. Wesley. In regeneration, "old things have passed away, and all things have become new." *Justified* persons will no more wear gold ornaments than entirely sanctified persons. Then you say, there are many professing justification and entire sanctification, who are deceived. Very likely. There are many who need a repentance that needeth not to be repented

of. We do not daub people with untempered mortar. A brother years ago in the Tuesday meeting, said: "There is much sanctification that needs sanctifying"—and it is true—it is too flimsy to stand the Bible test.

2. A brother in New York asks: Is it right for a minister to belong to a Masonic Lodge; and is it right for the Church to support them?

Ans.—We have heretofore spoken explicitly on this subject. We can find no warrant in the Bible for either one or the other. If others can, they have a keener spiritual eyesight than we possess. The injunction is, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness."—*Guide to Holiness.*

"HAVE FAITH IN GOD."

"Trust in Him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before Him: God is a refuge for us."—Psa. 62:8.

You believe in God; that is to say, he has a place in your intellectual notions; you could not on any consideration allow his name to be blotted out of your creed; you are intellectually sure that he lives. Now be true to your own creed, and trust in him. You believe that the river runs to the sea, and that the sea is large enough to sustain your ship—then act upon your faith and launch the vessel. If you keep your vessel on the stocks when she is finished, then all your praises of the ocean go for nothing; better never have built the ship than leave her unlaunched—a monument of your scientific belief, but also a testimony of your practical infidelity. This figure will serve us still further. This faith in God is truly as a sea-going ship. It is not a little craft meant for river uses, nor a toy-boat to play upon the shore even of the sea, when the sun is shining and the south wind is as the sweet breath of a sleeping child; this faith is meant for the wide waters of the great

deep, where storms have scope for their fury, where the stars are as guide-posts, and where the sun tells the voyager where he is and gives him the time of heaven. You have this great ship; she is well built; you know her preciousness,—but there you are, hesitating on the river, running down to the harbor-bar and coming back again aghast as if you had seen a ghost; have faith; pass the bar; leave the headlands behind; make the stars your counselors, and ride upon the great sea by the guidance of the greater sun. This is faith; not a mere nodding of the assenting head, but the reverent risking of the loving, clinging heart. To have a God in your belief is to sit in a ship which is chained upon the stocks; but to have a God in the heart, ruling the understanding, the conscience, and the will, is to sail down the river, enter upon the great ocean, and pass over the infinite waters into the haven of rest. Trust in him *at all times*. This is a practical religion. "What time I am afraid, I will trust in God. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust." Religion is not to be occasional, but continuous. In the daytime our faith is to shine as the sun; in the night it is to fill the darkness with stars; at the wedding feast it is to turn the water into wine; in the hour of privation it is to surround the impoverished life with angels of hope and promise; in the day of death it is to take the sword from the destroyer and to give the victory to him who is apparently worsted in the fight. It is not easy to do this. All this holy and happy issue does not come in uninterrupted sequence; great fights of affliction have to be endured, daily discipline has to be undergone, but, blessed be God, the issue is not a mere conjecture, a shining possibility which may or may not be at-

tained; it has actually been realized by countless numbers of holy men, and upon their testimony we build the doctrine, that what the grace of God has once done it can repeat in full and abiding miracles.

—Rev. Joseph Parker.

GOD'S SPECIAL LOVE.

There are some thoughts which, however old are always new, either because they are so broad that we never learn them thoroughly, or because they are so intensely practical that their interest is always fresh. . . . Now, among such thoughts we may reckon that which all children know—that God loves every one of us with a special love. It is one of the commonest thoughts in religion, and yet so amazing that when we come to look steadily at it we come nigh to not believing it. God does not look at us merely in the mass and multitude. As we shall stand single and alone before his judgment-seat, so do we stand, so have we always stood; single and alone before the eye of his boundless love. This is what each man has to believe of himself. From all eternity God determined to create me, not simply a fresh man, not simply the child of my parents, a new inhabitant of my native country, an additional soul to do the work of the nineteenth century. But he resolved to create me such as I am, the me by which I am myself, the me by which other people know me, a different me from any that have ever been created hitherto, and from any that will be created hereafter. Unnumbered possible creatures which God saw when he chose me, he left to remain in their nothingness. They might have worshipped him a thousand times better than I shall ever worship him. They might have been higher, holier, and more interesting. But there was some nameless thing

about me which he preferred. His love fastened on something special in me. It was just myself with my individual peculiarities, the size, shape, fashion, and way of my particular, single, unmated soul, which in the calmness of his eternal predilection drew him to create me.

Must I not infer then, also, that in the sight of God I stand in some peculiar relation to the whole of his great world? I clearly belong to a plan, and have a place to fill, and a work to do, all which are special; and only my specialty, my particular me, can fill this place or do this work. This is obvious, and yet it is overwhelming also. I almost sink under the weight of the thought. It seems to bring God so very near.

I come in sight of the most overshadowing responsibilities. Responsibility is the definition of life. It is the separable characteristic of my position as a creature. I am constantly moving, constantly acting. I move impulsively and I work negligently. What, then, becomes of my special place and of my special work? From this point of view life looks very serious. Surely we must trust God with a huge confidence, or we shall be frightened into going and burying our talent in the earth!

Now, what is it about us which was the prime object of God's love when he chose us for creation? It cannot be put into words. It is just all that which makes us ourselves, and distinguishes us from all other selves, whether created or possible. It was precisely our particularity which God so tenderly and intensely loved. The sweetness of this thought is almost unbearable. I draw in my breath as if to convince myself that I am alive, I lay my hand on my heart to feel its beating. First I smile, and then I weep. I hardly know what to do with myself, I am so delightfully entangled in the meshes of divine love. This special-

ty of God's love startles me more and more, the longer I familiarize myself with it. I am obliged to make acts of faith in God, acts of faith in all his different perfections, but the greatest act of faith in this specialty of his love of me, of such as I am, such as I know myself to be, even such as he knows me to be. Deeper and perpetually deeper, taller and perpetually taller, the shadow of my responsibilities is cast upon me. But it is not a dark shadow; not depressing, but inspiring; sobering, but not paralyzing. I see plainly that my love of God must be as special as God's love of me. I must love him out of my special place, love him through my special work; and what is that place, and what is that work? Is not this precisely the question of questions?—*Faber.*

“ALL THINGS ARE YOURS.”

Am I poor? All the riches of this world are mine, for they are Christ's, who is God's, and who could give me with Him all the riches of the earth, if they were for my good. If then, instead of the riches He sends me poverty, it is because that is what is best for me, and what God has chosen. The whole world, with all its glory and power, belongs to me, for they belong to my Father, who will give me them to-morrow—who would give me them to-day, if that were good for me, since He disposes of all as He will. Am I sick? Health and strength are mine; comfort, and the enjoyment of all the blessings of life are mine, for all belongs to Christ, who is God's, and who disposes of all as he will. For whom are they if they are not for me, His child? If then, He refuses them to-day—for a moment that passes as swiftly as a weaver's shuttle—He has good reasons for it. It is because there are, in these bitter pains, hidden blessings that are

better for me than precious health and sweet comforts. He never deprives me of any good thing, but to give me something better. This is all my consolation—all is in His love. Do I desire wisdom and understanding? Well, though I should be ignorant all my life, though I may have had no opportunities of cultivating my faculties in this world, I am learned in Christ. Knowing Christ, I am more enlightened—more learned in the things of God than the man of the world, who has spent his whole life over his books: for I know that uncreated eternal light that he knows not—that light which God himself enjoys, and which leads me by an unerring hand through all the obscurities of life. I defy you to find anything of which I cannot say—That is my Father's, consequently it is mine. If He refuses it to me to-day, He will give it me to-morrow. I trust in His love. All is mine if I am Christ's.

Observe that in the chapter we have just read St. Paul says: "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." O my friends let us not be so ungrateful as to forget that it is under the cross and by the cross that Jesus Christ merited and obtained for us the unspeakable felicity that I would fain describe, but which I cannot succeed in getting a glimpse of, or even in imagining. It is by His blood shed—it is by His inconceivable sufferings—that He accomplished all for us. His love is the mainspring of our complete redemption: such is the Saviour. It is with this idea that we began, and it is with this we must finish. We come to His cross, we sit down under His cross, and no earthly thing shall tear us from this spot; here we will live, and here will we die. Dear friend, very soon all the scenes in this world will have passed away. In the world we have

tribulation, but let us be of good courage: Jesus Christ has overcome the world; the strong man has been bound by one stronger than he; and now here we are in the presence of Christ, who has redeemed us by His blood, and who is waiting to crown us with glory and felicity. Will you not share his glory? Will you not taste His love? Learn to know Him as He is. Embrace Him wholly with a sincere faith, that you may be able to realize the admirable words of the Apostle on which we have been meditating; that you may be happy in life, and happier in death; and that this life, so sad for those who live for this world only, may be for you an existence of which the light and peace shall always continue to increase till the day of Christ, to whom be ascribed all the praise and honor and glory, and especially the homage of our hearts, and of a love answering, if possible, to His!

