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THE
BAPTIST MESSENGER:

AND

Evangelical Treasury

AND

CHRONICLE OF THE CHURCHES

FOR THE YEAR 1897.

LONDON

61, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C

TO OUR READERS.

By the good hand of the Lord, we are brought to the close of the year 1897, and with thankfulness we acknowledge it. We are much indebted to our many friends who have helped forward the Messenger, and would ask a continuance of their kind help. Wishing all a Happy New Year.

W. A. BLAKE,
EDITOR.

Orchard Road, Brentford.

December 31st, 1897.

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Grieving the Holy Spirit.

A SERMON BY THE LATE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

“And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”—Ephesians iv. 30.

THERE is something very touching in this admonition, “Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God.” It does not say, “Do not make him angry.” A more delicate and tender term is used—“Grieve him not.” There are some men of so hard a character, that to make another angry does not give them much pain; and indeed, there are many of us who are scarcely to be moved by the information that another is angry with us; but where is the heart so hard, that it is not moved when we know that we have caused others grief?—for grief is a sweet combination of anger and of love. It is anger, but all the gall is taken from it. Love sweetens the anger, and turns the edge of it, not against the person, but against the offence. We all know how we use the two terms in contra-distinction the one to the other. When I commit any offence, some friend who hath but little patience, suddenly snaps asunder his forbearance and is angry with me. The same offence is observed by a loving father, and he is grieved. There is anger in his bosom, but he is angry and he sins not, for he is angry against my sins; and yet there is love to neutralize, and modify the anger towards me. Instead of wishing me ill, as the punishment of my sin, he looks upon my sin itself as being the ill. He grieves to think that I am already injured, from the fact that I have sinned. I say this is a heavenly compound, more precious than all the ointment of the merchants. There may be the bitterness of myrrh, but there is all the sweetness of frankincense in this sweet term “to grieve.” I am certain, my hearers, I do not flatter you when I declare, that I am sure that the most of you would grieve, if you thought you were grieving anyone else. You, perhaps, would not care much if you had made anyone angry without a cause, but to grieve him, even though it were without a cause and without intention, would nevertheless cause you distress of heart, and you would not rest until this grief had subsided, till you had made some explanation or apology, and had done your best to allay the smart and take away the grief. When we see anger in another, we at once begin to feel hostility. Anger begets anger; but grief begets pity, and pity is next akin to love; and we love those whom we have caused to grieve. Now, is

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not this a very sweet expression—"Grieve not the Holy Spirit?" Of course, the language is to be understood as speaking after the manner of men. The Holy Spirit of God knoweth no passion or suffering; but nevertheless, his emotion is here described in human language as being that of grief. And is it not, I say, a tender and touching thing, that the Holy Spirit should direct his servant Paul, to say to us, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit," do not excite his loving anger; do not vex him, do not cause him to mourn? He is a dove: do not cause him to mourn, because you have treated him harshly and ungratefully. Now, the purport of my sermon, this morning, will be to exhort you not to grieve the Spirit; but I shall divide it thus:—first, I shall discourse *upon the love of the Spirit*; secondly, *upon the seal of the Spirit*; and then, thirdly, *upon the grieving of the Spirit*.

1. The few words I have to say UPON THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT will all be pressing forward to my great mark, stirring you up not to grieve the Spirit; for when we are persuaded that another loves us, we find at once a very potent reason why we should not grieve him. The love of the Spirit!—how shall I tell it forth? Surely it needs a songster to sing it, for his love is only to be spoken of in words of song. The love of the Spirit!—let me tell you of his early love to us. He loved us without beginning. In the eternal covenant of grace, as I told you last Sabbath, he was one of the high contracting parties in the divine contract, whereby we are saved. All that can be said of the love of the Father, of the love of the Son, may be said of the love of the Spirit—it is eternal, it is infinite, it is sovereign, it is everlasting: it is a love which cannot be dissolved, which cannot be decreased, a love which cannot be removed from those who are the objects of it. Permit me, however, to refer you to his acts, rather than his attributes. Let me tell you of the love of the Spirit to you and to me. Oh how early was that love which he manifested towards us, even in our childhood! My brethren, we can well remember how the Spirit was wont to strive with us. We went astray from the womb speaking lies, but how early did the Spirit of God stir up our conscience, and solemnly correct us on account of our youthful sins. How frequently since then has the Spirit wooed us! How often under the ministry has he compelled our hearts to melt, and the tear has run down our cheeks, and he has sweetly whispered in our ear, "My son, give me thy heart; go to thy chamber, shut thy door about thee, confess thy sins, and seek a Saviour's love and blood." Oh,—but let me blush to tell it—how often have we done despite to him! When we were in a state of unregeneracy, how we were wont to resist him! We quenched the Spirit; he strove with us, but we strove against him. But blessed be his dear name, and let him have everlasting songs for it he would not let us go! We would not be saved, but he would save us. We sought to thrust ourselves into the fire, but he sought to pluck us from the burning. We would dash ourselves from the precipice, but he wrestled with us and held us fast; he would not let us destroy our souls. Oh, how we illtreated him, how we did set at naught his counsel! How did we scorn and scoff him; how did we despise the ordinance which would lead us to Christ! How did we violate that holy cord which was gently drawing us to Jesus and his

cross! I am sure, my brethren, at the recollections of the persevering struggles of the Spirit with you, you must be stirred up to love him. How often did he restrain you from sin, when you were about to plunge headlong into a course of vice! How often did he constrain you to good, when you would have neglected it! You, perhaps, would not have been in the way at all, and the Lord would not have met you, if it had not been for that sweet Spirit, who would not let you become a blasphemer, who would not suffer you to forsake the house of God, and would not permit you to become a regular attendant at the haunts of vice, but checked you, and held you in, as it were, with bit and bridle. Though you were like a bullock, unaccustomed to the yoke, yet he would not let you have your way. Though you struggled against him, yet he would not throw the reins upon your necks, but he said, "I will have him, I will have him against his will; I will change his heart, I will not let him go till I have made him a trophy of my mighty power to save." And then think my brethren of the love of the Spirit after that—

"Dost mind the time, the spot of land,

Where Jesus did thee meet?

Where he first took thee by the hand

Thy bridegroom's love—how sweet!"

Ah, then in that blest hour, to memory dear, was it not the Holy Spirit who guided you to Jesus! Do you remember the love of the Spirit, when, after having quickened you, he took you aside, and showed you Jesus on the tree? Who was it that opened your blind eye to see a dying Saviour? Who was it that opened your deaf ear to hear the voice of pardoning love? Who opened your clasped and palsied hand to receive the tokens of a Saviour's grace? Who was it that break your hard heart and made a way for the Saviour to enter and dwell therein? Oh! It was that precious Spirit, that self-same Spirit, to whom you had done so much despite, whom in the days of your flesh you had resisted! What a mercy it was that he did not say, "I will swear in my wrath that they shall not enter into my rest, for they have vexed me, and I will take my everlasting flight from them;" or thus, "Ephraim is joined into idols, I will let him alone!" And since that time, my brethren, how sweetly has the Spirit proved his love to you and to me. It is not only in his first strivings, and then his divine quickenings; but in all the sequel, how much have we owed to his instruction. We have been dull scholars with the word before us, plain and simple, so that he that runs may read, and he that reads may understand, yet how small a portion of his Word has our memory retained; how little progress have we made in the school of God's grace! We are but learners yet, unstable, weak, and apt to slide, but what a blessed instructor we have had! Has he not led us into many a truth, and taken of the things of Christ and applied them unto us? Oh! when I think how stupid I have been, I wonder that he has not given me up. When I think what a dolt I have been, when he would have taught me the things of the kingdom of God, I marvel that he should have had such patience with me. Is it a wonder that Jesus should become a babe? Is it not an equal wonder that the Spirit of the living God, should become a teacher of babes? It is a marvel

that Jesus should lie in a manger; is it not an equal marvel that the Holy Spirit should become an usher in the sacred school, to teach fools, and make them wise? It was condensation that brought the Saviour to the cross, but it is not equal condensation that brings the mighty Spirit of grace down to dwell with stubborn, unruly, wild asses' colts, to teach them the mystery of the kingdom, and make them know the wonders of a Saviour's love?

Furthermore, my brethren, forget not how much we owe to the Spirit's consolation, how much has he manifested his love to you in cherishing you in all your sicknesses, assisting you in all your labours; and comforting you in all your distresses. He has been a blessed comforter to me I can testify; when every other comfort failed, when the promise itself seemed empty, when the ministry was void of power, it is then the Holy Spirit has proved a rich comfort unto my soul, and filled my poor heart with peace and joy in believing. How many times would your heart have broken if the Spirit had not bound it up! How often has he who is your teacher become also your physician, has closed the wounds of your poor bleeding spirit, and has bound up those wounds with the court plaster of the promise, and so has stanch'd the bleeding, and has given you back your spiritual health once more. It does seem to me a marvel that the Holy Ghost should become a comforter, for comforting is, to many minds, but an inferior work in the church, though really it is not so. To teach, to preach to command with authority, how many are willing to do this because it is honourable work; but to sit down and bear with the infirmities of the creature, to enter into all the stratagems of unbelief, to find the soul a way of peace in the midst of seas of trouble—this is compassion like a God, that the Holy Spirit should stoop from heaven to become a comforter of disconsolate spirits. What! must he himself bring the cordial? must he wait upon his sick child and stand by his bed? must he make his bed for him in his affliction? must he carry him in his infirmity? must he breathe continually into him his very breath? Doth the Holy Spirit become a waiting servant of the church? Doth he become a lamp to enlighten? and doth he become a staff on which we may lean? This, I say, should move us to love the Holy Spirit, for we have in all this abundant proofs of his love to us.

Stay not here, beloved, there are larger fields yet beyond, now that we are speaking of the love of the Spirit. Remember how much he loves us when he helpeth our infirmities. Nay, not only doth he help our infirmities, but when we know not what to pray for as we ought he teacheth us how to pray, and when "we ourselves groan within ourselves," then the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered—groans as we should groan, but more audibly, so that our prayer, which else would have been silent, reaches the ears of Christ, and is then presented before his Father's face. To *help* our infirmities is a mighty instance of love. When God overcomes infirmity altogether, or remove it, there is something very noble, and grand, and sublime in the deed; when he permits the infirmity to remain and yet works with the infirmity, this is tender compassion indeed. When the Saviour heals the lame man you see

his Godhead, but when he walketh with the lame man, limping though his gait may be; when he sitteth with the beggar, when he talketh with the publican, when he carryeth the babe in his bosom, then this helping of infirmities in a manifestation of love almost unequalled. Save Christ's bearing our infirmities upon the tree, and our sins in his own body, I know of no greater or more tender instance of divine love than when it was written "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities." Oh how much you owe to the Spirit when you have been on your knees in prayer! You know, my brethren, what it is to be dull and lifeless there: to groan for a word, and yet you cannot find it! to wish for a word, and yet the very wish is languid; to long to have desires, and yet all the desire you have is to desire that you may be able to desire. Oh, have you not sometimes, when your desires have been kindled, longed to get a grip at the promise by the hand of faith? "Oh," you have said, "If I could but plead the promise, all my necessities would be removed, and all my sorrows would be allayed," but, alas, the promise was beyond your reach. If you touched it with the tip of your finger, you could not grasp it as you desired, you could not plead it, and therefore you came away without the blessing, But when the Spirit has helped our infirmities how have we prayed! Why, there have been times when you and I have so grasped the knocker of the gate of mercy, and have let it fall with such tremendous force, that it seemed as if the very gate itself did shake and totter; there have been seasons when we have laid hold upon the angel, have overcome heaven by prayer, have declared we would not let Jehovah himself go except he should bless us. We have, and we say it without blasphemy, moved the arm that moves the world. We have brought down upon us the eyes look that upon the universe. All this we have done, not by our own strength, but by the might and by the power of the Spirit; and seeing he has so sweetly enabled us, though we have so often forgotten to thank him; seeing that he has so graciously assisted us though we have often taken all the glory to ourselves instead of giving it to him, must we not admire his love, and must it not be a fearful sin indeed to grieve the Holy Spirit by whom we are sealed?

Another token of the Spirit's love remains, namely, his indwelling in the saints. We sing in one of our hymns,—

"Dost thou not dwell in all the saints?"

We ask a question which can have but one answer. He does dwell in the heart of all God's redeemed and blood-washed people. And what a condescension is this, that he whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, dwells in thy breast my brother. That breast often covered with rags, may be a breast often agitated with anxious care and thought, a breast too often defiled with sin, and yet he dwells there. The little narrow heart of man, the Holy Spirit hath made his palace. Though it is but a cottage, a very hovel, and all unholy and unclean, yet does the Holy Spirit condescend to make the heart of his people his continual abode. Oh, my friends, when I think how often you and I have let the devil in, I wonder the Spirit has not withdrawn from us. The final perseverance of the saints, is one of the greatest miracles on

record; in fact, it is the sum total of miracles. The perseverance of a saint for a single day, is a multitude of miracles of mercy. When you consider that the Spirit is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and yet he dwells in the heart where sin often intrudes, a heart out of which comes blasphemies, and murders, and all manner of evil thoughts and concupiscence, what if sometimes he is grieved, and retires and leaves us to ourselves for a single season? It is a marvel that he is there at all, for he must be daily grieved with these evil guests. these false traitors, these base intruders who thrust themselves into that little temple which he has honoured with his presence, the temple of heart of man. I am afraid, dear friends, we are too much in the habit of talking of the love of Jesus, without thinking of the love of the Holy Spirit. Now I would not wish to exalt one person of the Trinity above another, but I do feel this, that because Jesus Christ was a man, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, and therefore there was something tangible in him can be seen with the eyes, and handled with the hands, therefore we more readily think of him, and fix our love on him, than we do upon the Spirit. But why should it be? Let us love Jesus with all our hearts, and let us love the Holy Spirit too. Let us have songs for him, gratitude for him. We do not forget Christ's cross, let us not forget the Spirit's operations. We do not forget what Jesus has done for us, let us always remember what the Spirit does in us. Why you talk of the love, and grace, and tenderness, and faithfulness of Christ, why do you not say the like of the Spirit? Was ever love like his, that he should visit us? Was ever mercy like his, that he should bear with our ill manners, though constantly repeated by us? Was ever faithfulness like his, that multitudes of sins cannot drive him away? Was ever power like his, that overcometh all our iniquities, and yet leads us safely on, though hosts of foes within and without would rob us of our Christian life?

“Oh, the love of the Spirit I sing,
By whom is redemption applied.”

And unto his name be glory for ever and ever.

II. This brings me to the second point. Here we have another reason why *we should not grieve the Spirit*. IT IS BY THE HOLY SPIRIT WE ARE SEALED. “By whom we are sealed unto the day of redemption.” I shall be very brief here. The Spirit himself is expressed as a seal, even as he himself is directly said to be the pledge of our inheritance. The sealing, I think, has a three-fold meaning. It is a sealing of *attestation* or confirmation. I want to know whether I am truly a child of God. The Spirit itself also beareth witness with my spirit that I am born of God. I have the writings, the title-deeds of the inheritance that is to come—I want to know whether those are valid, whether they are true, or whether they are mere counterfeits written out by that old scribe of hell, Master Presumption and Carnal Security. How am I to know? I look for the seal. After that we have believed on the Son of God, the Father seals us his children, by the gift of the Holy Ghost. “Now he which hath anointed us is God, who also hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” No faith is genuine which does not bear the seal of the Spirit. No love, no hope can ever

save us, except it be sealed with the Spirit of God, for whatever hath not his seal upon it is spurious. Faith that is unsealed may be a poison, it may be presumption; but faith that is sealed by the Spirit is true, real, genuine faith. Never be content, my dear hearers, unless you are sealed, unless you are sure, by the inward witness and testimony of the Holy Ghost, that you have been begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It is possible for a man to know infallibly that he is secure of heaven. He may not only hope so, but he may know it beyond a doubt, and he may know it thus,—by being able with the eye of faith to see the seal, the broad stamp of the Holy Spirit set upon his own character and experience. It is a seal of attestation.

In the next place, it is a sealing of *appropriation*. When men put their mark upon an article, it is to show that it is their own. The farmer brands his tools that they may not be stolen. They are his. The shepherd marks his sheep that they may be recognised as belonging to his flock. The king himself puts his broad arrow upon everything that is his property. So the Holy Spirit puts the broad arm of God upon the hearts of all his people. He seals us. "Thou shalt be mine," saith the Lord, "in the day when I make up my jewels." And then the Spirit puts God's seal upon us to signify that we are God's reserved inheritance—his peculiar people, the portion in which his soul delighteth.

But, again, by sealing is meant *preservation*. Men seal up that which they wish to have preserved, and when a document is sealed it becomes valid henceforth. Now, it is by the Spirit of God that the Christian is sealed, that he is kept, he is preserved, sealed unto the day of redemption—sealed until Christ comes fully to redeem the bodies of his saints by raising them from the dead, and fully to redeem the world by purging it from sin, and making it a kingdom unto himself in righteousness. We shall hold on our way; we shall be saved. The chosen seed cannot be lost, they must be brought home at last, but how? By the sealing of the Spirit. Apart from that they perish; they are undone. When the last general fire shall blaze out, everything that has not the seal of the Spirit on it, shall be burned up. But the men upon whose forehead is the seal shall be preserved. They shall be safe, "amid the wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds." Their spirits, mounting above the flames shall dwell with Christ eternally, and with that same seal in their forehead upon Mount Zion they shall sing the everlasting song of gratitude and praise. I say this is the second reason why we should love the Spirit and why we should not grieve him.

III. I come now to the third part of my discourse, namely, THE GRIEVING OF THE SPIRIT. How may we grieve him, what will be the sad result of grieving him—if we have grieved him how may we bring him back again? *How may we grieve the Spirit?* I am now, mark you, speaking of those who love the Lord Jesus Christ. The Spirit of God is in your heart, and it is very, very easy indeed to grieve him. Sin is as easy as it is wicked. You may grieve him by impure thoughts. He cannot bear sin. If you indulge in lascivious expressions, or if even you allow imagination to doat upon any lascivious act, or if your

heart goes after covetousness, if you set your heart upon anything that is evil, the Spirit of God will be grieved, for thus I hear him speaking of himself. "I love this man, I want to have his heart, and yet he is entertaining these filthy lusts. His thoughts, instead of running after me and after Christ, and after the Father, are running after the temptations that are in the world through lust." And then his Spirit is grieved. He sorrows in his soul because he knows what sorrow these things must bring to our souls. We grieve him yet more if we indulge in outward acts of sin. Then is he sometimes so grieved that he takes his flight for a season, for the dove will not dwell in our hearts if we take loathsome carrion in there. A cleanly being is the dove, and we must not strew the place which the dove frequents with filth and mire, if we do he will fly elsewhere. If we commit sin, if we openly bring disgrace upon our religion, if we tempt others to go into iniquity by our example, it is not long before the Holy Spirit will begin to grieve. Again, if we neglect prayer, if the closet door is cobwebbed, if we forget to read the Scriptures, if the leaves of our Bible are almost stuck together by neglect, if we never seek to do any good in the world, if we live merely for ourselves and not to Christ, then the Holy Spirit will be grieved, for thus he saith, "They have forsaken me, they have left the fountain of waters, they have hewn unto themselves broken cisterns," I think I now see the Spirit of God grieving, when you are sitting down to read a novel and there is your Bible unread. Perhaps you take down some book of travels, and you forget that you have got a more precious book of travels in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the story of your blessed Lord and Master. You have no time for prayer, but the Spirit sees you very active about worldly things, and having many hours to spare for relaxation and amusement. And then he is grieved because he sees that you love worldly things better than you love him. His spirit is grieved within him; take care that he does not go away from you, for it will be a pitiful thing for you if he leaves you to yourself. Again, ingratitude tends to grieve him. Nothing cuts a man to the heart more, than after having done his utmost for another, he turns round and repays him with ingratitude or insult. If we do not want to be thanked, at least we do love to know that there is thankfulness in the heart upon which we have conferred a boon, and when the Holy Spirit looks into our soul and sees little love to Christ, no gratitude to him for all he has done for us, then is he grieved.

Again, the Holy Spirit is exceedingly grieved by our unbelief. When we distrust the promise he hath given and applied, when we doubt the power or the affection of our blessed Lord, then the Spirit saith within himself—"They doubt my fidelity; they distrust my power: they say Jesus is not able to save unto the uttermost;" thus again is the Spirit grieved. Oh, I wish the Spirit had an advocate here this morning, that could speak in better terms than I can. I have a theme that over-masters me, I seem to grieve for him; but I cannot make you grieve, nor tell of the grief I feel. In my own soul I keep saying, "Oh, this is just what you have done—you have grieved him." Let me make a full and frank confession even before you all. I know that too often, I as well as you have grieved the Holy Spirit. Much within us has made that

sacred dove to mourn, and my marvel is, that he has not taken his flight from us and left us utterly to ourselves.

Now suppose the Holy Spirit is grieved, what is the effect produced upon us? When the Spirit is grieved first, he bears with us. He is grieved again and again, again and again, and still he bears with it all. But at last, his grief becomes so excessive, that he says, "I will suspend my operations; I will begone; I will leave life behind me, but my own actual presence I will take away. And when the Spirit of God goes away from the soul and suspends all his operations, what a miserable state we are in. He suspends his instruction; we read the Word, we cannot understand it; we go to our commentaries, they cannot tell us the meaning; we fall on our knees and ask to be taught, but we get no answer, we learn nothing. He suspends his comfort; we used to dance, like David before the ark, and now we sit like Job in the ash-pit, and scrape our ulcers with a potsherd. There was a time when his candle shone round about us, but now he is gone; he has left us in the blackness of darkness. Now, he takes from us all spiritual power. Once we could do all things; now we can do nothing. We could slay the Philistines, and lay them heaps upon heaps, but now Delilah can deceive us, and our eyes are put out and we are made to grind in the mill. We go preaching, and there is no pleasure in preaching, and no good follows it. We go to our tract distributing, and our Sunday-school, we might almost as well be at home. There is the machinery there, but there is no love. There is the intention to do good, or perhaps not even that, but alas! there is no power to accomplish the intention. The Lord has withdrawn himself, his light, his joy, his comfort, his spiritual power, all are gone. And then all our graces flag. Our graces are much like the flower called the *Hydrangia*, when it has plenty of water it blooms, but as soon as moisture fails, the leaves drop down at once. And so when the Spirit goes away, faith shuts up its flowers; no perfume is exhaled. Then the fruit of love begins to rot and drops from the tree: then the sweet buds of our hope become frostbitten, and they die. Oh, what a sad thing it is to lose the Spirit. Have you never, my brethren, been on your knees and have been conscious that the Spirit of God was not with you, and what awful work it has been to groan, and cry, and sigh, and yet go away again, and no light to shine upon the promises, not so much as a ray of light through the chink of the dungeon. All forsaken, forgotten, and forlorn, you are almost driven to despair. You sing with Cowper:—

What peaceful hours I once enjoyed,
 How sweet their memory still!
 But they have left an aching void,
 The world can never fill.

Return, thou sacred dove, return,
 Sweet messenger of rest,
 I hate the sins that made thee mourn,
 And drove thee from my breast.

The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from its throne,
And worship only thee."

Ah! sad enough it is to have the Spirit drawn from us. But, my brethren, I am about to say something with the utmost charity, which perhaps may look severe, but, nevertheless I must say it. The churches of the present day are very much in the position of those who have grieved the Spirit of God; for the Spirit deals with churches just as it does with individuals. Of these late years how little has God wrought in the midst of his churches. Throughout England, at least some four or five years ago, an almost universal torpor had fallen upon the visible body of Christ. There was a little action, but it was spasmodic; there was no real vitality. Oh! how few sinners were brought to Christ, how empty had our places become; our prayer-meetings were dwindling away to nothing, and our church meetings were mere matters of farce. You know right well that this is the case with many London churches to this day; and there be some that do not mourn about it. They go up to their accustomed place, and the minister prays, and the people either sleep with their eyes or else with their hearts, and they go out, and there is never a soul saved. The pool of baptism is seldom stirred; but the saddest part of all is this, the churches are willing to have it so. They are not earnest to get a revival of religion. We have been doing something, the church at large has been doing something. I will not just now put my finger upon what the sin is, but there has been something done which has driven the Spirit of God from us. He is grieved, and he is gone. He is present with us here, I thank his name, he is still visible in our midst. He has not left us. Though we have been as unworthy as others, yet has he given us a long out-pouring of his presence. These five years or more, we have had a revival which is not to be exceeded by any revival upon the face of the earth. Without cries or shoutings, without fallings down or swooning, steadily God adds to this church numbers upon numbers, so that your minister's heart is ready to break with very joy when he thinks how manifestly the Spirit of God is with us. But brethren, we must not be content with this; we want to see the Spirit poured out on all churches. Look at the great gatherings that there we in St. Paul's, and Westminster Abbey, and Exeter Hall, and other places, how was it that no good was done, or so very little? I have watched with anxious eye, and I have never from that day forth heard but of one conversion, and that in St. James' Hall, from all these services. Strange it seems. The blessing may have come in larger measure than we know, but not in so large a measure as we might have expected, if the Spirit of God had been present with all the ministers. Oh would that we may live to see greater things than we have ever seen yet. Go home to your houses, humble yourselves before God, ye members of Christ's church, and cry aloud that he will visit his church, and that he would open the windows of heaven and pour out his grace upon his thirsty hill of Zion—that nations may be born in a day, that sinners may be saved by thousands—that Zion may

travail and may bring forth children. Oh! there are signs and tokens of a coming revival. We have heard but lately of a good work among the Ragged School boys of St. Giles's, and our soul has been glad on account of that; and the news from Ireland comes to us like good tidings, not from a far country, but from a sister province of the kingdom. Let us cry aloud to the Holy Spirit, who is certainly grieved with his church, and let us purge our churches of everything that is contrary to his Word and to sound doctrine, and then the Spirit will return, and his power shall be manifest.

And now, in conclusion, there may be some of you here who have lost the visible presence of Christ with you; who have in fact so grieved the Spirit that he has gone. It is a mercy for you to know that the Spirit of God never leaves his people finally; he leaves them for chastisement, but not for damnation. He sometimes leaves them that they may get good by knowing their own weakness, but he will not leave them finally to perish. Are you in a state of backsliding, declension, and coldness? Hearken to me for a moment, and God bless the words. Brother, stay not a moment in a condition so perilous; be not easy for a single second in the absence of the Holy Ghost. I beseech you use every means by which that Spirit may be brought back to you. Once more, let me tell you distinctly what the means are. Search out for the sin that has grieved the Spirit, give it up, slay that sin upon the spot; repent with tears and sighs; continue in prayer, and never rest satisfied until the Holy Ghost comes back to you. Frequent an earnest ministry, get much with earnest saints, but above all, be much in prayer to God, and let your daily cry be, "Return, return, O Holy Spirit return, and dwell in my soul." Oh, I beseech you be not content till that prayer is heard, for you have become weak as water, and faint and empty while the Spirit has been away from you. Oh! it may be there are some here this morning with whom the Spirit has been striving during the past week. Oh yield to him, resist him not; grieve him not, but yield to him. Is he saying to you now "Turn to Christ?" Listen to him, obey him, he moves you. Oh I beseech you do not despise him. Have you resisted him many a time, then take care you do not again, for there may come a last time when the Spirit may say, "I will go unto my rest, I will not return unto him, the ground is accursed, it shall be given up to barrenness." Oh! hear the word of the gospel, ere ye separate, for the Spirit speaketh effectually to you now in this short sentence—"repent and be converted every one of you, that your sins may be blotted out when the time of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord," and hear this solemn sentence, "He that believeth in the Lord Jesus, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." May the Lord grant that we may not grieve the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Dry Baptism.

"PLEASE sir, will you call at No. 40, Redman Street, and baptize a baby?" was the question which greeted me, at the close of a service recently.

"Tell your father," I replied, "I will call at 10-o'clock to-morrow morning."

At the stroke of the hour I knocked at the door, and on entering found all in readiness. The father had brushed himself up for the occasion, and the mother sat beside the fire with the babe upon her lap; whilst on the table stood a basin of water, and beside it the Book of Common Prayer.

Ignoring the "Prayer Book," I drew a Bible from my pocket, and suggested we should do well to read a few verses bearing on the subject. To and fro I turned from Matthew to Revelation and back again, but in vain; then, turning to the father, I asked, "Can you tell me where to find mention of the baptism of babies?"

"No, I can't, sir! though I think it is somewhere in the Gospel by Mark, where it tells us of Christ taking the little ones in His arms and blessing them."

"Yes," I remarked, "He took them in His arms and *blessed* them; but it does not say He *baptized* them."

"Where is it then?" asked the anxious father; "I should have thought you would know where to find it at once."

"Yes, friend; doubtless I *should*, if it were there: for I have studied the Bible for many years; but I have failed to find it, *because it is not there.*"

"Then, what shall we do, sir?" the father asked with concern in his tone.

"I think we will have a dry baptism," I answered; "we will read this passage to which you refer, and then kneel here, and ask Jesus to bless this dear little one."

Opening on Mark x. I read verses 13 to 16; and then, as the father knelt beside me, I bent over the babe, and, taking the tiny hand in mine, invoked the Divine blessing on this new life; praying also for the parents, that they might be helped to train this dear boy for God; and that, if spared till riper years, they might hear that voice witnessing for Christ.

With a look of satisfaction, the father took the basin of water, and watered the flowers in the window, remarking meantime, "That will do more good there than on the child's face; and I'll never have any more babies sprinkled in my house; in future all my little ones shall have "*dry baptism.*"

Our Minister's Wife and her Noble Life.

CHAPTER I.—THE BRIDE'S RECEPTION.

OUR Church and congregation at Colcheston were all astir. We were expecting on a week-day evening the arrival of our beloved pastor and his newly married wife, the latter of whom we had never seen. But we had heard something of her, and what we had was decidedly in her favour. As a Baptist church, we had been in existence for nine years. We were formed originally of a few members, transferred by a mother church in the district, in addition to half a dozen newly baptised converts, brought in as the result of cottage preaching in the village. Twenty altogether in number including two deacons, one of whom was not only a good, but a very generous man, and three or four tolerably prosperous tradesmen, we may be said to have made a good start.

As soon as the church was formed, aided by the church's around, and by the County Association, with which we were connected, we were enabled to build a small chapel, with a school room at the back, which, costing only £700, was happily opened free of debt. And what a jubilant season we had when it was opened!

Well do I remember with what gusto the Hallelujah Chorus was sung, when the chairman of an enthusiastic meeting, rose at the close of the final collection, and

declared that the building could now be presented as a free will offering to the Lord. To use a common phrase, the people seemed hardly to know "whether they stood on their head or their heels," so great was their joy. Our edifice was, as may be imagined, for the comparatively small sum of money paid, a plain and unostentatious structure, with a stone frontage, but mainly built of brick. But it would not have been erected for that sum, had it not been that one of our newly baptised members being a builder and joiner, had in conjunction with others, not only given us a great deal of gratuitous help, but had also granted us much of the material at wholesale cost. It will thus be seen that from the first, Providence had highly favoured us, and as we worked together harmoniously, many were drawn to our new place of worship, which soon became as full of hearers as it would hold.

Then there came a pressing demand for a minister. For more than six years we had had supplies, some of whom were well liked, and others barely tolerated. It was felt all round, that a settled minister was not only needed for feeding the flock, but also for looking after it. Supplies as a rule were very good in their way indeed it may be truthfully

affirmed, that the good some of them did was incalculable—but that did not make up for the fact that the sick wanted visiting, backsliders restoring, and the young persons prone to drift away, needed well looking after. This sort of work being pre-eminently pastoral, few supplies could do it, their work, mostly beginning on the Lord's Day morning, and ending at night. A suitable minister was therefore prayed for and sought after, and it was not long before the Lord graciously fulfilled the desires of His people.

The Rev. Joseph Barton was a young man, who being full of fire and energy, took us all by storm. He had been four years at college, or at least, that term had nearly expired, when we gave him an unanimous call to the pastorate. The son of godly parents, he had been well trained at home, and being constrained by the love of Christ, and an ardent desire to win souls for the extension of His Kingdom, to give his whole soul to ministerial labour, we all concluded that he was just the man we wanted. But could we get him? that was the question. We learned incidentally that a large church in a distant town had also made overtures to him, and we knew well that the salary they could give him at present would be more than we could afford. But to our inexpressible delight, he proved what genuine stuff he was made of by rejecting their call and accepting ours. We could only offer him as a certainty what the pew rents brought in, which was the modest sum of £90 per annum, with the stipulation that if more was raised, he should have the advantage of receiving it. His reply was that a large

salary was not his object, but that if the people would instead of paying a fixed sum for their sittings, assess themselves according to their means, and pay proportionately, he would accept that as his salary, whether it came to £90 or more. With this the church and congregation heartily agreed: a revision took place, the poor paid their small sums, and the more wealthy part paid larger, the result being, that at the end of the first year, our worthy pastor received £120 instead of £90, which we were glad to learn for his sake, did not fall very short of the greater sum which the town church had offered him. This fact, it is needless to say, was very gratifying to us all.

Mr. Barton had not been with us above two years, before it began to leak out that he was not only "engaged," but likely to be married. When once this interesting rumour got afloat, other particulars soon came to hand. How they came to hand does not matter. In regard to such love affairs, it may be certain that what people want to know they will in some way or other get to know. It was, therefore, soon ascertained that in serving a church in another part of the kingdom, during one of his holidays, our pastor had become acquainted with a Miss Goldacre, the only child of an independent widow. As he was staying as a guest at the house, by the law of affinity, far better understood than expressed, they found their hearts drawn towards each other, with the usual result that an engagement was effected. But what was to be done with her mother? With noble self-sacrifice, believing that it would be most

conducive to her daughter's interests, Mrs. Goldacre consented to give her up, and if it were God's will to spend the remainder of her brief life alone. Thus it came to pass that according to pre-arrangement, on a bright summer morning, with the sun shining gloriously on the happy couple, Miss Mary Goldacre left her mother's home in a cab, with the bridegroom, to come back from her own chapel about an hour afterwards, as Mrs. Barton.

Now the proverbial months, honeymoon was over, a number of us were anxiously awaiting the arrival of the train which should give us the first glance of the bride. Like a prudent man Mr. Barton had carried out that wise maxim.

"Before thou marry,
Be sure of a house wherein
to tarry.

A month or two therefore before the pastor left for his annual holiday, a house had been taken, and partly furnished. Unknown to him, the Church and congregation had made suitable additions while he was away, which we knew would give pleasure to both when they entered their new home. We were also to have a "Welcome Home" meeting that night in the school-room, when sundry speeches of a congratulatory kind were to be made, and golden gifts and other gifts presented. At last the long-looked for train steamed in, and very delightful we were to see our pastor giving his hand to a young lady whom we knew as she stepped out of the carriage, to be the bride we were so anxious to become acquainted with.

If outward appearances go for

anything, a glance at Mrs. Barton served to show us that our pastor, in the selection of a wife had made an excellent choice. He himself was about the medium height, and she was not much shorter. Rather slim, neatly dressed, with a happy face that blushed but beamed with smiles, a fine head of dark brown hair, which, thrown back showed an intellectual forehead, and possessing a most musical voice, she seemed to have a kind of personal charm that drew us all at once towards her. But what struck us most was her eyes. They were not lustrous but large soft and loving; and it was the concurrent opinion that few could resist their firm, feeling, appealing influence. It is astonishing how some people can speak with their eyes, and if anybody could do that it was Mrs. Barton. No wonder that Mr. Barton succumbed to their influence. When taxed with it in merry company, he was honest enough to confess that above all, at first, it was those eyes that took him captive, though he said his wife's splendid singing and religious character had equally as much to do in ultimately bringing him to decision. "She was," he averred, in her absence, "good for a pastor's wife all round, and coming to that conclusion he was determined to win her if he could." So to work he set, and to the joy of thousands in his after life, as well as to his own, win her he did. Our pleasure at seeing her was, however, somewhat tinged with sorrow at the thought of the weeping widowed mother, that such a daughter must have left behind.

What a memorable meeting we had that night! There were several sittings down to tea:

and the schoolroom, which had been adorned with flowers and suitable mottoes, not being large enough, we had to adjourn for the subsequent gathering to the chapel, where amid much appropriate music and singing speeches were made by ministers in the district and friends connected with the place that must have shown Mrs. Barton how much her husband was loved by his people; and how glad they were to welcome her in their midst. Then when the meeting closed with the doxology, all left with the persuasion that the advent of their minister's wife was another of the blessings—and not

the least by far—that God had been pleased to bestow upon themselves as a church and congregation,

But the question arose in one or two pessimistic minds, would this sort of thing last? Had not many such alliances thus begun with bright sunshine terminated in dark storm? The only answer to such sombre thoughts was given in the Saviour's wise teaching, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." It was well to begin thus, and as to the future that might well be left in the guiding hands of infinite wisdom, infinite love and infinite power.

(To be Continued).

To-Day.

LORD, for to-morrow and its need
 I do not pray;
 Keep me, my God, from stain of sin—
 Just for to-day

Let me both diligently work
 And duly pray;
 Let me be kind in word and deed—
 Just for to-day.

Let me be slow to do my will,
 Prompt to obey;
 Help me to sacrifice myself—
 Just for to-day.

Let me no wrong or idle word
 Unthinking say;
 Set Thou a seal upon my lips—
 Just for to-day.

Cleanse and receive my parting soul;
 Be Thou my stay;
 O bid me, if to-day I die—
 Go Home to-day.

So for to-morrow and its need
 I do not pray!
 But keep me, guide me, hold me, LORD—
 Just for to-day.

“The first Baptist Chapel in the Isle of Thanet.”

THE history of Baptists in England forms an important chapter in English History. The character of these forefathers bears the impress of English strength, together with Christian faithfulness. The position, size, and structure of their chapels illustrate these traits in a remarkable degree. The buildings are witnesses to the immense difficulties encountered in maintaining the worship of God according to the dictates of their consciences. They also show the slenderness of resources—the smallness of numbers, and the tenacity with which they clung to their belief. To say that these men laboured under *disadvantages* would be putting it in too mild a form. They were restricted—had many grievances, and were greatly oppressed. Notwithstanding all, they struggled bravely on and flourished. Every honour then to the memory of these sturdy men and women who have handed down to us such a rich inheritance and such a worthy example. It is well to be reminded of their deeds sometimes—better still to emulate their faithfulness and courage.

Baptists were found in Kent about the middle of the sixteenth century, the church at Eythorne, near Dover, being founded in the

year 1550. Towards the beginning of the 17th century, they had spread over different parts of the country, churches having been formed at Canterbury and elsewhere. Very probably, all the churches at least in the eastern part of the country, sprang from acorns fallen from the “old oak” at Eythorne, which from the first had struck its roots deep into Kentish soil.

In the “good old times,” when William III. was king, a small number of these faithful brethren lived in Margate and its vicinity, and in the year 1690, they selected a secluded spot between that town and St. Peter’s for holding their meetings. At that time this place consisted of “two houses and a chalkpit.” It was off the mainroad situated in a hollow with a footpath running close by, which connected the town and village. It was, and still is known by the name of Shallows. The origin of the name is not quite clear. Some contend that the houses stood near a *shallow* creek running up from Margate, hence the name.

It is quite certain that at that time an arm of the sea came up close to the spot, and no doubt the water therein was *shallow* enough, and became shallower as

building and street-making increased at Margate. The water has long since been shut out, and all traces of the creek obliterated.

The most plausible derivation of the word, however, is from the name of Stephen Shallow, who lived thereabout. In the account of parish business for 1690; there is an entry against this good man's name for the payment of 10s. for some land he held close by the chalk-pit. The name of the spot, therefore, doubtless is not a plural, but a possessive form, and ought to be written Shallow's. This by the way.

In one of the cottages in this lonely place, the small company of believers met for worship, *public worship* would be a misnomer, it was of necessity as private as possible. Had singing been permitted, it would have helped to attract notice to the existence of the little band. It was a time of persecution, and men were employed for the purpose of finding out particulars respecting conventicles, and to give information with a view to their suppression. At first the society at Shallow's must have been very small, consisting for the most part of members from the church at Canterbury, who doubtless found the distance between Margate and that city too great for frequent visits to hold fellowship with their brethren. In the course of years the little community grew in numbers and power, and a separate church of the strict order was formed, and some time prior to the year 1750 a small chapel was erected in the garden belonging to the house, in which till then, the meetings had been held. This chapel was a very modest building, constructed in a very primitive style.

The walls were of flint, with brick dressings, the roof covered with the common tiles of the period. It was 34ft. long, and 16ft. wide, with an aisle down the centre. According to an old print, the door was at the side—near one of the corners of the building. There were two small windows, apparently filled with small squares of glass, close together, and not far from the doorway, and protected on the outside by substantial wooden shutters. The pitch was that of a cottage of the period, the whole presenting a nondescript appearance, as far removed from anything ecclesiastical as can well be imagined. The pulpit was a moveable structure, standing over the baptistery. On the right, as one entered, there were two small vestries, with accommodation for six persons, (three in each). The building would hold about one hundred people. There were pews of the orthodox high type, and as things went, the chapel outside and in was considered a fair specimen. In this little sanctuary for many years, the lamp was kept burning, and none can tell how many souls were brought to a saving knowledge of the truth. For a long time there was no regular ministry, supplies probably came from Canterbury, and in cases of emergency from places nearer home.

In 1765, the church thought itself justified in inviting the Rev. Jonathan Purchis to become Pastor. The invitation was accepted. He was the first and last stated minister at Shallows.

Very little can be ascertained about this good man beyond the fact that he laboured faithfully in his small sphere for the space of 35 years, doing the usual work

of a pioneer, and doing it successfully. Beyond doubt the Lord was with him. He was used to the conversion of many noble men and women, several of whom became eminent for their piety and usefulness. Two, at least, of the number became ministers of the Gospel, Mr. Atkinson at Margate, and Mr. T. Cramp at St. Peters (The father of Dr. Cramp, of Arcadia College, N.S., the Baptist Historian.

Mr. Purchis did not confine his ministry to Shallow's. He preached at Margate, and was the means of founding the Baptist cause in that town. The services were conducted in Meeting Court, King Street, where a chapel was erected about the year 1770. This old chapel stood for 55 years. In 1815, the Margate church removed to a more commodious building in New Cross Street, using the older structure as a Sunday School for about nine years, after which it was pulled down.

The church at Shallows, though small, must have contained persons of substance, because there is no evidence of lack of means, either in maintaining the worship or the pastorate. Mr. Purchis is supposed to have been entirely dependent on the ministry for support, and it is very probable that he found the sheep able amply to repay the care and attention of the shepherd. He closed his life's labours in 1800, in the 65th year of his age, honoured and beloved. He was interred in a vault in Margate parish church-yard, where his tombstone can still be seen. At his death there were 39 members at Shallows; these immediately divided into two separate bodies—one going to Margate, the other

to St. Peters. The lease of the old chapel was fast running out, and times were improving as rapidly. There was no longer necessity to court seclusion. It was imperative to seek publicity. The church was therefore wise in quitting the old spot, although it was not wholly deserted for many years after the separation, the old chapel being used as a baptistery, for both Margate and St. Peters. Later still it was used for Sunday School treats until it became unsafe. There is nothing left now but one of the side walls, which has been lowered to a convenient height, and forms the boundary between the garden of the remaining cottage and the roadway.

For many years the occupiers of this quaint old dwelling carried on a flourishing tea-garden business. The resort as such at one time, was very popular, but the construction of the L.C. & D. Railway has diverted the stream of Pedestrians passing the cottage on their way from Margate to St. Peters', consequently the tea-garden is not patronised as formerly, and everything is fast falling into decay.

Baptists are greatly indebted to Mr. Samuel Jones, a London strict brother, who, when he came to reside at Margate, about twenty years ago, took much interest in collecting information about the old cause at Shallows', and at his own expense erected a tablet on that portion of the old chapel wall which still exists. The inscription on the tablet is as follows:—

SHALLOW'S THANET.

Praise thy God, O Zion!

This wall formed part of the first chapel built in the island for

the Strict Baptists prior to 1750.

The Church first met in a cottage in this place in 1690, and separated to Margate and St. Peters' in 1800.

This tablet was erected by the kind permission of Latham Tomlin, Esq.
SAMUEL JONES.

At the present time there are

(Strict and Open) ten Baptist causes in Thanet, and the stream which takes its rise from the tiny rill at Shallow's is ever widening and deepening, and is bearing on its bosom many precious freights to the great ocean of Eternity.

THOS. DAVIES.

Broadstairs.

Unpublished Morning Prayer.

By C. H. SPURGEON.

Reported by T. W. MEDHURST, Cardiff.

WE bless Thee, Lord, for ever. For all that Thou art to us. For all that Thou art in Christ. For all that Thou ever wilt be. We desire to include in that blessing all that Thou hast ever been before. Sometimes we have rested at Thy commands, and then sometimes we have had to complain all the day long. Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? Do we not know that, what seems to us to be evil, is among the choicest of the good that our Father sends? Therefore, blessed Lord, we bless Thee that Thou hast quieted us, and made us to behave ourselves before Thee. How blessed to know that Thy will is right, and good, and true, and kind, and to feel that only and simply because it is Thy will, it must be right. It must be something better than ordinarily right. It must be divinely good. O Thou Blessed One, though broken in pieces all asunder, every atom of our flesh shall praise Thee! Even when we go down into the grave, if it be possible, we will even out of the dust give Thee thanks. For the Lord is good, and His mercy endureth for ever, and blessed be the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Blessed be the Triune Jehovah, from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, and through the night watches, let His Name be praised. Now look at Thy poor servants this morning, and receive first of all from us these acts of homage, these words of reverent praise and love. Then permit us to say some more to Thee.

Bless now, this morning, all here; each one wants a blessing. First, give us all a sense of perfect cleansing, through the precious blood of Christ. May we be clean every whit, and know it. May we be wrapped

about with the righteousness of Christ, and know it. May we have a firm, unshaken confidence in the finished work of Jesus Christ our Lord, and know, not only that we are saved for the day, but saved with an everlasting salvation, by virtue of our union with Christ. Thou hast given us this full salvation. Lord, give us complete conquest over self. O, that we might hold ourselves in complete subjection to Thy Spirit! We would have every thought brought into captivity to the will of Christ. We want, Lord, in our daily business, in our domestic conversation, in our recreation, in our private thought, still to be always speeding onward to the great mark of the glory of God in Christ Jesus. Lord, sanctify us wholly, spirit, soul, and body, that in everything, we may shew forth His praise, Who hath brought us out of darkness into this marvellous light.

It any brother has come here to-day, vexed and troubled, because he has not overcome himself during the past week, Lord, help him. Help the man who has a quick temper, that he may be able to curb and check it, and be angry and sin not. Help those that are loose-tongued, who often say that which they would recall. Lord, help them to master the tongue, and so to master the whole body. Lord, quicken the sluggish. O, that we may live while we do live, and not waste the golden opportunities! Help us to fling ourselves through life, like red hot shot through the foe. If, then, sluggishness be our sin, help us to overcome it. If any of us have trouble and depression of spirit, enable us to rise. If any have levity of spirit the Lord solidify and solemnize. Grant us grace in the flesh to be what our Lord and Master was. O sanctify us into the image of Jesus Christ, that we may glorify Thee!

Now, Lord, appoint every brother and sister here unto the work Thou mayest have committed to them. The Lord give more ability to serve, and more grace with which to serve. Lord, help us to do our work a great deal better than we have done it. Some of us could not do any more, but we do wish that what we do we did better. Help us to do it with greater depth of spirit, never playing at serving God, but serving Him with the heart, and soul, and strength, to our very utmost. Help those that are to preach; we are poor preachers; we are just beginning to learn to preach. Teach all Thy ministers; and if the live coal from off the altar should blister the lip of eloquence, we will be glad, so long as the blister of earnestness shall have power and be able to speak. Lord, save souls by all of us. Bless each christian man and woman here, by making each one of us a soul winner. May none of us have the misery of coming before Christ without souls. O, that it might be said of us, "They shall come again rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them!" The Lord grant it may be so.

Now, Lord, we do not know what to pray for. Thy servant cannot think before Thee. Thou knowest what Thy people want. Dear Saviour, give each child a portion. There is a bright stone in the breast-plate for Benjamin, as well as for Judah. Let the least of Thy people be remembered. Feed Thy flock like a shepherd, gather the lambs in Thy arms, carry them in Thy bosom, and gently lead those that are with young. Be very tender with those that are persecuted. Help those that are struggling against temptation. Help men and women that are just struggling from some evil habit, such as drunken-

ness, and who hardly seem as if they could get away from it: the Lord deliver them. The Lord be gracious unto any that are ready to slide in their feet—backsliders almost gone—restore them. Lord, we are such a company here this morning, that one lip cannot mention every case, but, as Thou knowest all, distribute to all. Let there be a feast this morning, at which no guest shall be neglected, no one go away hungry from the table. We bless Thee for those who have been newly converted, make much of them; may they be ready to break their alabaster box of precious ointment upon their Lord. O may they to-day break their very hearts all full of love, over their Divine Master, so that this house shall be full with the perfume of the ointment of intense love to Jesus Christ!

Lord, remember the unsaved among us. There are some sitting in these pews, and standing in the aisles, who are dead in trespasses and sins. Oh, God! be not angry with them, but raise them to life. With strong and agonising desire we utter this prayer. Save every unsaved person in this building this morning, if it be according to Thy mind. Not only those that are here, but, O, that millions more might be born unto God! Holy Spirit, dart some quickening thought into unconverted minds this morning. There are thousands and thousands, and hundreds of thousands of men and women in London, who are not yet dressed. They are spending the first part of the day in idleness and in sin they will spend the rest of the day; yet, Lord, while they are in their shirt sleeves and night dresses, make them think. Give them a willingness to go where they may hear Thy Gospel preached. Revive in London a desire to hear the Gospel. May the places of worship be crowded, and multitudes be converted.

Rest on us, Spirit of God! We are nothing without Thee. We lack nothing when we have Thee. Until the day break and the shadows flee away, abide with us, O our God, we beseech Thee, for Thy Son Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Sermon:—Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, No. 1,719, preached May 6th, 1883,

Scriptures read:—2 Corinthians, iv. 7-18; v. 1-9. *Text*, 2 Corinthians, v. 1. *Hymns* from "Our own Hymn Book," 870, 847, 816.

Title of Sermon:—"The tent dissolved and the mansion entered."

WHAT PUNCTUALITY TEACHES.

PUNCTUALITY is something more than being just on time. It would be a sorry state of things with a school of a thousand if every teacher and scholar arrived at the door at exactly the minute designated for beginning school. All would then be late in getting into place, ready for a part in the duties of the hour. It is in view of this truth that punctuality in Sunday school has been defined as being five minutes ahead of the time for opening. But even this is not always enough. Punctuality includes being present early enough to get into place, and do everything that needs doing before the school hour, so as to have nothing to do at beginning time but to begin.—*Sunday School Times.*

Grandpa's Policeman.

BY JULIA D. COWLES.

WILLIE had been spending his vacation at grandpa's on the farm and he found a great many things there which surprised as well as interested him.

One day he was walking in the woods, or "timber," as grandpa called it, and away up in the branches of a tree he espied a large white bird. He knew at once from its size and the shape of its head that it was an owl, and he sped away to the house as fast as his feet could carry him.

"Grandpa," he shouted as soon as he reached the door, "there's a big white owl up in the timber. Can't I see if I can shoot him? I want him so much for a specimen."

Grandpa looked up slowly at the excited boy and then he answered deliberately, "Shoot him! No indeed! He's my policeman." Then seeing Willie's look of astonishment he went on "Yes, there's a band of robbers on this farm, and that owl will arrest most of them before the summer is over if we let him alone."

Willie looked even more astonished at this information, and his resolve to go straight back into the woods suddenly forsook him and he dropped into a chair instead.

"Why, grandpa," was all he could say.

Grandpa smiled a little as he asked, "Would you like to know more about them?"

"Yes, indeed," answered Willie.

"Well," said grandpa, "this band of robbers likes to gnaw the bark off the young trees in the orchard. and that you know kills the trees. Then they eat the seeds that are planted in the ground; they nibble the young vegetables and even gnaw off the grass at its roots. Now can you guess who these robbers are?"

"No," said Willie slowly, and beginning to look relieved. "Are they squirrels?"

"No," said grandpa, "they are smaller still. They are field mice. You would not think that such little creatures could do much harm, but if our policemen, the white owls, hawks and weasels, which catch the mice, were killed, their number would increase so rapidly that all the crops would suffer."

"And there wouldn't be any apples, or corn, or—oh, my!" said Willie, "I'm glad you didn't let me kill that owl."

Minneapolis Standard.

Reviews.

Words of Advice for Seekers. C. H. Spurgeon. Passmore and Alabaster, Paternoster Buildings.

No Servant of the Lord in modern times had more to do with inquirers and seekers than the Tabernacle Pastor, and added to his rich experience, was his plain, direct and helpful way of dealing with their difficulties, and we find these qualities to the front in this volume. The chapters—do not save yourself—hindrances of coming to the light, and a needless question answered are specially helpful. The book will also be of service to those who are engaged in the work of leading souls to Christ.

A Carillon of Bells to ring out the Truths of Free Grace and Dying Love. Mrs. C. H. Spurgeon. Passmore and Alabaster.

Ring the Bells of Heaven, Glory, Glory, How the loud harps ring. We love these Old Truths of Free Grace and Dying Love. The Divine music rings forth from the word of God, and the echo is from music in the soul. Mrs. Spurgeon has produced a truly spiritual and experimental treasure in this chaste and prettily bound book.

Reveries and Realities, or Life work in London. By F. B. Meyer, B.A. Morgan and Scott, 12, Paternoster Buildings.

Those who have read the *Bells of 1a*, by the same writer, will be pre-

pared to find in these pages the details of plans, difficulties and interesting accounts of work done for the Lord in the highways and byways of Life. We believe this volume will not only be read with interest and thankfulness, but many hints and suggestions may be gathered from it which will be of great service to Christian workers. My album, *Back to the sea of Ink*, *The Christian Endeavour*, *The Railway Ministry*, are chapters full of touching incidents and details of work which should be read by all.

Gospel Pictures and Story Sermons for Children. By D. W. Whittle author, of *Life, Warfare and Victory Morgan and Scott.*

We are cheered by the increase of volumes having for their object the teaching and preaching the gospel to the children, and unless we are mistaken, there is an important change for the better in the desire to give to children their portion in the public services of the sanctuary. We therefore hail with pleasure this work by Mr. Whittle. The addresses are given as object lessons, and the plan has been admitted from the days of Wilderspin till now, that it is the most effective way of impressing truths on the minds of the children. The poison sermon, the magnet sermon, the candle sermon, the commandment sermons and the heart sermon, are good illustrations of how a speaker may be helped by some object being put before the mind of his juvenile audience.

The Ideal Church. By Rev. Q. T. Downen, M.D., F.G.S., Minister of Wynne Road Baptist Chapel, Brixton, London. H. R. Allenson, 30, Paternoster Row.

We have read with pleasure this discourse which was first delivered before the London Baptist Association. It contains a clear exposition of a true New Testament Church, and in this age of high ritualistic claims is a most timely protest against priestly pretensions.

Almanacks.—John Ploughman's *Pictorial Sheet Almanack* and Spurgeon's *Illustrated Almanack*, containing articles by the late Editor and by Mrs. C. H. Spurgeon, and other writers. Passmore and Alabaster. *Baptist Almanack*, Banks & Co., Racquet Court; and our own *Baptist Year Book and Almanack*.

These are full of *denominational information*.

Reflections for the New Year, by William Frith. One Penny. Part-ridge & Co.

The Bible Societies Monthly Reporter contains very interesting paper by Rev. T. S. Wynkoop. *The Bible in the Leper Asylum. The Ragged School Magazine. In His Name* gives index of the year's contents.

We have also to name *Life and Light* and the *Monthly Record of the Protestant Evangelical Mission*. The second part of the new volume of *Boys Own Paper* full of stirring reading for boys, and a large beautiful coloured plate—"Perils in the Deep."

Our Magazines.—*The Baptist* completes the 88th volume and has some reviews of valuable books, and a photo likeness of the Rev. William Hill. *Sword and Trowel* completes its 32 years, 27 of which it was edited by the late Pastor of the Tabernacle. *The Irish Baptist Magazine* is a worthy well conducted penny monthly.

The yearly volume of the *Baptist Messenger* may be had from the publisher, E. Stock, Paternoster Row, or of any bookseller.

Denominational Intelligence.

CHANGES IN THE PASTORATE.

Rev. H. J. Wicks, from Minchinhampton, to Cirencester.

Rev. H. Trueman, from Zion Church, Chesham, to Tabernacle Church, Barking.

Rev. F. W. Walker, from Bildeston to Burley Road Church, Leeds.

Rev. W. Ruthven, from St. Clement's Church, Norwich, to Bridgeton Church, Glasgow.

Rev. B. Davies, from Moriah, Dowlas, to the Welsh Church at Abergwynff.

Rev. M. T. Rees, Meincian, near Kidwelly, to the Welsh Church at Zoar, Ffrwdamos, Penygraig.

Rev. W. H. Williams, of North Wales College, Bangor, to Nantwich.

Rev. A. E. Calver, from Pastors' College, to Westbury Street Church, Thornaby-on-Tees.

Rev. H. K. Kempton, from Pastors' College, to St. George's Church, Canterbury.

Rev. E. Packer, from Regent's Park College, to Commercial Road, Oxford.

Rev. J. F. Tavener, from Pastors' College, to the church at Elgin, N.B.

Rev. J. E. Roberts, M.A. B.D. (Union Chapel, Manchester), has received from the church at Bloomsbury a unanimous invitation to the pastorate.

Rev. Morrison Cumming, formerly of Bury St. Edmond's, has been invited to take the pulpit at Honor Oak Chapel for six months.

RECOGNITIONS.

Rev. W. Chisnall has been ordained to the pastorate of the Old Church, Guildford. Rev. P. Reynolds gave the charge to the pastor, and Rev. E. Mitchell addressed the church. Rev. R. E. Sears took part.

Rev. T. Edwards, late of Stocton-on-Tees, has been recognised as pastor of Tabernacle Church, Southport. Mr. S. Kenworthy presided, and Revs. J. Chater, Adam Scott, J. W. Butcher, and T. J. Dickinson took part.

Rev. J. J. Ellis had been recognised as pastor of Emmanuel Church, Upper Brook Street, Manchester. Rev. W. E. Darby, presided; Revs. J. W. Ewing, E. B. Woods, J. E. Roberts, T. Armstrong, S. F. Collier, and J. Garnett were among the speakers.

Rev. F. J. Mathison has been recognised as pastor at Millom. Rev. J. B. Brasted delivered the charge to the pastor, and Rev. W. Walker addressed the church.

Rev. C. Davis has been recognised as pastor at North Bradley. Rev. R. Richard gave the charge to the

pastor, and Rev. G. Jarman addressed the church.

Rev. F. Neal, of Regent's Park College, has been ordained to the pastorate at Kingsthorpe. Rev. J. R. Woods, J. T. Brown, Professor Gould, H. Bradford, A. Morgan, F. T. Symthe, S. Needham, D. R. Owen and R. A. Elvey took part.

Rev. W. Ross has been recognised as pastor of Commercial Street, Church, Newport. The Mayor, (Mr. T. Goldsworthy) presided at the public meeting. Revs. J. Owen, E. W. Skinner, R. Jenkin, and H. Abraham took part in the proceedings.

Rev. R. H. Ricby has been recognised as pastor at Brearley, Luddenden Foot. Revs. W. Jones, John Lawton, W. Haigh, F. Slater and F. W. Turner took part.

PRESENTATIONS.

Rev. A. C. Batts, a marble time-piece from the Church at Wisbech, on leaving for Long Sutton.

Rev. W. Burnett, of Coseley, an address from the Kent Band of Hope Union.

Miss Hopkins, a purse of gold and a book from Bideford Church, in recognition of services as organist and teacher.

Rev. A. Peet, a silver revolving tureen with trays from residents of Sharnbrook, including the vicar of the parish and Lord Alwyn Compton, and an easy chair from Sharnbrook Church, on relinquishing the pastorate.

At a social meeting of High Street Church, Merthyr Tydfil (Rev. A. Hall) books were presented to five members who had been identified with the church for an uninterrupted period of over forty years; one had been a member sixty-four years.

Mr. Joseph Rankin, an illuminated address and photographs from North

Street Church, Halstead, in recognition of twenty-nine years' services as deacon.

Rev. J. M. Murphy, a purse with £46 from South Street Church, Hull,

NEW CHAPELS.

MALDON, ESSEX.—The opening services of the new chapel were held on Wednesday afternoon, November 25th. Rev. Archibald G. Brown preached from 2 Chron. xxxix. 27, 29. Tea was provided in the Public Hall at six o'clock, to which 216 sat down, and at 7.30 a public meeting was held in the chapel. Mr. Thomas Sadler presided and gave an address. The pastor read details of the building scheme and account. It is now four years since he commenced his ministry with a dilapidated iron building, a debt on the incidental fund, and a declining congregation. Efforts were at once made to clear off the debt and start a fund for a new chapel. The Essex Baptist Union manifested their sympathy, and there is now no debt on the general funds of the church. The new chapel, capable of seating between 250 and 300 people, with two large vestries, has been erected, and, aided by a few sympathetic friends, about £530 has been raised toward the £1,350 required. The pastor referred to the practical sympathy manifested by all the other denominations in the town and the perfect unanimity that existed between them.

Memorial-stones have been laid of a new chapel, to seat 588, in Eldon Street, Cardiff, for the congregation now worshipping in Brunel Street. Seven large classrooms will be erected over the present school. The cost is estimated at £2,425.

MISCELLANEOUS.

COLTAGE-GREEN, CAMBERWELL.—On Thursday, December 3rd, the

anniversary was celebrated, the chair being taken by Mr. J. T. Sears, J.P., L.C.C. The meeting was addressed by Revs. Alfred Dickerson (Brixton), E. Roberts (South London Tabernacle), and William J. Sears (Willesden Green). During the evening the chairman asked Rev. J. Alexander Brown, the late pastor, to accept an illuminated address on vellum, in album form, which also contained sketches of the chapel and school buildings, together with particulars of the formation and development of the cause, and other items of historical interest. The presentation was acknowledged by Mr. Brown in an appropriate speech, in which he pressed upon the members the great need of keeping together and striving to maintain the work which for upwards of forty years had been carried on. He had not anticipated the present, which he should most highly prize. Messrs R. J. Elder and Walter Owen, of the Pastors' College, assisted in the devotional part of the meeting, and two or three solos were rendered during the evening. Revs. C P Sawday and R. A. Elvey preached the anniversary sermons on the preceding Sunday.

CHINA.—A report has been received at the Mission House from Dr. Bergin, of Lao-ho-kou, who has visited the stations in Shenji. He speaks of a village called 'the Gospel village,' composed entirely of Christian families. In each of the twenty-one village stations chapels have been built by the natives, unpaid elders having been elected to preside over them respectively; there are 300 scholars in the schools, and a large number of conversions have taken place. With respect to the cruel custom of foot-binding Dr. Bergin says: "Nearly all the girls have unbound their feet, and many of the women too; 120 in all. I was quite surprised to find the feet would grow right again after being bound up for ten years or more."

BAPTISMS.

- Aldershot*.—November 11, One, 25, One, by E. P. Connor.
- Briton Ferry*, Jerusalem.—November 15, Five, by R. Powell.
- Birmingham*, Stratford Road.—December 3, Four, by J. Hulme.
- Barrow-in-Furness*.—November 29, Four, by W. Walker.
- Belfast*, Great Victoria Street.—November 22, Six, by A. Walker.
- Cheltenham*, Cambray.—November 29, Six, by H. A. B. Phillips.
- Chester*, Milton Steet.—November 29, Five, by W. Povey.
- Coseley*, Staff.—November 25, Five, by W. Burnett.
- Crickhowell*, Breconsire.—November 29, Two, by W. M. Yorwerth.
- Dudley*, New Street.—November 15, Three, by E. Milnes.
- Dumfermline*, Scotland.—November 18, Thirteen, by J. T. Hagen.
- Dundee*, Ward Road.—November 6, Two, by D. Clark.
- Desborough*.—November 25, Five, by I. Near.
- Devonport*, Morice Square.—November 29, Six, by A. A. Harmer.
- Dolgelly*.—November 29, Eight, by R. G. Robut.
- Edinburgh*, Charlotte Chapel, November 19, One, by H. Bardwell.
- Esher*.—December 2, Three, by T. G. Head.
- Great Marlow*.—December 6, Three, by J. E. Joynes.
- Garston Tabernacle*, near Liverpool.—November 1, One, by J. Thomas.
- Glasgow*, Cambridge-street.—November 15, Eight, by E. Last.
- Glasgow*, Frederick Street.—November 22, Nine, by E. Aubrey.
- Huddersfield*, Pole Moor Chapel.—December 6, One, by T. Iles.
- Knights*.—December 6, One, by W. Williams.
- Longton*, Staffs.—November 29, Five, by M. H. Whetnall.
- Lemley*.—December 6, Two, by T. Yauldren.
- Manchester*, Higher Openshaw, November 22, One, by L. M. Thomas.
- Matsyberuan*, Brecon.—November 25, One, by G. H. Llewelyn.
- Malton*.—December 6, One, by J. O. Ogilvy.
- Merthyr Vale*, Zion, English.—November 29, Two, by H. P. Jones.
- Merthyr Tydfil*, Bethnal Welsh.—November 15, Nine, by H. I. Jenkins.
- Merthyr Tydfil*, Morlais.—November 8, Two, by E. G. Thomas.
- Newport*, Mon, Duckpool-road.—November 22, Two, by A. T. Jones.
- Newport*, Mon, East Usk-road.—November 25, Two, by A. Purnell.
- Oswestry*, Salop-road.—November 22, Two, by M. M. Thompson.
- Preston*, Pole-street.—November 22, One, by A. Priter.
- Risca*, Moriah.—November 29, One, by J. Jenkins.
- Rishworth*, Halifax.—November 15, Two, by D. Jerman.
- Shelfanger*, Norfolk.—December 6, Two, by A. J. Jarrett.
- Sunderland*, Enon Chapel.—December 2, Two, by G. Wilson.
- Southsea*, Immanuel.—November 22, Five, by J. Kemp.
- Tonypanyd*, Bethel.—November 22, One, by D. Davies.
- Treforest*, Calvary.—November 22, Six, by E. Lewis.
- Thurleigh*, Bed.—November 29, Two, by G. Chandler.
- Wincanton*.—November 22, Two, by J. Brown.
- Wainsgate*, Yorks.—December 6, Two, by D. Lindsay.

LONDON DISTRICT.

- Bermondsey*, S.E., Abbey-street.—November 29, Five, by A. V. G. Chandler.
- Brentford*, North-road.—November 29, One, by R. Mutiner.
- Church-street*, Edgware-road.—November 29, Seven, by J. Tucker.
- Harington*, W.—(For the church at Harmondsworth) November 25, Nine, by T. Byford; November 29, Two, by W. F. Edgerton.
- John-street*, Bedford-row.—November 22, Six, by F. S. W. Nicholson.
- Maze Pond*, Old Kent Road.—November 29, Four, by D. Walker.
- Poplar*, Cotton-street.—November 29, Six, by W. Joynes.
- Leyton*, Vicarage-road.—December 3, Two, by G. T. Bailey.
- East Dulwich*, Arnott-road.—November 20, Three, by G. W. Beale.

THE
BAPTIST MESSENGER:

AND

Evangelical Treasury

AND

CHRONICLE OF THE CHURCHES

FOR THE YEAR 1897.

LONDON

61, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C

The Blood of the Everlasting Covenant.

A SERMON BY THE LATE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

"The blood of the everlasting covenant."—Hebrews xlii. 20.

ALL God's dealings with men have had a covenant character. It hath so pleased him to arrange it, that he will not deal with us except through a covenant, nor can we deal with him except in the same manner. Adam in the garden was under a covenant with God and God was in covenant with him. That covenant he speedily brake. There is a covenant still existing in all its terrible power—terrible I say, because it has been broken on man's part, and therefore God will most surely fulfil its solemn threatenings and sanctions. That is the covenant of works. By this he dealt with Moses, and in this doth he deal with the whole race of men as represented in the first Adam. Afterwards when God would deal with Noah, it was by a covenant; and when in succeeding ages he dealt with Abraham, he was still pleased to bind himself to him by a covenant. That covenant he preserved and kept, and it was renewed continually to many of his seed. God dealt not even with David, the man after his own heart, except with a covenant. He made a covenant with his anointed; and beloved, he dealeth with you and me this day still by covenant. When he shall come in all his terrors to condemn, he shall smite by covenant—namely, by the sword of the covenant of Sinai; and if he comes in the splendours of his grace to save, he still comes to us by covenant—namely, the covenant of Zion; the covenant which he has made with the Lord Jesus Christ, the head and representative of his people. And mark, whenever we come into close and intimate dealings with God, it is sure to be, on our part, also by covenant. We make with God, after conversion, a covenant of gratitude; we come to him sensible of what he has done for us, and we devote ourselves to him. We set a seal to that covenant when in baptism we are united with his church; and day by day, so often as we come around the table of the breaking of bread, we renew the vow of our covenant, and thus we have personal intercourse with God. I cannot pray to him except through the covenant of grace; and I know that I am not his child unless I am his, first through the covenant whereby Christ purchased me, and secondly, through the covenant by which I have given up myself, and dedicated

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all that I am and all that I have to him. It is important, then, since the covenant is the only ladder which reaches from earth to heaven—since it is the only way in which God has intercourse with us, and by which we can deal with him, that we should know how to discriminate between covenant and covenant; and should not be in any darkness or error with regard to what is the covenant of grace, and what is not. It shall be my endeavour, this morning, to make as simple and as plain as possible, the matter of the covenant spoken of in our text, and I shall thus speak—first, upon the *covenant of grace*; secondly, its *everlasting character*; and thirdly, the relationship which the blood bears to it. “*The blood of the everlasting covenant.*”

I. First of all, then, I have to speak this morning of THE COVENANT mentioned in the text; and I observe that we can readily discover at first sight *what the covenant is not*. We see at once that this is not the covenant of works, for the simple reason that this is an everlasting covenant. Now the covenant of works was not everlasting in any sense whatever. It was not eternal; it was first made in the garden of Eden. It had a beginning, it has been broken; it will be violated continually, and will soon be wound up and pass away: therefore it is not everlasting in any sense. The covenant of works cannot bear an everlasting title; but as the one in my text is an everlasting covenant, therefore it is not the covenant of works. God made a covenant first of all with the human race, which ran in this wise: “If thou, O man, wilt be obedient, thou shalt live and be happy, but if thou wilt be disobedient, thou shalt perish. In the day that thou disobeyest me thou shalt die.” That covenant was made with all of us in the person of our representative, the first Adam. If Adam had kept that covenant, we believe we should every one of us have been preserved. But inasmuch as he broke the covenant, you and I, and all of us, fell down and were considered henceforth as the heirs of wrath, as inheritors of sin, as prone to every evil and subject to every misery. That covenant has passed away with regard to God’s people; it has been put away through the new and better covenant which has utterly and entirely eclipsed it by its gracious glory.