—Selected.

EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

The history of the people of Israel affords many interesting examples of the effect of prayer in delivering from outward trouble, as of the tendency of affliction to impress the most careless with the necessity and value of prayer. These examples are thus beautifully referred to in the 107th Psalm: "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy. They wandered in the wilderness in the solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their souls fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distress. For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness."

Nor was the efficacy of prayer, in preventing or removing trouble, confined to the Jewish people, although they lived under a dispensation which was in many respects supernatural and miraculous; we are taught, on the contrary, to regard the examples which their history presents, as so many indications of the unalterable principles on which the general government of the world is conducted; and in so far as the point now before us is concerned, the same principle is recognized and embodied in a promise in the New Testament itself: "If any man is afflicted, let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sin, it shall be forgiven him." And in more general terms, our Lord has said to all his disciples, "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." "Whatsoever ye ask in my name, believing, ye shall receive."

To this, many may be ready to oppose their own experience, and may be unwilling to admit the efficacy of prayer in preventing or removing outward calamity, when they remember with what frequency and earnestness they supplicated for mercies which were, nevertheless, withheld, and deprecated trials which were, nevertheless, sent or continued with them. They may remember that, when threatened with bereavement, they wept sore, and besought the Lord to spare and restore the object of their fond affections; and yet, that he allowed disease to take its course, until it terminated in death. These facts, which no Christian minister will seek either to deny or to conceal, may have had the effect of staggering the belief of many in the efficacy of

prayer; and where they have not had this effect, they may occasionally embarrass even the minds of believers, and overwhelm them with deep anxiety, by suggesting the awful thought, that, since their prayers have received no direct answer, they must either not be of the number of God's people at all, or they must "have prayed amiss."

But these conclusions are not warranted by Scripture, and they arise from a misapprehension, not so much of the promise annexed to prayer, as of the very nature of prayer itself. No prayer is scriptural which does not express a desire in unison with the will of God; and where the purpose of God is, as in most cases it must be, secret or unknown to us, no prayer is scriptural in which the expression of our own desire is not limited by a holy acquiescence in his will. We are not entitled, for example, to pray absolutely that God's chastening hand may be withdrawn from us, or that we may be blessed with worldly prosperity;—all these desires, however natural and however strong, must be limited by, and subordinated to, the will of Him who knoweth what is best for us, and who has graciously taken the management of our case into His own hands. This is strikingly implied in the very structure of that form of prayer which our Lord himself gave to his disciples; for it is a very remarkable fact, that the first three petitions of that prayer are expressive of a desire for God's glory, acquiescence in God's will, and zeal for the extension of his kingdom; and it is not till after we have thus ascribed sovereignty to Jehovah, and cast ourselves absolutely into his hands, that we are permitted to broach one petition for our own particular interest, even to the extent of daily bread!

It is only, therefore, when our desires are in unison with the divine

will, that we have reason to expect a direct fulfilment of our requests. And this consideration is fraught with much interesting instruction, and with great practical comfort in regard to the efficacy of prayer; for it assures us, that if we should happen to pray in a right spirit, but, from ignorance, should ask what is not really good for us, God will not take advantage of our ignorance or weakness, so as to visit us with a curse when we are seeking a blessing. There can be no doubt that, were every desire which we express in prayer to meet with a direct and literal fulfilment, the efficacy of prayer might, through our ignorance of what is really for our good, become a source of calamity rather than of comfort. As it is related of one who, being possessed of great wealth, and having an only son, and that son laboring under a very sore disease, and being repeatedly counselled to resign him into God's hand, and to acquiesce in his appointment, even should he be pleased to take him away, did, nevertheless, so far yield to his natural affections, as resolutely to refuse any act of submission, and could not bring himself to utter one word of acquiescence in such a result, and who, many years after, was seen dishonored and beaten in his old age, by that very son whom he was so loath to lose, and mourning, in the bitterness of his heart, over filial ingratitude and disobedience, as the heaviest curse of his gray hairs! But when our petition is limited by acquiescence in the sovereign disposal of Almighty God, even should we ask amiss, God will neither withhold what is truly good for us, nor give what he knows to be bad. And thus the omniscient wisdom of God is our security against the effect of our own ignorance, or weakness in prayer.—*Rev. James Buchanan, D.D.*

DO YOU LOVE CHRIST?

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him."—John 14 : 21.

There are some who willingly speak of themselves as believers in Christ, but who would be displeased if you were to address to them the question, Do you love Christ? Love to Christ does not well express their idea of the feeling that a believer should have. There is something too warm, too personal, too enthusiastic about this definition of discipleship to suit them. They would view Christ at a certain distance, they would yield him reverence, honor, trust, but to speak of loving Christ savors to them of extravagance. It is nevertheless certain that this is the very sentiment that Christ most persistently demands of his people. He freely speaks of it without the least hesitation. "Lovest thou me?" is his interrogation to every one who professes to be his disciple. There are some who are very willing to make use of Christ, as they are of the servants of Christ in certain exigencies, but who prefer that there should be, for the most part, no great intimacy, no very decided warmth of affection. They would be united to him by a cord so long that they may walk on one side of the way and he on another. They deceive themselves fatally as to the nature of a true union with Christ. Note the affection of the mother for her child, of the child for its parent. See how the glances of the bridegroom and the bride seek each other! Search in the retrospect of your own heart-life for that which may best be expressed by the word "love," and you will be assisted to understand something of the strength of that feeling which binds the believer to Christ. Do you consent to recognize the obligation thus to love

"Sinner, turn, why will you die?"

Christ? Is it your heart's desire and aim thus to love him? If not, you may immediately blot out your name from the book of candidates at the door of Christ. If you will not give up the idea that there may be faith without love, you must give up Christ.

He that truly loves Christ will be content to learn of Christ how he shall express his love. Some are willing to love him, they think, but they must be allowed to express their love in the way their own heart may suggest. When he says "Go," they reply "Nay, but we will sit at his blessed feet." This sort of love is simply calumny. They prefer themselves to Christ in the very act by which they profess to show their attachment. They prefer their will to his—that vile, corrupt, odious will; they prefer their wisdom to his—an abominable caricature of wisdom to the infinite wisdom of Christ. A parent may love a child and yet do what the child dislikes; a husband may show his love even in acts that oppose the will of his wife, for with him is authority, and with him, perhaps, superior wisdom; but what a monstrous position were this for a believer to take up, with respect to Christ!

"He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father." Ah, Lord, there are some who deny that thou art God manifest in the flesh, God over all, blessed for ever, by whom all things were made, by whom all are upheld. While they profess to love thee, they declare thee an impostor, guilty of one of the basest and most opprobrious of all practices, the undue exaltation of one's self, and guilty of it in a greater degree than any other man ever was. To love *their* Christ were a sin indeed. How blessed the confidence of him who knows unwaveringly that he who loveth Jesus is loved of the Father! The Father loveth the

Son, and therefore he loves him who loves the Son, rejects him who rejects the Son.

We love him because he first loved us. Our love is elicited by his, and there are special revelations of his love granted to those who give proof of love to him. As the believer makes progress in conformity with his will, he is enabled by faith to discover new measures of Christ's unmeasurable love.

—Bowen.

PRIDE.

Watch and pray continually against pride. If God has cast it out, see that it enter no more: it is fully as dangerous as desire; and you may slide back into it unawares: especially if you think there is no danger of it. "Nay, but I ascribe all I have to God." So you may, and be proud nevertheless. For it is pride, not only to ascribe anything we have to ourselves, but to think that we have what we really have not. You ascribe all the knowledge you have to God; and in this respect you are humble. But if you think you have more than you really have: or if you think you are so taught of God, as no longer to need man's teaching, pride lieth at the door.

Do not, therefore, say to any who would advise or reprove you, "you are blind: you cannot teach *me*." Do not say, "this is your *wisdom*, your *carnal reason*," but calmly weigh the thing before God.

Always remember, much grace does not imply much light. These do not always go together. As there may be much light where there is little love, so there may be much love where there is little light. The heart has more heat than the eye; yet it cannot see. And God has wisely tempered the members of the body together, that none may say to another, "I have no need of thee."

To imagine that none can teach you, but those who are themselves saved from sin, is a very great and dangerous mistake. Give not place to it for a moment. It will lead you into a thousand mistakes, and that irrecoverably. *Obey and regard them who are over you in the Lord*; and do not think you know better than they. Know their place, and *your own*: always remembering, much love does not imply much light.

The not observing this has led some into many mistakes, and into the appearance, at least of pride. Oh! beware of the appearance and of the thing. Let there be in you *that lowly mind which was in Jesus Christ*. And be ye likewise clothed with humility. Let it not only fill but cover you all over. Let modesty and self diffidence appear in all your words and actions. Let all you speak and do, show that you are little, and base, and mean, and vile, in your own eyes.

As one instance of this, be always ready to own any fault you have done. If you have at any time thought, spoke, or acted wrong, be not backward to acknowledge it. Never dream that it will hurt the cause of God: no, it will further it. Be, therefore, open and frank when you are taxed with anything: do not seek either to evade or disguise it. But let it appear just as it is, and you will thereby not hinder, but adorn the gospel.

Beware of that daughter of pride, *enthusiasm*! keep at the utmost distance from it: give no place to a heated imagination. Do not hastily ascribe things to God. Do not easily suppose dreams, voices, impressions, visions, or revelations, to be from God. They may be from him; they may be from nature: they may be from the devil. Therefore *believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be from God*. Try all things by the written word,

and let all bow down before it. You are in danger of enthusiasm every hour, if you depart ever so little from Scripture, yea, from the plain, literal meaning of any text, taken in connection with the context. And so you are if you despise or lightly esteem reason, knowledge, or human learning: every one of which is an excellent gift of God, and may serve the noblest purposes.
—Wesley.

THE CHRISTIAN RACE.

They that will go to heaven must run for it, because, as the way is long, so the time in which they are to get to the end of it is very uncertain; the time present is the only time: it may be thou hast no more time allotted thee than thou now enjoyest: "Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." Do not say, I have time to get to heaven seven years hence; for I tell thee the bell may toll for thee before seven days more be ended; and when death comes, away thou must go, whether thou art provided or not; and therefore look to it—make no delays—it is not good dallying with things of so great concernment as the salvation or damnation of thy soul. You know, he that hath a great way to go in a little time, and less by half than he thinks of, he had need to run for it.

They that will have heaven must run for it, because the devil, the law, sin, death, and hell, follow them. There is never a poor soul that is going to heaven, but the devil, the law, sin, death, and hell make after that soul. "Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour." And I will assure you the devil is nimble; he can run apace, he is light of foot, he hath overtaken many, he hath turned up their heels, and hath given them

an everlasting fall. Also the law, that can shoot a great way; have a care thou keep out of the reach of those great guns the ten commandments. Hell also hath a wide mouth; it can stretch itself further than you are aware of. And as the angel said to Lot, "Take heed, look not behind thee, neither tarry thou in all the plain"—that is, anywhere between this and the mountain—"lest thou be consumed;" so say I to thee, Take heed; tarry not, lest either the devil, hell, death, or the fearful curses of the law of God, do overtake thee and throw thee down in the midst of thy sins; then thou, as well as I, wouldst say, They that will have heaven must run for it.

They that go to heaven must run for it, because, perchance, the gates of heaven may be shut shortly. Sometimes sinners have not heaven's gates open to them so long as they suppose, and if they be once shut against a man, they are so heavy that all the men in the world and all the angels in heaven are not able to open them. "I shut, and no man can open," saith Christ. And how if thou shouldst come but one quarter of an hour too late? I tell thee it will cost thee an eternity to bewail thy misery in. Francis Spira can tell thee what it is to stay till the gate of mercy be quite shut; or to run so lazily that they be shut before thou get within them. What, to be shut out—what, out of heaven! Sinner, rather than lose it, run for it; yea, and "so run that thou mayest obtain."—*Bunyan.*

We seem to live in great peace and serenity of mind when things are done according to our own will and opinions; but if things happen otherwise, then we are straightway moved and much vexed. Let us, therefore, humble our souls under the hand of God in all temptations and tribulations, for by them is man proved.—*Thomas a Kempis.*

MISTAKES ABOUT RELIGION.

I cannot speak of religion, but I must lament that, among so many pretenders to it, so few understand what it means; some placing it in the understanding in orthodox notions and opinions, and all the account they can give of their religion is, that they are of this or of the other persuasion, and have joined themselves to one of those many sects whereinto Christendom is most unhappily divided. Others place it in the outward man, in a constant course of external duties, and a model of performances; if they live peaceably with their neighbors, keep a temperate diet, observe the returns of worship, frequenting the church or their closet, and sometimes extend their hands to the relief of the poor, they think they have sufficiently acquitted themselves. Others, again, put all religion in the affections, in rapturous heat and ecstatic devotion; and all they aim at is to pray with passion, and think of heaven with pleasure, and to be affected with those kind and melting expressions wherewith they court their Saviour, till they persuade themselves that they are mightily in love with him; and from thence assume a great confidence of their salvation, which they esteem the chief of Christian graces. Thus are these things which have any resemblance of piety, and at the best are but means of obtaining it, or particular exercises of it, frequently mistaken for the whole of religion; nay, sometimes wickedness and vice pretend to that name. I speak not now of those gross impieties wherewith the heathen were wont to worship their gods; there are but too many Christians who would consecrate their vices and hallow their corrupt affections; whose rugged humor and sullen pride must pass for Christian severity; whose fierce wrath and

bitter rage against their enemies must be called holy zeal; whose petulancy toward their superiors, or rebellion against their governors, must have the name of Christian courage and resolution. But certainly religion is quite another thing; and they who are acquainted with it will entertain far different thoughts, and disdain all those shadows and false imitations of it; they know by experience that true religion is a union of the soul with God, a real participation of the Divine nature, the very image of God drawn upon the soul, or in the apostle's phrase, "It is Christ formed within us." Briefly, I know not how the nature of religion can be more fully expressed than by calling it a divine life.—*Henry Scougal*

HOLINESS FOR ALL.

When I was laboring among the Kaffirs in South Africa in 1866, a grand old missionary, grown gray in the service, expressed surprise on finding that I was going to preach holiness to his people.

"Why," said he, "we have never even thought of preaching such a high doctrine to Kaffirs."

He was still more surprised to see how eagerly they received it, and the philosophy of its application to the bodily appetites, and the affections belonging to them, and to the mental appetencies and their affections; not destroying any of them, but by the blood of Jesus tried by the Holy Spirit, putting out all lust, and sin, and putting all these under the power of a sanctified judgment, conscience, and will, to be used only for the purposes for which God designed them.

The converted Kaffirs had no better sense than to walk right into the arms of a present perfect Saviour, who washed the Ethiopians "whiter than snow." The greatest surprise of all was expressed by the

dear old missionary in a letter to me some months after. He said that in the quarterly visitation of his class, in a membership of over three hundred, most of them testified to a clear experience of holiness and were exemplifying it in their lives.

Everything revealed in the Gospel essential to fit a soul to dwell in the family of God in Heaven is adapted, under the illuminations of the Holy Spirit, to the lowest measure of intelligence constituting responsibility.

—*Wm. Taylor.*

GOD'S WORK ALONE.

When we seek by our own endeavors, labor, or activity, to destroy and eradicate evil, sin, or self within us, that which is evil is not essentially slain and destroyed in us by such well-meant endeavors, but only in appearance; it seems to be dead sometimes, but it is not yet dead, it is only asleep and hidden, and afterwards comes so much the more dangerously and dreadfully to light. In order that the evil may be essentially and thoroughly slain and eradicated in us, God must do it, and we must be passive under His operation. The former, however, precedes the latter. We are bound, according as our state and the grace we have attained requires, to resist that which is evil, to suppress it, to turn away our will entirely from it, and inwardly to hunger after full redemption through Christ.

And this is, therefore, a denial of self, a crucifixion and a mortification, but not the real death and dissolution of the life of self, which is God's work alone, and a free favor, an impartation of the death of Christ. However, no one dies with Christ who is not crucified with him. "O that the salvation were come out of Zion into Israel—O that the Lord would redeem his people from their captivity!"

—*Gerhard Tersteegen.*

DOROTHEA L. DIX.

This friend of the prisoner, the insane, and the soldier, was born in Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1805. Her father died when she was very young, leaving her in limited circumstances. At the age of thirteen she taught a day school for young children. She afterwards established a select school for young ladies in the same city, which was very successful, and yielded her a comfortable income. She educated in this school, free of expense, twenty-five young girls, the daughters of poor clergymen.