Again, I may remark that the covenant here meant is not the covenant of gratitude which is made between the loving child of God and his Saviour. Such a covenant is very right and proper. I trust all of us who know the Saviour have said in our very hearts:—

“’Tis done! the great transaction’s done;
I am my Lord’s, and he is mine.”

We have given up everything to him. But that covenant is not the one in the text, for the simple reason that the covenant in our text is an everlasting one. Now ours was only written out some few years ago. It would have been despised by us in the earlier parts of our life and cannot at the very utmost be so old as ourselves.

Having thus readily shown what this covenant is not, I may observe *what this covenant is*. And here it will be necessary for me to subdivide this head again, and to speak of it thus: To understand a covenant, you must know who are the contracting parties; secondly, what are the stipulations of the contract; thirdly, what are the objects

of it; and then, if you would go still deeper, you must understand something of the motives which lead the contracting parties to form the covenant between themselves.

1. Now in this covenant of grace, we must first of all observe *the high contracting parties* betwixt whom it was made. The covenant of grace was made before the foundations of the world between God the Father, and God the Son; or to put it in a yet more scriptural light, it was made mutually between the three divine persons of the adorable Trinity. This covenant was not made directly between God and man. Man did not at that time exist; but Christ stood in the covenant as man's representative. In that sense we will allow that it was a covenant between God and man, but not a covenant between God and any man personally and individually. It was a covenant between God with Christ, and through Christ indirectly with all the blood-bought seed who were loved of Christ from the foundation of the world. It is a noble and glorious thought, the very poetry of that old Calvinistic doctrine which we teach, that long ere the day-star knew its place, before God had spoken existence out of nothing, before angel's wing had stirred the unnavigated ether, before a solitary song had disturbed the solemnity of the silence in which God reigned supreme, he had entered into solemn counsel with himself, with his Son, and with his Spirit, and had in that council decreed, determined, purposed, and predestinated the salvation of his people. He had, moreover, in the covenant arranged the ways and means, and fixed and settled everything which should work together for the effecting of the purpose and the decree. My soul flies back now, winged by imagination and by faith, and looks into that mysterious council-chamber, and by faith I behold the Father pledging himself to the Son, and the Son pledging himself to the Father, while the Spirit gives his pledge to both, and thus that divine compact, long to be hidden in darkness, is completed and settled—the covenant which in these latter days has been read in the light of heaven, and has become the joy, and hope, and boast of all the saints.

2. And now, what were *the stipulations of this covenant*? They were somewhat in this wise. God had foreseen that man after creation would break the covenant of works; that however mild and gentle the tenure upon which Adam had possession of Paradise, yet that tenure would be too severe for him, and he would be sure to kick against it, and ruin himself. God had also foreseen that his elect ones, whom he had chosen out of the rest of mankind would fall by the sin of Adam, since they, as well as the rest of mankind, were represented in Adam. The covenant therefore had for its end the restoration of the chosen people. And now we may readily understand what were the stipulations. On the Father's part, thus run the covenant. I cannot tell you it in the glorious celestial tongue in which it was written: I am fain to bring it down to the speech which suiteth to the ear of flesh, and to the heart of a mortal. Thus, I say, run the covenant, in lines like these: I, the Most High Jehovah, do hereby give unto my only begotten and well-beloved Son a people, countless beyond the number of the stars, who shall be by him washed from sin, by him preserved, and kept, and led, and by him, at last, presented

before my throne, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. I covenant by oath, and swear by myself, because I can swear by no greater, that these whom I now give to Christ shall be for ever the objects of my eternal love. Them will I forgive through the merit of the blood. To these will I give a perfect righteousness; these will I adopt and make my sons and daughters, and these shall reign with me through Christ eternally." Thus run the glorious side of the covenant. The Holy Spirit also, as one of the high contracting parties on this side of the covenant, gave his declaration, "I hereby covenant," saith he, "that all whom the Father giveth to the Son, I will in due time quicken. I will show them their need of redemption; I will cut off from them all groundless hope, and destroy their refuges of lies. I will bring them to the blood of sprinkling; I will give them faith whereby this blood shall be applied to them; I will work in them every grace: I will keep their faith alive; I will cleanse them and drive out all depravity from them, and they shall be presented at last spotless and faultless." This was that one side of the covenant, which is at this very day being fulfilled and scrupulously kept. As for the other side of the covenant this was the part of it, engaged and covenanted by Christ. He thus declared, and covenanted with his Father: "My Father, on my part I covenant that in the fulness of time I will become man. I will take upon myself the form and nature of a fallen race. I will live in their wretched world, and for my people will I keep the law perfectly. I will work out a spotless righteousness, which shall be acceptable to the demands of thy just and holy law. In due time I will bear the sins of all my people. Thou shalt exact their debts on me; the chastisement of their peace I will endure, and by my stripes they shall be healed. My Father, I covenant and promise that I will be obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. I will magnify thy law, and all the vials of thy wrath shall be emptied and spent upon my head. I will then rise again! I will ascend into heaven; I will intercede for them at thy right hand; and I will make myself responsible for every one of them, that not one of those whom thou hast given me shall ever be lost, but I will bring all my sheep of whom, by thy blood, thou hast constituted me the shepherd—I will bring every one safe to thee at last." Thus ran the covenant; and now, I think, you have a clear idea of what it was and how it stands—the covenant between God and Christ, between God the Father and God the Spirit, and God the Son as the covenant head and representative of all God's elect. I have told you as briefly as I *could*, what were the stipulations of it. You will please to remark, my dear friends, that the covenant is, on one side perfectly fulfilled. God the Son has paid the debts of all the elect. He has, for us men and for our redemption, suffered the whole of wrath divine. Nothing remaineth now on this side of the question except that he shall continue to intercede, that he may safely bring all his redeemed to glory.

On the side of the Father this part of the covenant has been fulfilled to countless myriads. God the Father and God the Spirit have not been behindhand in their divine contract. And mark you, this side shall be as fully and as completely finished and carried out as the

other. Christ can say of what he promised to do, "it is finished!" and the like shall be said by all the glorious covenanters. All for whom Christ died shall be pardoned, all justified, all adopted. The Spirit shall quicken them all, shall give them all faith, shall bring them all to heaven, and they shall, every one of them, without let or hindrance, stand accepted in the beloved, in the day when the people shall be numbered, and Jesus shall be glorified.

3. And now having seen who were the high contracting parties, and what were the terms of the covenant made between them, let us see what were the *objects of this covenant*. Was this covenant made for every man of the race of Adam? Assuredly not; we discover the secret by the visible. That which is in the covenant is to be seen in due time with the eye and to the heart with the ear. I see multitudes of men perishing, continuing wontonly in their wicked ways, rejecting the offer of Christ which is presented to them in the gospel day after day, treading under foot the blood of the Son of Man, defying the Spirit who strives with them; I see these men going on from bad to worse and at last perishing in their sins. I have not the folly to believe that they have any part in the covenant of grace. Those who die impenitent, the multitudes who reject the Saviour, are clearly proved to have no part and no lot in the sacred covenant of divine grace; for if they were interested in that, there would be certain marks and evidences which would show us this. We should find that in due time in this life they would be brought to repentance, would be washed in the Saviour's blood, and be saved. The covenant—to come at once straight to the matter, however offensive the doctrine may be—the covenant has relationship to the elect and none besides. Does this offend you? Be ye offended even more. What said Christ? "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me: for they are thine." If Christ prayeth for none but for his chosen, why should ye be angry that ye are also taught from the Word of God that in the covenant there was provision made for the like persons, that they might receive eternal life. As many as shall believe, as many as shall trust in Christ, as many as shall persevere unto the end, as many as shall enter into the eternal rest, so many and no more are interested in the covenant of divine grace.

4. Furthermore, we have to consider what were the motives of this covenant? Why was the covenant made at all? There was no compulsion or constraint on God. As yet there was no creature. Even could the creature have no influence on the Creator, there was none existing in the period when the covenant was made. We can look nowhere for God's motive in the covenant except it be in himself, for of God it could be said literally in that day, "I am, and there is none beside me." Why then did he make the covenant? I answer absolute sovereignty dictated it. But why were certain men the objects of it and why not others? I answer, sovereign grace guided the pen. It was not the merit of man, it was nothing which God foresaw in us that made him choose many and leave others to go on in their sins. It was nothing in them, it was sovereignty and grace combined that made the divine choice. If you, my brethren and

sisters, have a good hope that you are interested in the covenant of grace, you must sing that song—

“What was there in me to merit esteem, or give the Creator delight?
’Twas even so Father I ever must sing, for so it seemed good in thy
sight.”

“He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy,” for it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. His sovereignty elected, and his grace distinguished, and immutability decreed. No motive dictated the election of the individuals, except a motive in himself of love and of divine sovereignty. Doubtless the grand intention of God in making the covenant at all was his own glory; any motive inferior to that would be beneath his dignity. God must find his motives in himself: he has not to look to moths and worms for motives for his deeds. He is the “I AM.”

“He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be.”

He doth as he wills in the armies of heaven. Who can stay his hand and say unto him, “What doest thou?” Shall the clay ask the potter for the motive for his making it into a vessel? Shall the thing formed before its creation dictate to its Creator? No, let God be God, and let man shrink into his native nothingness, and if God exalt him, let him not boast as though God found a reason for the deed in man. He finds his motives in himself. He is self-contained, and findeth nothing beyond, nor needeth anything from any but himself. Thus have I, as fully as time permits this morning, discussed the first point concerning the covenant. May the Holy Spirit lead us into this sublime truth.

II. But now, in the second place, we come to notice ITS EVERLASTING CHARACTER. It is called an everlasting covenant. And here you observe at once its *antiquity*. The covenant of grace is the oldest of all things. It is sometimes a subject of great joy to me to think that the covenant of grace is older than the covenant of works. The covenant of works had a beginning, but the covenant of grace had not; and blessed be God, the covenant of works has its end, but the covenant of grace shall stand fast when heaven and earth shall pass away. The antiquity of the covenant of grace demands our grateful attention. It is a truth which tends to elevate the mind. I know of no doctrine more grand than this. It is the very soul and essence of all poetry, and in sitting down and meditating upon it, I do confess my spirit has sometimes been ravished with delight. Can you conceive the idea that before all things God thought of you? That when as yet he had not made his mountains, he had thought of thee, poor puny worm? Before the magnificent constellations began to shine, and ere the great centre of the world had been fixed, and all the mighty planets and divers worlds had been made to revolve around it, then had God fixed the centre of his covenant, and ordained the number of those lesser stars which should revolve round that blessed centre, and derive light therefrom. Why, when one is taken up with some grand conceptions of the boundless universe, when with the astronomers we fly through space, when

we find it without end, and the starry hosts without number, does it not seem marvellous that God should give poor insignificant man the preference beyond even the whole universe besides? Oh this cannot make us proud, because it is a divine truth, but it must make us feel happy. Oh believer, you think yourself nothing, but God does not think so of you. Men despise you but God remembered you before he made anything. The covenant of love which he made with his Son on your behalf is older than the hoary ages, and if ye fly back when as yet time had not begun, before those massive rocks that bear the marks of grey old age upon them, had begun to be deposited, he had loved and chosen you, and made a covenant on your behalf. Remember well these ancient things of the eternal hills.

Then, again, it is an everlasting covenant from its *sureness*. Nothing is everlasting which is not secure. Man may erect his structures and think they may last for ever, but the Tower of Babel has crumbled, and the very Pyramids bear signs of ruin. Nothing which man has made is everlasting, because he cannot ensure it against decay. But as for the covenant of grace, well did David say of it, "It is ordered in all things and sure." It is

"Signed, and sealed, and ratified,
In all things ordered well."

There is not an "if" or a "but" in the whole of it from beginning to end. Freewill hates God's "shalls" and "wills" and likes man's "ifs" and "buts," but there are no "ifs" and "buts" in the covenant of grace. Thus the tenure runs: "I will" and "they shall." Jehovah swears it and the Son fulfils it. It is—it must be true. It must be sure, for "I AM" determines. "Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" It is a sure covenant. I have sometimes said, if any man were about to build a bridge or a house, if he would leave me just one single stone or one timber to put where I liked, I would undertake that his house would fall down. Let me, if there is anyone about to construct a bridge, have just simply the placing of one stone—I will select which stone it shall be—and I will defy him to build a bridge that shall stand. I should simply select the key-stone, and then he might erect whatever he pleased and it should soon fall. Now, the Arminian's covenant is one that cannot stand, because there are one or two bricks in it (and that is putting it in the slightest form; I might have said "because every stone in it," and that would be nearer the mark) that are dependent on the will of man. It is left to the will of the creature whether he will be saved or not. If he will not, there is no constraining influence that can master and overcome his will. There is no promise that any influence shall be strong enough to overcome him, according to the Arminian. So the question is left to man, and God the mighty Builder—though he put stone on stone, massive as the universe—yet may be defeated by his creature. Out upon such blasphemy! The whole structure, from beginning to end, is in the hand of God. The very terms and conditions of that covenant are become its seals and its guarantees; seeing that Jesus has fulfilled them all. Its full accomplishment in every jot and title is sure. and must be fulfilled by

Christ Jesus, whether man will or man will not. It is not the creature's covenant, it is the Creator's. It is not man's covenant, it is the Almighty's covenant, and he will carry it out and perform it, the will of man notwithstanding. For this is the very glory of grace—that man hates to be saved—that he is at enmity to him, yet God will have him redeemed—that God's covenant is "you shall," and man's intention is, "I will not," and God's "shall" conquers man's "I will not." Almighty grace rides victoriously over the neck of free will, and leads it captive in glorious captivity to the all conquering power of irresistible grace and love. It is a sure covenant, and therefore deserves the title of everlasting.

Furthermore, it is not only sure, but it is *immutable*. If it were not immutable, it could not be everlasting. That which changes passes away. We may be quite sure that anything that has the word "change" on it, will sooner or later die, and be put away as a thing of nought. But in the covenant everything is immutable. Whatever God has established must come to pass, and not a word, or line, or letter, can be altered. Whatever the Spirit voweth shall be done, and whatever God the Son promised hath been fulfilled, and shall be consummated at the day of his appearing. Oh, if we could believe that the sacred lines could be erased—that the covenant could be blotted and blurred, why then my dear friends, we might lie down in despair. I have heard it said by some preachers, that when the Christian is holy, he is in the covenant; that when he sins, he is crossed out again; that when he repents, he is put in again, and then if he falls he is scratched out once more; and so he goes in and out of the door, as he would in and out of his own house. He goes in at one door and out of another. He is sometimes the child of God, and sometimes the child of the devil—sometimes an heir of heaven, and anon an heir of hell. And I know one man who went so far as to say that although a man might have persevered through grace for sixty years, yet should he fall away the the last year of his life—if he should sin and die so, he would perish everlastingly, and all his faith, and all the love which God had manifested to him in the days gone by would go for nothing. I am very happy to say that such a notion of God is just the very notion I have of the devil. I could not believe in such a God, and could not bow down before him. A God that loves to-day and hates to-morrow, a God that gives a promise, and yet foreknows after all that man shall not see the promise fulfilled; a God that forgives and punishes—that justifies and afterwards executes—is a God I cannot endure. He is not the God of the Scriptures I am certain, for *he* is immutable, just, holy, and true and having loved his own, he will love them to the end, and if he hath given a promise to any man, the promise shall be kept, and that man once in grace, is in grace for ever, and shall without fail by-and-by enter into glory.

And then to finish up this point. The covenant is everlasting, because it *will never run itself out*. It will be fulfilled but it will stand firm. When Christ hath completed all, and brought every believer to heaven; when the Father hath seen all his people gathered in—the covenant it is true, will come to a consummation, but not to a conclusion, for thus the covenant runs: The heirs of grace shall be blessed for

ever, and as long as "for ever" lasts, this everlasting covenant will demand the happiness, the security, the glorification, of every object of it.

III. Having thus noticed the everlasting character of the covenant I conclude by the sweetest and most precious portion of the doctrine—the relation which the blood bears to it—**THE BLOOD OF THE EVERLASTING COVENANT.** The blood of Christ stands in a fourfold relationship to the covenant. *With regard to Christ*, his precious blood shed in Gethsemane, in Gabbatha and Galgotha, is the fulfilment of the covenant. By this blood sin is cancelled; by Jesus' agonies justice is satisfied; by his death the law is honoured; and by that precious blood in all its mediatorial efficacy, and in all its cleansing power, Christ fulfils all that he stipulated to do on the behalf of his people towards God. Oh, believer, look to the blood of Christ, and remember that there is Christ's part of the covenant carried out. And now, there remains nothing to be fulfilled but God's part, there is nothing for thee to do; Jesus has done it all; there is nothing for free will to supply; Christ has done everything that God can demand. The blood is the fulfilment of the debtor's side of the covenant, and now God becometh bound by his own solemn oath to show grace and mercy to all whom Christ has redeemed by his blood. With regard to the blood in another respect, it is *to God the Father the bond of the covenant.* When I see Christ dying on the cross, I see the everlasting God from that time, if I may use the term of him who ever must be free, bound by his own oath and covenant to carry out every stipulation. Does the covenant say, "A new heart will I give thee, and a right spirit will I put within thee?" It must be done, for Jesus died, and Jesus' death is the seal of the covenant. Does it say, "I will sprinkle pure water upon them and they shall be clean; from all their iniquities will I cleanse them?" Then it must be done, for Christ has fulfilled his part. And, therefore, now we can present the covenant no more as a thing of doubt; but as our claim on God through Christ, and coming humbly on our knees, pleading that covenant, our heavenly Father will not deny the promises contained therein, but will make every one of them yea and amen to us through the blood of Christ Jesus.

Then, again, the blood of the covenant has relation to us as the objects of the covenant, and that is its third light; it is not only a fulfilment as regards Christ, and a bond as regards his Father, but it is an evidence as regards ourselves. And here, dear brothers and sisters, let me speak affectionately to you. Are you relying wholly upon the blood? Has his blood—the precious blood of Christ—been laid to your conscience? Have you seen your sins pardoned, through his blood? Have you received forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus? Are you glorying in his sacrifice, and is his cross your only hope and refuge? Then you are in the covenant. Some men want to know whether they are elect. We cannot tell them unless they will tell us this. Dost thou believe? Is thy faith fixed on the precious blood? Then thou art in the covenant. And oh, poor sinner, if thou hast nothing to recommend thee; if thou art standing back, and saying, "I dare not come! I am afraid! I am not in the covenant!"

still Christ bids thee come. "Come unto *me*," saith he. "If thou canst not come to the covenant Father, come to the covenant Surety. Come unto *me* and I will give thee rest." And when thou hast come to him, and his blood has been applied to thee doubt not, but that in the red roll of election stands thy name. Canst thou read thy name in the bloody characters of a Saviour's atonement? Then shall thou read it one day in the golden letters of the Father's election! He that believeth is elected. The blood is the symbol, the token, the earnest, the surety, the seal of the covenant of grace to thee. It must ever be the telescope through which thou canst look to see the things that are afar off. Thou canst not see the election with the naked eye, but through the blood of Christ thou canst see it clear enough. Trust thou in the blood, poor sinner, and then the blood of the everlasting covenant is a proof that thou art an heir of heaven. Lastly, the blood stands in a relationship to *all three*, and here I may add that *the blood is the glory of all*. To the Son it is the fulfilment, to the Father the bond, to the sinner the evidence, and to all—to Father, Son, and sinner—it is the common glory and the common boast. In this the Father is well pleased; in this the Son also, with joy, looks down and sees the purchase of his agonies; and in this must the sinner ever find his comfort and his everlasting song,—“Jesus, thy blood and righteousness, are my glory, my song, for ever and ever!”

And now, my dear hearers, I have one question to ask, and I have done. Have you the hope that you are in the covenant? Have you put you trust in the blood? Remember, though you imagine, perhaps, from what I have been saying, that the gospel is restricted, that the gospel is freely preached to all. The decree is limited, but the good news is as wide as the world. The good spell, the good news, is as wide as the universe. I tell it to every creature under heaven, because I am told to do so. The secret of God, which is to deal with the application, that is restricted to God's chosen ones, but not the message, for that is to be proclaimed to all nations. Now thou hast heard the gospel many and many a time in thy life. It runs thus: “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” Dost thou believe that? And is this thy hope—something like this: “I am a sinner. I trust Christ has died for me; I put my trust in the merit of his blood, and, sink or swim, I have no other hope but this.

‘Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling.’”

Thou hast heard it; hast thou received it in thy heart, and laid hold on it; then thou art one of those in the covenant. And why should election frighten thee? If thou hast chosen Christ, depend upon it he has chosen thee. If thy tearful eye is looking to him, then his omniscient eye has long looked on thee; if thy heart loveth him, his heart loves thee better than ever thou canst love, and if now thou art saying, “My father, thou shalt be the guide of my youth,” I will tell thee a secret—he has been thy guide, and has brought thee to be what thou now art, a humble seeker, and he will be thy guide and bring thee safe at last. But art thou a proud, boastful, free-willer, saying, “I

will repent and believe whenever I choose; I have as good a right to be saved as anybody, for I do my duty as well as others, and I shall doubtless get my reward"—if you are claiming a universal atonement, which is to be received at the option of man's will, go and claim it, and you will be disappointed in your claim. You will find God will not deal with you on that ground at all, but will say, "Get thee hence, I never knew thee. He that cometh not to me through the Son cometh not at all." I believe the man who is not willing to submit to the electing love and sovereign grace of God, has great reason to question whether he is a Christian at all, for the spirit that kicks against that is the spirit of the devil, and the spirit of the unhumiliated, unrenewed heart. May God take away the enmity out of your heart to his own truth, and reconcile you to it and then reconcile you to himself through THE BLOOD of his Son, which is the bond and seal of the everlasting covenant.

A few Thoughts Concerning the Better Country.

By HENRY COUSENS.

“FOR he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”—*Heb.* xi. 10.

“But, now, they desire a better country, that is an heavenly, wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city.”—*Heb.* xi. 16.

“And took joyfully the spoiling of your goods. Knowing in yourselves ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.”—*Heb.* x. 34.

“For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. For I am in a straight betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ: which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.”—*Phil.* i. 21, 23 24.

“We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.”—*2 Cor.* v. 8.

The chief possessions of the Saints of God are not contained in this world, *they have* a reversionary interest in the inheritance of the Saints in Light, secured to them by the Almighty Conquests of their Redeemer Lord, in Whom dwelleth all Divine perfections—wisdom, love and power—grace, mercy and truth—riches, glory and blessing—might majesty and dominion.

If the readers will turn to the first Epistle of Peter, first chapter, from 3rd to 5th verses, they may read some precious words concerning the better country.

The prospects of believers in Christ according to the scriptures, which cannot be broken, are very bright and glorious, so magnificent, that we are at present incapable of fully realizing them, by our *limited* powers; we see them as through a glass darkly, or we should be unable to follow our ordinary avocations, and fulfil our proper duties and responsibilities in life; but it is our privilege to consider them, and contrast them with our present position. *Here sin, there purity; here pain, there ease; here sorrow, there joy; here war and unrest, there peace and rest; here disappointments, there satisfaction; here the world, the flesh and the devil, there Holy Angels, the spirits of the just made perfect, but most of all, the Lord of the place, Who is gone into Heaven and is on the right hand of God; Angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him.*

There shall we bathe our weary souls
In seas of heavenly rest,
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across our peaceful breast.

Now all this is very wonderful, but it may be helpful to bear well in mind that when we give attention to the glorious plan of Redemption and Salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ or any part thereof, we must expect to meet with *wonders*. We should remember that it is "God's Great Salvation," and that whatever emanates from Him, is *sure to be wonderful*. We have an illustration of this in His Great Creation of the Universe—we cannot examine the tiniest insect and upwards, but we find the Infinite exceeds the Finite immeasurably—that His Greatness and Majesty is unsearchable.

Among the wonders of God's Great Salvation, is the fact that many of the objects thereof were of the chief of sinners, some of the worst of our race. In the 6th chapter of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians after naming a number of abominable sins, our Apostle says in the 11th verse "And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

There is no reason why anyone should hesitate to solicit Divine mercy on account of the magnitude of their sins and their deep consciousness of unworthiness, the invitations and encouragements of the Glorious Gospel are ample to insure success to every penitent petitioner for forgiveness and salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ.

But the persistent rejectors of God's Holy Word, who live and die without repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, have no authority to expect to go to the better country when they exchange worlds, it will be a terrible day to them, we recommend them to *consider* these things, which are of the highest importance.

Leyton, Essex.

Our Minister's Wife and her Noble Life.

CHAPTER II.—FAMILY RECORDS.

AS a matter of necessity, though somewhat reluctantly, at this stage of my narrative I am compelled to bring in myself. My reason for doing so consists in the fact of the close intimacy that I was favoured to have with Mrs. Barton for upwards of thirty years. It was this early personal acquaintance that enables me to place on record facts with regard to her that otherwise would have been consigned to oblivion. In the present day the press teems with biographies of ministers who, having nobly served their day and generation, have entered into rest. But how comparatively little is said about their wives! And yet, what would most of these ministers have been without them? Could they but rise from the dead and tell us what they owe as husbands, fathers and pastors to their domestic virtues, their loving counsel, their patient sufferings, their unobtrusive labour, and their illustrious example, they would indeed, "A tale unfold." Only now and then such a revelation is made by manuscripts left through the reminiscences of surviving relatives or friends; but what is thus recorded of the few may safely be taken as samples of the rest. Of most, it may be said that they live and work and die, and then

pass away, known only to a mournful-limited circle; but that, whether known or unknown, "their works do follow them."

My name is Henrietta Kent. In the village of Colcheston I was familiarly known as Miss Kent. My father and mother having died shortly one after the other. I being their only surviving child, came at the age of six and twenty into the possession of the little property they left behind, which chiefly consisted of the house they lived in, and a few cottages beside. As their death happened to occur about the time that Mr. Barton accepted the church's call to the pastorate, I was induced to take him in as a lodger, and he remained with me until the date of his marriage, when, of course, he removed to his new home. But before the happy couple entered that, it was my privilege to receive them into my own house; give them needful refreshment, and then proceed with them to their newly furnished house. That I was taken up with Mrs. Barton from the first, need hardly be said, and I have every reason to believe that she shared the same kind of feeling towards myself. But be that as it may, one thing is certain, our subsequent intercourse for many years gave ample proof that a good providence had

destined us to be life-long friends, and to be of much use to each other in the service of the Lord.

In the course of three months after her arrival, Mrs. Barton began to feel herself thoroughly at home amongst us. It was but natural at first that on account of her constitutional shyness, and her unacquaintance with the people's customs and habits, some should think her rather stiff. But this sort of feeling soon wore off, and discerning friends came to the right conclusion, that she was "just that on of stuff that a minister's wife should be made of." Only twenty-five years of age, she could not but feel to a certain degree, the burden of responsibility thrust upon her, on leaving a private home to sustain a public position. Her husband was but one year older than herself, so that his experience, too, was somewhat limited. But being naturally more free and jovial than his young bride, and not so susceptible to external influences, he did not feel the weight of things as she did, and was therefore able to cast off the ordinary burdens of official life, as ducks, by shaking their wings, throw off drops of water. She, on her part, was more inclined to be reticent and grave, which made superficial and overfree people stigmatize her as being proud and even haughty. But in this respect they were totally wrong. She was more timid than proud, and no one could cast off natural reserve, and appear more lively and joyous than she could, when she realised that she was in company that she could unreservedly trust.

Then there were some things that she did not feel herself

called upon to do. For instance, though she had taken a Sunday School class when residing with her mother, and was much esteemed both by the teachers and scholars, she used to tell me that she never felt as if she was adapted for teaching, and always had an intense desire to be instructed rather than to instruct. Hence, when asked, after she had been a month or two with us, whether she would take the Young Women's Senior Class, she kindly but firmly declined to do so, on the grounds assigned. This refusal at first gave umbrage to some of the leaders, but ultimately finding that as a pastor's wife she had other qualifications that pre-eminently fitted her for her position, they ceased to talk about the matter, and the dark little cloud blew over. But if she did not care to teach, she could, as already asserted, sing, and by giving the choir at times the benefit of her melodious voice, she soon sprang into favour with them and the public. Another quality she was found to possess that cast even this in the shade. Having intense sympathy for the poor and afflicted she was constantly planning what she could do for their benefit, and when this began to be found out it made her immensely popular. In this "good Samaritan" kind of work she really felt at home, and hundreds now in glory, while fighting the hard battle of life below had cause to give hearty thanksgivings to God for the kindly deeds she did on their behalf in their homes of darkness and sorrow.

I have been at the pains at the outset to describe these matters in regard to our minister's wife, not only in order to prepare the

way for incidents that will follow, but also to knock on the head an absurd theory that too often prevails in the churches. It is quite common to suppose, if a minister marries, that his wife, like himself, should be an official servant of the church. Why such an idea should be entertained has always passed my comprehension. That her position gives her prominence in any department of church work in which she may engage I have already conceded, but that she should be called upon to engage in all kinds of church and congregational work, when, like most married women she has to bear children, train them up, and endure all the cares and sufferings of domestic life, appears to me to be preposterous. Carry the theory out, why should it not be applied to the wives of deacons and other church officers? The rule will apply equally to the one class as well as the other. To do Mr. Barton justice, he had sense enough to see this, and to one grumbler he gave the decisive answer. "Look here, Mrs. Growler, when I took my wife, I married her to keep my soul in my body; and if she does that, she comes up to my requirements, and indirectly benefits all I am as a minister privileged to serve; if she can do any more than that, I am perfectly willing that she should do it, but if you want to make her the Rev. Mrs. Barton, you must give her an adequate salary, and that will enable me to hire servants to do her domestic work." I am not ashamed to confess that I admired Mr. Barton for taking this stand, and when Mrs. Growler grumbled afterwards to me about it, I candidly told her

that such treatment on his part just served her right. The fact is, Mrs. Growler was well known to be a splendid tattler, but a poor worker, and the rebuke told home.

Christmas time came round, and Mrs. Barton had been with us nearly five months. Then we heard the joyful news that her mother was coming to spend a month or two with her. As we had never seen Mrs. Goldacre, but had heard from her daughter much in her praise, we were prepared to give her a hearty welcome. On Christmas Eve she turned up, and if we had been charmed at first with her daughter, we were equally so with her mother. She was a tall, ladylike person, rather aristocratic in her bearing, but having as kind and loving heart beating within her breast as could be found in the gentler sex. No wonder, we thought, that she should own such a daughter! Though Mrs. Barton was, we were informed, more like her father than her mother, still there were lineaments in her face, and traits in her character, which made us often think of her mother, when Mrs. Goldacre had been called to her eternal home. In fact, to her own dying day it was Mrs. Barton's delight to confess that if she had been privileged to do any good as a woman or minister's wife, she owed the glory of it instrumentally, mainly to her beloved mother.

Mrs. Goldacre's history had, in spite of her present comfortable circumstances, been rather a trying one. She was brought up in a small town in the Midland Counties, as one of the members of a large family. Her father, who was an ironmonger, was but

moderately successful in business, and suffered greatly from financial losses, that almost brought him to the verge of the Bankruptcy Court. Then he died rather suddenly of what was termed "heart disease," the consequence being that the whole estate had to be wound up, and very little was left for his widow and her numerous offspring. At this juncture Miss Osborne was but fifteen years of age, and being the eldest daughter left at home, she had, for seven years, to remain there, as her mother's chief assistant. By this time, however, several of her brothers, older than herself, had left home to be married, and it was then that she became acquainted with her future husband, Mr. Goldacre.

As he was the confidential clerk in a prosperous firm with a large salary, in a worldly sense, the alliance was considered most satisfactory, and in less than a year after her introduction to him, they became, as the matrimonial service strangely words it, "man and wife." Up to this period her struggles had been severe; but now it seemed as if the sun of worldly prosperity was about to shine upon her, and so amply repay her for the heavy trials she had had to endure in conjunction with her widowed mother since her father's death. But whether this pleasant dream was realised or not, future chapters will show.

(To be Continued)

THE BULLET IN THE BIBLE.

WHEN Oliver Cromwell became General of the Army of Parliament, he ordered each soldier to carry a Bible in his pocket. A young, reckless fellow, in a desperate skirmish wherein many had fallen, came out unhurt. The same night, on going to bed, he pulled out his Bible and observed a hole in it. A bullet had pierced it. He searched leaf after leaf to see the depth of the hole. The bullet had gone as far as Ecclesiastes, and had struck upon the verse, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth. . . but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment," and that was the divine arrow which reached his heart. His Bible had saved both body and soul. He became a faithful witness for Christ in after days.

THE HEART.

"THE greatest difficulty in conversion is to win the heart to God: and the greatest difficulty after conversion is to keep the heart with God. Even a gracious heart is like a musical instrument, which, though it be exactly tuned, a small matter brings it out of tune; yea, hang it aside but a little, and it will need setting again before you can play another lesson on it."—*Flavel*.

The Work and Qualification of a Christian Minister.

A SERMON PREACHED TO THE STUDENTS OF THE BAPTIST COLLEGE,
BANGOR, NORTH WALES, ON THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 18th, 1896,
By REV. R. C. ROBERTS, PEMBROKE DOCK.

“Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.”—Isaiah lii. 11.

THE primary reference of these words is generally acknowledged to be to the exiled Jews, who were now permitted to return to Jerusalem from their long captivity in Babylon; and the vessels of the Lord here mentioned were the sacred vessels of the sanctuary. It is recorded, that when the Jews were taken to Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar carried thither all these sacred utensils, which were subsequently desecrated as illustrated at Belshazzar's feast. Cyrus, however, commanded them to be restored, when the exiles returned to their own land. The office of bearing them pertained to the Priests and Levites, to whom the injunction in the text was more particularly given. They were required to be morally and ceremonially clean, to realise the sacredness of their function, and to avoid contaminating themselves with the polluted objects of idolatry. Although we do not believe in any priestly office in connection with the Christian religion save that which Jesus Christ Himself fills, and so do utterly reject the epithet when applied exclusively by sacerdotal teachers to those who professedly minister in holy things, as we maintain, that all who have received Christ as their Lord and Saviour, are priests unto God, offering up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ; yet the sacredness of the office to which the priest under the law was ordained, the essential purification to which he had to subject himself, and the powerful influence for good or evil his personal life exerted upon the people, may serve to illustrate some important particulars essential to every Christian minister and his work.

We shall consider, first, the work of the ministry in its nature; secondly, its qualification; and lastly, seek to point out the means whereby we may possess this qualification.

I.

ITS NATURE.—“ Bearing the vessels of the Lord.”

In the first place we observe that it is a most holy work. The vessels of the temple were designated holy; they were designed by God Himself, and made under the direction of Moses, according to the pattern shown him on the Mount. By the application of the word *holy* to them, we understand them to have been utilized for sacred purposes in the tabernacle in the wilderness, and also in the temple, and were under the special charge of the Priests and Levites, none else being permitted to touch them. The sacredness of the work of these officials was most impressively taught them at their consecration, as we observe in the book of Leviticus, and especially in connection with the high priest. Everything relative to him was to be holy. And in one particular this holiness reached its fullest manifestation. On his forehead he was always to wear a plate of gold with the words engraved, “Holiness unto the Lord.” Everyone would read by it that the whole object of his existence, the great purpose of his appointment was, to make known the Divine Holiness, and that nothing unholy would be accepted by God.

Now the sanctity of the work of the Christian ministry is an element with which we cannot be too deeply impressed. It is impossible for us to overestimate its importance. It should never be regarded by us as a mere profession, paralled with those of law and of medicine. While the student of the law and the student of medicine prepare for professions which are essentially serviceable; how very few would ever think of undergoing the toilsome years of study and research from pure altruistic motives? We would not for a moment think of speaking in any derogatory spirit of these honoured professions, or of casting any reflection upon those who adorn them, yet it is very evident that the consideration of a respectable livelihood, the acquiring of wealth, power and fame have greatly influenced them in their choice. But with regard to the Christian minister, neither wealth, nor fame, nor social status must be the motive to prompt him in his work; but the glory of God in the salvation of precious souls. If a man count the ministry simply a profession by which he may secure a comfortable living, it has at once in his judgment, a low self-gaining character. The Apostle Paul had such an exalted idea of the Christian ministry, that he sacrificed all his worldly prospects in order to enter upon it, and after many years of arduous toil and incessant persecution, he could say when writing to Timothy, “I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.” And in the estimation of Dr. Carey, there was no work so sacred and honourable as that of making known to men the joyful tidings of salvation; for when his son Felix resigned as a missionary in order to become a Burmese Ambassador, Dr. Carey said to him, “Whenever I think of you relinquishing your post, I start from the idea with a kind of horror, as if I realized it to be a great crime.” And some time after he wrote, “Felix has sank from a missionary to an ambassador.” It is very desirable that you, my young brethren,

who are preparing for this work should be deeply impressed with the sacredness of it.'

2. This is also a work to which men are Divinely called and set apart. Particularly was it in relation to Aaron and his two sons. Moses was commanded by God to take them and to consecrate them to their work. And it was Divinely ordained that none but the Priests and Levites should have anything to do with the sacred vessels. We always experience a danger in expanding some analogies, as in the present instance; but all, I trust, will readily admit that there is no work in which God more manifestly reserves the prerogative of calling men to, as that of making known His gracious purposes to a sinful world. His servants under the old dispensation received each one a distinctly Divine call. Moses at the burning bush, Samuel and Isaiah in the temple, Jeremiah in his house at Anathoth, Amos in the field, and others we might mention. We read of some who rushed into this sacred office, but of whom God said, "I have not sent them, yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied." Under the Christian dispensation the Apostles received their commission to preach direct from Christ. And every true minister of the Gospel has been assuredly divinely called to the work. Whether this call has been distinctly heard by everyone who has entered the Christian Ministry we gravely doubt. And there have been periods in our experience, when much depressed by the apparent non-success of our labours, we have been overwhelmed with fear lest we should have mistaken our vocation. Even the celebrated Christmas Evans had some painful misgivings in his mind years after he entered the ministry as to whether God had ever called him to the work; and this feeling became so unbearable, that one day as he was riding along the road, he felt compelled to get off his horse, fasten it to a post, whilst he went into an adjoining field, and there, like Jacob, he wrestled with God in prayer, and before he left that spot every doubt respecting his being divinely called completely vanished away like the mist at the rising of the sun, and not a shadow of a doubt relative to his call ever after crossed his mind. It would be very interesting to discuss the questions as to *when* and *how* a person may know whether he has been called of God to this work. A little exchange of opinions on these topics at a fraternal gathering of ministers and students, would, I believe, prove profitable and edifying.

II.

The qualification essential for this work. "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord."

Prominence is given in the Old Testament to the importance of *physical* cleansing on the part of the priests, which is most significant. Aaron and his two sons were washed with water by Moses on the occasion of their being set apart for their work; and there was a brazen laver fixed between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, filled with water, for Aaron and his two sons to wash their hands and their feet thereat before they approached the altar, the neglect of which ablution would be punished by death. Now among Eastern

people generally, cleanliness is considered a part of their religion. They connect the idea of internal sanctity with that of external purification. They feel that it would be an insult to the Holy Being they worship to come into His presence covered with impurity. And the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews in exhorting believers to "draw near to God in full assurance of faith," combines physical with moral purity—"having our hearts," says he, "sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." May not the words of our text have a literal as well as a symbolic application,— "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." Although we are not convinced of the necessity of enforcing its literal application; yet we should never lose sight of the fact that a congregation of worshippers expect the preacher to be modestly neat and orderly in his appearance, and they are justified in their expectation from the nature of the position he holds.

But there is a cleanliness indispensable to everyone who enters the Christian ministry of far greater weight and importance than physical, namely, moral and spiritual cleanliness, purity of heart and mind, holiness of life, which is to be exemplified in our daily conduct. Some render the word *clean* in our text, *pure*, "Be ye *pure* that bear the vessels of the Lord." Synonymous with this are the words *holy* and *sanctity*. The Welsh renderings of Holy Spirit and Holy Scripture are very suggestive,—*Ysbryd Glan*, and *Ysgrythyr Lan*. Pure Spirit, Clean Spirit, Clean Word, unadulterated. And a holy man is a clean man, a man whose sins are forgiven him, and who is cleansed from all unrighteousness.

Now of all the qualifications essential to a Christian minister, this moral and spiritual cleanliness, in other words, holiness, stands pre-eminent. It is indispensable to everyone who names the name of Christ, but above all to a minister of the Gospel. And in extolling this principle of holiness, let it not be supposed that we depreciate scholastic attainments, profound learning, or brilliant abilities. We thank God and shall for ever feel grateful for having been admitted into this College when it was at Llangollen, and to have been honoured with such efficient tutors as Dr. Hugh Jones (died May 28th, 1883, aged 52 years) and Dr. Gethin Davies (died March 17th, 1896 aged 49 years), who are now resting from their arduous labours, but whose names are indelibly engraved on many of our hearts, and whose loving memories will be cherished by us until we meet them in the Father's home on high. No, we do not disparage scholastic attainments. This is acknowledged to be an age of great advancement in learning, and the minister must needs keep abreast with the times in this respect, and you have had, my young brethren, superior advantages in this Institution, which is gratifying to know you have availed yourselves of, and the happy selection made this morning of our esteemed brother, the Rev. Silas Morris, M.A., as the Principal, inspires us with the fullest confidence that this College will not lose any of its prestige, but that its path will be as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. But, if a man should be able to speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and be destitute of holiness, it will only be in the sight of heaven as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

“Be ye holy that bear the vessels of the Lord.” There are two aspects of this holiness I wish to expatiate upon,—The one in relation to the minister's outer life, the other in relation to his inner life: that which is revealed to men, and that which is only known to the individual himself and the great God from whom nothing can be concealed.

1. The importance of holiness in its bearing on the minister's outer life. He must preach the Gospel, not only in the pulpit, but in his everyday deportment. His frequent contact with men should impress upon them the truthfulness of his character, and the dignity of his calling. There is no legitimate power to divorce the preaching from the preacher, the doctrine from the practice. Example, it is said, goes further than precept. It more clearly illustrates, and more powerfully enforces the duties of life, than the other can effectuate. Accordingly our Blessed Lord seems to have considered Christian example very efficacious teaching. “Let your light,” says He, “so shine before men, that they seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven.” This is preaching, not to the ear but to the eye, the noblest of our senses; and that by means of which the most durable impression is made upon the soul. Light can be seen from a far greater distance than sound can be heard. “But if the light that is in thee be darkness,” says Christ, “how great is that darkness.” Now it is absolutely necessary that everyone engaged in this sacred work of preaching the Gospel should stand morally high in the world. Paul says, “A bishop is to be blameless.” He is to be “an ensample to the flock.” And he is to secure “a good report from them that are without.” This can only be accomplished by a holy living, by a life fully consecrated to the service of God. Nothing is considered more detrimental to a minister's influence than a manifest absence in his deportment of any of those Christian virtues enforced by Jesus Christ and His Apostles. It has been repeatedly illustrated that small faults in other men are regarded as great if discovered in ministers. And if a person fall from this sacred and exalted position, he drags religion down into the very mire, brings a painful reproach upon the name of Christ, fills every Christian heart that is cognizant of it with intense sadness, and mars his influence for good in the world. “Take heed unto thyself,” were the words of Paul to Timothy. And very significant were the words of the same Apostle to Titus, “Let no man despise thee,” that is, do not give any one occasion to despise thee. “In all things show thyself a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.” It is a grand attainment when a minister can fearlessly appeal to his Church as Paul did to the Thessalonians, and say, “Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe.” Be ye *outwardly* holy that bear the vessels of the Lord.”

Now there is a potency in holiness that will defeat some of the bitterest opponents who may assail you in your work. It is probable you will find in your ministerial career, as others have previously found, some adverse to you. And the great question is, what is the wisest course to take with such characters? Argue them down?

Preach them down? Fight them down? No, but live them down by a pure, holy life. It is reported of Martin Luther that he was so devoutly hated by the priests of Rome, that they continually watched and dogged his footsteps, hoping that as he had beaten them in controversy they might discover impurity in his life, which they would have readily used against him and his work. At length, with undisguised rage, they wrote of him, "This German beast is so scrupulously holy that we can bring nothing against him on this ground." So they were defeated. And by our living near to God, and breathing the spirit of Christ in our daily life, we may be able "to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men."

2. Again, inward holiness is most essential to everyone engaged in this sacred work. It is stated that in New York glass-lined iron pipes are used to convey water for domestic purposes. They lessen the friction, the pipes continue clean, and the purity of the water is preserved. So should we all, who convey the water of life to the parched and perishing multitudes, seek to be sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and Christlike in our lives, in order that the truths of God may be communicated in all their purity to those who hear them. The Psalmist after his falling into sin, was so deeply convinced of the pollution of his heart and total unfitness to instruct others in the truths of God, that he earnestly prayed for a thorough cleansing, the creating within him a clean heart. "Then," not till then,— "Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee." An unholiness is evidently disqualified for this work. The late Mr. Spurgeon in his "Lectures to Students" delineated this truth in his characteristic style. "A graceless pastor," said he, "is a blind man elected to a professorship of optics, philosophizing upon light and vision, discoursing upon and distinguishing to others the nice shades and delicate blendings of the prismatic colours, while he himself is absolutely in the dark. He is a dumb man elevated to the chair of music; a deaf man fluent upon symphonies and harmonies. He is a mole professing to educate eaglets; a limpet elected to preside over angels." He has undertaken a work for which he is totally unfit. Such a man cannot be truly happy. He is out of his sphere. He has no genuine sympathy with his calling. How can he guide others along a path he himself has not trodden? How can he recommend to others that which he himself is a stranger to? A preacher destitute of true holiness can have no real peace and joy; for he is not only out of sympathy, for he is not only out of sympathy with his sacred duties, but also out of sympathy with his God. And as one writer very truly states, "that there is a growing impression which is fast ripening into conviction, that what our ministry needs, in order to enjoy a larger amount of blessing, is more attention to the culture of our own hearts." We fear we are apt to lose sight to some extent of our own spiritual condition while attending to the spiritual wants of others, the care of whom devolves upon us as ministers. We must take heed lest the words of the spouse in the Song of Solomon find a fitting application in some of us,— "They have made me the keepers of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept." It behoves us not to neglect this inward qualification, "Be ye clean, inwardly as well as outwardly, ye that bear the vessels of the Lord."

III.

Time will not permit me to offer any remarks upon the last head of our discourse, namely, the means of attaining to this holiness of heart and life, as you are to be favoured with a Welsh sermon in this same service. May I however, urge upon you, my young brethren, who will soon leave this Institution to enter upon the sacred work of the Christian ministry, to seek to be men eminent for godliness, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, maintaining constant communion with God, living always in the very atmosphere of devotion, mirroring forth the resplendent lustre of the Gospel by pure untarnished lives, and so commending yourselves to every man's conscience, yours included, in the sight of God. "The Lord bless you, and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace."

Reviews.

Notes from my Bible from Genesis to Revelation, by D. L. MOODY: London. Morgan and Scott, 12, Paternoster Buildings.

Anything from Mr. Moody will command the attention of Christian people, especially those who are in active work for the Master. To such, this book will have a most hearty welcome. We are all interested in the methods adopted by this most successful Evangelist of the age. Here we give a specimen—7th chapter of Matthew. In this chapter we have 2 Gates, straight and wide; 2 Ways, broad and narrow; 2 Classes, many and new; 2 Destinations, life and destruction; 2 Trees, good and corrupt; 2 Fruits, good and evil; 2 Things done to Trees, hewn down and cast out; 2 Houses; 2 Foundations, rock and sand; 2 Builders, wise and foolish; 2 Storms; 2 Results of the Storm; The one house stood the other fell.

Sowing and Reaping, by D. L. MOODY, Morgan and Scott.

Eight well-written characteristic chapters on the above subject, in the writer's best style. Pungent, direct, anecdotal, all who read will be profited.

Gwon and Gwladys, by WILLIAM REES D.D. Translated from the Welsh by W. Rees Evans. Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

To English speaking Welshmen, who are scattered throughout the world, these Reminiscences of village life in their beloved homeland in the time of their fathers are dedicated. English readers will also read their description of the earlier days of Welsh village life with pleasure and satisfaction. The writer is well known and has the power of recital and description mingled with strokes of wit and humour. Tenderness and pathos which gives a charm to the book that will make the reader of the first few pages not rest until the end is reached. We understand that the interest and excitement produced in Wales when it first appeared in Welsh will not soon be forgotten.

We with pleasure call our Readers attention to the January issues of the Religious Tract Society's Monthly, Part 2 of *Sunday Hours for Boys and Girls*, and we couple with it our old favourites for boys, *The Boys Own Paper*, and we do this because the materials are so good for their objects in both papers. The one for fun and pastime on weekdays, and

the other full of cheerful instructive reading for the Sunday. *The Leisure Hour*, amongst other valuable contributions contains an illustrated account of a Lady's visit to the Diamond Mines of Kimberley, also a second group of the world's future kings. *The Sunday at Home* has a paper by Dr. Munro Gibson, on Facts of Experience and Truths of Life, and a leading story by Boyd Bayly, *The Old Bell Ringer's Last Pull*, illustrated. *The Girls' Own*, illustrated with a coloured frontispiece, *A Shepherd with a Pipe*, and pictorial story, *How I was presented at Court*. *The Child's Companion*, as good as ever, and *Our Little Dots*, simply charming. If you love children, try it.

Friendly Greeting, A Bundle of Tracts for the Million. For the workman and his cottage what can be better than the *Cottage and Artisan*, and *Light in the Home*. We are glad to find *The Present Day Tracts* are continued. No. 81, Some modern views of Zovoastrianism, examined in the light of Christianity, by the Rev. M. Kayfmann, M.A. We think almost every class of readers will find something suitable in the above serials.

The Treasury of Religious Thought (American) Gay & Bird, Bedford Street, Strand.

Thoughtful articles on the Interpretation of the parables, by Rev. George H. Hubbard, also on the Future of the Anglo-Saxon Race, by E. S. Payson.

The Baptist Hand Book for 1897. 84th year. London; Clark & Co., 13 & 14, Fleet Street.

As usual, full of most interesting valuable information and statistics. Indispensable to the Pastors and Deacons of our churches. In the memoirs of deceased ministers, are several who will have been known to our readers for their long and varied works of usefulness. William King Armstrong, of Lewes. Henry

Dunckly, who was for many years successfully engaged in Literary work. Gethin Davies, of Bangor College, William Elliston, of Leighton, Arthur O'Neill, of Birmingham, James Harcourt, in the years gone by, of Boro Road and East Hill, Wandsworth. These worthies whose departure from the field of labours carry some of us back to the days of our youth, and cause us to feel that

We are to the margin come,

And wait our call to rest.

We regret the announcement of the reductions of amounts hitherto paid to Our Aged and Infirm Baptist Ministers and Widows, and this followed by the partial failure of the Augmentation Fund, makes us sad indeed. These are steps backward.

Hints and Helps to Christian Workers. Edited by A. H. G. Second Edition. *The Way of Salvation or Peace with God*. What is it? by the same author. *Helps in Bible Reading*, by W. S., author of "Story of our English Bible." *Helps Heavenward*, or *Fighting the good Fight of Faith*. A book for young Christians by J. Wharton, Second Edition. Alfred Holness, 14, Paternoster Row, or of any Bookseller. These four booklets in antique binding and handy for the breast coat pocket, ought to be in the hands of every Christian worker. They are cabinets of Treasures. Not one word wasted, but Holy sentences and stimulating thoughts and wise counsels put in brief. Price Sixpence each.

Faithful Words for Old and Young. Alfred Holness, 14, Paternoster Row.

A volume of good sound Christian teaching, well illustrated, and neatly bound. We are in accord with the words in the preface as to our times—religious there is in abundance, though the Lapsed Masses, Rich and Poor, are to be counted by tens and tens of thousands. Religion there is, but a vast amount of its present day energy is sorely deficient of Christ. Religion without Christ will save no

one, will bring no one to heaven and will bring no glory to God in time or Eternity.

Parts 14 and 15 of *The Treasury of David*, by C. H. Spurgeon, Passmore and Alabaster, 4, Paternoster Buildings.

We are thankful that this life-work of Mr. Spurgeon's continues to be issued in monthly parts as we sincerely hope it may be the means of causing many persons and many homes to secure for themselves copies of this unsurpassed and incomparable commentary on the Psalms of David. Cases for binding Vol. 1 and 2 may be had 1/4 each, post free 1/6.

Drummond Tract Depot Stirling and London, Partridge and Co., have issued some new useful Tracts and booklets, *Sunlight and Sunlight Homes*, a New Year's Address by Rev. Geo. Everard, M.A., also *Give me thine Hand*, a message for the New Year by the same author. *The Lord my Banner, or Laying up the Colours*, a New Year's Address by Lady Beaujolois Dent. *The Hush of the Soul*, a New Year's Address by Rev. P. B. Power, M.A. *The Wonder Worker*, an address to the young by J. Forbes Moncrieff, and *John Knox*, the hero of the Scottish Reformation, a book for the young by Rev. Alexander Andrews, D.D. We hope these seasonable addresses to the young may have a wide circulation and command the attention of thousands of our young people.

Great Thoughts for January is full of the best of reading culled wisely from

the writings of the past and present times, also pictures of Martin Luther, J. S. Wood, General Roberts, General Sir Evelyn Wood. The new volume of *Helping Words* commences with the January number, which contains contributions from Newman Hall D.D. Dr. G. V. Barrett on the Unfulfilled purposes of Life, illustrated, also Terrible Tanner, illustrated by the Editor. *The Prize Reciter*, good for Band of Hope, Christian Endeavour, Bible Classes, &c., all the back numbers can be had.

We have also received *Consecrated Melodies*. Favourite secular tunes to sacred words—The sacred words are sound and scriptural, and we see that some of the music is from our best favourite composers, and with care in the selection, no doubt some of our secular tunes might be set acceptably to sacred words. The music is arranged and harmonised by Caroline Wicherne and Ella Macgill. The words by Wakefiel Macgill. London: John Heywood, and all Booksellers.

Magazines which have our hearty approval:—*Baptist Missionary Herald*, *Life and Light*, *Monthly Record of the Protestant Evangelical Mission*, *The Bible Societies Monthly Reporter*, and *The Gleanings for the Young*. The latter contains the likeness of the Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala. *In His Name*, *The Home Blessing*, *The Baptist Magazine*, *The Sword and Trowel*, and *Our Coming Lord, In the Air and on the Earth*, by Pastor W. Fuller Gooch.

THE single star seen through the rift in the cloud assures us of the clear sky beyond the darkness.

RUDENESS suffers little, but refinement much. As men go up toward manhood, they go toward the possibility of pain. Suffering is an affliction of a large and Godlike nature.

Denominational Intelligence.

CHANGES IN THE PASTORATE.

Rev. T. Parrish, from Bargoed, to the Welsh chapel at Noddfa.

Rev. A. O. Hopkins, from Cardiff College, to Mount Carmel English Church, Caerphilly.

Rev. D. Morgan Davies, from Colwyn Bay, to Claremont Church, Shrewsbury.

Rev. H. J. Wicks, from Minchinhampton, to Coxwell Street, Cirencester.

Rev. J. Hogben, from Glastonbury, to Horningsham.

Rev. A. G. Short, from Sandown Isle of Wight, to Herne Hill.

Rev. E. B. Warren, from London, to West Drayton.

Rev. J. E. Roberts, M.A., co-pastor with Dr. McLaren, of Manchester, has declined the invitation to the pastorate of Bloomsbury Church.

RECOGNITIONS.

SUNNINGDALE, BERKS.—On Monday, December, 14, the recognition of Mr. Frank Burnett, of the Pastors' College, as student pastor of the Baptist Church, was held here. A public tea was provided, followed by a meeting, when addresses were delivered by Messrs. Phillips, Waugh, and F. Burnett, of the Pastors' College, and Mr. W. Burnett, of Darkhouse, Staffordshire (father of the pastor). An interesting portion of the meeting was the presentation of a book ("Spurgeon's Interpreter") to Mr. G. Gulliford, teacher in the

Sunday-school and organist of the chapel, on the occasion of his recent marriage, and as a recognition of the long and useful service he has rendered.

PRESENTATIONS.

Rev. S. H. Firks, £20 from Great Whyte Church, Ramsey.

Mr. John Townsend, secretaire, timepiece and tazzi in recognition of sixteen years' service as secretary of Glossop-road School, Sheffield, a post he resigned to become superintendent.

Rev. T. Bentley, a cheque and an illuminated address from Chipping Norton Church, on resigning the pastorate after a ministry of twenty seven years.

Rev. G. H. F. Jackman, a cheque for £13 7s. 6d, from Coggeshall Church; Mrs. Jackman, a Christian Endeavour Society gold badge.

Rev. H. C. Trotman, a case of cutlery and plates from Portmahon Church, Sheffield, on resigning the pastorate; Mrs. Trotman, a ladies' companion from the mother's meeting, an easy chair from the sewing society, and a teapot from her Sunday-school class.

Rev. W. Ruthven, an illuminated address and a study clock from St. Clement's Church, Norwich, on removing to Glasgow.

NEW CHAPELS.

On Wednesday afternoon, Dec. 30, Pastor Thomas Spurgeon opened Beulah Chapel, Bexhill, the found-

ation stone of which he laid some months ago. The present building is a school chapel, the larger edifice not being yet erected. In the evening a sermon was preached by Pastor J. W. Harrald.

Portmahon Chapel and Schools, Sheffield, are to be pulled down; on the site is to be erected a chapel, with school beneath, in accordance with modern requirements. The estimated cost is £4,000, of which nearly £1,000 is in hand.

A corner plot in Florence-road, Brighton, has been purchased for the erection of a new place of worship for Florence-road Church (Rev. D. Llewellyn), which at present meets in the Sunday-school. At a meeting held in the Countess of Huntingdon's Church on Thursday, Rev. J. G. Greenhough spoke in aid of the building fund, and two donations of £100 were received.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Regent's Park College Preaching Station Association has now the following churches under the care of the students: Sarratt, Whitechurch, Northchuroh, Wraysbury, Stantonbury, and Henley-on-Thames, Leavesden, Park-street (St. Albans), Surbiton, Kings Langley, Abbots Langley, Buxted and Essendon are occasionally supplied. In addition work is being done in connection with the children's services and lodging-house visitation. The plan adopted by this association is for the church or congregation applying for assistance to elect one of the students as pastor, who visits his charge once a month, other students preaching on the other Sundays. The association has now been in existence twenty-four years. The most encouraging work of the past year has been the erection of the

new chapel at Sarratt, which cost £750, and was opened free of debt.

The Welsh Baptist Year Book for 1897 has been published under the editorship of the Rev. D. B. Richards, Swansea. It records the death of twelve ministers during the year 1896. The number of churches is 806, ministers 630, assistant preachers 399. There were 4,907 baptised, 2,570 restored, and 4,721 received by transfer, which makes a total of 12,198 received from all sources. There were lost by death 1,427, exclusion 1,217, transfer 5,352, lapses 2,494, a total of 10,490 losses; giving a clear gain 1,708. The total number of members is 105,423—an increase of 2,457 over last year's, owing to the fact that the statistics are more complete. The Sunday scholars number 114,206.

The summary of statistics in the Handbook just published shows for the United Kingdom—churches 2,934; chapels, 3,822; chapel seats, 1,286,514; members, 360,112; Sunday-school teachers, 50,721; Sunday scholars, 519,226; local preachers, 4,838; pastors in charge, 1,955; baptisms, 16,113—an increase over the previous year of churches, 7; chapels, 13; chapel seats, 8,604; members, 6,145; Sunday-school teachers, 242; scholars, 5,588; local preachers, 193; pastors in charge, 20; baptisms, 318. These totals include an estimate for 18,000 members, 1,400 teachers, 14,000 scholars, and 90 pastors in connection with non-reporting churches. The amount expended upon (1) new buildings during the year is £76,897, or £17,293 more than in the previous year, (2) chapel improvements and new school-rooms, £27,315—an increase of £1,657, and (3) the removal of debt on chapel property, £63,340—an increase of £5,948. The number of ministers who have died during the year is thirty-three, and their average age sixty-six and a-half years.

BAPTISMS.

- Belfast*, Great Victoria Street.—December 20 Five, by C. S. Donald.
- Burnley*, Ebenezer.—December 21, Five, by S. C. Alderidge.
- Blaenavon*, Horeb.—December 18, Four, by D. E. Hughes.
- Blaenavon*, Ebenezer.—December 17, Seventeen, by I. Meredyth.
- Barrow-in-Furness*.—December 27, Three, by W. Walker.
- Berwick-on-Tweed*.—January 8, Ten, by J. L. Harvey.
- Clayton-le-Moors*.—December 27, Three, S. Cadwell.
- Clayton*, near Bradford.—December 18, Three, by J. W. Hambly.
- Caerwent*, Mon.—December 20, Two, by I. Berryman.
- Cheltenham*, Cambray.—December 27, Seven, by H. A. K. Phillips.
- Chalfont*, Bucks, Gold Hill.—December 17, Two by T. Davies.
- Coalville*, Ashby-road.—December 21, Three, by J. H. Grant.
- Diss*, Norfolk.—December 27, Two, by J. Easter.
- Dunfermline*, Scotland.—December 28, Three, by J. T. Hagen.
- Edinburgh*, Abbey Hill.—December 27, One, by G. Macdonald.
- East Dereham*.—December 30, Three, by R. J. Layzell.
- Ford*, Devonport.—December 27, Three, by A. T. Head.
- Glasgow*, Springburn.—December 6, Seven, by J. Horae.
- Glasgow*, Cambridge-street.—December 27, Five, by E. Last.
- Hinckley*.—December 27, Six, by P. Williams.
- Hull*, George-street.—December 27, Six, by J. E. Shephard, F.C.S.
- Ibstock*.—December 27, Three, by A. E. Johnson.
- Largo*, Fife.—December 27, One, by W. Pulford.
- Leeds*, Hunslet Tabernacle.—December 27, Two, by A. E. Greening.
- Lowestoft*, Tonning-street.—December 20, Three, by D. Bennett, B.A.
- Leeds*, Burley-road.—December 6, Four, by F. W. Walter.
- Leeds*, Armlcy.—December 13, Six, by W. Sumner.
- Liverpool*, Waterloo.—December 18, Seven, by D. Scott.
- Liverpool*, New Brighton.—December 13, Two, by F. Morley.
- Macclesfield*, St. George's-street.—December 27, Five, by E. A. Hooby.
- Merthyr Tydfil*, Bethel.—December 13, Eight, by H. I. Jenkins.
- Nantymoel*, Hore. English.—December 13, Eight, by T. D. Matthias.
- Oswestry*, Salop-road.—December 27, Eight, by M. M. Thompson.
- Prestegyn*.—December 27, Four, by W. Skinner.
- Pontyclun*, R.S.O., Bethel.—December 13, Three, by L. T. Evans.
- Pentypidd*, Ynysybwli.—November 29, Four by J. Lamb.
- Rhayader*, Radnorshire.—December 11, Three, by W. E. Thomas.
- Rhymney*, Mon., Beulah.—December 18, Two, by T. M. Richards.
- Ramsgate*, Cavendish.—December 27, Three, by T. Hadcocks.
- Rawtenstall*.—December 20, Six, by J. S. Langley.
- Ryde*, I.W., George-street.—December 20, One, by E. B. Pearson.
- Sheffield*, Cemetery-road.—December 27, Nine, by E. Carrington.
- Shepton Mallet*, Somerset.—December 20, Three, by T. Moss.
- South Bank*, Yorks.—December 27, Two, by D. M. Pryse.
- Southampton*, East-street.—December 20, Four, by J. Gibbon.
- Southport Tabernacle*.—December 30, Eight, by T. L. Edwards.
- Shegness*, St. Paul's.—December 13, Four, by G. Goodchild.
- South Leish*.—November 29, One, December 13, One; 27, One, by J. Tait.
- Swansea*, Landore.—December 13, Six, by C. Joshua.
- Treherbert*, Hope.—December 10, Four, by R. Powell.
- Tonbridge*, High-street.—December 27, Five, by James H. Blake.
- Thrapston*.—December 29, Three, by H. E. Roberts.
- Velindre*, Radnorshire.—January 8, Three, by W. G. Mansfield.
- Wainsgate*, Yorks.—January 8, One, by D. Lindsay.
- Weston-super-Mare*, Boulevard.—December 13, Six, by R. S. Latimer.
- Worcester*, Sansome Walk.—December 20, Ten, by J. Bell Johnston, M.A.
- Wincanton*.—December 27, Four, by J. Brown.

LONDON DISTRICT.

- Brentford*, North-road.—December 27, One, by R. Mutimer.
- Church-street*, Edgware-road.—December 27, Four, by J. Tucker.
- Ealing Dean*, W.—December 20, Thirteen, by W. L. Gibbs.
- Harlington*, W.—(For Harmondsworth Church).—December 10, Eight, by C. T. Byford.
- Lower Edmonston*.—December 27, Four, by D. Russell.
- Maze Pond*, Old Kent Road.—December 27, Two, by D. Walker.
- Putney*.—December 20, Four, by S. H. Wilkinson.
- Penge Tabernacle*, S.E.—December 30, Four, by J. W. Boud.
- Raleigh Park*, Brixton Hill, S.W.—December 20, Three, by A. Dickerson.
- Stratford-grove*, E.—December 13, Three, by W. H. Stevens.
- Willenden Green*.—December 27, Two, by W. Sears.
- Westminster*, Romney-street.—December 27, Five, by G. Davies.

THE
BAPTIST MESSENGER:

AND

Evangelical Treasury

AND

CHRONICLE OF THE CHURCHES

FOR THE YEAR 1897.

LONDON

61, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C

The Saviour's Many Crowns.

A SERMON BY THE LATE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

"On his head were many crowns."—Revelations xix. 12.

AH, well ye know what head this was, and ye have not forgotten its marvellous history. A head which once in infancy reclined upon the bosom of a woman! A head which was meekly bowed in obedience to a carpenter! A head which became in after years a fountain of water, and a reservoir of tears. A head which "sweat as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground!" A head which was spit upon, whose hair was plucked! A head which at the last in grim agony of death, crowned with thorns, gave utterance to the terrible death-shriek—*Iama Sabacthani!* A head which afterwards slept in the grave; and—glory be unto him that liveth and was dead, but is alive for evermore—a head which afterwards arose again from the tomb, and looked with radiant eyes of love upon the holy women waiting at the sepulchre. This is the head whereof John speaks in the words of the text. Who would have thought that a head, the visage of which was more marred than that of any other man—a head which suffered more from the tempests of heaven and of earth than ever mortal brow before, should now be surrounded with these many diadems, these star-bestudded crowns!

My brethren, it needs John himself to expound this glorious vision to you. Alas my eye has not yet seen the heavenly glory, nor has my ear heard the celestial song, I am therefore but 'as a little child among topless mountains, overawed with grandeur, and speechless with awe. Pray for me that I may utter a few words which the Holy Spirit may comfortably apply to your souls, for if he help me not, I am helpless indeed. With his divine aid, I dare to look upon the glorious diadems of our Lord and King. The crowns upon the head of Christ are of three sorts. First, *crowns of dominions*, many of which are on his head. Next, there are the *crowns of victory*, which he has won in many a terrible battle. Then there are the *crowns of thanksgiving* with which his church and all his people have delighted to crown his wondrous head.

I. First, then, let every believing eye look through the thick darkness and behold Jesus as he sits this day upon the throne of his Father, and let every heart rejoice while it sees the many CROWNS OF DOMINION upon his head. First, and foremost, there sparkles about

his brow the everlasting diadem of the King of *Heaven*. His are the angels. The cherubim and seraphim continually sound forth his praise. At his behest the mightiest spirit delights to fly, and carry his commands to the most distant worlds. He has but to speak and it is done. Cheerfully is he obeyed, and majestically doth he reign. His high courts are thronged with holy spirits, who live upon his smile, who drink light from his eyes, who borrow glory from his majesty. There is no spirit in heaven so pure that it does not bow before him, no angel so bright that it does not veil its face with its wings, when it draweth near to him. Yea, moreover, the many spirits redeemed, delight to bow before him, day without night they circle his throne, singing—"Worthy is he that was slain and hath redeemed us from our sins by his blood, honour, and glory, and majesty, and power, and dominion, and might, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." To be King of heaven were surely enough! The ancients were accustomed to divide heaven, and earth, and hell, into divers monarchies, and allot each of them to distinct kings; and surely heaven were an empire large enough even for an infinite Spirit. Christ is Lord of all its boundless plains. He laid the precious stones upon which was built that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God; he is the light of that city, he is the joy of its inhabitants, and it is their loving life ever more to pay him honour. Side by side with this bright crown behold another. It is the iron crown of *hell*, for Christ reigneth there supreme. Not only in the dazzling brightness of heaven, but in the black impenetrable darkness of hell is his omnipotence felt, and his sovereignty acknowledged; the chains which bind damned spirits are the chains of his strength; the fires which burn are the fires of his vengeance; the burning rays that scorch through their eyeballs, and melt their very hearts, are flashed from his vindictive eye. There is no power in *hell* besides his. The very devils know his might. He chaineth the great dragon. If he give him a temporary liberty, yet is the chain in his hand, and he can draw him back lest he go beyond his limit. *Hell* trembles at him. The very howlings of lost spirits are but deep bass notes of his praise. While in heaven the glorious notes shout forth his goodness; in *hell* the deep growlings resound his justice, and his certain victory over all his foes. Thus his empire is higher than the highest heaven, and deeper than the lowest *hell*. This earth also is a province of his wide domains. Though small the empire compared with others, yet from this world hath he perhaps derived more glory than from any other part of his dominions. He reigns on earth. On his head is the crown of *creation*. "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." His voice said, "Let there be light," and there was light. It was his strength that piled the mountains, and his wisdom that balances the clouds. He is Creator. If you lift your eye to the upper spheres, and behold yon stary worlds—he made them. They are not self-created. He struck them off like sparks from the anvil of his omnipotence; and there they glitter, upheld and supported by his might. He made the earth and all men that be upon it, the cattle on a thousand hills, and the birds that make glad the air. The sea is his, and he made it also.