One day during her residence in Boston, D. L. Dix, by accident, overheard a conversation between two gentlemen in regard to the convicts at the Charleston State Prison. She could get no rest of mind until she went there. She found great need of reform, and devoted herself at once to the work of improving the condition of its inmates, using her own private means to this end. She began to visit other prisons, jails, houses of correction, and similar institutions for the wicked and unfortunate. During one of her visits at a jail in Cambridge, Massachusetts, she discovered several insane men who were confined in solitary rooms, with no fire, or anything whatever to make them comfortable or divert their minds. Upon conferring with the jailer, he told her they did not mind the cold like other people, and that no provision had been made to heat their rooms. She took the matter in her own hands, went to the proper authorities, had the men made comfortable, and devoted a part of each subsequent visit to try to cheer and amuse them. This was the beginning of her interest in the indigent insane.

While still a young woman she inherited sufficient property to render exertions for her own support no

longer necessary. She spent several years in Europe. On her return in 1837 she secured pleasant rooms on Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, and contemplated a delightful winter of literary work. But it flashed upon her that she had no right to be resting in ease while so many of her fellow-beings were suffering. So, instead, she with new zeal resumed her visitations to jails, poorhouses, State prisons, houses of correction, and insane asylums, often travelling many miles and incurring great expense and fatigue for the relief of their inmates. Her interest and labors constantly increased, and she visited every State in the Union east of the Rocky Mountains, using her influence to better their condition.

In the winter of 1848-49 she presented a Memorial to Congress, asking for an appropriation of five million acres of the public lands to endow hospitals for the indigent insane in the different States. The petition failed, and in 1850, she renewed the appeal, asking for ten millions of acres, but it failed in the Senate for lack of time. In 1854 her exertions were rewarded by the passage of the bill in both Houses, but it was vetoed by President Pierce on the ground that the general Government had no power to make such an appropriation. This was a sad blow to Miss Dix, but it did not lessen her zeal. She devoted herself, indeed, anew to her work, making another visit to Europe for its better prosecution.

She had no fear of the insane, and the power of her voice over them was very remarkable. During a visit of inspection to one of the asylums of her own founding she expressed a wish to enter the basement, which was locked. The keeper told her that only the fiercest maniacs were confined there, and that her life would be endangered by going where they were. She said she had no fear, and insisted

upon entering. He reluctantly admitted her, pointing out the man particularly to be avoided. She at once approached the poor maniac, whose hand was stretched through the bars of his cell as if to seize her. She took the hand, and in a quiet voice full of controlling power began to talk with him as if he were a rational being. She expressed her sympathy for him and her desire to help him, and held his attention for some time. At length her hand and arm, from the effects of his tight grasp, began to ache violently. She told him of it and asked him to release her. He said he would if she would come again, which condition being agreed to, he let her hand go and she went away with the astonished keeper.

Once when driving with only a boy for her escort through an unfrequented road in one of the Southern States, her carriage was stopped by a highwayman who, at the point of a pistol, demanded her money. With perfect calmness she told him that of course he could have her money, but that if he took it he would also take from her the power to do the errand of mercy on which she had started, and informed him of the nature of that errand. The man gazed at her while she spoke, with a bewildered expression; he dropped his hand and told her that he did not want her money, and that he had seen her before; and that she had read and talked to him in prison. She said she was sorry that it had done no good. He then confessed that he had resolved to follow her advice, but that after leaving the prison he was taunted with being a jail bird; he had no home, no friends and no money, and so he got discouraged and went back to his old life and expected to get back to prison in time. Her heart was touched with pity; and there on that lonely road, not knowing but that

the man had accomplices near, she pleaded with him as he stood before her revolver in hand. She told him that there was yet time for him to take a good stand among his fellow-men and that she would be his friend. Then, taking out her well-filled purse, of which he a few minutes before would so gladly have robbed her, she drew out a five dollar bill, which with great difficulty she persuaded him to accept. Then giving him more kind counsel and bidding him good bye, she drove on unharmed.

In her travels to and fro on important matters she never overlooked the little opportunities on the way. She believed that every possible thing, no matter how small, should be utilized to make somebody happy. She carried about with her a bag, in which she dropped little things collected here and there in the houses of friends. If she saw a pretty advertising or Christmas card lying apparently uncared for on somebody's table, she would ask permission to put it into her bag, and with it she would make happy the first poor child she met.

Her labors for convicts and the insane were continued without intermission until at the breaking out of the war in 1861, she was appointed by the Secretary of War Superintendent of Female nurses.

Thereafter, with the exception of hospital matrons, all women regularly employed in the hospitals were appointed by her.

She was at this time slight and delicate looking, seemingly inadequate to the work she was engaged in. In her youth she must have possessed much beauty, and she was then very comely, with a soft and musical voice. She rented two large houses, which were used as places for rest and refreshment for nurses and convalescent soldiers, employed two secretaries, owned several ambulances, which were

kept in constant use, printed and distributed circulars, took long journeys by land and water, and paid all the expenses from her private purse. She asked for and received no salary for her labor.

She seemed to be unconscious that her life was made up of self-denial. She said once, after a prolonged visit to a friend, that she never knew the meaning of self-denial until she saw it in his life.

None of us need be reminded of what a different life she might have chosen, with her education, wealth and advantages of travel. But how different would have been her retrospect. She has resided for the last five years in Trenton, New Jersey, occupying apartments in the State Lunatic Asylum. Enduring patiently a good deal of suffering during these later years, she passed away July 19.—*The Friend*.

ETERNITY'S NIGHT.

BY S. K. WHEATLAKE.

Oh sinner remember tho' fair be life's day,
There's only one step to the tomb,
Thy life, like a vapor, will soon pass away,
Then cometh the darkness and gloom.

On the crumbling verge of perdition you tread,
A slippery path 'neath your feet,
Ah! soon you will be with the numberless dead,
Making torment and sorrow complete.

Oh, eternity's night, how the darkness affright
No star-beam of hope from on high.
No morning shall dawn on the gloom with its light,
There cometh no sweet by and by.

Oh, eternity's night, soon the day will be o'er,
The twilight begins to appear.
Ah! soon there'll be mercy, sweet mercy no more.
Outer darkness and death draweth near.

To be lost in that night, in eternity's night,
Sinking down into deeper despair.
Ever wandering away from the mountains of light,
No Saviour will seek for you there.

The Spirit is striving. There's mercy to-day,
'Tis Jesus invites you to come.
Oh, flee to His arms, seek the heavenly way,
'Twill lead to the heavenly home.

—Holland, Ohio.

RELIGION AND TEMPER.

One matter which religion claims to regulate, but from which it is excluded by many persons, is our TEMPER. If any one should be disposed to ask, What has religion to do with temper? I will answer this question, by referring him to the thirteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians. The whole of this exquisitely beautiful portion of divine truth, refers to temper; and it is really very solemn to consider how imperatively and essentially necessary to salvation, the Holy Spirit makes the exercise of a good temper. The most splendid miracles, the most profound knowledge of sacred truths, the most consummate eloquence in recommending them, the expenditure of a fortune in supporting them, the martyr's death in attesting them, will, we are told, be of no avail to any one, if he have not the good temper there described. Religion is nothing in the absence of love; nothing can fit us for heaven but love; the very essence of religion is love to God for his own sake, and love to man for God's sake: we are to love our neighbor for God, and God in our neighbor. Can we love our neighbor, and yet indulge in habitual passion, malice, revenge? Oh, how much dishonor is done to religion by the bad temper of its professors; by the petulance and peevishness of one, the passion of a second, the sullenness of a third, the obstinacy of a fourth, and the cherished resentment of a fifth. It is astonishing how any who habitually indulge in such dispositions, can imagine they are the children of the God of love, the followers of Him whose designation is "the Lamb," and the temples of that divine Spirit, whose symbol is a "Dove." I am aware that there is something physical in the cause of bad tempers, but they are still subject to moral control. It may be,

that some find it much more difficult to restrain and manage their temper than others; and that some who take far more pains to govern their disposition, than those who are possessed of a natural amiableness, gain far less credit than the latter. The mischief and the blame lie in supposing that, as bad tempers are inherent in us, their indulgence is inevitable, and therefore excusable. If this be correct, *all* sin is inevitable and excusable, for it is inherent in all. If, then, you would prove your regeneration; if you would carry on the work of sanctification; if of sin; if you would not have darkness you would promote the mortification of mind, and distress of conscience; if you would not grieve your fellow-Christians, and disturb the comfort of those around you, subdue and regulate your temper. A professing Christian, red and stormy with passion, pale with anger, furious with rage, is a most unseemly spectacle. How can the love of God or man be in such a heart? But it is not merely this excess of passion which is discreditable, but the waspishness the touchiness, the moodishness, which many display, the sensitiveness and susceptibility to offence; in short, the being *easily* offended, which so many exhibit without an effort to resist it. Your profession requires, my dear friends, a constant resistance of such dispositions: and it is one great part of religion to keep up this resistance. Your piety and principle should be ever at hand for this purpose, always nigh and ready to be applied, with all their mighty energies and motives, to suppress every rising unhallowed emotion. "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering: forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

And above all things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body." Col. 3: 12, 15. This is the law of Christ, the rule of your conduct, the standard of your action the mould of your character. How tender the language, how touching the motives, how forcible the obligations! Abjure, then, the idea that religion has nothing to do with temper; adopt the sentiment that *your temper must be governed by your religion*, and by importunate prayer, constant watchfulness, and laborious effort, seek after the meekness and gentleness of Christ.—*John Angell James.*

SPIRITUAL PROGRESS.

Almost all who aim at serving God do so more or less for their own sake. They want to win not to lose; to be comforted, not to suffer; to possess, not to be despoiled; to increase not to diminish. Yet all the while our whole interior progress consists in losing, sacrificing, decreasing, humbling, and stripping self even of God's own gifts, so as to be more wholly his. We are often like an invalid who feels his own pulse fifty times in the day, and wants the doctor to be perpetually ordering some fresh treatment, or telling him how much better he is. This is very much all the use that some people make of their director. They move round and round in a petty circle of easy virtues, never stepping beyond it heartily and generously; while the director (like the physician) is expected to soothe, comfort, encourage, foster delicacy and fastidiousness, only ordering little sedative treatments, which drop into mere habit and routine. Directly they are deprived of sensible grace, which is as the milk of babes, such people fancy all is lost. But this is a plain proof that they

cling over much to means, overlooking the end, and that self is their main object. Privations are the food of strong minds; they invigorate the soul, take it out of itself, and offer it a living sacrifice to God; but weak people are in despair at the first touch of privation. They fancy that all their work is being overthrown just when it really is beginning to be solidly fixed and thoroughly purified. They are willing to let God do what he will with them, provided always it be something great and perfect; but they have no notion of being cast down and crushed, or of being offered as a sacrifice to be consumed by the Divine flames. They seek to live by pure faith, yet want to retain all their own worldly wisdom; to be as children, and yet great in their own eyes. But what a mere spiritual chimera is this!

—*Fenelon.*

USES OF SUFFERING.

We remember a parable in which a preacher says, "Look at this flute; it was a piece of wood; what has made it a flute? The rifts, the holes in it." What life is there through which affliction does not make some rift? All went well till then, but through that rift in the life came thought and feeling. Doubt in us is created by some rift in our life, some loss creating a sense of grief, some question of despair. "So," said the preacher we heard, "I listened to a flute one day, complaining that it was spoiled by having a number of holes bored in it. 'Once,' it said, 'I was a piece of wood, very beautiful to look upon; now I am spoiled by all these rifts and holes,' and it said all this mournfully and musically. 'O, thou foolish flute,' I said, 'without these rifts and holes thou wouldst only be a mere stick, a bit of mere hard, black ebony, soon to be thrown away. Those rifts and holes, have

been the making of thee; they have made thee into a flute; they are thy life, thy character, thy music and melody, and thou wilt not now be cast aside with contempt, but touched by even the fingers of future generations.' Thus sorrow in man should reveal to him his capacity for supernatural refreshment; his hard and sterile being is made to receive divine airs which make it musical in its sorrow."—*Selected.*

INDEBTEDNESS TO OTHERS.

We may never know, this side of eternity, how far we are indebted to the efforts of others for our present gracious condition whatever it be: but, without doubt, the debt is immense. The word of God recognizes such efforts as an important element in Christian culture, both for the church and the individual. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem," wrote the inspired Psalmist, centuries ago. That exhortation, heeded by the Church, has many a time rebuilt her ruined walls, or strengthened her tottering towers. The fulfillment of the apostle's command, "Pray one for another," has doubtless, wrought a thousand times the establishment of the wavering, or the recovery of the erring. How touching the prayer of Moses for Israel, "If thou wilt forgive their sin—and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book, and who can tell its influence in averting destruction? Was it not the prayer of Abraham that delivered righteous Lot from the fiery overthrow of Sodom? Did not the servant of the centurion live because of his friendly intercession? and was not the ruler's daughter raised to life in answer to the rulers request? These Bible illustrations are but the specimens of myriad instances of the results of human efforts in behalf of others.

—*Calvin Sears Harrington, D.D.*

INTERIOR SPIRITUAL LIVING

In everything that happens to us in this world, be it ever so trifling, there are interior planes of interest involved. Every transaction of our outer life has within it not only the external interest which the transaction ostensibly serves, but a thousand interior purposes as well. There are thoughts and affections which he who enters into the transaction cultivates and confirms in himself. There are effects of his actions upon others, and through them upon the whole world. Within that are still more heavenly purposes subserved in the divine providence, until, in the inmost of all things, is the Lord Himself. The divine Being stands at the center of everything that happens in the world, either permitting it or ordaining it for the accomplishment of the divine ends of His kingdom. * * *

Not a sparrow falls to the ground, the Lord says, "without your Father." And not an event happens in the world, not an experience comes into our lives, that there are not involved within it planes of thought and affection, at the very inmost of which is always the Lord.

Interior spiritual living, when realized in this world, is living in the conscious presence of this inmost of everything that comes into our lives. In every transaction that we engage in, it is acknowledging the Lord as concerned in that transaction. In every event that comes to us, it is recognizing the Lord in that event. In every temptation we endure, it is the Lord who through the humiliation of that temptation will come to us, that is thought of in it. The great affairs of life are not prized for their greatness, but for the Lord who is in them. The insignificant things of life are not despised on account of their insignificance, for the Lord is in them too. The honorable things of life do not

elate us with their honors, for it is only as the Lord is in them that they are worthy. The disgraceful things of life do not humiliate us with their shame, for the divine purposes in them will make them serve some use. And all things of life, of joy or sorrow, of success or failure, of importance or insignificance, of good or evil, are thought of as being governed by the divine love and wisdom, and are accepted as bringing, in the divine providence, some spiritual life to the soul.—*New Church Messenger*.

THE WAY OF HOLINESS.

BY MRS. L. A. BALDWIN.

We find many souls who have actually entered upon the highway of holiness, whose life and lips have given ample testimony of the reality of having climbed up this beautiful yet narrow pathway, who have become bewildered if not discouraged, because they lose what they deem a part of their former brightness, and the way seems far less brilliant. Many have not read the lives of many in the "interior life," and so think their case is peculiar, or their circumstances very adverse to this peculiar life, and so get enshrouded in darkness and faint heartedness.

There is altogether too much living on experiences. Every day of our life teaches us the danger of this thing. Especially is it wrong to look back and seek for a reiteration of the same feelings, joy and light of the past. We are children in the school house, and none of our lessons are alike, nor are they apt to be repeated if well learned. We step into an upper grade each day, and have set before us the particular lesson for each day. A very wise Teacher has the loving oversight of each pupil, and He desires us to look at what He places before us, not at yesterday's lesson, nor at

our neighbor's, or even at the desk-mate beside us, but only at what He sees *we* best learn.

O! then let all be like Paul, "forgetting the things that are *behind*," and press forward to learn more of and from Christ himself. It is the daily, yes, momentarily contact with Him, that helps us to feel we need no experience to keep us bright. He is our light. We need no feelings within to make us trust we are right, for we need only Himself who is the Way and the Truth. Best of all He is, and he lives His life within us. Christ *made* unto us sanctification all the time, is our safeguard and progress.

CHURCH GAMBLING.

As the heavy prison bolts turned on the minister, he looked sadly on the prisoners in their strange garments and thought with greater anxiety of his errand. He had come to see a young man of his congregation convicted of forgery. The heart broken parents had begged him to visit the prison, hoping the peace of the Gospel might reach even his gloomy cell. As the minister kindly greeted him, the youth scarcely replied, but gazed with a sort of defiance. He began giving the mother's tender message, with the interest all the church felt in his welfare.

At last the prisoner broke out, "Do you know you was what did it?"

"What have I done?" replied the pastor, striving to understand his strange language. "I began the business," returned the youth, speaking very loud, "in your Sunday-school. Don't you remember the Sunday-school fair, when they first set up raffling, and hid a gold ring in a loaf of cake? Just for twenty-five cents, too, I got a whole box of little books. I was pleased with my luck, and went in afterward for chances. Sometimes I

gained and sometimes I lost. Money I must have for lotteries. I was half mad with excitement; so I used other folks' names—and here I am. Don't let the church come blubbering around me. They may thank themselves—their raffling was what did it; it ruined me."