Leviathan he hath formed, and though that monster maketh the deep to be hoary, yet is he but a creature of his power. Together with this crown of creation there is yet another—the crown of *providence*, for he sustaineth all things by the word of his power, Everything must cease to be, if it were not for the continual out-going of his strength. The earth must die, the sun must grow dim with age, and nature sink in years, if Christ supplied it not with perpetual strength. He sends the howling blasts of winter; he, anon, restrains them and breathes the breath of spring; he ripens the fruits of summer, and he makes glad the autumn with his harvest. All things know his will. The heart of the great universe beats by his power; the very sea derives its tide from him. Let him once withdraw his hands, and the pillars of earth must tremble; the stars must fall like fig leaves from the tree, and all things must be quenched in the blackness of annihilation.

On his head is the crown of providence. And next to this there glitters also the thrice-glorious crown of grace. He is the King of *grace*: he gives, or he withholdeth. The river of God's mercy flows from underneath his throne; he sits as Sovereign in the dispensation of mercy. He hath the keys of heaven; he openeth, and no man shutteth; he shutteth, and no man openeth; he calleth, and the stubborn heart obeys; he willeth, and the rebellious spirit bends its knee: for he is Master of men, and when he wills to bless, none can refuse the benediction. He reigneth in his church amidst willing spirits; and he reigns for his church over all the nations of the world, that he may gather unto himself a people that no man can number who shall bow before the sceptre of his love.

I pause here, overcome by the majesty of the subject, and instead of attempting to describe that brow, and those glittering crowns, I shall act the part of a seraph, and bow before that well-crowned head, and cry, "Holy, holy, holy, art thou Lord God of hosts! The keys of heaven, and death, and hell, hang at thy girdle; thou art supreme, and unto thee be glory for ever and ever."

And now, my brothers, what say you to this? Do not sundry thoughts at once stir in your hearts? Methinks I hear one say, "If this be so, if Christ hath these many crowns of dominion, how vain it is for me to rebel against him." My hearers, it may be some of you are striving against Christ. Like Saul of Tarsus, you have become "exceeding mad" against him. Your wife frequents the house of God, and you forbid her. You persecute your child because she follows Jesus. You hate the very name of Christ; you curse his servants; you despise his Word. You would if you could, spit upon his ministers; and, perhaps, burn his people. This know, that you have undertaken a battle in which you are certain of defeat. Who ever strove against him and prospered? Go, O man, and do battle against the lightning, and hold the thunder bolt in thine hand; go and restrain the sea, and hush the billows, and hold the winds in the hollow of thine hand; and when thou hast done this, then lift thy puny hands against the King of kings. For he that was crucified is thy Master, and though thou oppose him thou shalt not succeed. In thy utmost malice thou shalt be defeated, and the vehemence of thy wrath shall but return upon thine own head. Methinks I see this day the multitudes of Christ's

enemies. They stand up; they take counsel together—"Let us break his bands in sunder; let us cast away his cords from us." Hear ye, O rebels, yonder deep-sounding laugh? Out of the thick darkness of his tabernacle, Jehovah laughs at you. He hath you in derision. He saith, "I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." Come on, ye enemies of Christ, and be dashed in pieces. Come on in your most vehement force, and fall like the waves that are broken against the immovable rock. He ruleth and he will rule; and you one day shall be made to feel his power. For "At the name of Jesus every knee must bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth."

Another thought, right full of comfort, springs up to my mind. Believer, look to Christ's thrice crowned head this day and be comforted. Is Providence against thee? Correct thy speech; thou hast erred, God hath not become thine enemy. Providence is not against thee, for Jesus is its King; he weighs its trials and counts its storms. Thy enemies may strive, but they shall not prevail against thee—he shall smite them upon the cheek-bone. Art thou passing through the fire? The fire is Christ's dominion. Art thou going through the floods? They shall not drown thee; for even the floods obey the voice of the Omnipotent Messiah. Wherever thou art called thou canst not go where Jesu's love reigns not. Commit thyself into his hands. However dark thy circumstance, he can make thy pathway clear. Though night surround thee, he shall surely bring the day. Only trust thou in him; leave thy concerns both little and great in his Almighty hands, and thou shalt yet see how kind his heart, how strong his hand to bring thee out and glorify thee. Repose your confidence in him who is the King of kings. Come bring your burdens each one of you to his feet, and take a song away. If your hearts be heavy bring them here; the golden sceptre can lighten them. If your griefs be many, tell them into his ear: his loving eyes can scatter them, and through the thick darkness shall there be a bright light shining, and you shall see his face and know that all is well.

I am sure there is no more delightful doctrine to a Christian, than that of Christ's absolute sovereignty. I am glad there is no such thing as chance, that nothing is left to itself, but that Christ everywhere hath sway. If I thought that there was a devil in hell that Christ did not govern, I should be afraid that the devil would destroy me. If I thought there was a circumstance on earth, which Christ did not over-rule, I should fear that that circumstance would ruin me. Nay, if there were an angel in heaven that was not one of Jehovah's subjects, I should tremble even at him. But since Christ is King of kings, and I am his poor brother, one whom he loves, I give all my cares to him, for he careth for me; and leaning on his breast, my soul hath full repose, confidence, and security.

II. And now, in the second place. Christ hath many CROWNS OF VICTORY. The first diadems which I have mentioned are his by right. He is God's only begotten and well-beloved Son, and hence he inherits unlimited dominions. But viewed as the Son of Man, conquest has made him great, and his own right hand and his holy arm has won for him the triumph. In the first place, Christ has a crown which I pray

that every one of you may wear. He has a crown of victory over the world. For thus saith he himself, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Did you ever think of what a stern battle that was which Christ had to fight with the world? The world first said, "I will extinguish him, he will not be known;" and it threw on Christ heaps of poverty that there he might be smothered. But he shone in his poverty, and the seamless coat shone with greater light than the robe of the rabbi. Then the world attacked him with its threatenings. Sometimes they dragged him to the brow of a hill to cast him down headlong; at another time they took up stones to stone him. But he who was not to be hidden by poverty, was not to be quenched by threatening. And then the world tried its blandishments; it came with a fair face and presented to him a crown. They would have taken Christ and would have made him king; but he who cared not for their frowns was regardless of their smiles. He put away the crown from him: he came not to be a king but to suffer and to die. "My kingdom is not of this world," said he, "else would my servants fight." Have you never thought how through thirty years the world tempted Christ? That temptation of the devil in the wilderness was not the only one which he had to endure. Trials of every shape and size surrounded him; the world emptied its quiver; and shot all its arrows against the breast of the spotless Redeemer; but all holy, all unharmed was he. Still separate from sinners, he walked among them without defilement; feasted among them, and yet did not sanction their gluttony; drank with them, and yet was not a drunkard; acted as they acted in all innocent things, and was the world's man, and yet not a man of the world. He was in the world, but he was not of it; separate, and yet one of themselves; united to our race by closest ties, and yet evermore separate and distinguished from all mankind. I would, my brethren, that we could imitate Christ in our battle with the world. But alas, the world oftentimes gets the upper hand of us. Sometimes we yield to its smiles, and often do we tremble before its frowns. Have hope and courage, believer: be like your Master, be the world's foe and overcome it, yield not, suffer it never to entrap your watchful feet. Stand upright amid all its pressure, and be not moved by all its enchantments. Christ did this, and therefore around his head is that right royal crown of victory, trophy of triumph over the entire forces of the world.

Furthermore, the next crown he wears is the crown by which he has overcome sin. Sin has been more than a match for creatures of every kind. Sin fought the angels, and a third part of the stars of heaven fell. Sin defied the perfect Adam and soon overcame him, for even at the first blow he fell. Sin had a stern contest with Jesus our Lord, but in him it found its master. Sin came with all its temptations, but Christ resisted and overcame. It came with its horror and with its curse; Christ suffered, Christ endured, and so destroyed its power. He took the poisoned darts of the curse into his own heart, and there quenched its poison fires by shedding his own blood. By suffering, Christ has become master over sin. The dragon's neck is now beneath his feet. There is not a temptation which he has not known and therefore not a sin which he has not overcome. He has cast down

every shape and form of evil, and now forever stands he more than a conqueror through his glorious sufferings. Oh, my brethren, how bright that crown, which he deserves, who hath forever put away our sin by the sacrifice of himself. My soul enraptured restrains my voice, and once again I bow before his throne and worship, in spirit, my bleeding Ransomer, my suffering Saviour.

And then again, Christ wears about his head the crown of death. He died, and in that dreadful hour he overcame death, rified the sepulchre, split the stone which guarded the mouth of the grave, hewed death in pieces, and destroyed the arch destroyer. Christ seized the iron limbs of Death and ground them to powder in his hand. Death swayed his sceptre over all the bodies of men, but Christ has opened the gate of resurrection for his redeemed: and in that day when he shall put the trumpet to his lips and blow the resurrection blast, then shall it be seen how Christ is universal monarch over all the domains of death; for as the Lord our Saviour rose, so all his followers must. And then again, Christ is not only Lord of the world, king of sin, and king of death, but he is king of Satan too. He met that arch fiend foot to foot. Fearful was the struggle, for our champion sweat as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground; but he hewed his way to victory through his own body, through the agonies of his own soul. Desperate was the encounter. Head and hands, and feet and heart were wounded, but the Saviour flinched not from the fight. He rent the lion of the pit as though he were a kid, and broke the dragon's head in pieces. Satan was nibbling at Christ's heel, Christ trod on him and smashed his head. Now hath Jesus led captivity captive, and is master over all the hosts of hell. Glorious is that victory! Angels repeat that triumphant strain, his redeemed take up the song; and you, ye blood-bought sons of Adam, praise him too, for he hath overcome all the evil of hell itself.

And yet, once again, another crown hath Christ, and that is the crown of victory over man. Would to God my hearers, that he wore a crown for each of you. What hard work it is to fight with the evil heart of man. If you wish him to do evil, you can soon overcome him; but if you would overcome him with good, how hard the struggle! Christ would have man's heart, but man would not give it to him. Christ tried him in many a way; he wooed him, but man's heart was hard and would not melt. Moses came and said, "my Master, let me try and open man's heart;" and he used the fire, and the whirlwind, and the hammer of God; but the heart would not break, and the spirit would not open to Christ. Then Christ came, and he said, "Hard-heart, I will win thee; O, icy soul, I will melt thee." And the Soul said, "No, Jesus, I defy thee." But Christ said, "I will do it." And he came once upon a time to the poor Hard-heart, and brought his cross with him. "See, Hard-heart," said he, "I love thee; though thou lovest not me, yet I love thee, and in proof of this, see here; I will hang upon this cross." And as Hard-heart looked on, suddenly fierce men nailed the Saviour to the tree. His hands were pierced; his soul was rent in agony, and looking down on the Hard-heart, Jesus said, "Hard-heart, wilt thou not love me? I love thee; I have redeemed thee from death; though thou hatest me, yet do I die for thee; though thou kickest

against me, yet will I surely carry thee to my throne." And the Hard-heart said, "Jesus, I can bear it no longer; I yield to thee; thy love has overcome me; oh, I would be thy subject forever; only remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom, and let me be numbered with thy subjects both now and for ever." My hearers, has Christ ever overcome you? Say, has his love been too much for you? have you been compelled to give up your sins, wooed by his love divine? Have your eyes been made to run with tears at the thought of his affection for you, and of your own ingratitude? Have you ever thought this over?—"I, the blackest of sinners, have despised him; His Bible I have left unread; his blood I have trampled under foot, and yet he died for me, and loved me with an everlasting love." Surely, this has made you bow your knee; this has made your spirit cry—

"Oh, sovereign grace my heart subdue;
I will be led in triumph, too,
A willing captive to my Lord,
To sing the triumphs of his Word."

If this be the case with you, then you may yourself recognise one of the many crowns that are on his head.

III. Now, this brings me to the third point, and may I very earnestly ask your prayers, that, feeble as I am this morning, I may be helped while I endeavour to dwell upon this sweet subject.

I am preaching in my own spirit against wind and tide. There are times when one preaches with pleasure and delight, enjoying the Word; but now I can get nothing for myself, even if I am giving you anything. Pray for me, that nevertheless the Word may be blessed, that in my weakness God's strength may appear.

The third head deals with the CROWNS OF THANKSGIVING. Surely, concerning these we may well say, "On his head are many crowns." In the first place, all the mighty doers in Christ's church ascribe their crown to him. What a glorious crown is that which Elijah will wear—the man who went to Ahab, and when Ahab said, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" reproved him to his very face—the man who took the prophets of Baal, and let not one of them escape, but hewed them in pieces and made them a sacrifice to God. What a crown will he wear who ascended into heaven in a chariot of fire! What a crown, again, belongs to Daniel, saved from the lion's den—Daniel, the earnest prophet of God. What a crown will be that which shall glitter on the head of the weeping Jeremy, and the eloquent Esaias! What crowns are those which shall begirt the heads of the apostles! What a weighty diadem is that which Paul shall receive for his many years of service! And, then, my friends, how shall the crown of Luther glitter, and the crown of Calvin; and what a noble diadem shall that be which Whitfield shall wear, and all those men who have so valiantly served God, and who by his might have put to flight the armies of the Aliens, and have maintained the gospel banner erect in troublous times! Nay, but let me point to you a scene. Elijah enters heaven, and where goes he with that crown which is instantly put upon his head? See, he flies to the throne, and stooping there, he uncrowns himself, "Not unto me, not unto me, but unto thy name be all the

glory!" See the prophets as they stream in one by one; without exception, they put their crowns upon the head of Christ. And mark the apostles, and all the mighty teachers of the church; they all bow there and cast their crowns at his feet, who, by his grace, enabled them to win them.

"I ask them whence their victory came;
They, with united breath,
Ascribe their triumph to the Lamb,
Their conquest to HIS DEATH."

Not only the mighty doers, but the mighty sufferers do this. How brilliant are the ruby crowns of the martyred Saints. From the stake, from the gibbet, from the fire, they ascended up to God; and amongst the bright ones, they are doubly bright, fairest of the mighty host that surrounds the throne of the Blessed One. What crowns they wear! I must confess that I have often envied them. It is a happy thing to live in peaceful days; but while happy, it is not honourable. How much more honourable to have died the death of Lawrence, grilled to death upon that fiery gridiron, or to die pierced with spears, with every bone dislocated on the rack! A noble way of serving Christ, to have stood calmly in the midst of the fires, and have clapped one's hands, and cried, "I can do all things, even give my body to be burned for his dear name's sake!" What crowns are those which martyr's wear! An angel might blush to think that his dignity was so small compared with that of those riders in chariots of fire. Where are all those crowns? They are on the head of Christ. Not a martyr wears his crown; they all take their blood-red crowns, and then they place them on his brow—the fire crown, the rack crown, there I see them all glitter. For it was his love that helped them to endure; it was by his blood that they overcame.

And then, brethren, think of another list of crowns. They who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever. There are a few men whom God has enabled to do much for the church and much for the world. They spend and are spent. Their bodies know no rest, their souls no ease. Like chariots instinct with life, or dragged by unseen but resistless coursers, they fly from duty to duty, from labour to labour. What crowns shall theirs be when they come before God, when the souls they have saved shall enter paradise with them, and when they shall say, "Here am I and the children which thou hast given me!" What shouts of acclamation, what honours, what rewards, shall then be given to the winners of souls! What will they do with their crowns? Why, they will take them from their heads and lay them there where sits the Lamb in the midst of the throne. There will they bow and cry, "Jesus, we were not saviours, thou didst it all; we were but thy servants. The victory belongs not to us but to our Master. We did reap, but thou didst sow; we did cast in the net, but thou didst fill it full. All our success is accomplished through thy strength, and by the power of thy grace." Well may it be said of Christ, "On his head are many crowns."

But see, another host approaches. I see a company of cherubic spirits flying upwards to Christ; and who are these? I know them

not. They are not numbered among the martyrs; I read not their names among the apostles; I do not even distinguish them as having been written among the saints of the living God. Who are these? I ask one of them, "Who are you, ye bright and sparkling spirits?" The leader replies, "We are the glorious myriad of *infants*, who compose the family above. We from our mother's breasts fled straight to heaven, redeemed by the blood of Christ. We were washed from original depravity, and we have entered heaven. From every nation of the earth have we come; from the days of the first infant even to the winding up of earth's history, we in flocks have sped hither like doves to their windows," "How came ye here, ye little ones?" They replied, "Through the blood of Christ, and we come to crown him Lord of all." I see the countless multitude surround the Saviour, and flying to him, each one puts its crown upon his head, and then begins to sing again louder than before. But yonder I see another company following them. "And who are ye?" The reply is, "Our history on earth is the very opposite of the story of those bright spirits that have gone before, We lived on earth for sixty, or seventy, or eighty years, until we tottered into our graves from very weakness; when we died there was no marrow in our bones, our hair had grown grey, and we were crisp and dry with age." "How came ye here?" They reply—"After many years of strife with the world, of trials and troubles, we entered heaven at last." "And ye have crowns I see." "Yes," they say, "but intend not to wear them." "Whither are ye going then?" "We are going to yonder throne, for our crowns have been surely given us by grace, for nothing but grace could have helped us to weather the storm so many, many years." I see the grave and reverend sires pass one by one before the throne, and there they lay their crowns at his blessed feet, and then shouting with the infant throng, they cry, "Salvation unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

And then I see following behind them another class. *And who are ye?* Their answer is, "We are the chief of sinners, saved by grace." And here they come—Saul of Tarsus, and Manasseh, and Rahab, and many of the same class. And how came ye here? They reply, "We have had much forgiven, we were grievous sinners, but the love of Christ reclaimed us, the blood of Christ washed us; and whiter than snow are we, though once we were black as hell." And whither are ye going? They reply, "We are going to cast our crowns at his feet, and 'Crown him Lord of all.'" Among that throng, my dear hearers, I hope it may be my lot to stand. Washed from many sins, redeemed by precious blood, happy shall that moment be, when I shall take my crown from off my head, and put it on the head of him whom having not seen I love, but in whom believing, I rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. And it is a happy thought for me, this morning, that many of you will go with me there. Come brothers and sisters, in a few more years, many of us who have met Sunday after Sunday, will walk up in one band; and without exception, ye saints of God, I am persuaded we shall be prepared there to lay all our honours down, and to ascribe unto him the glory for ever and ever. "Ah, but" says Little-Faith, "I fear I shall never get into heaven, and therefore I

shall never crown him." Yes, but Little-Faith, do you know that one of the richest crowns Christ ever wears, and one of the brightest which adorns his brow, is the crown which Little-Faith puts on his head? For Little-Faith when it gets to heaven will say, "O what grace has been shown to me, that though the meanest of the family, I have been kept—though least of all the saints, yet hell has not prevailed against me—though weaker than the weakest, yet as my days so has my strength been." Will not your gratitude be great? Will not your song be loud, when approaching his dear feet, you lay your honours there and cry, "Blessed be Jesus who has kept my poor soul in all its dangers, and brought me safely at last to himself?" "*On his head are many crowns.*"

I cannot preach any longer, but I must ask you this question, my dear hearers: Have you a crown to put on the head of Jesus Christ to-day? "Yes," says one, "I have. I must crown him for having delivered me out of my last great trouble." "I must crown him," says another, "for he has kept up my spirits when I was well nigh despairing." "I must crown him," says another, "for he has crowned me with lovingkindness and tender mercy." Methinks I see one standing yonder who says, "Would that I could crown him. If he would but save me, I would crown him." Ah, if he would but give himself to me, I would gladly give myself to him. I am too worthless and too vile." Nay, my brother, but does your heart say, "Lord have mercy upon me?" Does your soul now crave pardon and forgiveness through the blood of Christ? Then go boldly near him this day and say to him, "Jesus, I the chief of sinners am, but I rely upon thee;" and in so saying thou wilt put a crown upon his head which shall make glad his heart, even as in the day when his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals. Make this the day of your espousals to him. Take him to be thy all in all, and then mayest thou look at this text with pleasure and say, "Yes, on his head are many crowns, and I have put one there, and I shall put another there ere long."

God add his blessing, for Jesus sake! Amen.

THE GROUND OF ASSURANCE.

AN incident is related by Legh Richmond, author of "The Dairyman's Daughter," of his daughter coming to him one day, two years after she had confessed Christ, and expressing the fear that she had never been truly converted. Legh Richmond replies:—

"Well, then let us both go straight to God's Word now, as if neither of us were Christians, and read what it says, 'Come unto Me all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'"

Then they prayed together, and he said:—

"Now we know we have come to him; let us take Him at His word, relying upon the promise that he who cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

Our Minister's Wife and her Noble Life.

CHAPTER III.—THE OLD FOLKS PARTY.

"MOTHER! I should very much like to carry out a plan if it would meet with your approval."

"And pray what is your plan, Mary?" asked Mrs. Goldacre, of her daughter.

"I want, Mother, to have all the old women in our Church some afternoon to tea, and then for them to spend a social evening with us. I feel sure that they would be delighted to come if cordially invited, and it might do them a power of good."

"What made you think of such a thing, my dear?"

"Just this, mother. You know if our people are noted for one thing more than another, it is for their hospitality. How often have Joseph and ourselves been invited out to dine and take tea and supper during the six weeks you have been with us! And what invitations are given us for the next fortnight! Why, if you persist in returning home, then we cannot accept one quarter of them. Now, I do not believe in all this receiving without giving in return, and what better can we do than show our gratitude to the Lord and His people by inviting His aged ones to our own home?"

"I am thankful to know, Mary, that I have a daughter that has

reverence and love for the aged. I often think of those beautiful lines of Charles Wesley, written just before that great and good poet launched into a better world.

In age and feebleness extreme,
Who shall a sinful worm redeem?

Jesus my only hope, Thou art,
Strength of my failing flesh and heart;

Oh! could I catch a smile from
Thee,
And drop into eternity!

"As aged Christians draw near their end they see the world in its true light, and feel as the young never can feel Jesus to be 'their only hope.' If, therefore, as the eyes grow dim, the ear deaf, the senses dull, the limbs weary, and the intellectual powers fail, we can, in any measure, contribute to their comfort, and aid them during the remainder of their brief journey, I am sure we shall be doing that which will be specially acceptable to the Lord. So by all means carry out your plan, and I shall be glad if you can do so while I am with you."

With her Son-in-law's hearty consent, invitations were sent out by Mrs. Goldacre to about twenty female members who were over sixty years of age. All but two were found eager to come,

and turned up promptly at the appointed time. The couple that could not come on account of distance and infirmity, were, however, well looked after by having some good things sent them from the feast that had been provided.

As I was asked to give aid on the occasion, I did so willingly, and in several respects lent a helping hand. The dining-room was found large enough for the accommodation of the guests; and after all had partaken of the savoury viands at the tea tables, the whole was cleared away for an evening's enjoyment.

Mrs. Barton was not only a good singer, but an accomplished pianist. As soon, therefore, as what might be termed the entertainment began, she took her seat on the music stool, sang sacred solos, and gave out hymns in which all could join. To say that the singing of these poor old people was attractive to the musical ear would be saying too much. Several voices were cracked, harsh, and strained; but it was evident, by the joy manifested on their wrinkled, wasted countenances that in lieu of musical talent, they "made melody in their hearts to the Lord." Then Mrs. Goldacre read a most interesting narrative specially calculated to encourage and cheer her aged auditors in their endeavour to do the will of God in patient endurance and suffering during the remaining period of their lives. A fine collection of her own and other drawings was next handed for inspection; and incidents were told connected with the various pictures which tended somewhat to enlarge the notions of those who gazed upon them regarding the beauty of various places in

the United Kingdom, and to increase their regard for persons of note who lived and died, or had been martyred in the service of God and of humanity. Mr. Barton then brought forward his "Wheel of Life," and after setting it up beneath a good central light, put a goodly number of pictures within it which, on being moved round performed such various antics as caused even these old folks to give way to merriment such as they were rarely accustomed to at their time of life. Then followed a collation, on partaking of which a general conversation ensued, which was allowed to generate into genial gossip, when the good old ladies tongues went according to the old saying, "nineteen to the dozen." It was indeed a happy gathering, and as Mrs. Barton, her husband and mother moved round the circle, talking kindly and sympathetically first to one and then to another, I could perceive how delighted they were to be honoured by giving so much enjoyment to such a company.

Well do I remember three in particular who were there that night. I could name others whose brief histories would be worth recording, but for the present these three must suffice.

First there was one poor old creature, well known as "Blind Hannah." Through excessive inflammation of the eyes unskilfully treated in her early childhood, she had lost her eyesight, and for nearly sixty-three years had lived in Egyptian darkness. For above forty years she had been a member of the Christian Church, and was supported partly by her own labour in the shape of knitting, and help

rendered by a few relatives and friends. Offered aid from the Poor Fund of the Church, she peremptorily declined it, saying that she believed there were others in the Church who needed it more than herself, and until she could use her fingers no longer, she would never have a penny. Though frail in body, she had a cheerful soul, and was rarely absent from the Lord's House, except through sickness or unavoidable causes. Very independent in her movements, she would respectfully decline help tendered to her when walking through the village or entering the chapel. She seemed to find her way through every maze as if by instinct, and never appeared to care much about her malady. To one who once asked her if she did not feel it greatly, her reply was, "No! not if persons do not talk to me about it and pity me, for if they do, then I begin to mourn and think that they have some rich blessing that I do not possess. But then a sweet thought comforts me, and it is this. Well, if I do not see in earth, I shall see in heaven, and see, too, more than anybody can see on earth, for you know what the good old hymn says:—

"There we shall see His face,
And never, never sin,

There from the rivers of His
grace.

Drink endless pleasures in."

"For that time I'm patiently waiting, and won't it be grand when my eyes are opened first in heaven, and I shall see Him seated on the Throne, who hung on the Cross for me."

This was beautiful, but to be faithful, I must add that she had one defect that sometimes made

her presence rather disagreeable. With a great fondness for joining in the singing, she had an awful squeaking voice. She knew a large number of the hymns by heart, and if one of her favourite hymns was given out, in her unenviable way she sang lustily. This was anything but to the edification of those who sat next to her. Those of us who were accustomed to her could bear it, but strangers felt it greatly. As an instance, on one occasion, I remember a casual hearer, who was a gifted member of a chapel choir in an adjacent village, unfortunately seating herself next to her and being horrified at her performance. Little knowing what sort of a character she had to deal with, she ventured rather harshly to ask Hannah to sing more quietly. But Hannah was "in the spirit," and did not feel at all inclined to be interfered with. Turning her face, therefore, to her astonished censor as if she saw her, in a tone of indignation that all around her could hear, she exclaimed, "You let me alone, I'm singing to the Lord and not to you," and as if in absolute defiance, she sang louder than ever. It is needless to say that whenever this musical friend favoured our chapel afterwards with a visit, she took good care to give Blind Hannah a wide berth.

A second old lady present was over ninety years of age. She was gifted with what is called "second sight," and could thread her needles without spectacles, and what was most droll was that she lived with a daughter who was sixty-five years of age, and who, in spite of the fact that she wore glasses, had often to ask her aged mother to thread her needle for her. She was an honoured

member who had served the Lord from her youth, and was still able, once at least, on the Lord's Day with the aid of a stick, to tread her way firmly to the chapel.

A third guest was a respectable widow, who had seen "seas of trouble." She had had a large family, and first lost her husband and then every child except a married daughter, as soon as they had arrived at dawning manhood or womanhood all passing away from some hereditary bowel disease that no doctor could cure, or from some contagious fever. That her haggard face bore traces of the sorrow she had been called upon to endure, can be well understood; but even on this happy evening she seemed for a

while to forget her grief, and to be as cheerful as any that were present.

As the company dispersed in good time, Blind Hannah was heard to say to a friend, "Well, I've been a member of the Church here and at Bradnock most of my life, and I've never seen old folk cared for like this before." It will be observed that she spoke as if she had seen what she had enjoyed and felt, but this was her habit, and without doubt she gave vent to the joyous feelings of all the aged guests who, unlike her, were blessed with the invaluable, though common gift of eyesight.

(To be Continued)

The Angelic Hierarchy.

By REV. J. HUNT COOKE.

IN the glimpses of the unseen world afforded us in the Holy Scripture Angels are often mentioned. They appear to be of great variety in power, in nature, and in glory. There seems to be a wide-spread notion that they are similar the one to the other, like the men and women of earth; but a careful study of the statements of the Bible shows us that they are of many ranks, and fulfil work of many kinds in the celestial world. John Milton, the poet, following the old theologians, spoke of nine ranks of angels. No complete account has been given, but mention is made of a greater number than this.

The word Angel literally means a messenger, and is applied to any being to whom is entrusted some work by God. But it is also an appropriated term, descriptive of active intelligent beings, whose home is in Heaven. The Psalmist in one place mentions three classes, (1) those that excel in might; (2) those that do His commandments; and (3) those that hearken to the voice of His word. Isaiah speaks of

Seraphim, or blazing Angels, beings whose nature is fire, their great work is to adore the holiness of God. Ezekiel describes the Cherubim, or the chariot Angels, which are yoked to the ear of God, they are also supposed to be throne bearers. In the Book of Daniel much is taught us. There we read of two classes, (1) Watchers; (2) Holy Ones. The Apostle Paul mentions seven orders, archangels, angels, principalities, powers, thrones, dominions, and mights. He does not give the distinctions; but according to ancient writers, the archangels are leaders, angels are the messengers of God, principalities are those who rule over nations. Of some of these Daniel makes mention, referring to the Prince of Persia, and Michael, the Prince of the chosen people. Powers, are those who rule the forces of nature. Thrones are the elders, or those who sit and worship in the upper temple. Dominions rule over other worlds, and mights are those sent to work miracles. In the Book of Revelation, there is an Angel of the waters, an Angel of the bottomless pit, and an Angel who has the seal of the living God. This does not exhaust the list, but may be sufficient to indicate the great variety of the heavenly hierarchy.

There are three things taught us on this subject of considerable importance.

1. Angels are deeply interested in the work of the salvation of mankind. Our Lord taught us that there is joy in the presence of the Angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. They delight in watching those who take the first step in the Divine life. And the same interest continues all the way along, for we read that "we are made a spectacle to the world, to Angels, and to men." It is a solemn thought that there are holy beings ever near and observant of our spiritual life and growth.

2. There is an angelic factor in the events of earth. Jacob, in a vision, had revealed to him, that they are continually coming and going, he saw that there was a ladder between earth and heaven. The Apostle teaches us that they are all ministering Spirits, sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation. At times, when we know not, they defend us from harm, for God gives His Angels charge concerning us, lest at any time we even dash our foot against a stone. No evil can come to us but by the wise loving permission of God, Who makes all things work together for good.

3. However glorious these Angels may be they are but the servants of the palace, but redeemed souls are the children of God, "Unto which of the Angels, said He, at any time, 'Thou art my Son.'" But this honour hath all the Saints. Our Lord took not on Him the nature of Angels, but became a man. This brings the soul-enlivening thought, that for His blood bought people, there is a destiny more glorious than that of the most glorious of the Angels of Heaven.

London.

Anecdotal Illustrations and Meditations from C. H. Spurgeon's Works.

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Gathered by

T. W. MEDHURST, CARDIFF.
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THE CHRISTIAN'S CHOICE TREASURES.

WHEN a Christian man constantly acts like a worldly man, can it be possible that he is acting rightly? When the two actions are precisely the same, and you discern no difference, is there not grave cause to suspect that there is no difference? By the fruit must you know the tree, and if two trees bear precisely the same fruit, is there not cause to suspect that they are the same sort of trees? My friends, may you and I shun this sin of trying to match ourselves with sinners as to the joys of this present life. If they say, "Here are my treasures," let us tell them about the "city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God," and say, "OUR TREASURE IS ABOVE." Let us imitate the noble Roman lady, who when her friend showed her all her trinkets, waited till her two fair boys came home from school, and then pointed to them, and said, "These are my jewels." Do you when you hear the worldling vaunting his happiness, drop in a gentle word, and say, "I, too, have my earthly comforts, for which I am grateful; but *my best delights are not here*, they spring neither from corn, nor wine, nor oil, nor could spices, and gold, and music, render them to me. My heart is in heaven, my heart is not here; I have set my soul upon things above; JESUS IS MY JOY, AND HIS LOVE IS MY DELIGHT. You tell me of what you love, permit me to tell you of what I love. I have listened patiently to you, now listen to one of the songs of Zion; I have walked with you over your estate, now let me take you over mine; you have told me of all the good things which you enjoy, do lend me a few minutes of your attention while I tell you of still better things which make my portion." The Lord takes it hard on the part of His people if they are ashamed of the blessings which He gives them; and if they never boast in the cross of Christ Jesus their Lord, they have good cause to be ashamed of themselves.

SPIRITUAL WORSHIP.

Is it not the fault of many of us who do try as much as possible to preserve and cultivate the simplicity of worship, that we are so everlastingly talking? I find it a very blessed thing at the Tabernacle to say, "Now let us sit still for a few minutes." It is often the very best part of the meeting, when the soul can masticate and digest the truth; and if this were done oftener when we meet together for worship, if more frequently solemn silence were proclaimed, I believe the very best results would follow from it. It is as much formality for people to think that they can not worship God without the voice of the preacher, as it is for others to fancy that they cannot worship God without an altar and a priest. It is ceremonialism to imagine that we *must* sing, or pray, or read in a certain order; or must sit still just so many minutes; how much better while all things are done decently and in order to conduct worship as the Divine Spirit may direct! The Spirit of God is free, and sometimes the best worship will be without words.

Would that the *spirituality* of worship were known throughout England! Would that it were recognised in every place of worship, that we must worship God who is a Spirit in spirit and in truth! We must keep this in mind constantly. Preachers cannot preach about it too often, for the rising race need to be told of it incessantly. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship HIM, must worship *Him* in spirit and in truth."—(John iv. 24.) Alas! we know that it is one thing to talk about spiritual things, but quite another thing to feel them; one thing to make a profession of them, and even to live in *outward* correspondence with that profession to a degree, but quite another thing to have the *inward* and spiritual grace. The world, of course, turns away with a sneer, and says, "What do we care for this spiritual fanaticism?" And we can reply to the world, "Thou knowest nothing about it! How canst thou know it, for it is spiritually discerned!" But you and I must see it, that every act of worship which we perform is done in the Spirit. We must pray in the Spirit, sing in the Spirit, and preach in the Spirit. Only that music is sweet in God's ear which comes from the heart, and only that praise is accepted which is the work of His Spirit in the soul. Let nothing beguile you from your steadfastness in the spirituality of your worship, and press it upon others everywhere, wherever you have opportunity, that the Father seeketh such to worship Him, as worship Him in spirit and in truth.

"GO FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH."

"Thou shalt never find a bundle of affliction which has not bound up in the midst of it sufficient grace. Thou must not judge a future trial by thy present portion of strength. True, thou art not strong enough now to face the trial that is to come upon thee at some future time, but thou shalt "go from strength to strength."—"As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Look at yonder rivulet. If thou shouldst ask it how it will have water enough next summer, for it is all running

away as quickly as possible, what would be its answer? Would it not say, "Man, I have enough for the day, and although every drop of this water will be gone by to-morrow, I shall always have a fresh stream running in, so that if thou passest by some twenty years hence, I shall be as full as I am now, though my water is always rushing away." Ah, little faith, the fountain cannot be dried, fresh necessities shall have fresh mercies. Yea, so far from decreasing in strength thou shalt grow and wax stronger. Like the sun in the heavens, thou shalt shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. There shall be an increase of spiritual power, for thou shalt advance "from strength to strength." We grow as we advance if heaven be our goal. If we spend our strength in God's ways we shall find it increase.

"All needful grace will God bestow,
And crown that grace with glory too;
He gives us all things, and withholds
No real good from upright souls."

Arrow Points.

By Pastor J. CLARK.

Faith is not fancy, but a force.

Despise not the aged. Many an old tree bears the sweetest fruit.

You cannot reach the right end by the wrong means.

There is guilty silence as well as guilty speech.

A heavy purse may prove a curse.

What goes into the hopper gravel, will never come out grist.

The poorest sinner may have a rich Saviour.

Heroes are found on sick beds, as well as on battle-fields.

There must be work as well as worship, and worship as well as work.

Brightest moments pass away,
Give your heart to God to-day.

Bass River, Nova Scotia.

Revivals.

REVIVALS in religion, may be the effect of some quiet stir by the Spirit of God, acting on thoughtful minds; or the result of exciting meetings, to which many persons in various states of mind, have been gathered. Many minds have already been evangelised, but have relapsed into indifference, and now a spiritual quickening has come, developing into discipleship to Christ.

1. Freshness of life. Life is a condition of good, and is the root of all blessing. Healthy life is a first cause of enjoyment. Regeneration is a new life, spiritual in character and exercise. It is a life of grace and of holiness. A life subject to decay needs reviving. Decay is not the element of life, but the evidence of neglect. It needs arousing and directing.

2. Freshness of love. All true life possesses and exercises love. Destitute of love, we are destitute of love, lifeless and loveless creatures. Both life and love are by the quickening of the Spirit. Life seeks to the Saviour, and love clings to him. He is the source of life, and the object of love. He gives us life and commands our love. He that yields no love to Christ, shows that he derives no life from him. "If any man has not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

3. Freshness of joy. Believing leads to rejoicing. Receiving Christ as our salvation, we rejoice in him. His love and teaching, his presence and sympathy, are our joy and rejoicing. The first disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit quickens the desire for joy, and when it declines, revives the desire, and restores to us the joy of salvation.

4. Freshness of zeal. Zeal is stimulated by the fervency of love and joy. Zeal is the breathing and action of love and joy. The zeal of obedience, of service for Christ, is prompted and sustained by the spirit of love and joy. Love to Christ shows itself by zeal, running in the way of his commands. Zeal often flags, and needs the reviving.

5. Freshness of Hope. The revival of the other graces, put new life and brightness into hope. The revival of the Christian man, gives an impetus to all his graces, habits, and prospects. All this change is by the Spirit that convicted him, and that now restores him. Such live and die "rejoicing in hope."

How God doth make us Blessings.

BY WILLIAM LUFF.

"I WANT to be a blessing," said a raindrop in the sky,
 While floating in a fairy cloud, bright, beautiful and high.
 "And you shall be a blessing," said the Father of the rain,
 As He cast the jewel downward, where its coming seemed in vain.
 "I am falling in the ocean," said the raindrop—nature's tear;
 But a shipwrecked sailor caught it, and *it stayed his fevered fear.*

"I want to be a blessing," said a star-point in the night;
 "And you shall be a blessing, child," replied the God of light.
 But still it shone and quivered, came no nearer to the earth;
 Would He take its lustrous lantern, seeking jewels of true worth?
 Oh, it wanted so to wander, Blessing many with its light:
 But God fixed it in the heavens, and it steered the sailor right.

"I want to be a blessing," said the drift-wood on the shore;
 To build a vessel deep and strong, and brave the tempest's roar.
 But still the drift-wood floated, till the angry billow toss'd
 High and dry the useless rubbish, where hope seemed forever lost.
 But the shipwrecked sailors landed, and the drift-wood made their fire,
 And the warmth brought life and blessing, all the *wishes could desire.*

"I want to be a blessing," is a noble wish and good:
 And God will grant the holy prayer; but be it understood,
 The rain-drops may be scattered, and the stars be fixed in heaven:
 And the stately vessels beauty, to no broken spars be given;
 But the scattered drops bring blessing, and the fixed and shining star:
 While a blessing crowns the burning of the old oft storm-toss'd spar.

Morning Devotions.

BE always on the outlook, fellow-disciples, for thy Lord, especially in the early morning, when the world is fresh and the breeze curls the wavelets as they break in musical ripple on the sand. Ere the sun is risen above the hills, and while shadows lie dark and far on shore and sea, thou wilt probable find the Master taking pleasure in the works of his hands. There, where the foot of the roysterer and dissolute cannot intrude, where the voices of the world's dissipation are unheard, while the pulses are unstirred by the fever of the world's

passion, and the atmosphere of the soul is untainted by the soil of the world's sin, at early dawn, amid nature, among the mountains, on the silver line of sand, in the woodland brake, in the garden, thou shalt hear the voice of thy heart saying, "It is the Lord." Thou wilt know him by the fragrance of his breath, by the considerateness of his care, by the pity as of a father to his children, by his knowledge of mysteries hidden from all else; and when thou knowest him to be present, gird thy coat about thee in the modesty of true humbleness, plunge through the dividing waves, and never rest till thou hast found thy way to his feet.

It is wonderful what Jesus is to those that meet him thus. They may be tired with the night watch, weary with their run of ill-success, out of heart and hope, but they never approach him without finding a fire kindled by his hand, the fish and bread of prepared provision, and a welcome to breakfast. Never let that chance of the morning interview pass unimproved. Never let him stand there in vain; never let love descry him without the strength of a mighty purpose bearing thee to his embrace.

F. B. MEYER.

Spurgeon in a Hospital.

THE following anecdote was told by John B. Gough. He says, "Mr. Spurgeon and I, visiting a hospital, went into an airy and pleasant ward, where the boy lay whom he wished to see. The boy was greatly delighted on seeing Mr. Spurgeon. The great preacher sat down by his bedside and took his hand saying:

"My son, there are precious promises for you hanging on these walls. You are going to die, my dear boy. You are tired of lying here on your couch, and soon you will be at rest. Nurse, did he sleep well last night?"

"No, he coughed a good deal."

"Oh, my son, it is very hard for you to suffer all day and cough all night. Do you love Jesus Christ?"

"Yes, sir."

"And Jesus loves you, and bought you with his precious blood, and he knows what is best for you. It seems hard for you to lie here in bed and hear the boys playing in the streets, but soon the Lord will take you home, and then he will tell you why there is so much suffering in the world, and you will be happy for ever."

"Then, placing his hand on the head of the child, he said, 'Jesus, Master, this dear lad puts up his little hand to reach Thine. Take it, beloved Saviour; bear him over the river of death, and take him to heaven when it seems best to Thee. Comfort him until that happy

time arrives ; reveal Thyself to him while he remains here, and let him look to Thee and think of Thee more and more as his loving Saviour.'

"After a moment he said, 'My son, is there not something you want? Would you like a canary in a cage, so that you can hear him sing in the morning? Nurse, bring him a canary to-morrow morning. Good-bye, my boy; very likely you will see the Saviour before I do.'

"Seeing Mr. Spurgeon seated by the cot of a dying lad whom he had taken from the street, he seemed to me even more grand and noble than when I saw him moving great audiences with his eloquence. Like Richter, the great German poet, he loved God and he loved children."—*American Messenger.*

The Fatal Flower.

TRAVELLERS who visit the falls of Niagara are directed to a spot on the margin of the precipice over the boiling current below, where a gay young lady a few years since lost her life. She was delighted with the wonders of the unrivalled scene, and ambitious to pluck a flower from a cliff where no human hand had before ventured, as a memorial of the cataract, and her own daring. She leaned over the verge, and caught a glimpse of the surging waters far down the battlement of rocks, while fear for a moment darkened her excited mind. But there hung the lovely blossom upon which her heart was fixed; and she leaned, in a delirium of intense desire and anticipation, over the brink. Her arm was outstretched to grasp the beautiful form which charmed her fancy, the turf yielded to the pressure of her light feet, and with a shriek she descended, like a falling star, to the rocky shore, and was borne away gasping in death.

How impressively does the tragical event illustrate the way in which a majority of impenitent sinners perish for ever! It is not a deliberate purpose to neglect salvation; but in pursuit of imaginary good, fascinated with pleasing objects just in the future, they lightly, ambitiously, and insanelly venture *too far*.

They sometimes fear the result of desired wealth or pleasure; they seem to hear the thunder of eternity's depth, and recoil a moment from the allurements of sin; but the solemn pause is brief, the onward step is taken, the fancied treasure is in the grasp, when a despairing cry comes up from Jordan's wave, and the soul sinks into the arms of the *second death*. Oh, every hour life's sand's are sliding from beneath incautious feet, and with sin's fatal flower in the *unconscious* hand, the trifer goes to his doom!

The requiem of each departure is an echo of the Saviour's question, "What shall a man give in *exchange* for his soul.

Reviews.

Religious Equality in its Connexion with National and Religious Life, ALEXANDER MACLAREN, B.A., D.D. New Edition. Alexander and Shephard, Furnival St., Holborn.

Nothing could be more timely than this re-issue of Dr. Maclaren's logical and masterful lecture, in which are traced the tendencies and operations of Religious Equality and its opposite in National and Religious Life. The two forms of the relations of Church and State presented by the Established and the Free Churches respectively, are dealt with in a powerful and convincing manner, and we most heartily re-echo the nearly closing words of the Lecture: Nonconformists, stand to your principles, they are worth fighting for. Have the courage of your opinions and in all moderations, and with a careful avoidance of the corrupting leaven of human passion, but with resolute firmness avow them, and diffuse them and act upon them.

Complete Bible Commentary for English Readers. Edited by C. J. Ellicott, D.D., London, Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol. Cassell and Company.

We agree with the *Spectator*, a greater boon to Students than this Commentary has never been published in England. We advise all our Bible Class Teachers and Bible Union Leaders not to miss securing this precious helpful treasure, originally issued at the

cost of Eight Guineas, and now may be had in Weekly Parts, complete edition, 36 parts, at Sixpence each.

The Quiver, Illustrated Magazine for Sunday and General Reading: The leader, a Sunday with the Prince and Princess of Wales, illustrated from photographs, will make the February part of special interest and value to English readers, and the glory of service by the Bishop of Ripon, will sustain one of its sentences. Christ taught His disciples that service is the test of life.

The Sword and Trowel, says, during the past month, the regular issue of Mr. Spurgeon's Sermons, covering a period of 42 years, has reached 2,500. The one completing the twenty-fifth hundred is specially suitable for distribution amongst the unsaved. It is published by Passmore and Alabaster, and may be had reduced in size, Demy 32mo., for one half-penny, or printed in gold, one penny each. The subject is, Entrance and Exclusions. The ten Virgins. Part sixteen of the Treasury of David, commenting up to the 67th Psalm.

Great Thoughts, for February, has its usual selection of wise and precious gems, and also likenesses and sketches of Dr. Edghill, Chaplain General of Her Majesty's Forces, William Tyndale, Lawrence Stern, Samuel Richardson, George

W. E. Russell, Robert Hervick, and Mr. Alfred Austin. *Helping Words* new volume commenced last month. *Mothers and Daughters*, a bright beautiful magazine, worthy of a place in every household. *The Prize Reciter* opens with sketches of John Wesley.

Religious Tract Society. We are sometimes asked to advise as to which would be most likely to be read with profit as Tracts distributed from house to house. We have replied, *Friendly Greetings*. As we read through the various contents of Part three of *Sunday Hours for Boys and Girls*, and then look through *The Boys' Own* and *Girls' Own Magazines*, we were struck with the completeness with which each one presents its work in its own department. *The Leisure Hour* and *Sunday at Home* do not abate a jot in quality or quantity as compared with former numbers.

The Baptist Magazine has a very good article. "Our Distinctive Principle," by an Old Baptist. We have also received *The Irish Baptist Magazine*, *The Morning Star*, *Light and Life*, *The Monthly Records of the Protestant Evangelical Missions*, &c.

Words of Advice for Seekers, by C. H. SPURGEON. Passmore & Alabaster.

We recommend this volume to seekers and also to those who have to deal with Inquiring Souls. It will be very helpful to such, containing as it does, twenty phrases of the subject.

BAPTIST MESSENGER, 1896.—Again has the yearly volume of this work come before us, interesting beyond its special features on account of the Editor, our old townsman, the Rev. W. A. Blake, who is now seldom seen amongst us, although, in the past, taking such an active interest in all matters which concerned, and were for the good of Brentford. The prominent feature of the work is still twelve sermons of the late C. H. Spurgeon, but there are many gleanings from other sources, some anecdotal illustrations from Mr. Spurgeon's work; some scenes from the life of the old Welsh preachers, miscellaneous matters and a chronicle of the Baptist churches. As an appendix the Baptist Year Book and Almanack is given, which must be of use and interest to all connected with the churches. The publishing office is at 61, Paternoster Row, E.C., and the price of the volume, is 1s. 9d. post free.—County of Middlesex Independent, Feb., 1897.

PRECIOUS STONES.

WE see in a jeweller's shop that there are pearls and diamonds and precious stones; so there are files, cutting instruments, and many sharp tools for their polishing; and while they are in the work-house they are continual neighbours to them, and often come under them. The Church in God's jewellery—His work-house where His jewels are polishing for His palace and house: and those He especially esteems and means to make most resplendent He hath oftenest His tools upon."—*Archbishop Leighton*.

Denominational Intelligence.

CHANGES IN THE PASTORATE.

Rev. J. Neighbour, from Cirencester, to Trinity Church, West Retford, Notts.

Rev. F. C. M. Buck, from Midland College, Nottingham, to Hillsborough Church, Sheffield.

Rev. F. G. Benskin, B.A., from Regent's-park College, to West End, Hammersmith.

Rev. Joseph W. Kemp, from the Bible Training Institute, Glasgow, to Kelso.

Rev. W. Maynard, from Syston, to Sibley.

Rev. A. O. Hopkins, from Cardiff College, to Mount Carmel English Church, Caerphilly.

Rev. J. Smith, from Pastor's College, to Cottage-green Chapel, Walworth.

Rev. F. W. Westby, from Chadwell Heath, to West Hendon.

Rev. Charles H. Homer, from Port Elizabeth, to Barnes, Surrey.

RECOGNITIONS.

Rev. F. J. Feltham has been welcomed as pastor of Wellington-street Church, Stockton-on-Tees. Revs. J. A. Clark, C. E. Stone, A. W. Curwood, E. J. Hope, took part.

Rev. F. C. Lusty has been recognised as pastor of Sackville-street Church, Kettering. Revs. T. Phillips, D. John and G. C. Leader took part.

Rev. Alfred Bax, late of Salter's Hall Church, Islington, has been recognised as pastor of Wycliffe Church, Reading. Mr. E. P. Collier, J.P., presided, and Revs. C. B. Sawday, Forbes Jackson, W. A. Findlay, W. Armstrong and R. M. Hunter took part.

Rev. H. R. K. Kempton has been ordained to the pastorate of St. George's-place Church, Canterbury. Rev. Thomas Spurgeon preached, Rev. W. Townsend (late pastor) presided at the public meeting; Dr. A. McCaig delivered the charge to the minister, and Rev. N. Dobson addressed the church.

Rev. Joseph Fox, of Brighton-grove College, Manchester, has been ordained to the pastorate of Trinity Church, Haslingden. Principal Marshall gave the charge to the pastor, and Rev. Charles Williams addressed the church. Revs. T. Thomas, B. Bowker, T. B. Field, J. McCleery, and J. Hatton took part.

Rev. Ralph Holme has been recognised as pastor at Walsworth-road Church, Hitchin. Revs. E. G. Gange, Principal Davies, J. Clark and C. M. Hardy took part.

PRESENTATIONS.

TONBRIDGE: A MINSTER'S GOLDEN WEDDING. — The customary new year's tea in connection with the Baptist Chapel took place in the Schoolroom on January 27th, and additional interest attached to the event from the fact that it was also the anniversary of the golden

wedding of the pastor, Rev. J. H. Blake and Mrs. Blake, who have now been in Tonbridge just over five years. There was a large company, the room, which had been prettily decorated by Miss Blake and Mrs. Constable, being filled, and Mr. Bolton kindly sent choice plants from his Hadlow Road Nursery. After an enjoyable meal, Miss North delighted the company with selections on the organ while the tables were being cleared, and afterwards a meeting was held, under the genial presidency of Mr. F. East, C.C., J.P. After a hymn and prayer, the Pastor read congratulatory letters he had received from the Revs. C. G. Baskerville, G. Noel Storrs, F. Orton, and W. M. Edwards, who regretted their inability to attend, and others from friends at a distance. He also spoke on the satisfactory position of the church and the principal events of his five years' ministry. The Revs. J. Smith (Tunbridge Wells), Alfred Walker (London), J. Cattell (Bessells Green), and D. Chapman (Yalding), all delivered short addresses, in which they congratulated Mr. and Mrs. Blake on their celebration, and alluded particularly to the success of the past year's work. The most interesting feature of the evening, perhaps, was the presentation by Mrs. East, in a witty speech, of a purse of gold to Mr. and Mrs. Blake from the church and congregation, and a congratulatory address was also delivered by Mr. E. Tanton as representing the Bible Union and Christian Endeavour and Tract Societies. The Pastor made a suitable and grateful response. Col. March also spoke a few words expressive of his pleasure at being present on the happy occasion. The proceedings were varied with vocal music by Miss North and Mr. Chapman.

Rev. F. W. Walter, a gold watch from the church at Bildeston, on leaving for Leeds.

Rev. M. Ashby, a purse of gold from Breachwood-green Church, Herts.

Rev. John Thomas, an illuminated address from Garston Tabernacle, Liverpool. Mrs. Thomas a Teacher's Bible.

Rev. G. Wearman, £20 from Lewisham-road Church, Greenwich. Rev. H. J. Wicks, an address and a purse of gold from the church at Minchinhampton, a photograph from the Christian Endeavour Society, and a clock with chimes from the P.S.A. Society,

NEW CHAPELS.

A new chapel has been built at Purfleet, where services have been conducted for the past three years by workers from Grays Church (Rev. T. Heywood), at an office lent by the Anglo-American Oil Company. A site, situated on the High-road, was secured at a nominal rental from Mr. S. Whitbread, and on this has been built an iron structure, seating two hundred and sixty persons, at a cost of £250, £100 of which has been given by the Oil Company. Opening services have been conducted by Revs. Dr. Duncan, T. Heywood, E. A. Davies and J. J. Winsor. The cement and bricks used in the building were given by local firms.

Plans have been passed for the erection of a new chapel in Queen's-road, Wimbledon. It will be of Gothic design, and seat 1,000 persons. The present building will be converted into Sunday-schools.

A plot of land situated in Queen's-road, Broadstairs, has been purchased as a site for a place of worship for the congregation under the pastorate of Rev. T. Davies.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Baptist Missionary Society has completed its programme for the annual meetings. Rev. James Owen, of Swansea, will deliver the address at the introductory prayer-meeting

on April 22; on the following day there will be the quarterly meeting of committee; on Sunday, 25th, the annual sermons will be preached in the various chapels in the metropolis. Mr. John Town, of Leeds, will preside over the members' meeting on Tuesday morning, the 27th; in the evening there will be the missionary *soirée* in Cannon-street Hotel, with Sir Charles Elliott, K.C.S.I., late Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, as chairman, and Revs. James Baillie, J. P. Bruce (China), and J. H. Weeks (Congo), as speakers. Dr. Fairbairn, of Mansfield College, Oxford, has consented to preach the annual sermon, in Bloomsbury Chapel, on Wednesday, 28th, at noon. At the annual public meeting in Exeter Hall, on the evening of the 29th, the chairman will be Mr. R. W. Perks, M.P.; speeches will be given by Revs. W. J. Dawson, R. Wright Hay (Dacca), and A. G. Shorrocks (China). On Friday, 30th, the engagements will be the Missionary Breakfast Conference with Mr. W. R. Rickett in the chair; a paper will be read by

Rev. J. T. Forbes. At the young people's meeting in the evening Judge Bompas, Q.C., is to preside; Revs. R. Glennie (Congo), W. Bowen James (India), and Moir Duncan (China) will speak. Mr. Albert Spicer, M.P., will preside at the Missionary Breakfast of the Ladies' Zenana Association on the 28th, when Rev. A. G. Shorrocks (China) and two Indian Missionaries on furlough will deliver addresses.

Pastor James Smith of Tonbridge Wells, has been seized with Paralysis but it is hoped far and wide, that his valuable life may be spared.

Pastor J. Mountain of Tonbridge Wells, who was baptized some four years ago by Pastor F. B. Meyer, has resigned his pastorate and connexion with the Countess of Huntingdon Denomination, and having baptized a number of his former flock, who have taken Salem Chapel and are having it altered, and Mr. Mountain having acceded to the request that he will become their Pastor. The Chapel will be opened shortly as Salem Free Church.

OUR INFLUENCE.

THE stone flung from my careless hand in the lake splashed down into the depths of the flowing water, and that was all. No, it was not all. Look at those concentric rings rolling their tiny ripples among the sedgy reeds, dipping the overhanging boughs of yonder willow, and producing an influence, slight but conscious, to the very shores of the lake itself.

That hasty word, that word of pride or scorn flung from my lips in casual company, produces a momentary depression, and that is all. No, it is not all. It deepened that man's disgust at godliness, and it sharpened the edge of that man's sarcasm, and it shamed that half-converted one out of his penitent misgivings, and it produced an influence, slight but eternal, on the destiny of an immortal soul.

Oh! it is a terrible power that I have—this power of influence—and it clings to me. I cannot shake it off. I cannot live to myself, must either be a light to illumine, or a tempest to destroy.

This necessary element of power belongs to us all. The sphere may be contracted, the influence may be small, but a sphere and influence we have.—*W. M. Punshon, LL.D.*

BAPTISMS.

Anstruther, N.B.—January 3, One, by H. Edwards.

Blackwood, Mon., Mount Pleasant.—January 17, Three, by H. J. Harris.

Bratton, Wills.—January 17, Three, by W. Fry.

Bideford.—December 27, Four, by F. Durbin.

Briton Ferry, Jerusalem.—January 10, Seven, by R. Powell.

Briton Ferry, Salem.—January 10, Five, by D. Davies.

Burnley, E, Mon Chapel.—January 3, Five.

Barrow-in-Furness, Abbey-road.—January 31, Three, by W. Walker.

Burnley, Mount Pleasant.—January 31, Two, by J. P. Newman.

Battle, Zion.—February 7 Four, by G. B. Richardson.

Caersws.—January 23, Eight, by T. E. Williams.

Church, Lancs.—February 3, Fifteen, by E. M. Durbin.

Christchurch Hants.—February 4, One, by R. J.

Cardiff, Hope—January 31, Two, by T. W. Medhurs

Carmarthen.—January 22, Three, Ly A. Mills.

Crickhowell, Breconshire.—January 24, One, by W. M. Yorwerth.

Derby, Junction-street.—January 19, Six, by P. A. Hudgell.

Golcar, Huddersfield.—January 3. Two, by W. Gay.

Glasgow, Frederick-street.—Five, by E. Aubrey.

Glasgow Springburn.—January 4, Three, by J. Horne.

Glasgow, Cambridge-street.—January 31, Three, by E. Last.

Hull, Trafalgar-street.—January 31, Two, by J. S. Griffiths.

Hail Western, Hunts.—January 17, One by W. E. Davies.

Kingsthorpe, Northampton.—January 20, Six, by F. Neal.

Leeds, Hunslet Tabernacle.—January 31. Three, by A. E. Greening.

Leicester, Friar-lane.—January 31, Four, by J. Evans.

Manchester, Rochdale-road.—January 31 One, by H. Gruber.

Milford Haven.—January 31, One, by W. H. Prosser.

Newbury.—January 24, Three, by G. J. Knight.

Pembroke Dock.—January 31, Two, by R. C. Roberts.

Pontyclun, Bethel.—January 17, Two, by L. T. Evans.

Pisgan, Talywam, Mon.—January 17, Six, by J. Morgan.

Rawdon, near Leeds.—January 31, Eight, by A. P. Fayers.

Rochdale, West-street.—January 31, Nine, by C. Deal.

Sheffield, Cemetery-road.—January 31, Three, by C. Carrington.

Skegness, St. Paul's.—February 7, Two, by G. Goodchild.

Speen, Bucks.—February 3, One; February 3, Nine, by W. Harrison.

Tenby, South Wales.—January 31, Five, by C. Thomas.

Thurleigh, Bedford.—February 7, Three, by G. Chandler.

Velindre, Radnorshire.—February 7, One, by W. G. Mansfield.

West Hartlepool.—January 24, Two, by A. W. Curwood.

LONDON DISTRICT.

Blackheath, S.E., Shooters Hill Road.—January 31, Three, by W. L. Mackenzie.

Lee, S.E., Bromley-road.—January 31, Six, by J. W. Davies.

Moorfields, Eldon-street, (Welsh).—January 31, Two, by W. A. Jones.

Mansion Mission, Camberwell-road, S.E.—January 10, Eight, by G. W. Linnecar.

Poplar, Cotton-street, E.—January 31, Twelve, by W. Jones.

Stratford, Carpenters Road, E.—January 24 Six, by F. T. Passmore.

Upton Chapel, Lambeth.—February 3, Thirteen, by W. Williams.

THE
BAPTIST MESSENGER:

AND

Evangelical Treasury

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One Antidote for Many Ills.

A SERMON BY THE LATE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

“Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.”—Psalms lxxx, 19.

THIS seems to be the only prayer the Psalmist puts up in this Psalm, as being of itself sufficient for the removal of all the ills over which he mourned. Though he sighs over the strife of neighbours and the ridicule of foes; and lamenting the ill condition of the goodly vine, he deploras its broken hedges, and complains of the wild beasts that waste and devour it, yet he does not petition the Most High against these evils in detail; but gathering up all his wishes into this one prayer, he reiterates it o'er and o'er—“Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.” The reason is obvious. He had traced all the calamities to one source, “O Lord, how long wilt thou be angry—?” And now he seeks refreshing from one fountain! Let thy face no longer frown, but let it beam upon us with a smile and all shall then be well. This is a sweet lesson for the church of Christ. “In your troubles, trials, and adversities, seek first, chiefly, and above everything else, to have a revival of religion in your own breast, the presence of God in your own heart; having that, you have scarcely anything beside to pray for; whatever else may befall you shall work for your good, and all that seems to impede your course, shall really prove a prosperous gale, to waft you to your desired haven: only, take care that you seek of God that you yourselves are turned again unto him, and that he would give you the light of his countenance; so shall you be saved.”

This morning's sermon, then, will be especially addressed to my own church, on the absolute necessity of true religion in our midst, and of revival from all apathy and indifference. We may ask of God multitudes of other things, but amongst them all, let this be our chief prayer: “Lord, revive us; Lord, revive us!” We have uttered it in song; let me stir up your pure minds, by way of remembrance, to utter it in your secret prayers, and make it the daily aspiration of your souls. I feel, beloved, that notwithstanding all opposition, God will

help us to be "more than conquerors, through him that loved us," if we are true to ourselves, and true to him. But though all things should go smoothly, and the sun should always shine upon our heads, we should have no prosperity if our own godliness failed; if we only maintained the form of religion, instead of having the very power of the Holy Spirit manifested in our midst.

EI shall endeavour to urge upon you this morning, first of all, *the benefits of revival*, as we shall find some of them suggested in this Psalm; and secondly, *the means of revival*—"Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts;" then, thirdly, I shall exhort you to *use these means, that you may acquire these benefits*.

I. THE BENEFITS OF REVIVAL TO ANY CHURCH IN THE WORLD will be a lasting blessing. I do not mean that false and spurious kind of revival which was so common a few years ago. I do not mean all that excitement attendant upon religion, which has brought men into a kind of spasmodic godliness, and translated them from sensible beings, into such as could only rave about a religion they did not understand. I do not think that is a real and true revival. God's revivals, whilst they are attended with a great heat and warmth of piety, yet have with them knowledge as well as life, understanding as well as power. The revivals that we may consider to have been genuine, were such as those wrought by the instrumentality of such men as President Edwards in America, and Whitfield in this country, who preached a free-grace gospel in all its fulness. Such revivals I consider to be genuine, and such revivals, I repeat again, would be a benefit to any church under heaven. There is no church, however good it is, which might not be better; and there are many churches sunken so low, that they have abundant need, if they would prevent spiritual death, to cry aloud, "Lord revive us."

Among the blessings of the revival of Christians, we commence, by noticing *the salvation of sinners*. When God is pleased to pour out his Spirit upon a church in a larger measure than usual, it is always accompanied by the salvation of souls. And oh, this is a weighty matter, to have souls saved. Some laugh, and think the salvation of the soul is nothing; but I trust, beloved, you know so much of the value of souls that you will ever think it to be worth the laying down of your lives, if you might but be the means of the saving of one single soul from death. The saving of souls, if a man has once gained love to perishing sinners, and love to his blessed Master, will be an all-absorbing passion to him. It will so carry him away, that he will almost forget himself in the saving of others. He will be like the stout, brave fireman, who careth not for the scorch or for the heat, so that he may rescue the poor creature on whom true humanity hath set his heart. He must, he will pluck such a one from the burning, at any cost and expense to himself. Oh the zeal of such a man as that Whitfield to whom I have alluded! He says in one of his sermons, "My God, I groan day by day over the salvation of souls. Sometime," he says, "I think I could stand on the top of every hackney-coach in the streets of London, to preach God's Word. It is not enough that I can do it night and day, labouring incessantly by writing and preaching; I would that I were multiplied a thousand-fold,

that I might have a thousand tongues to preach this gospel of my blessed Redeemer." Ah, you find too many Christians who do not care about sinners being saved. The minister may preach, but what heed they the results? So long as he has a respectable congregation, and a quiet people, it is enough. I trust, my friends, we shall never sink to so low a state as to carry on our services without the salvation of souls. I have prayed my God many a time, and I hope to repeat the prayer, that when I have no more souls to save for him, no more of his elect to be gathered home, he may allow me to be taken to himself, that I may not stand as a cumberground in his vineyard, useless, seeing there is no more fruit to be brought forth. I know you long for souls to be converted. I have seen your glad eyes when, at the church meetings, night after night, sinners have told us what the Lord has done for them. I have marked your great joy when drunkards, blasphemers, and all kinds of careless persons have turned with full purpose of heart unto God, and led a new life. Now, mark you, if these things are to be continued, and above all, if they are to be multiplied, we must have again a revival in our midst. For this we must and will cry, "O Lord our God, visit thy plantation, and pour out again upon us thy mighty Spirit."

Another effect of a revival in a church, is generally *the promotion of true love and unanimity in its midst*. I will tell you the most quarrelsome churches in England, if you will tell me the most lazy churches. It has actually become a proverb now-a-days. People say, when persons are sound asleep, "He is as sound asleep as a church;"—as if they really thought the church was the soundest asleep of anything that exists! Alas that there should be so much truth in the proverb. Where a firm, established for business, would have all its eyes open—where a company, that had for its object the accumulation of wealth, would be ever on the watch—churches, for the most part, seem to neglect the means of doing good, and fritter away holy opportunities of advancing their Master's cause; and for this reason, many of us are split in sunder. There are heart-burnings, achings, rankling of soul, quarrelings amongst each other. An active church will be a united church; a slumbering church will be sure to be a quarrelsome one. If any minister desires to heal the wounds of a church, and bring the members into unanimity, let him ask God to give them all enough to fill their hands; and when their hands are full of their Master's work and their mouths are full of his praise, they will have no time for devouring one another, or filling their mouths with slander and reproach. Oh, if God gives us a revival, we shall have perfect unanimity. Blessed be God, we have much of it; but oh for more of it that our hearts may be knit together as the heart of one man,—that we, being one army of the living God, may none of us have any anger or ill-will towards each other, but being—as I trust we all are—brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus, we may live as becometh such. Oh that Christ would give us that spirit that loveth all, hopeth for all, and will bear burdens for all, passing by little things, and differences of judgment and opinion, that so we may be united with a three-fold cord that cannot be broken. A revival, I think, is necessary for the unanimity of the church.

A revival is also necessary, *in order that the mouths of the enemies of the truth may be stopped.* Do they not open wide their mouths against us? Have they not spoken hard things against us?—ay, and not only against us, but against the truth we preach, and against the God we honour. How shall their mouths be stopped? By our replying to them? No; foul scorn we think it to utter one single word in our own defence. If our conduct be not sufficiently upright to commend itself, we will not utter words in order to commend it. But the way we can shut our adversaries' mouths is this: by seeking a revival in our midst. What! do they rail against our ministry? If more souls are saved, can they rail against that? Ay, let them if they will. Do they speak against the doctrines? Let them; but let our lives be so holy that they must lie against us when they dare to say that our doctrines lead any into sin. Let us seek of God that we may be so earnest, so eminently holy, so God-like, and so Christ like, that to all they say their own consciences may tell them, "Thou utterest a falsehood whilst thou speakest against him." This was the glory of the Puritans: they preached doctrines which laid them open to reproach. I am bold to say I have preached the doctrine of the Puritans; and I am bold to say, moreover, that those parts which have been most objected to in my discourses, have frequently been quotations from ancient fathers, or from some of the Puritans. I have often smiled when I have seen them condemned, and said, "There now, sir, thou hast condemned Charnock, or Bunyan, or Howe, or Doddridge," or some other saint of God whom it so happened I quoted at the time. The word condemn was theirs, and therefore it did not so much affect me. They were held up to reproach when they were alive; and how did they answer their calumniators? By a blameless and holy life. They, like Enoch, walked with God; and let the world say what they would of them, they only sought to keep their families the most rigidly pious, and themselves the most strictly upright in the world; so that while it was said of their enemies, "They talk of good works," it was said of the Puritans, that "They did them;" and while the Arminians, for such they were in those days, were living in sin, he who was called Calvinist, and laughed at, was living in righteousness, and the doctrine that was said to be the promoter of sin was found afterwards to be the promoter of holiness. We defy the world to find a holier people than those who have espoused the doctrines of free-grace, from the first moment until now. They have been distinguished in every history, even by their enemies, as having been the most devotedly pious, and as having given themselves especially to the reading of God's Word and the practice of his law; and whilst they said they were justified by faith alone, through the blood of Christ, none were found, so much as they, seeking to honour God in all the exercises of godliness, being "a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Their faith let us follow, and their charity let us emulate. Let us seek a revival here; and so our enemies' mouths, if not entirely shut, shall be so far stopped that their consciences shall speak against them whilst they rail against us. We want no eminent reply to silence their calumny; no learned articles brought out in our vindication; no voice lifted up in our favour. I thank my friends for

all they do; but I thank them little for the true effect it produces. Let us live straight on; let us work straight on; let us preach straight on, and serve our God better than heretofore; then let hell roar, and earth resound with tumult; the conscious integrity of our own spirit shall preserve us from alarm, and the Most High himself shall protect us from their fury. We need a revival, then, for these three reasons each of which is great in itself.