—*Sabbath Reading.*

ZEALOUS FOR GOD.

Zeal is the offspring of love. To commend, to please, to promote the objects of the beloved with steady, constant, untiring energy, is the delightful work of true affection. To be cold in action is to be cold in heart, and to be cold in heart is to be so much the object of heavenly dislike, as to expose us to the threat of being "spued out of His mouth." My great Example was zealous, and to me the apostles say, "Be zealous." My circle of Christian duties is not therefore complete unless I possess zeal.

But am I zealous? Does my heart burn for the honor and cause of God? Do I delight to run in the way of his commandments? Am I zealous in the ordinances of his house, or do slight excuses, as, a little rain, a slight cold, a rough wind, or a dark night, keep me from them? Am I zealous in contending for his honor, when I hear his name blasphemed, by meekly reproving the offender? Am I zealous for the best interests of the Church and the world? Do I, with becoming regard for the Divine teachings, act out at all times and in all places, and not occasionally, the overflowings of a loving heart? Or am I a cold, lukewarm, do-nothing disciple, without labor or interest in the cause of Jesus?

O thou who dwellest on high, search me and try me, that I may know myself aright. Surely thou knowest that I have a zeal for thee, which leads me to do what is in my

power for thy cause. I love to be in thy work, at home and abroad, in the ordinances and in the private walks of life. Thy work is my delight, and I would that my whole soul were clad with zeal as a cloak; that all sin were swallowed up by holiness.—*Rev. D. Wise.*

COME TO JESUS NOW.

It is necessary for every one to come to Jesus. No gentleness, nor amiability of disposition, nor filial love, nor obedience, however pleasant or desirable they may be, will answer. These are not enough. The Divine requirement is, "Ye must be born again;" "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord;" and while these requirements are in full force, as they will be until the end of time, we must obey them or perish.

How fearful to hear the words "*Too Late*," from those who are on the brink of eternity! Dear reader will it be so with you! You see that a fearful risk is run. Will you repeat this folly? Will you jeopardize your eternal interests for the momentary pleasures of time? Will you voluntarily expose yourself to to that endless perdition which is the result of "the neglect of salvation?" Amid all the contingencies of human life, and the possibilities of sudden death, will you venture to put off the work of seeking your salvation until life's last moments? O be entreated to pause now, right where you are, and resolve to seek your soul's salvation!

Why should you hesitate to do this? Do you suppose that your happiness, or any of your interest will be promoted by delay? Can this world give your often-burdened and aching heart this bliss for which it longs? Is your soul of so little value that its interests can be crowded into a few brief moments, and its everlasting salvation secured by a

few broken or half-uttered prayers? Is heaven of so little consequence, and its mansions and crowns and thrones and harps of so little worth, that you deem a few gasping efforts of a dying scene sufficient to make sure of them? I know you will say, "The dying thief and others have sought and found Christ in their last moments." But, remember that the dying thief had never heard of Christ before; and as soon as he knew him he embraced him as his Saviour. But you have heard of him all your life long; and how often have you rejected him already! And will you continue to reject him?

O, dear reader, let me once more entreat you, do not so. This may be your last call—the last warning uttered which may meet your eye. Let not the dungeons of hell echo, what may be the everlasting lament of your soul: "I came to Jesus too late."—*Word and Way.*

The refiner's furnace is a thing of high mysterious meaning. There is gold there, there is chaff, there is fire working in a confined space. This fire is not diverse, yet its effects are diverse. It turns chaff into ashes; from gold it taketh away its impurities. Now, they in whom God dwelleth are assuredly made better in tribulation, proved as gold. And if, perchance, the adversary, the devil, ask to prove any and it be granted him, whether in some bodily pain or some loss or bereavement, let the saint keep his eye fixed on Him who "withdraweth not His eye from the righteous," and if He seems to withdraw His ear from his lamentations, yet He sheweth mercy to his supplications. He who made us knoweth what to do, He knoweth how to remake us. He is a good builder who built the house; and if anything therein hath fallen to decay, He knoweth how to repair it.

—*Bunyan.*

EDITORIAL.

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To get through to Heaven you must not let your piety depend upon others. Get all the help from them that you can, and be as helpful to them as you can, but let your soul be rooted in God. No matter who may go astray do not suffer them to lead you astray. Never stumble over the fall of any one. Though one to whom you may have looked for direction, may falter, and go after the world do you steadily press forward for eternal life. Keep *in the narrow way* and you will not stumble over others. If they fall they fall *out* of the way, leaving it unimpeded. If you do not follow them in one misstep you will not go astray. To gain eternal life you must have the root of the matter in you. It will not do to be a stony ground hearer. With the Psalmist you must truthfully say "All my springs are in thee."

S. Francis de Sales, well says: "Do not be eager to find out whether you are in the path of perfection or not, and that for two reasons. First, because if we were quite perfect, we should not know or believe it, but regard ourselves as most imperfect;—there is no need to examine as to whether we are imperfect; how can we doubt it? Nor should we be astonished or disheartened at our own imperfection, but rather humbled, for thus we shall learn to correct our faults and improve gradually—which is one main use of imperfections; nor are they to be dealt with as sins. Again, all such eager research, if made with anxiety and perplexity, is pure waste of time;—just as though soldiers, while awaiting a battle, were to weary themselves with sham fights among each other; or musicians were to practice till they were too hoarse to sing; a perpetual self-inspection wears the mind, and renders it incapable of

action when really necessary. Simplify your judgment, do not indulge in so many questionings and replies, but go on quietly and in confidence. Let there be nought to you in this world save God and yourself;—all else should not be able to touch you, except as He may command. I intreat you not to look so much hither and thither; keep your eye fixed on God and yourself—and you will never see aught save goodness in Him, unworthiness in yourself;—but you will also see His goodness mindful of your unworthiness, and your worthless self the object of His goodness and mercy. Therefore keep your eyes firmly, resolutely fixed thereon, and let the rest go by with a passing glance. Moreover, do not dwell overmuch on what others do, or how they advance; look upon them with a single, kindly, loving eye; do not expect perfection in them any more than in yourself, and do not be surprised at the various forms of imperfection which you meet; imperfections are not more imperfect because they are unwonted. Imitate the bee which gathers honey from all manner of flowers."

To enter the Kingdom of Heaven we must be converted and become as little children. To stay in the Kingdom we must keep the simplicity and the trust of little children.

There must be nothing stiff or affected about us. The dignity of maturity must be blended with the simplicity of childhood. Affectation has its roots in pride. All manifestations of pride are striking proofs of a lack of saving grace. Little children do not like to be dressed up. Let them have their way, and they soon take the starch out of their clothes. If full of health they want liberty to get down on the ground, and run here and there. So a Christian filled with the Spirit, cannot bear the restraints which the standard proprieties of formal church es impose. He loves the simplicity and

the freedom which the Spirit imparts.

A little child is full of trust. It never questions the ability and the willingness of its parents to care for it. S. Francis de Sales in his directions to a soul striving for the Kingdom says, "Strive to be as a little child, who, while its mother holds it, goes on fearlessly, and is not disturbed because it stumbles and trips in its weakness. So long as God holds you up by the will and determination to serve Him with which He inspires you, go on boldly and do not be frightened at your little checks and falls, so long as you can throw yourself into His arms in trusting love. Go there with an open, joyful heart as often as possible; if not always joyful, at least go with a brave and faithful heart."

FRUITS.

True godliness is practical godliness. Every living creature when occasion offers acts out its nature. You cannot tell what that nature is, under ordinary circumstances. A gentleman trained some tigers from their infancy, as household pets. They appeared as harmless as kittens. But a taste of blood caused them to act out their nature; and their owner to save his own life, was compelled to kill them. People may think they are good because they feel good in a good meeting. But the character of their blessings is tested when they come in contact with temptation. If the work of grace with them is thorough it reaches the will. No matter what the bias may be from interest or inclination or influence the stand is finally and firmly taken on the side of God. A man decides to do right because he is right. The fruit of a tree is an infallible proof of the nature of a tree. John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ insisted upon a life corresponding to the profession. *Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.* Christ was still more exacting.

"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"—Luke 6:46. The teaching of the Apostles were in the same strain. They never taught that one could be saved by simply believing he was saved. Says St. Paul, "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire: and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."—1 Cor. 3:13.