Yet, above all, we want a revival, *if we would promote the glory of God.* The proper object of a Christian's life is God's glory. The church was made on purpose to glorify God; but it is only a revived church that brings glory to his name. Think you that all the churches honour God? I tell you nay; there are some that dishonour him—not because of their erroneous doctrines, nor perhaps because of any defect in their formalities, but because of the want of life in their religion. There is a meeting for prayer; six people assemble besides the minister. Does that proclaim your homage to God? Does that do honour to Christianity? Go ye to the homes of these people; see what is their conversation when they are alone; mark how they walk before God. Go to their sanctuaries and hear their hymns; there is the beauty of music, but where is the life of the people? Listen to the sermon; it is elaborate, polished, complete, a master-piece of oratory. But ask yourselves, "Could a soul be saved under it, except by a miracle? Was there anything in it adapted to stir men up to goodness? It pleased their ears; it instructed them in some degree, perhaps, but what was there in it to teach their hearts?" Ah, God knows there are many such preachers. Notwithstanding their learning and their opulence, they do not preach the gospel in its simplicity, and they draw not near to God our Father. If we would honour God by the church, we must have a warm church, a burning church, loving the truths it holds, and carrying them out in the life. Oh that God would give us life from on high, lest we should be like that church of old of whom it was said, "Thou hast a name to live, and art dead." These are some of the benefits of revivals.

II. WHAT ARE THE MEANS OF REVIVAL? They are two-fold. One is, "Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts;" and the other is, "Cause thy face to shine." There can be no revival without both of these. Allow me, my dear hearers, to address you one by one, in different classes, in order that I may apply the former of these means to you.

"Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts." Your minister feels that he needs to be turned more thoroughly to the Lord his God. His prayer shall be, God helping him, that he may be more fearless and faithful than ever; that he may never for one moment think what any of you will say with regard to what he utters, but that he may only think what God his Master would say concerning him;—that he may come into the pulpit with this resolve—that he cares no more for your opinion with regard to the truth than if you were all stones, only resolving this much:—come loss or come gain by it, whatsoever the Lord God saith unto him, that he may speak; and he desires to ask his Master that he may come here with more prayer himself than heretofore, that whatever he preaches may be so burnt into his own soul that you may all know, even if you do not think it true yourselves,

that at any rate he believes it, and believes it with his inmost soul. And I will ask of God that I may so preach to you, that my words may be attended with a mighty and a divine power. I do forswear all pretence to ability in this work. I forswear the least idea that I have aught about me that can save souls, or anything which could draw men by the attractions of my speech. I feel that if you have been profited by my preaching, it must have been the work of God, and God alone, and I pray to him that I may be taught to know more my own weakness. Wherein my enemies say aught against me, may I believe what they say, but yet exclaim,

“Weak though I am, yet through his might,
I all things can perform.”

Will you ask such things for me, that I may be more and more turned to God, and that so your spiritual health may be promoted.

But there are some of you who are workers in the church. Large numbers are actively engaged for Christ. In the Sabbath-school, in the distribution of tracts, in preaching the Word in the villages, and in some parts of this great city—many of you are striving to serve God. Now what I ask and exhort you to is this: cry unto God—“Turn us again, O God.” You want, my dear working friends, more of the Spirit of God in all your labours. I am afraid we forget him too much, we want to have a greater remembrance of him. Sunday-school teachers, cry unto God that you may attend your classes with a sincere desire to promote God’s glory, leaning wholly on his strength. Do not be content with the ordinary routine, gathering your children there, and sending them home again; but cry, “Lord, give us the agony which a teacher ought to feel for his child’s soul.” Ask that you may go to the school with deep feelings, with throes of love over the children’s hearts, that you may teach them with tearful eyes, groaning before heaven that you may be the means of their salvation and deliverance from death. And you who in other ways serve God, I beseech you do not be content with doing it as you have done. You may have done it well enough to gain some approval of your fellows; do it better, as in the sight of the Lord. I do not mean better as to the outward form, but better as to the inward grace that goeth with it. Oh! seek from God that your works may be done from pure motives, with more simple faith in Christ, more firm reliance on him, and with greater prayer for your success. “Turn us again,” is the cry of all, I hope, who are doing anything for Jesus.

Others of you are intercessors; and here I hope I have taken in all who love the Lord in this place. Oh! how much the strength of a church depends upon these intercessors! I had almost said we could do better without the workers than the intercessors. We want in every church, if it is to be successful, intercessors with God—men who know how to plead with him and to prevail. Beloved, I must stir you up again on this point. If you would see great things done in this place, or in any other place, in the salvation of souls, you must intercede more earnestly than you have done. I thank God our prayer-meetings are always full; but there are some of you whom I do not see so often as I would desire. There are some of you business

men who are accustomed to come in for the least half hour, and I have seen you, and called on you to pray. For six months I have not seen some of you at all. There are others whom I know to be as much engaged as you are, who somehow or other manage to be always here. Why is it not so with you? If you do not love prayer, then I wish you not to come until you do. But I do ask of God to bring you into such a state of mind, that your soul may be more thoroughly with the Lord's church, and you may be more thoroughly devoted to his service. Our prayer-meeting is well attended, and is full; but it shall be better attended yet, and we shall have the men among us coming up "to the help of the Lord against the mighty." We do want more prayer. Your prayers, I am sure, have been more earnest at home than ever they were, during the last three weeks; let them be more earnest still. It is by prayer we must lean on God; it is by prayer that God strengthens us. I beseech you, wrestle with God, my dear friends. I know your love to one another, and to his truth. Wrestle with God, in secret and in public, that he would yet open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing upon us, such as we shall not have room enough to receive. There must be a turning again to God of the intercessors in prayer.

Again: we want a turning again to God of all of you who have been accustomed to hold communion with Jesus, but who have in the least degree broken off that holy and heavenly habit. Beloved, are there not some of you who were accustomed to walk with God each day? Your morn was sanctified with prayer, and your eventide was closed in with the voice of praise. You walked with Jesus in your daily business: you were real Enochs; you were Johns; you did lay your head on the bosom of your Lord. But ah! have not some of you known suspended communion of late? Let us speak of ourselves personally, instead of addressing you; have not we ourselves held less communion with Jesus? Have not our prayers been fewer to him, and his revelations less bright to us? Have we not been content to live without Emmanuel in our hearts? How long is it with some of us since our morsel was dipped in the honey of fellowship? With some of you it is weeks and months, since you had your love visit from Jesus. Oh! beloved, let me beseech you, cry unto God, "Turn us again." It will never do for us to live without communion; we cannot, we must not, we dare not live without constant hourly fellowship with Jesus. I would stir you up in this matter. Seek of God that you may return, and experience the loveliness of Jesus in your eyes, that you may know more and more of your loveliness in his eyes.

And once more, beloved, "Turn us again" must be the prayer of all you, not only in your religious labours, but in your daily lives. Oh! how I do groan over each one of you, especially those of you who are my children in Christ, whom God has granted me to be the means of bringing from nature's darkness into marvellous light; that your lives may be an honour to your profession. Oh! my dear hearers, may none among you who make a profession, be found liars to God and man. There are many who have been baptized, who have been baptized into the waters of deception; there are some who put the sacramental wine between their lips, who are a dishonour and a

disgrace to the church in which they assemble. Some who sing praises with us here can go and sing the songs of Satan elsewhere. Ay, are there not some among you, whom I cannot detect, whom the deacons cannot, nor your fellow-members either, but whose consciences tell you, you are not fit to be members of a church? You have crept into our number, you have deceived us, and there you are, like a cancer in our midst. God forgive you, and change your hearts; God turn you to himself! And, oh my brethren, one and all of us, though we hope we have the root of the matter in us, yet how much room there is for improvement and amendment! How are your families conducted? Is there as much of that true and earnest prayerfulness for your children as we could desire? How is your business conducted? Are you above the tricks of trade? Do you know how to stand aloof from the common customs of other men, and say, "If all do wrong it is no reason why I should—I must, I will do right?" Do you know how to talk? Have you caught the brogue of heaven? Can you eschew all foolishness, all filthy conversation, and seek to bear the image of Jesus Christ in the world? I do not ask you whether you use the "thee" and "thou," and the outward formalities of ostentatious humility, but I ask you whether you know how to regulate your speech by the Word of God. I trust, in some degree, that you all do, but not as we could desire. Cry out, then, ye Christians, "Turn us again, O God!" If others sin, I beseech you, do not you sin; remember how God is dishonoured by it. What! will you bring shame on Christ, and on the doctrines we profess? There is enough said against them without our giving cause of offence; lies enough are made up, without our giving any cause that men should truthfully speak ill of us. Oh! if I thought it would avail, methinks I would go down upon my knees, my brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus, to beg of you, as for my very life, that you would live close to Jesus. I do pray the Holy Spirit that he may so rest on you in every place, that your conversation may be "such as becometh the gospel of Christ;" and that in every act, great or small, and in every word of every sort, there may be the influence from on high, moulding you to the right, keeping you to the right, and in everything bidding you to become more and more patterns of godliness, and reflections of the image of Jesus Christ.

Dear friends, to be personal with each other again, are we where we want to be just now, many of us? Can we put our hands in our hearts, and say, "O Lord, I am, in spiritual things just where I desire to be?" No; I don't think there is one of us that could say that. Are we now what we should desire to be if we were to die in our pews? Come now, have we so lived during the past week, that we could wish this week to be a specimen-week of our whole lives? I fear not. Brethren, how are your evidences!—are they bright for heaven? How is your heart?—is it holy set on Jesus? How is your faith?—does it dwell on God alone? Is your soul sick, or is it healthy? Are you sending forth blossoms and bearing fruit, or do you feel dry and barren? Remember, blessed is the man who is planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season. But how about yourselves? Are not some of you so cold and languid in prayer, that

prayer is a burden to you? How about your trials? Do they not break your heart more, almost, than ever they did? That is because you have forgotten how to cast your burden on the Lord. How about your daily life? Have you not cause to grieve over it, as not being all you could desire it to? Ah! beloved, do not reckon it a light matter to be going backwards; do not consider it a small thing to be less zealous than you used to be. Ah! it is a sad thing to begin to decline. But how many of you have done so! Let our prayer be now,—

“ Lord, revive us, Lord, revive us,
All our help must come from thee.”

Do, I beseech you, I entreat you, in the name of God our Father, and Jesus Christ our brother, search into your own hearts; examine yourselves, and put up this prayer, “ Lord, wherein I am right, keep me so, against all opposition, and conflict; but wherein I am wrong, Lord make me right, for Jesus’ sake.” We must have this turning again unto God, if we would have a revival in our breasts. Every unholy liver, every cold heart, every one who is not entirely devoted to God, keeps us back from having a revival. When once we have all our souls fully turned unto the Lord, then, I say, but not till then, he will give us to see the travail of the Redeemer’s soul: and “ God, even our own God shall bless us, and all the ends of the world shall fear him.”

The other means of revival is a precious one—“ Cause thy face to shine.” Ah; beloved, we might ask of God, that we might all be devoted, all his servants, all prayerful, and all what we want to be: but it would never come without this second prayer being answered; and even if it did come without this, where would be the blessing? It is the causing of his face to shine on the church that makes a church flourish. Do you suppose that, if to our number there were added a thousand of the most wealthy and wise of the land, we should really prosper any the more without the light of God’s countenance? Ah! no, beloved, give us our God, and we could do without them; but they would be a curse to us without him. Do you imagine that the increase of our numbers is a blessing, unless we have an increase of grace? No, it is not. It is the crowding of a boat until it sinks, without putting in any more provision, for the food of those who are in it. The more we have in numbers, the more we need have of grace. It is just this we want every day: “ Cause thy face to shine.” Oh! there have been times in this house of prayer, when God’s face has shone upon us. I can remember seasons, when every one of us wept, from the minister down almost to the child; there have been time, when we have reckoned the converts under one sermon by scores. Where is the blessedness we once spoke of? Where is the joy we once had in this house! Brethren, it is not all gone; there are many still brought to know the Lord; but oh! I want to see those times again. when first the refreshing showers came down from heaven. Have you never heard that under one of Whitfield’s sermons, there have been as many as two thousand saved? He was a great man; but God can use the little as well as the great, to produce the same effect; and why should there not be souls saved here, beyond all our dreams? Ay, why not? We answer, there is no reason why not, if God does but cause his face to

shine. Give us the shining of God's face; man's face may be covered with frowns, and his heart may be black with malice, but if the Lord our God doth shine, it is enough.

“ If he makes bare his arm,
Who can his cause withstand?
When he his people's cause defends,
Who, who can stay his hand? ”

It is his good hand with us we want. I do think there is an opportunity for the display of God's hand at this particular era, such as has not been for many years before; certainly, if he doeth anything, the crown must be put on his head, and on his head alone. We are a feeble people: what shall we do? But if he doeth anything, he shall have the crown and the diadem entirely to himself. Oh that he would do it! Oh that he would honour himself! Oh that he would turn unto us that we might turn unto him, and that his face may shine! Children of God, I need not enlarge on the meaning of this! You know what the shining of God's face means; you know it means a clear light of knowledge, a warming light of comfort, a living light poured into the darkness of your soul, an honourable light, which shall make you appear like Moses, when he came from the mountain—so bright, that men will scarce dare to look upon you. “Cause thy face to shine.” Shall we not make this our prayer, dearly beloved? Have I one of my brethren in the faith, who will not this day go home to cry out aloud unto his God, “Cause thy face to shine?” A black cloud has swept over us, all we want is that the sun should come, and it shall sweep that cloud away. There have been direful things; but what of them, if God our God shall appear? Let this be our cry, “Cause thy face to shine.” Beloved, let us give no rest unto our God, until he hears this our prayer, “Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.”

III. Come, now, let me stir you all up, all of you who love the Saviour, to seek after this revival. Some of you, perhaps, are now resolving in your hearts that you will at once, when you reach your homes, prostrate yourselves before your God, and cry out to him that he would bless his church; and oh! do so I beseech you. It is common with us under a sermon to resolve, though after the sermon we are slow to perform. You have often said, when you left the house of God, “I will carry out that injunction of my pastor, and will be much in prayer.” You thought to do it so soon as you arrived at home, but you did not, and so there was an untimely end of the matter—it accomplished not what was designed. But this time, I beseech you, while you resolve be resolute. Instead of saying within yourselves, “Now I will devote myself more to God, and seek to honour him more,” anticipate the resolution by the result. Ye can do more in the strength of God than ye can think or propose to yourselves in the utmost might of man. Resolves may pacify the conscience very frequently for a while, without really benefitting it. You say you will do it; conscience therefore does not reproach you with a disobedience to the command; but ye do it not after all, and so the effect has passed away. Let any holy and pious resolution you now form be this

instant turned into prayer. Instead of saying, "I will do it," put up the prayer, "Lord enable me to do it; Lord, grant me grace to do it." One prayer is worth ten thousand resolutions. Pray to God that you, as a soldier of the cross, may never disgrace the banner under which you fight. Ask of him that you may not be like the children of Ephraim, who turned back in the day of battle, but that you may stand fast in all weathers, even as good old Jacob, when "in the day he drought consumed him and the frost by night,"—so may you serve that God who has called you with so high a calling. Perhaps others of you think there is no need of a revival, that your own hearts are good enough; I hope but few of you think so. But if thou dost think so my hearer, I warn thee. Thou fanciest thou are right, and therein thou dost prove that thou art wrong. He who says within himself, "I am rich and increased with goods," let him know that he is "poor, and naked, and miserable." He who says he needs no revival knoweth not what he says. Beloved, you shall find that those who are noted as best among God's people need to write themselves the worst; and those who fancy all goes well in their hearts oftentimes little know that an under-current of evil is really bearing them away as with a tide where they would not wish to go, whilst they fancy they are going on to peace and prosperity.

Oh! beloved, carry into effect the advice I have just given. I know I have spoken feebly. It is the best I can do just now, I have only stirred you up by way of remembrance. Think not my desires are as feeble as my words; imagine not that my anxiety for you is or can be represented by my speech. Ask, I beseech you, ask of God, that to every one of you brethren and sisters, the simple exhortation of one who loves you as his own soul, may be blessed. God is my witness, beloved, for Him I seek to live: no other motive have I in this world, God knoweth but His glory. Therefore do I bid and exhort you, knowing that you love the same God, and seek to serve the same Christ, do not now, in this hour of peril, give the least cause to the enemy to blaspheme. Oh! in the bowels of Christ, I entreat you for his sake who hung upon the tree, and who is now exalted in heaven by his bloody sacrifices offered for your redemption, by the everlasting love of God, whereby you are kept. I exhort, I beseech, I entreat you, as your brother in Christ Jesus, and such an one as your pastor, be in nothing moved by your adversaries. "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, when they shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for our Saviour's sake." But do ask that your life and conversation may be an honour to your Lord and Master; in nothing give occasion for the enemy to malign our sacred cause; in everything may your course be "like the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

But oh! ye who came here and approve the truth with your judgment, but yet have never felt its power in your hearts or its influence in your lives, for you we sigh and groan; for your sake I have stirred up the saints among us to pray. Oh how many of you there are that have been pricked in your consciences and hearts many a time. Ye have wept, ay, and have so wept that you have thought with yourselves "Never souls wept as we have done!" But ye have gone back again

After all the solemn warnings ye have heard, and after all the woings of Calvary, ye have gone back again to your sins. Sinner! thou who heedest little for thyself, just hear how much we think of thee. Little dost thou know how much we groan over thy soul. Man! thou thinkest thy soul nothing; yet morning, noon, and night, we are groaning over that precious immortal thing which thou despiseth. Thou thinkest it little to lose thy soul, to perish or mayhap to be damned. Dost thou account us fools that we should cry over thee? Dost thou suppose we are bereft of reason, that we should think thy soul of so much concern, whilst thou hast so little concern for it? Here are God's people; they are crying after thy soul; they are labouring with God to save thee. Dost thou think so little of it thyself, that thou wouldest fool away thy soul for a paltry pleasure, or wouldest procrastinate thy soul's welfare beyond the limited domain of hope; Oh! sinner, sinner, if thou lovest thyself, I beseech thee, pause and think that what God's people love must be worth something; that what we labour for, and strive for, must be worth something; that what was reckoned worth a ransom so priceless as Jesus paid must have its sterling value in the sight of heaven. Do, I beseech thee, pause? think of the value of thy soul; think how dreadful it will be if it is lost; think of the extent of eternity; think of thine own frailty; bethink thee of thine own sin, and of thy deserving. May God give thee grace to forsake thy wicked ways, turn unto him and live; for He "hath no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, but rather than he should turn unto Him and live!" Therefore, saith He, "Turn thee, turn thee, why wilt thou die?"

And now, oh Lord of hosts, hear our ardent appeal to Thy throne. "Turn us again." Lighten our path with the guidance of Thine eye; cheer our hearts with the smiles of Thy face. O God of armies, let every regiment and rank of thy militant church be of perfect heart, undivided in thy service. Let grace rest upon all Thy children. Let great fear come upon all the people. Let many reluctant hearts be turned to the Lord. Let there now be times of refreshing from Thy presence. To Thine own name shall be all the glory, "O Thou that are more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey."

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ON Thanksgiving Avenue, an unlimited number of first-class estates. These mansions are beautifully situated, and may be had at a most reasonable rental. The price to be paid is simply an unselfish, meek and quiet spirit. The outlook towards the east is Hope, toward the west is Peace, toward the north is Strength, and towards the south joy. In every direction the view is uninterrupted and magnificent. It is a singular fact that it grows wider and more expansive the longer one lives on the avenue, until at last one can see the gates of the celestial city. Terms very easy—a lifetime allowed for full payment.
—*Dr. H. W. Bennett.*

Our Minister's Wife and her Noble Life.

CHAPTER III.—A SUDDEN STROKE.

WHEN Mrs. Goldacre came to Colcheston, it was fully her intention to return home after a six weeks' visit. But this intention was in God's providence frustrated in a totally unexpected way. A day or two previous to her departure, Mrs. Barton was suddenly taken ill, and for more than a month was under the doctor's hands. As from the beginning, she was in a very serious condition, and exceedingly weak, Mrs. Goldacre felt it to be her duty to stay with her; and on her convalescence, was induced both by her son-in-law, and and by the urgent entreaties of her daughter, to come and stay with them permanently. This, however, she would not have consented to, had she not been independent, and able to make arrangements that in a pecuniary sense, would make her no burden to the household. It was, therefore, decided that as soon as practicable, she should, with Mr. Barton, return to her home, sell off part of her effects, and bring the remainder to the manse. This having been done to the joy of many, Mrs. Goldacre settled down as a resident in Colcheston.

It did not take long for her to make herself thoroughly at home among the friends. She was what

is called in society, "good company." She was specially gifted also in visiting the poor and the afflicted. As a worker in Christ's cause, she seemed to revel in doing good, and that without any ostentation whatever. She had such a nice, kind, sympathetic way, too, of administering counsel and relief to the poor and needy, that made sufferers, even in their great pain, smile, as soon as she made her appearance on the doorsteps. It was thus the desire of all who knew her, or came in contact with her, that she might long be spared in the district, to do the much needed work, for which she was so admirably adapted.

But most mysterious are the ways of providence. Just as Mrs. Goldacre was in the zenith of her popularity as a helper to the afflicted,—a kind of popularity most desirably to be envied—she herself was stricken down with paralysis, the sad stroke threatening to put an end to her usefulness on earth for ever. She had just returned from a visit to an afflicted person in the evening, when she said she felt tired and would retire to bed. After partaking of a good supper, she entered her own room, and nothing more was heard of her until

the morning. Then as she did not, as usual, come down to breakfast, her daughter went up stairs, listened for a while outside, knocked at her door but received no answer. Now beginning to be alarmed, she entered the room, and saw a sight that involuntarily made her scream with terror. On the floor lay her mother in an unconscious condition. She was fully dressed, but her eyes were closed, and she lay upon her side and breathed heavily. Dr. Robertson, her daughter's medical attendant, who lived very near, was immediately sent for, and he at once administered remedies that gave her relief, and caused the stagnant blood to flow more freely through the system. An hour or two after, she was got into bed, she half-opened her eyes and looked around her as if dazed, and wondering where she was, and what had come to her, but she could not speak, nor lift up either her left-arm or leg. Fearful lest she might have another stroke, the medical man ordered a professional nurse to be sent for, that she might be properly attended to and strictly prohibited any but the family, for the present, entering her room. "Absolute quietness and freedom from excitement," he said, "was essential in such a serious case; and he felt certain that, as Mrs. Barton valued her mother's life, she would comply with his wishes. All had been done that could be done, and good nursing and care might even now work wonders."

As he came down stairs, Mrs. Barton followed him, and with tears in her eyes, said, "Doctor Robertson, I want to ask you a question, and I know you will tell me the plain truth. Did my poor mother have this heavy stroke last

night before she got into bed, or after she had dressed this morning?"

"I think I can relieve your mind, Mrs. Barton; she evidently had it after she had risen. She had made her bed, and was probably preparing in the early dawn to sit down and read, and perform her devotions, when she felt dizzy and knew no more until you found her prostrate and sent for me."

"Of course, had not the bed been made, and I knew it was my dear mother's custom on these bright summer mornings to rise early and spend some time in devotional exercises, I should never, doctor, have asked you the question; but as it was I hardly knew what to think."

"Well, if it will comfort you at all, I think you may take my word for it, Mrs. Barton, that anyway, before this calamity befell her, your mother had had a good night's rest, and that may be so much in her favour.

"But do you think she will recover the use of her speech and limbs, doctor?"

"Well, that is more than I can tell. I will not attempt to deceive you, Mrs. Barton, or even to evade your question. All that I can say is that in a somewhat extensive practice, I have seen cases like her's come round: but if so, at your mother's age, which I presume is about sixty, you can never expect her to be the same as she has been before. At the best she must be a semi-invalid for life. I wish I could give you, Mrs. Barton, greater comfort, I really do; but we must hope for the best, and do the best we can. I can assure you from what I have seen and heard in the village of your good mother, I sympathise very much with you all, and feel truly sorry

that this unexpected calamity has overtaken you: and I feel certain that the same sympathetic feeling will be shared by all who have had the privilege of becoming acquainted with her."

With these kind words on his lips the doctor left, promising to call later in the day.

The news spread rapidly through the village, and as may be expected, caused great commotion. As for Mrs. Barton, she was completely overwhelmed with the suddenness and nature of the disaster. And perhaps there are few things in domestic life that are calculated to create more depression than an event of this kind. For the apparently strong thus to be stricken down, lie for days and weeks, and even months, in a dead-alive condition: to have, in other words, one part of the body the semblance of a corpse, with the other part capable of motion, and the mind of the sufferer so depressed at the enforced inertia engendered by the mysterious malady is a trial that can only be adequately conceived by those who have to pass through it. Yet this was the sad trial that Mrs. Goldacre was called upon to pass through. Still even this heavy blow was not without its alleviations. No daughter could have attended on her mother in such a condition more devotedly than did Mrs. Barton. Her constant endeavours to alleviate the patient's misery both by night and by day, proclaimed to us all the self-sacrificing love for her mother that dwelt within her breast. So much so was this the case that her deprivation of needful rest and her arduous toil caused more than her own husband to remonstrate kindly but firmly with her against

the extra exertions thus put forth that might just as well have devolved upon others. But not until her mother was for the present considered out of danger did these exertions cease: and then she appeared wasted well nigh to a shadow.

In the course of a couple of days complete consciousness was restored to Mrs. Goldacre, and though, through the tongue being swollen, she could not give utterance to her feelings, by signs she gave her anxious daughter reason to believe that she fully comprehended what had befallen her. When speech returned, as it did in a measure, in about a week after the stroke, she in a muttering tone informed Mr. Barton that what Dr. Robertson had said was perfectly correct: that she had had a sound night's sleep: had risen early, refreshed by her rest; had made her bed and was about to kneel down and pray when she seemed to slide upon the floor and remembered no more until she saw them all standing around her bed: but then unable to collect herself she again fell into a profound slumber. As, however, consciousness returned, she felt pains in her head, and as if a part of her body was weighted down. Then, unable even to turn herself over she realised what had come upon her, and lay for days as one dazed. The idea of utter helplessness also produced melancholy, with a tendency to cry, and even give way to bitter weeping. When able to speak and with aid to get down stairs three months after the direful stroke in mournful tones she said to her daughter, "Ah! Mary, my dear, I never thought I should come to this!"

This reminds me of a minister

I knew who was once called upon to see an aged deacon of his, who had been his right hand supporter for many long years, but who in extreme illness talked to him as one bordering on imbecility. As the minister, after the interview, came downstairs in a tremulous voice he said to the good man's sorrowing daughter, "God only knows what we may come to!"

He was right, and it is a mercy that we do not know what awaits us on earth; but the great thing is to realize that come what will we "know Whom we have believed and are persuaded that He is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him against that day."

(To be continued.)

Running for a Prize.

BY REV. D. THOMPSON, APPLEDORE.

LIFE is a race, and men are runners. What a world of bustle, and how full of action! Attend one of our marts and see how eager men are for business. Day after day they are found labouring for earthly good. They rise early, sit up late, and eat the bread of carefulness. They haste after riches, and thirst for honour. Truly the children of this world are wise in their generation; and read important lessons to professors of religion. But the folly of the worldling is seen in overlooking the soul. Yea, he laughs at anxious believers and at action for eternity. This infatuation has no equal. Although worldly diligence is to be praised, yet, "What shall it profit a man, if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark viii. 36, 37.)

Earnestness in things lawful is a virtue, not a vice: but let there be the same earnestness in religious matters. There ought to be consistency. The actions of men should not contradict each other. The most necessary and important concerns demand the first and greatest attention. Seeing that the soul is the best part and lives for ever, we ought to secure its safety. To give it our greatest care is truest wisdom. In the sight of God they are most wise, and will have their reward.

John Bunyan in his "Pilgrim's Progress," tells us about the man who could no longer contain, but broke out with a lamentable cry, saying, "What shall I do?" He says that when he turned his back on the City of Destruction, his wife and children began to cry after him to return; "but the man put his fingers in his ears, and ran on, crying, 'Life! Life! Eternal Life!' So he looked not behind him, but fled to the middle of the plain." In another of his books, Bunyan may well say:—"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; thou hast no more*

time allotted thee than that thou now enjoyest. 'Boast not thyself of the morrow: for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.' Do not say, I have time enough to get to heaven seven years hence; for I tell thee the bell may toll for thee before seven more days be ended: and if death comes to-day thou must go whether thou art provided or not: and, therefore, look to it—*Make no delay*. It is no good dallying with things of so great concernment, as the salvation or damnation of the soul. You know he that hath a great way to go in a little time, and less by half than hethinks of he had need to run for it."

If we would run for the prize, "Life! Life! Eternal Life!" there must be *earnestness*. We must not be half-hearted, but intent on its possession. It is a matter of great importance, and must have the purpose and strength of the soul. There should be no inaction, but we ought to be wide-awake and full of effort.

There must be *resolution*. Difficulties are in the way, of eternal life:—the opposition of the Devil, of prejudice, of self, and of friends. They have to be overcome, and to do this there must be resoluteness. A half purpose will not do; there must be a *whole* purpose, and every power at full stretch,—understanding, and heart, and will all resolute.

There must also be *perseverance*. We must not stop short, but continue to pursue the object of desire till crowned with success. On we must run till we have gained the prize.

Robert Bruce was driven one night to take shelter in a barn. When he awoke in the morning, he saw a spider suspended in mid-air by a thread from a beam of the roof. It fell to the ground twelve times in succession: the thirteenth time it succeeded, and gained the beam. He arose and said, "This spider has taught me perseverance. I will follow its example. Twelve times have I been beaten; the thirteenth I may succeed." He rallied his followers, met, and defeated Edward, and gained for Scotland freedom, and for himself a crown. So it must be with the penitent seeker after salvation,—there must be an *asking*, a *seeking*, and a *knocking*. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." (Matthew xi. 12.)

"Life! Life! Eternal Life!" has been the blessing of every one that has sought it aright. Thank God, men in every age have had everlasting life in Jesus. Millions have received it. And what a blessing to know!—this eternal life may be *our* good NOW. Simple faith in Christ gives it. "This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath Life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not Life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God." (1 John v. 11-13). The door is wide open. The king waits to welcome you. He holds out the large blessing—*Eternal Life!* Enter in by Him who is the Door and receive it. Its blessings are pardon and justification, peace and joy, adoption and sanctification:—"Christ in you the hope of glory." (Col. i. 27).

Some may ask, "If eternal life is so difficult to obtain—requiring *earnestness*, and *resoluteness*, and *perseverance*—how does this accord with the taught easiness of religion?" God has not made the way of life difficult; but the world, self, sin and Satan have. These powerful

enemies of God and men have built around religion difficulties, and made *great* effort necessary. The striving is not with God, but with ourselves and our spiritual foes. As it respects the Almighty the way is simple and easy—so easy that we may be heir of hell one moment, and the next instant heir of heaven. Simple faith in Jesus gives eternal life.

Where in heaven or on earth will you find a more loving, willing, ready Saviour? Is there difficulty with Jesus? Have we to strive with Him? Ah! no. All the way up to the Cross you may read the words, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37). All the way up to Heaven you may continue to read, "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew xi. 28). There is a wide door and a plain path to Christ, and at every refusal to enter you are met with the words, "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life." (John v. 40).

"Run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith."—(Heb. xii. 1, 3). "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. ii. 10).

Hints for Teachers and Workers.

The Gracious Call :—read *Isaiah* lv.

INTRODUCTION.—The prophet beautifully brings before our notice the Kingdom and Office of Christ, the glorious salvation He would bring to man. The Call, indeed, would be glorious and life-giving, and certainly what we need, and indeed, we may say we cannot do without it, for the call of Christ to sinful creatures as we are cannot be put off. We cannot act and remain indifferent to the Holy claims of Christ, the great salvation He wrought is, indeed, a call of the greatest importance, and concerns us all, no matter what position of life we may be, and no difference what age we may be, the call is *universal*. We should give heed to the Saviour, we may apply a few practical lessons from this subject.—

- (1). *Seek Jesus Now.*
- (2). *Seek Jesus and a Pardon.*
- (3). *Seek Jesus for peace and pardon.*
- (4). *Seek Christ if you wish to be happy.*
- (5). *Seek Christ while He is near.*

" Christ receiveth sinful men,
Even me with all my sin;
Purged from every spot and stain,
Heaven with Him I enter in."

" Come unto Me and I will give you rest,"
" Refuse not Him that speaketh."

The Thessalonian Christians.

Substance of an Address delivered by the late

Mr. W. P. LOCKHART, of Liverpool.

IT is worthy of note that, in the case of the first four preachings of the Gospel in Europe, the Holy Ghost has recorded the fact that women were converted. When the Apostle came to Phillippi, he went amongst the women, and the first heart unlocked by the Holy Spirit, was the heart of Lydia. When he came to Thessalonica, of the "chief women who believed there were not a few." And when he passed on to Berea, a place some fifty or sixty miles further in the country, of the "honourable women, which were Greeks, who believed also, there were not a few." At Athens, too, the woman Damaris is honorably mentioned as being among the number of the converts.

Looking at the incidents connected with the visit of Paul and Silas to Thessalonica, we note there was first of all, a tumult. And here, as elsewhere, we have the twofold result of the preaching of the Gospel, namely, "some believed the things that were spoken, and some believed not." Reading carefully the Acts of the Apostles, we shall find that this was the invariable result of the preaching of the Word. While some believed, those who did not believe were

stirred up to bitter enmity, and very often to open opposition.

As an example of this two-fold effect, I would remind you that on the day of Pentecost, when Peter preached, those who heard him were "pricked in the heart," and they came to him and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" But after this, when Stephen preached, the council gnashed their teeth at him, took up stones, and put him to death. On the one hand, men acknowledged the Lord and sought his salvation; on the other hand, men rejected the Christ, who was preached, and sought to destroy his servants. At Thessalonica, both these results were manifested at one and the same time. Those who believed consorted with Paul and Silas, and those who believed not stirred up a tumult, and sought to destroy them.

Well, this is so still. The Gospel preached is either "the saviour of life unto life, or of death unto death." The Gospel either draws or it drives. Although the manifestation of the power may be different from what it was eighteen hundred years ago; because of the circumstances in which we are now placed, the

result in the heart of men is precisely the same. If men do not, through the power of God, receive Christ, submit to Him, and accept Him, they will be stirred up to hatred and enmity, and are very often driven away from under the very sound of the preaching of the Gospel itself.

In connection also with the tumult, there was the mob. We are told that the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people (Acts xvii. 5). What the Jews did not dare to do themselves, they sought to do by stirring up others. They took these good-for-nothing, idle men, the corner street man of Thessalonica, who were always ready for any row whatever might be the cause of it; and these men, they stirred up, till there was a tumult throughout the whole city: they engaged the very scum of the town to persecute and destroy those whom they hated.

And it is just the same to-day. To what extent bigotry and zeal will lead men, may be seen in the old cry, "No Popery!" and the parrot cry of "Church and Queen." These and like cries are little if any better than the cries of those "lewd fellows of the baser sort" eighteen hundred years ago, and they are generally put up to it by those who ought to know better. Thus does history repeat itself.