Jeremy Taylor, one of the greatest lights that ever shone in the English church wrote in 1650: "True repentance must reduce to act all its holy purposes, and enter into and run through the state of holy living, which is contrary to that state of darkness in which in times past we walked. For to resolve to do it, and yet not to do it, is to break our resolution and our faith, to mock God, to falsify and evacuate all the preceding acts of repentance, and to make our pardon hopeless, and our hope fruitless. He that resolves to live well when a danger is upon him, or a violent fear, or when the appetites of lust are newly satisfied, or newly served, and yet when the temptation comes again, sins again, and then is sorrowful, and resolves once more against it, and yet falls when the temptation returns, is a vain man, but no true penitent, nor in the state of grace; and if he chance to die in one of these good moods, is very far from salvation; for if it be necessary that we resolve to live well, it is necessary we should do so. For resolution is an imperfect act, a term of relation, and signifies nothing but in order to the actions; it is as a faculty is to the act, as spring is to the harvest, as eggs are to birds, as a relative to its correspondent, nothing without it. No man, therefore, can be in the state of grace and actual favor by resolutions and holy purposes; these are but the gate and portal towards pardon: a holy life is the only perfection of repentance, and the firm ground upon which we can cast the anchor of hope in

the mercies of God, through Jesus Christ."

The attempt to blend the religion of Christ with worldly pleasures has often been made and has always proved a failure. The invariable result, from the Apostle's times down to the present, has been that the Christians who make the experiment become "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." The priests and monks of the dark ages sought to take advantage of the love of the people for plays, and so they dramatized the remarkable events recorded in the Bible. The leading parts were played by ecclesiastics for the instruction of the people; but instead of converting sinners from the error of their ways, they converted themselves to the belief that Christianity is a farce.

Rev. B. W. Gorham appears to anticipate a similar result from the experiment at Chautauqua. Writing from there he says in *The Christian Witness and Advocate of Bible Holiness*, "If I do not blunder, the spirit that is fostered here, and that dominates these grounds, is to make practical infidels in the church, and especially among the young, by the ten thousand." These are ominous words. Brother Gorham is an experienced, careful observer. But his words of warning will pass by unheeded by those for whom they were intended. The current of worldliness in popular churches is so strong that he who seriously attempts to stop it, is swept away; and the current moves on drawing in its millions and sweeping them down to remediless ruin.

Many a large tree whose leaf is green, whose outside is solid, is rotten at heart. A heavy gale prostrates it. So many who keep up a creditable profession of religion are lacking in deep sincerity. When spoiled by strong temptation they are overcome.

TO THE END.

It is a great step for a person to take to become a disciple of Christ. In such a person all Heaven is interested. He has a most glorious prospect before him; for, he may wear to all eternity, an unfading crown of life. Enemies may rise up on every hand to defeat him; but he has an ever present Protector who is more than a match for all his enemies.

Yet he may fail. But it can only be through his own fault. If he keeps on he cannot be stopped; if he turns back he cannot be saved. Many who made a promising beginning do turn back. It has been so in all ages: it will be till the dispensation of mercy is finally closed. St. John in speaking of Christ said, "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."—Jno. 6:66. There must have been no inconsiderable number who at this time left Christ for ever. Doubtless his enemies thought that this disturbing element was wellnigh destroyed.

St. Paul wrote, "O foolish Galatians who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth; before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you."—Gal. 3:1. Again "This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me."—2 Tim. 1:15. St. Peter warns us that, "there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies." "And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."—2 Pet. 2:1, 2.

In all these cases the fault was not with their preacher, nor with their church; but with themselves. To endure to the end we must have the root of the matter in ourselves. If our fidelity depends upon the fidelity of others it will sooner or later give out. We must draw our inspiration, and our encouragement directly

from God, Our dependence for our support, and our final reward must be wholly upon Christ. We must set ourselves to obey his commands. We must aim at the perfect development of the Christian character which he requires. It will not do to lay all the stress upon some one quality however important and neglect others. If we do, we shall be like a leaning house, liable to fall over in a storm. We have been considering the cases of several who once walked with us, but do not now, and endeavored to ascertain the cause why they turned away. In almost every instance there was a want of a complete Christian experience. Some were wanting in righteousness. They were not scrupulously honest. They had never fully repented and made old wrongs right. Others were wanting in peace. They could not keep calm and quiet under provocation. They would easily get out of patience.

But by far the greater number were honest, and patient, and sincere, but they went no farther. They lacked the joy of the Holy Ghost. You would never see them get blessed. They would not be tried with those upon whom God poured his Spirit abundantly, but they never themselves got where they "rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Some were exceedingly straight. They laid down the law in its utmost rigor. No one scarcely came up to the standard they insisted upon. They were terrible toward those who showed the slightest disposition to be conformed to the world. But they never rejoiced in the Lord. Those who did, they thought ought not to. They could do but little towards getting sinners converted—because they could never get their brethren and sisters just where they thought they ought to be in their experience.

It seems strange to see such preachers going over to the Church most conformed to the world of all others. But they sometimes do. They sometimes fall in-

to outbreking sin, disgrace themselves and the cause of God.

Your only safety is to live so near to God that he fills you with joy and peace in believing. If you "rejoice in the Lord always" you will go through. If you do not your case is doubtful.

See to it then that you have the joy of the Lord which is your strength. Do not let any considerable time pass without a special, conscious blessing of God upon your soul. And get blessed up to the rejoicing point where the praises of God flow naturally and spontaneously from your lips. *I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.*

CONFESSION.

We read in the first epistle of St. John, the ninth verse, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." A very frequent cause of stumbling in the Christian career lies in the fact that we do not, from a feeling of false pride, confess our sins to those whom we have wronged. We do, perhaps humble ourselves before the Lord, and confess to him in secret. This is not so hard for us to do, but we shrink from saying to the injured one, "I am sorry that I wronged you; will you forgive me?" and generally the longer we hesitate, the harder it becomes to make the confession.

Sometimes, after sincere confession to God, of what we have done amiss, we wonder why we do not feel that we are forgiven. It is because we have not fulfilled all the conditions of forgiveness; have not first been reconciled to the injured brother, and yet have dared to lay our gift upon the Lord's altar. We may feel sure that the one sinned against, will not listen kindly to the confession, and may even refuse to pardon us, but that in no whit alters our duty. If we make

what atonement is in our power, "God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins," whether man pardons us or not: and there is no peace like that which comes into our hearts and fills our souls when we are made conscious that He has indeed accepted our gift—has heard our prayer and granted us full forgiveness.

R

BE CHARITABLE.

You must have a spirit of forgiveness if you would gain Heaven. This is indispensable. There will be daily occasions for its exercise. We are compassed about with infirmities, and even holy persons associating together will afford each other ample opportunities to manifest forbearance and love. There are those who will injure us without intending it; and there are others who will, if we walk with God, make us suffer from calumny and detraction. Others, from selfishness, will endeavor to promote their own interests at our expense. It is easy to forgive those who unintentionally harm us, as soon as we are assured of the fact, for they are themselves ready to ask our forgiveness, when they learn that they have wronged us—but what of those who injure us from design? Shall we forgive them? Undoubtedly. If not, what do we more than others? Do not infidels forgive those who injure them, when they supplicate for pardon, and make all amends in their power? Not to do so would be unnatural and devilish. But to forgive those who injure us, and who do it intentionally and without provocation—to forgive them freely, without their exhibiting any signs of repentance or amendment, is to manifest the Spirit of Jesus, who, when enduring the agony of the cross, prayed for his merciless tormentors, FATHER FORGIVE THEM, FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO. So too, the last words of St. Stephen were a petition for his murderers, *Lord, lay*

not this sin to their charge. This is the spirit of a Christian. If we do not possess it whatever else we may have, we do not belong to Christ. We are yet in our sins. Did not Jesus teach us to pray, *Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors?* And did he not declare, *If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses!* How dare you, then, go to the communion, or repeat the Lord's prayer, or profess to be a Christian when your heart is so full of bitterness that you cannot pray or testify in public without making an ill-natured fling at somebody? When you say, forgive us our debts AS WE FORGIVE OUR debtors, you in reality pray that you may never be forgiven! If God answers you, and answer you he will, you will be damned forever! O, get delivered from that unrelenting disposition. Break down before the Lord and get a heart full of kindness and gentleness and compassion.

If the one who trespasses against you is a brother—a professed disciple of Jesus—your course is plain. Tell no one of the wrong you have received. Brood not over it in silence. But *go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone.* Be ready to receive his explanations. Listen to him and pray for him. It may be thou wilt gain thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, take one or two judicious Christians, in whom he has confidence. In nine cases out of ten such a course will need to be carried no farther. The erring will be brought back. But in extreme cases, where one is obstinately bent upon wrong, as a last resort tell it to the church; and then if he is not reformed let him be to thee as a heathen and publican. Even then you must not hate him. You are bound to treat him with kindness, though you may not receive him to the intimacies of a Christian.

It is always best to be on the safe side. Too much of the spirit of forgiveness will

not harm you—too little will damn you forever! If you really forgive offenders there will be in your heart no hardness nor coldness toward them. You will treat them with entire cordiality; you will not speak evil of them either openly or by insinuations.

Will not this principle lead us to forgive those who are indebted to us in money when it is evidently out of their power to pay? It is far better to do it than to grind the face of the poor, and, with legal blows, demand him to *pay that thou owest*. If we would obtain mercy at the last day of the Master we must have compassion upon our fellow-servants. It is vain to profess to love God unless we are kind to our fellow-men. Hardness and severity but ill become those who depend, as we all do, upon God's forbearance. *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, vengeance is mine; I will repay saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.*

CLARKE'S COMMENTARIES.

There are many of our preachers who do not possess a commentary of any kind, who could easily secure this very excellent work, by devoting a small portion of their time for two or three months to securing subscribers for THE EARNEST CHRISTIAN. Often several subscribers could be secured at a time by announcing in public that you are acting as agent. Let the people know that you need a commentary, and they will assist you to secure one by subscribing.

Geikie's Hours with the Bible is another very valuable work which ought to have a place in the library of every one of our preachers, considering how little effort is needed to secure it. We hope the brethren will see the importance of securing both of these valuable works.

PREACHING CHRIST.

The strong tendency of the age, is to antinomianism. Under the plea of exalting Christ, the people are taught that they have nothing to do in order to secure their salvation. They are told that Jesus purchased it for them, and they *must believe it* and enjoy the comforts of this assurance. And this too by ministers claiming to be orthodox! This theology is expressed in a popular hymn, current among leading evangelical denominations,

"Nothing either great or small
Remains for me to do;
Jesus died and paid it all,
All the debt I owe.

"Weary working, plodding one,
Wherefore toil you so;
Cease your 'doing,' all was done
Long, long ago."

This so-called Gospel preaching, is utterly subversive of the Gospel of Christ. Did not Jesus command us at the very outset to *repent and believe the Gospel*? And does not this "remain for us to do?" Are we not required to "confess our sins," that we may obtain forgiveness? And what is confessing but "doing?" If there was more of this kind of "doing" in our modern revivals, the converts would not be weak and faint, and conformed to the world. Having obtained pardon, we are commanded to *WORK out our own salvation with fear and trembling*. The faith that saves is a faith that works. As the sainted Judson, the modern apostle of India, says: "Let us depend upon it, that nothing but a real faith in Christ, *proved to be genuine by a holy life*, can support us at last. That faith which consists merely in a correct belief of God, and prompts to no self-denial—that faith which allows us to spend all our days in serving self, content with merely refraining from outward sins, and attending to the ordinary duties of religion—is no faith at all. O, it is a solemn thing to die; an awful thing to go into eternity, and discover that we have been deceiving ourselves."

EVIL SPEAKING.

This is a vice almost universal, even among those who profess godliness. It meets you everywhere. You cannot be in the company of even those who are considered good people long without hearing something to the prejudice of some absent brother or sister. Some report or insinuation, or suspicion is breathed into your ear calculated to shake your confidence in some follower of Jesus. A reform in this matter is loudly demanded. The command is, *Speak not evil one of another, brethren*. If you have hitherto disregarded this command, ask for pardon and commence a reformation from this hour. The man who is on his way to Heaven is described as *He that taketh not up a report against his neighbor*. No matter under whose patronage he finds the report going about, he does not take it up, he lets it die, as all false and slanderous reports will when let alone.

A brother called at our house whom we had long known as an uncompromising follower of Jesus. We had heard that some differences had arisen between him and the pastor and some of the brethren of the church to which he belonged, and rumor said he had withdrawn from the church. We inquired "How the preacher was getting along." He replied "First-rate, the Lord is with him, and he is doing a good work." "How are brothers A. and B. doing!" "Never better." And so he had a good word, without any insinuations, for every one of whom he spoke. I said that brother might go on professing holiness, and I would stand by him. With such a person you feel safe. He will not betray you. There is no danger that he will, after sharing your hospitalities, and professing for you the strongest friendship, go away and report untrue and unkind things to your injury.

BIOGRAPHICAL.

MR. J. H. MCNALL was born in Tuscarawas county, Ohio, Sept. 5, 1850, and departed this life July 12, 1887.

In 1865 he removed to Illinois, and again in the spring of 1883 he removed to Mitchell, Dakota, where he made his home until death removed him to his home above. March 6, 1884, he was united in marriage with Sophia, daughter of Bro. and Sister L. R. Taylor of Mitchell, who survives to mourn her loss. The writer first made the acquaintance of the deceased brother two years ago, at the session of our annual conference, held in the city of Mitchell. Our conference home was with him and his devoted wife, and though he made no public profession of religion, together we read the word of God, and knelt around the family altar. From that time, as often as duty called me to Mitchell, I have made it a point to renew our acquaintance, and share in the hospitalities of their home.

Brother McNall was a man of few words, and very quiet and unassuming in his ways. He was known in business circles as a man of strict business integrity, fair and honest in all his dealings, and his word was as good as his bond. He was a frequent attendant at public worship, but did not know by personal experience what it was to be born of the Spirit, and to pass from death unto life, till May 12, 1887. He had been in feeble health for some time, and had been thinking deeply of his soul's need; but like many others, instead of making a full surrender of all into the hands of God, he lingered on the threshold. But God, in his mercy, came to his help. He took to Himself, after a brief illness, their only child, a beautiful little boy. He died May 8. This was regarded as the call of God, and as such he obeyed it. He began now earnestly to seek salvation, and four days afterwards, May 12, 1887, en-

tered into rest of soul. He could now testify

"The past is under the blood,
The cross now covers my sins."

From this time till death closed the scene, his peace was like a river. Not a cloud came between him and the Saviour he had learned to love. He expressed the deepest regret that he had not claimed Him as his Saviour many years before.

A few days before he died he requested to be baptized. His wife and members of the family gathered around the bed of death. The dying man repeated the baptismal vows, and the writer baptized him in the name of the triune God he had so lately learned to love. Then as I took his trembling hand in mine, and bade him good-by, feeling that we should meet no more till we met in judgment, he assured me that all was well between his soul and God. He was conscious to the last, and as the end drew near, he bade his friends good-by; requesting his wife not to weep for him. Learning that a sister of his wife had just returned from camp meeting, he called for her, and wanted to know if she was saved. On being told that she was, he expressed much satisfaction. His last prayer was for the unsaved, and his last question was if all in the house had found the Lord. Then quietly as the sun sinks to rest, and the night comes on, our brother sank to rest and passed to his home beyond. The writer was sent for but did not reach the home of mourning till after the body was laid away in the grave. The funeral took place in the M. E. Church, the pastors of the different churches, who had visited him in his last sickness, taking part in the services. The sorrowing widow says truly, "I have lost a kind husband, and you have lost a good friend." The widow's God comfort the stricken one.

—J. S. Phillips.

LOVE-FEAST.

MRS. M. A. HALL.—These are most blessed days to my soul. Age is creeping on, and strength is failing, but prospects are brightening for that glorious rest above. I find blessed rest for my soul here. Glory to his holy name! I never was so poor in this world's goods, and never so rich in faith and love. Let others do as they may, I am going through on this line. I find obedience is better than sacrifice, knowing that godliness with contentment is great gain. I find my Christian hope grows deeper and wider as new tribulations flow in. Hallelujah! I have victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil. I am washed in the blood of the Lamb to-day. Amen.

—South Elgin, Ill.

NETTIE C. HENDERSHOTT.—I praise the Lord to-day for a present experience that the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin. Since leaving the state of New York last April, I have not had the privilege of attending a meeting where women were allowed to testify. But I have testified to my neighbors personally, and have been greatly blessed. I have had the abiding presence of the Holy Ghost, and have not been troubled with even a discouraging thought. When I first saw it was the will of the Lord for us to come here, he gave me this promise, "I will rebuke the devourer for thy sake, no evil shall befall thee." I have been confident under all circumstances that all things would work together for good, not only to me, but for the work in the school. I have been blessed and happy while away from the pilgrims, and shall greatly appreciate their company when they come here for this work. Those who assisted when the work was new at Chili Seminary will understand me when I say there is a blessing even in looking after the household cares for this work, and it is a privilege to be here. The Lord abides in this building.—Leavell, Va.