Turning to the commencement of the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, we find the Apostle abounding in thanksgiving on behalf of the Thessalonian Church

and especially for three things connected with it, "their work, their labour of love, and their patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ."

In the first place he speaks of their work. And here I wish you to observe that in speaking of their work he refers to all the members of the Church. We sometimes hear people talk of "the Christian worker." Are there any Christians who are not workers? Is it not an anomaly among Christians that there should be a select class who are called "Christian workers!" Every Christian is, or should be, a worker. But, however, the expression "Christian worker," shows that it is still a recognised fact that there may be Christians who are not workers at all. It was not so in the Thessalonian Church, for the Apostle said, "We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers." Every individual member of the Church was included in Paul's thanksgiving. There were no idlers. There was a work of faith on the part of each member. I ask if this Church corresponds with the Church at Thessalonica? Is every brother and sister engaged in this work of faith seeking to do something as God gives him or her time and opportunity to promote the common cause, and extend the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ? There were no unbelieving believers amongst the Thessalonian Christians, such as I am afraid there are in the present day—persons who never see any good in anything: persons who never expect any result, but may be compared to wet blankets. If they happen to have among them Christians on fire they say, "Oh! yes, yes: they will soon give this up: we know all about

this sort of thing: yes, yes, it will pass away by and by; we had some enthusiasm ourselves once and we understand all about it: depend upon it they will soon cool down!" Such persons are like the wet blankets that are sometimes hung around the fire when the chimney is on fire, and people are trying to put it out. There were no wet blanket Christians in the Church of Thessalonica! I, for my part like young converts with their zeal, their enthusiasm, and their faith. It is true that sometimes they are a little bit imprudent, but then they work all the better for it. Do not, my friend, be a wet blanket, do not try to lessen the fire of their faith: rather seek to get from them some of that enthusiasm which too many Christians seem to lose. The Thessalonian Church was a working Church and a believing Church: faith and works went hand in hand and so the Gospel

was proclaimed in the whole district around.

Then the Apostle offered thanksgiving for their "labour of love," showing that it is as much the duty of Christians to love one another as to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ—quite! All the precepts of the Lord Jesus Christ demand compliance and obedience, and the precept of love is as important as any other. Love to Christ will in fact always cause fervent love amongst the brethren.

Then, finally, the Apostle thanked God for their "patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." Knowing that Christ would come and receive them unto Himself in cherishing that hope the Thessalonian believers had patience, suffered, and endured. In these respects what an example they set to all Christians in all places and in all times.

WHAT IS LIBERTY.

WHAT false ideas many entertain of freedom? Every man desires to be free. God has implanted the desire in every human heart. What is freedom? A man once told me he would not sign the pledge, because that would be the signing away of his liberty. "What liberty?" "Why to do as I please." To do as you please? Is that liberty? There is no liberty without law; it is licentiousness. To do as you please, independent of the law of God, is to be a slave. He only is a free man who renders strict and steadfast obedience to righteous law. True liberty consists as much in exemption from the slavery within, as the slavery without.—*J. B. Gough.*

The more the Christian enjoys of his God the more he is concerned to bring others to enjoy the same.

Every trial says, Go to Jesus; go now.

The Lord may lead you round, but He will lead you right.

In Memoriam.

PASTOR JAMES SMITH, of Tunbridge Wells, fell asleep in Jesus February 17th, 1897, aged 60 years. He was born at Histon, in Cambridgeshire, of humble parentage. His first work as a minister of the Gospel was at Burwell, Cambs, where God enabled the ploughman to plough into the hearts of many sinners. After spending some time at the Pastors' College, then followed seven years at Redhill, during which time the chapel was built. From thence he went to Haddenham, and continued successful for six happy years; and, after four years at Leeds, came to Tunbridge Wells, where he was eminently successful in saving souls, establishing Christians, gathering large congregations, and building the tabernacle and schools. He may almost be said to have died in harness, for he was engaged in speaking on the Wednesday and Thursday, when on Friday the messenger came, and in a few days he entered into rest. The Memorial Service was held in the chapel, presided over by Pastor J. H. Blake, who also gave a long address at the grave, and preached the funeral sermon on the following Lord's Day. The ministers of the town, and others from a distance, took part in the memorial services. He was a brother beloved. He lived in the hearts of all who knew him. A faithful standard bearer. His stand was beneath the Cross of Jesus. His doctrine Jesus and him crucified; and now he is singing of the love of, and worshipping at the throne of, the Saviour, who loved him, and gave Himself for him. The widow and the fatherless have our prayers and our heart's deepest sympathies.

J. H. B.

DR. NEWTON gives us the following helpful anecdote: A mother one morning gave her two little ones books and toys to amuse them while she went upstairs to attend to something. A half hour passed quietly away, when one of the little ones went to the door of the stairs, and in a timid voice cried out, "Mamma, are you there?" "Yes, darling." "All right," said the child, and the play went on. After a little time the voice again cried, "Mamma, are you there?" "Yes, darling." "All right," said the child again, and once more went on with her play. And this is just the way we should feel toward Jesus. He has gone up to the right hand of God to attend to some things for us. He has left us down in the lower room of the world to be occupied here for a while. But to keep us from being worried by fear or care he speaks to us from the word, as the mother spoke to her little ones. He says to us, "Fear not, I am with thee." Jehovah Jireh—"The Lord will provide."

Reviews.

Prayer in the Four Gospels. By W. E. Winks, V.D.M., author of *Thoughts on Prayers, &c.* Baptist Tract Society, Gray's Inn Road.

The writer has dealt with a most interesting and profitable subject. In his introductory remarks he says truly, a very large part of Christ's revelation of God and of man, and of the revelation God bears to man and man to God, is conveyed to us by Our Lord as an example and exponent of prayer. The work shows how worthy the description of the gospel by Luke. It is the Gospel of Prayer, and also how the same feature dominates in the Acts of the Apostles. We commend this book to our readers.

The Treasury. Gay & Bird, Bedford-street, Strand

Its Leader is written by Right Rev. William Stevens Perry, Bishop of Iowa, on the Religious Character of Washington, and also the number contains two sermons, Grace without Measure, by Rev. W. B. Waller, and Faith and Doubt, by Rev. W. E. Barton, D.D.

The Quiver for March, Cassell & Co. Besides its valuable articles and beautiful illustrations, presents its readers with a copy of Holman Hunt's *Light of the World*, accompanied with Professor Ruskin's description and impressions made on him at the time of its first exhibition.

The Ideal Publishing Company, Memorial Hall, Farringdon-street, have issued No. 1 of *Penny Temperance Classics.* Edited by Dr. Dawson Burns. The medical side of the drink question, by Sir Benjamin Ward Richardson, M.D.

Is Infant Baptism Scriptural. By Rev. Thomas S. Hall, B.D., Incumbent of Upper Falls Parish, Belfast. This writer will have first to convince eminent men on his own side, that Infant Baptism is taught in scripture. Such as the late Henry Ward Beecher, who declares that there is no warrant for Infant Baptism. We, at all events, can congratulate the writer of this Tract on his having discovered Infant Baptism in the New Testament which says nothing whatever about the subject.

We have been asked to call attention to the following notice, which we gladly do:—

Fourteen Nuts for Skeptics to Crack, by H. L. Hastings, editor of THE CHRISTIAN, Boston, U S.A., is one of the valuable issues of the celebrated ANTI-INFIDEL LIBRARY which has reached its second hundred thousand. Try your skeptical friend with this basket of hard nuts, and try your own teeth or hammer on some of them. The Yankee shrewdness, solid sense, and sanctified wisdom of the veteran author appear on every

page of the booklets. Marshall Brothers, 5A, Paternoster Row, London, E.C., are the publishers.

No. 17 of *The Treasury of David* is to hand extending to the 73 Psalm. Cases are now ready for Vols. one to three, at One Shilling and Fourpence each. Parts 503 of Sermons by C. H. Spurgeon, contains four sermons and exposition of scripture with each sermon. Passmore and Alabaster.

The Religious Tract Society have published No. 82 of *Present Day Tracts*. Non-Christian Religions, their state and prospects, by Rev. J. Murray Mitchell, M.A., LL.D. This Tract which would be valuable at any time, will be of special interest now. The pages on Spirit-worship, Hinduism, Buddhism, Mohammedanism The religion of India, China and Japan, cannot fail to be read without considerable profit.

We are satisfied that no Monthly for *Sunday Hours for Boys and Girls*, will meet with greater success or do more good than the new magazine by

that title, published by the Religious Tract Society. The papers and selections of favourite hymns of children is of special interest. We have received *The Sunday at Home*, *Leisure Hour*, *Friendly Greetings*, *Cottager and Artisan*. *Boys' and Girls' Own*, and the children's favourites, *Little Dots* and *The Child's Companion*.

Great Thoughts. A. W. Hall. Hutton-street, Whitefriars. March is a very bright number, its pages are literally crowded with good things. All who want to pick up gems will find them here.

Baptist Magazine will be valued for the article, "The Education for the National Conscience," by Dr. Clifford. The sermon in *The Sword & Trowel*, by the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon to Sunday School Teachers should be read by all concerned in the Religious Education of Children We have received *The Baptist Irish Magazine*, always good, and the following are worthy, *The Bible Societies' Reporter* and *Gleanings for the Young*, *Life and Light*, *In His Name*, *The Monthly Record of the Protestant Evangelical Missions*, &c.

THE PUBLIC SPEAKER.

THERE are many kinds of public meetings in support of the spread of the Gospel. There is the quiet, serious meetings, in which light is diffused, the heart is touched, the conscience is roused, the whole soul is moved and gained. There is little thought of the speaker and of his style, but a good deal of his subject and purpose. It is a time when, as John Woolman would phrase it, "the fountain of love is opened." There is another kind of meeting, in which fun and fancy, rhetoric and sarcasm, wit and humour, play a great part. The fireworks are on, the clapping is loud and exciting, but you feel no nearer to God, and the voice of the Spirit is hushed. A merely flashy speech may do immense harm.—*The Christian*.

When you are quite content to bear what God has laid upon you He will soon remove it, or show you it is a real blessing to you.

Denominational Intelligence.

CHANGES IN THE PASTORATE.

Rev. A. T. Brainsby, from Brighton Grove College, to Bethesda Church, Barnoldswick.

Rev. W. C. Minifie, from Bourne-mouth, to Sion Jubilee Church, Bradford.

Rev. E. T. Beckett, from the Pastors' College, to Bildeston.

Rev. R. C. Lemin, from Bradninch, to South-parade Church, Leeds.

Rev. T. M. Richards, from Calcaria, Nelson, to Beulah English Church, Rhymney.

Rev. M. Cumming, from Bury St. Edmonds, to Honor Oak Church.

Rev. W. J. Young, from Sulgrave, to Spratton and Ravensthorpe Churches.

Rev. J. W. Hambly, from Clayton, Bradford, to Portmahon Chapel, Sheffield.

Rev. R. F. Jeffrey, from Folkestone, to Belfast.

Rev. J. Crook, from Lewisham, to Rushden Church.

Rev. B. A. Evans, from Preston, to Barmouth.

Rev. W. G. Hailstone, from Reading, to Poole, Dorset.

Rev. Ivor H. James, from Heywood, to High-street Church, Andover, Hants.

RECOGNITIONS.

Rev. E. Packer, of Regent's-park College, has been ordained to the pastorate of Commercial-road Church Oxford. Rev. James Dann and Principal Gould preached.

Rev. S. J. Somers has been recognised as pastor at Appledore. Revs. A. Gurney Goldsmith (vicar), Frank Durbin, G. W. Roughton, S. Newnam, G. F. Owen, and G. J. Whitin took part.

Rev. W. Maynard, of Syston, has been recognised as pastor at Sileby. Revs. T. Adamson, R. F. Handford, S. P. Carey and J. D. Alford took part.

Rev. Owen Hopkins has been ordained minister of Mount Carmel English Church, Caerphilly. Principal Edwards gave the charge, and Rev. Owen Jones preached.

Rev. A. Harris has been recognised as pastor of the church at Modbury, Devon. Revs. S. Vincent, G. McFadyean, J. P. Tetley, W. T. Adey, and A. W. Bishop took part.

Rev. F. C. Darvell has been recognised as pastor of Aylsham and Buxton Churches. Revs. J. M. Hamilton, T. Bullimore, A. S. Culley and J. Gibson took part.

Rev. W. H. Williams, of Bangor College, has been ordained to the pastorate at Nantwich. Principal Morris gave the charge to the pastor and Rev. P. Williams addressed the church.

Rev. R. W. Ayres has been recognised as co-pastor of Mill-road Chapel Cambridge. Professor A. McCaig and Rev. T. Phillips took part in the services.

Rev. F. C. Watts has been recognised as pastor at Payton-street, Stratford-on-Avon. Revs. J. Butler, H. B. Case, E. Edgington, J. Mark, F. J. Fry and R. B. Saul took part.

NEW CHAPELS.

The chapel situated in Annandale-road, Chiswick, which has just been rebuilt, was opened on Tuesday, March 2nd. In the afternoon the Rev. C. Spurgeon, of Greenwich, preached in the new building, and afterwards a public tea was held in the Chiswick Hall, where during the rebuilding of the chapel the services had been held. Returning to the new chapel in the evening, a public meeting, under the presidency of Mr. William Olney, of the Metropolitan Tabernacle was held. The Secretary presented a report stating, that £1,500 still remained to be raised to clear off the debt. Among the speakers were the Rev. J. P. Clarke, M.A. of Gunnersbury, the Rev. T. Downen, M.D., Rev. W. D. Edgerton, Rev. W. L. Gibbs, Rev. S. H. Wilkinson, and the minister the Rev. A. G. Edgerton.

The opening services of the new chapel in Woolwich Lower-road, East Greenwich, commenced with a sermon by Rev. J. H. Shakespeare. The building is constructed to contain over 900 persons. Rev. W. E. Wells, formally of the Metropolitan College, is the pastor.

GRESHAM, BARRINGTON - ROAD, BRIXTON.—The memorial stones of the new chapel have been laid by Mr. Horace Brooks Marshall, J.P., M.A., and Mr. Charles Phillips, the former placing a cheque upon the stone for £100, the latter for £25.

A place of worship is to be erected at Ashton-under-Lyne for the Welsh

Church now meeting in Katherine-street. The building will seat 250 persons, and the estimated cost is £500.

PRESENTATIONS.

Rev. R. Walker, having resigned the pastorate at Hill-street Chapel, Poole, after sixteen years' ministry, a farewell meeting was held, at which letters expressing regret at inability to attend were read from Rev. W. O. Parish, rural dean, Rev. J. A. Lawson rector of St. James's, and Rev. C. F. de Jersey, vicar of St. Paul's. Mr. Walker was presented by the church with an illuminated address, accompanied by a purse of gold. There was also a public testimonial of a purse of gold from the Borough of Poole.

Rev. W. Fidler, a cheque for £50 from Towcester Church, in recognition and appreciation of the disinterestedness shown by his total surrender of all personal benefits during the past year (the twenty-fifth anniversary of his settlement) for the claims of the chapel debt, now extinct.

Rev. Evan Thomas, an illuminated address and a cheque from Pembroke Church, on completion of twenty-one years' pastorate.

Rev. J. A. Morris, D.D., a purse with £50 and an illuminated address, from the Welsh Church at Aberystwith, on his marriage, in recognition of twenty-four years' services.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The arrangements for the spring assembly of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland have been made. On Monday afternoon, April 26, Rev. E. G. Gauge will open the home mission centenary bazaar in the King's Hall, Holborn Restaurant, and in the evening will preside at the first session of the assembly in Bloomsbury Chapel,

after a devotional service conducted by Rev. T. V. Tymms. At the second session, on Wednesday evening, in Bloomsbury Chapel, the President will deliver his address. At the third session, on Thursday morning, Rev. F. J. Benskin, of Huddersfield, will read a paper on "Hindrances to Spiritual Life in the Present Day." This will be followed by the resolutions on public questions, and an address by Dr. McLaren.

The Metropolitan Association of Strict Baptist Churches, held its annual meetings on Tuesday, March 16, at Mount Zion Chapel, High-street, Marylebone. The pastors and delegates met for business at 10.30 a.m. In the afternoon, at 2.30, there followed thanksgiving, supplication, and brief addresses by Pastors Ballard, Humphreys, and Thomas; also by brethren representing the provincial associations. An interesting statement of the statistics and letters received from the churches was given. In the evening a public

meeting took place, the president (Pastor E. White, of Woolwich), delivering his address to the churches. The report of the committee for the past year, also a statement of the funds, was read, and two papers upon the following themes:—"The Adaptation of the Gospel to the Needs of Sinners," by Pastor J. Copeland; "The Office of the Holy Spirit in Salvation," by Pastor E. Beecher.

"It is estimated," writes a correspondent, "that there are nearly 4,000,000 in the actual membership of the Baptist Churches in America. The number of persons who have Baptist affinities, taking the low multiple of three, will be twelve millions, in a population of sixty-seven millions, or one Baptist to six of the entire community. The growth in the membership has been remarkable. In 1874 there was one Baptist to every ninety-four of the population; in 1840, one to thirty; now one for every twenty-two.

Poetry.

"What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"—Matt. xvi. 26.

WERE I sole monarch of the world,
 It would not profit me;
 If without Christ I lived and died,
 My soul then lost would be.
 From Thee I long have gone astray,
 And walked the downward road,
 Regardless of my precious soul,
 And Thee, my Saviour God.
 O Lord, let not my soul be lost;
 My sinfulness I own,
 And humbly pray, let Jesus' blood
 For all my sins atone.
 In mercy, Lord, my soul renew,
 Fill it with love divine:
 That to Thy glory I may live,
 And evermore be Thine.

J. DORE,

BAPTISMS.

Atleborough, Warwickshire.—February 28, One, by W. Southwell
Bishop's Stortford.—February 25, Four, by W. Walker
Blackpool: Abingdon-street.—February 28, Four, by the pastor.
Bolton: Zion.—February 21, Three, by W. Crispin
Buckley, Flintshire.—February 28, Six, by W. Jenkins
Builth Wells.—February 26, Four, by H. Evans
Blanksome.—February 14, Two, by H. T. Dibben
Bardwell, Suffolk.—March 4, One, by G. F. Wall
Bildeston.—March 1, Three, by E. S. Beckett
Belfast: Regent-street.—February 11, One, by C. S. Donald
Buckley, near Cbester.—February 14, One, by W. Jenkins
Cheltenham: Cambray.—February 10, Five, by A. B. Phillips
Cardiff, Hope.—February 28, Two, by T. W. Medhurst
Cardiff: Llandaff-road.—March 7, Five, by Z. H. Lewis
Caersalem, Victoria.—February 28, Two, by T. Thomas
Calvary, Treforest.—March 7, Two, by H. Lewis
Cilfynydd, Pontypridd: Beulah (English).—Two, by S. C. Jenkins
Carmarthen (English).—February 28, Four, by A. F. Mills
Clayton-le-Moors.—February 21, Three, by S. Caldwell
Cwnduad, Carmarthen.—February 26, Three, by D. Richards
Downham Market.—February 17, Two, by S. Howard
Devonport.—February 28, One, by A. J. Head
Earby.—March 7, Seventeen, by W. Wynn
Elgin.—Three, by J. F. Taviner
Glasgow, Springburn.—February 7, Four, by J. Horne
Glasgow, Cambridge-street.—February 28, Seven, by E. Last
Glasgow, Frederick-street.—February 28, Three, by E. Aubrey
Haddenham, Bucks.—February 17, Two, by J. Edwards
Histon, Cambs.—February 7, Two, by R. Smith
Kingshorpe, Northampton.—March 6, Eight, by F. Neal
Leeds: Hunslet.—February 28, Two, by A. E. Greening
Leeds: York-road.—January 31, Six, by C. Riseborough
Leeds: Buley-road.—February 28, Seven, by F. W. Walter
Llantarnam, Mon.: Ebenezer.—February 28, Eight; March 7, Five, by W. E. Robinson
Lamb-in-Rosendale.—February 26, Seven, by E. T. Davies

Middlesbrough (Welsh).—February 28, One, by T. Roberts
Mold.—February 28, Three, by T. Morgan
Newport, Mon.: Duckpool-road.—February 28, Five, by A. T. Jones
Newport, Mon.: East Usk-road.—February 21, One, by A. Purnell
Newton Abbot.—February 28, Six, by S. Lyne
Nottingham: The Tabernacle.—February 10, Twelve, by J. Clark
Oswestry: Salop-road.—February 14, Two, by M. M. Thomson
Plumstead.—February 21, Ten, by G. Barren
Pontypridd, Glam.: Carmel Chapel.—February 21, Nine, by E. E. Probert
Ponhir, Caerleon.—February 21, Seven; 28, Five, by J. James
Polemoor, Huddersfeld.—March 7, One, by T. Iles
Rhymney, Beulah.—February 28, Seven, by Rev. T. M. Richards, Nelson
Sarn, Mont.—March 7, Eighteen, by A. G. Jones, Ph.D.
South Leith.—March 7, Two, by D. Tait
Southsea: Elm Grove.—February 28, Six, by J. D. Williams
Shegness, St. Paul's.—February 28, Two, by G. Goodchild.
Stockport.—February 21, Four, by W. H. Thomas
Tolywain, Mon.: Pisan.—February 14, Two, by J. Morgan
Treagar: Bethel.—January 7, Three; February 14, Ten, by D. P. David
Tonypanyd, Rhondda: Bethel (English).—February 14, Two, by D. Davies
Todmo, dem, Yorks.—February 21, Nine, by W. L. Stevenscn
Tormorden: Roomfield Cbapel.—March 26, Four, by H. Briggs
Tyldesley (Welsh).—March 7, Five, by T. L. Jones
Tylorstown, Pontypridd.—February, Three, by W. J. Walters.
Upton-on-Seven.—February 10, Two, by W. T. Shepherd
Upper Parkstone: The Tabernacle.—February 14, Four, by R. D. Morrison
Ystalyfera, Scar.—February 28, Five, by W. Jones

LONDON DISTRICT.

Abbey-street.—February 28, Two, by A. V. G. Chandler
Bow Common, E.: The "Lighthouse".—February 6, Four; 26, Eight, by J. J. Hazzard
Clapham Junction: Meyrick-road.—February 28, One, by R. E. Sears
East Finchley.—February 28, Five, by J. J. Bristow
Leyton: Vicarage-road.—February 28, Two, by G. T. Bailey; March 1, Four (from South Woodford), by G. Cox
Lee, S.E.: Bromley-road.—February 21, Four, by J. W. Davies.
New Southgate, N.—February 17, Two, by G. Freeman
Penge Tabernacle.—February 8, One; March 8, Six, by J. W. Boud.

THE
BAPTIST MESSENGER:

AND

Evangelical Treasury

AND

CHRONICLE OF THE CHURCHES

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Christ Triumphant.

A SERMON BY THE LATE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it"—Colossians ii. 15.

TO the eye of reason the cross is the centre of sorrow and the lowest depth of shame. Jesus dies a malefactor's death. He hangs upon the gibbet of a felon and pours out his blood upon the common mount of doom with thieves for his companions. In the midst of mockery, and jest, and scorn, and ribaldry, and blasphemy, he gives up the ghost. Earth rejects him and lifts him from her surface, and heaven affords him no light, but darkens the mid-day sun in the hour of his extremity. Deeper in woe than the Saviour dived, imaginations cannot descend. A blacker calumny than was cast on him satanic malice itself could not invent. He hid not his face from shame and spitting; and what shame and spitting it was! To the world the cross must ever be the emblem of shame: to the Jew a stumbling-block, and to the Greek foolishness. How different however is the view which presents itself to the eye of faith. Faith knows no shame in the cross, except the shame of those who nailed the Saviour there; it sees no ground for scorn, but it hurls indignant scorn at sin, the enemy which pierced the Lord. Faith sees woe, indeed, but from this woe it marks a fount of mercy springing. It is true it mourns a dying Saviour, but it beholds him bringing life and immortality to light at the very moment when his soul was eclipsed in the shadow of death. Faith regards the cross, not as the emblem of shame, but as the token of glory. The sons of Belial lay the cross in the dust, but the Christians make a constellation of it, and see it glittering in the seventh heaven. Man spits upon it, but believers, having angels for their companions, bow down and worship him who ever liveth though once he was crucified. My brethren, our text presents us with a portion of the view which faith is certain to discover when its eyes are anointed with the eye-salve of the Spirit. It tells us that the cross was Jesus Christ's field of triumph. There he fought, and there he conquered, too. As a victor on the cross he divided the spoil. Nay, more than this; in our text the cross is spoken of as being Christ's triumphal chariot in which he rode when he led captivity captive, and received gifts for men. Calvin thus

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admirably expounds the last sentence of our text:—"The expression in the Greek allows, it is true of our reading—in *himself*; the connection of the passage, however, requires that we read it otherwise; for what would be meagre as applied to Christ, suits admirably well as applied to the cross. For as he had previously compared the cross to a signal trophy or show of triumph, in which Christ led about his enemies, so he now also compares it to a triumphal car in which he showed himself in great magnificence. For there is no tribunal so magnificent, no throne so stately, no show of triumph so distinguished, no chariot so elevated, as is the gibbet on which Christ has subdued death and the devil, the prince of death; nay, more, has utterly trodden them under his feet."

I shall this morning, by God's help, address you upon the two portions of the text. First, I shall endeavour to describe *Christ as spoiling his enemies on the cross*; and having done that I shall lead your imagination and your faith further on to see *the Saviour in triumphal procession upon his cross*, leading his enemies captive, and making a shew of them openly before the eyes of the astonished universe.

I. First, our faith is invited this morning to behold CHRIST MAKING A SPOIL OF PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS. Satan, leagued with sin and death, had made this world the home of woe. The Prince of the power of the air, fell usurper, not content with his dominions in hell, must need invade this fair earth. He found our first parents in the midst of Eden; he tempted them to forego their allegiance to the King of heaven; and they became at once his bond-slaves—bond-slaves for ever, if the Lord of heaven had not interposed to ransom them. The voice of mercy was heard while the fetters were being rivetted upon their feet, crying, "*Ye shall yet be free!*" In the fulness of time there shall come one who shall bruise the serpent's head, and shall deliver his prisoners from the house of their bondage. Long did the promise tarry. The earth groaned and travailed in its bondage. Man was Satan's slave, and heavy was the clanking chains which were upon his soul. At last, in the fulness of time, the Deliverer came forth, born of a woman. This infant conqueror was but a span long. He lay in the manger—he who was one day to bind the old dragon and cast him into the bottomless pit, and set a seal upon him. When the old serpent knew that his enemy was born, he conspired to put him to death; he leagued with Herod to seek the young child that he might destroy him. But the providence of God preserved the future conqueror; he went down into Egypt, and there was he hidden for a little season. Anon, when he had come to fulness of years, he made his public advent, and began to preach liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that were bound. Then Satan again shot forth his arrows, and sought to end the existence of the woman's seed. By divers means he sought to slay him before his time. Once the Jews took up stones to stone him; nor did they fail to repeat the attempt. They sought to cast him down from the brow of the hill headlong. By all manner of devices they laboured to take away his life, but his hour was not yet. Dangers might surround him, but he was invulnerable till the time was come. At last the tremendous day arrived. Foot to foot the conqueror must

fight with the dread tyrant. A voice was heard in heaven, "This is your hour, the power of darkness." And Christ himself exclaimed, "Now is the crisis of this world; now must the prince of darkness be cast out." From the table of communion the Redeemer arose at midnight, and marched forth to the battle. How dreadful was the contest! In the very first onset the mighty conqueror seemed himself to be vanquished. Beaten to the earth at the first assault, he fell upon his knees and cried, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Revived in strength, made strong by heaven, he no longer quailed, and from this hour never did he utter a word which looked like renouncing the fight. From the terrible skirmish all red with bloody sweat, he dashed into the thick of the battle. The kiss of Judas was, as it were, the first sounding of the trumpet; Pilate's bar was the glittering of the spear; the cruel lash was the crossing of the swords. But the cross was the centre of the battle; there, on the top of Calvary, must the dread fight of eternity be fought. Now must the Son of God arise, and gird his sword upon his thigh. Dread defeat or glorious conquest awaits the Champion of the church. Which shall it be? We hold our breath with anxious suspense while the storm is raging. I hear the trumpet sound. The howlings and yells of hell rise in awful clamour. The pit is emptying out its legions. Terrible as lions, hungry as wolves, and black as night, the demons rush on in myriads. Satan's reserved forces, those who had long been kept against this day of terrible battle, are roaring from their dens. See how countless are their armies, and how fierce their countenances. Brandishing his sword the arch fiend leads the van, bidding his followers fight neither small nor great, save only with the King of Israel. Terrible are the leaders of the battle. Sin is there, and all its innumerable offspring, spitting forth the venom of asps, and infixing their poison-fangs in the Saviour's flesh. Death is there upon his pale horse, and its cruel dart rends its way through the body of Jesus even to his inmost heart. He is "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Hell comes, with all its coils of juniper and fiery darts. But chief and head amongst them is Satan; remembering well the ancient day when Christ hurled him from the battlements of heaven, he rushes with all his malice yelling to the attack. The darts shot into the air are so countless that they blind the sun. Darkness covers the battle-field, and like that of Egypt it was a darkness which might be felt. Long does the battle seem to waver, for there is but one against many. One man—nay, tell it, lest any should misunderstand me, one *God* stands in battle array against ten thousand principalities and powers. On, on they come, and he receives them all. Silently at first he permits their ranks to break upon him, too terribly enduring hardness to spare a thought for shouting. But at last the battle-cry is heard. He who is fighting for his people begins to shout, but it is a shout which makes the church tremble. He cries, "I thirst." The battle is so hot upon him, and the dust so thick that he is choked with thirst. He cries, "I thirst." Surely, now, he is about to be defeated? Wait awhile; see ye yon heaps; all these have fallen beneath his arm, and as for the rest fear not the issue. The enemy is but rushing to his own destruction. In vain his fury and his

rage, for see the last rank is charging, the battle of ages is almost over. At last the darkness is dispersed. Hark how the conqueror cries, "It is finished." And where are now his enemies? They are all dead. There lies the king of terrors, pierced through with one of his own darts! There lies Satan with his head all bleeding, broken! Yonder crawls the broken-backed serpent, writhing in ghastly misery! As for sin, it is cut in pieces, and scattered to the winds of heaven! "*It is finished,*" cries the conqueror, as he came with dyed garments from Bozrah, "I have trodden the wine-press alone, I have trampled them in my fury, and their blood is sprinkled on my garments."

And now he proceeds to *divide the spoil*.

We pause here to remark that when the spoil is divided it is a sure token that the battle is completely won. The enemy will never suffer the spoil to be divided among the conquerors as long as he has any strength remaining. We may gather from our text of a surety, that Jesus Christ has totally routed, thoroughly defeated once for all, and put to retreat all his enemies, or else he would not have divided the spoil.

And now, what means this expression of Christ dividing the spoil? I take it that it means, first of all, that *he disarmed all his enemies*. Satan came against Christ; he had in his hand a sharp sword called the Law, dipped in the poison of sin, so that every wound which the law inflicted was deadly. Christ dashed this sword out of Satan's hand, and there stood the prince of darkness unarmed. His helmet was cleft in twain, and his head was crushed as with a rod of iron. Death rose against Christ. The Saviour snatched his quiver from him, emptied out all his darts, cut them in two, gave Death back the feather end, but kept the poisoned barbs from him, that he might never destroy the ransomed. Sin came against Christ; but sin was utterly cut in pieces. It had been Satan's armour bearer, but its shield was cast away, and it lay dead upon the plain. Is it not a noble picture to behold the enemies of Christ?—nay, my brethren, all your enemies, and mine, totally disarmed? Satan has nothing left him now wherewith he may attack us. He may attempt to injure us, but wound us he never can, for his sword and spear are utterly taken away. In the old battles, especially among the Romans, after the enemy had been overcome, it was the custom to take away all their weapons and ammunition; afterwards they were stripped of their armour and their garments, their hands were tied behind their backs, and they were made to pass under the yoke. Now, even so hath Christ done with sin, death, and hell; he hath taken their armour, spoiled them of all their weapons, and made them all to pass under the yoke; so that now they are our slaves, and we in Christ are conquerors of them who were mightier than we.

I take it this is the first meaning of dividing the spoil—total disarming of the adversary.

In the next place, when the victors divide the spoil they carry away not only the weapons but all the treasures which belong to their enemies. They dismantle their fortresses, and rifle all their stores, so that in future they may not be able to renew the attack. Christ hath done the like with all his enemies. Old Satan had taken away from

us all our possessions. Paradise, Satan had added to his territories. All the joy, and happiness, and peace of man. Satan had taken—not that he could enjoy them himself, but that he delighted to thrust us down into poverty and damnation. Now, all our lost inheritances Christ hath gotten back to us. Paradise is ours, and more than all the joy and happiness that Adam had. Christ hath brought back to us. O robber of our race, how art thou spoiled and carried away captive! Didst thou despoil Adam of his riches? The second Adam had rent them from thee! How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken, and the water is become desolate. Now shall the needy be remembered, and again shall the meek inherit the earth. “Then is the prey of a great spoil divided, the lame take the prey.”

Moreover, when victors divide the spoil, it is usual to take away all the ornaments from the enemy, the crowns and the jewels. Christ on the cross did the like with Satan. Satan had a crown on his head, a haughty diadem of triumph. “I fought the first Adam,” he said; “I overcame him, and here’s my glittering diadem.” Christ snatched it from his brow in the hour when he bruised the serpent’s head. And now Satan cannot boast of a single victory, he is thoroughly defeated. In the first skirmish he vanquished manhood, but in the second battle manhood vanquished him. The crown is taken from Satan. He is no longer the prince of God’s people. His reigning power is gone. He may tempt, but he cannot compel; he may threaten, but he cannot subdue; for the crown is taken from his head, and the mighty are brought low. O sing unto the Lord a new song, all ye his people, make a joyful noise unto him with psalms, all ye his redeemed; for he hath broken in sunder the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron, he hath broken the bow and cut the spear in sunder, he hath burned the chariots in the fire, he hath dashed in pieces our enemies, and divided the spoil with the strong.

And now, what says this to us? Simply this. If Christ on the cross hath spoiled Satan, let us not be afraid to encounter this great enemy of our souls. My brethren, in all things we must be made like unto Christ. We must bear our cross, and on that cross we must fight as he did with sin, and death, and hell. Let us not fear. The result of the battle is certain, for as the Lord our Saviour hath overcome once even so shall we most surely conquer in him. Be ye none of you afraid with sudden fear when the evil one cometh upon you. If he accuse you, reply to him in these words:—“Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?” If he condemn you, laugh him to scorn, crying:—“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather hath risen again.” If he threaten to divide you from Christ’s love, encounter him with confidence:—“I am persuaded that neither things present nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus your Lord.” If he let loose your sins upon you dash the hell-dogs aside with this:—“If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” If death should threaten you, shout out in his very face:—“O grave! where is thy sting; O death! where is thy victory.” Hold up the cross before you. Let that be your shield and buckler, and rest

assured that as your master not only routed the foe but afterwards took the spoil, it shall be even so with you. Your battles with Satan shall turn to your advantage. You shall become all the richer for your antagonists. The more numerous they shall be, the greater shall be your share of the spoil. Your tribulation shall work patience, and your patience experience, and your experience hope—a hope that maketh not ashamed. Through this much tribulation shall you inherit the kingdom, and by the very attacks of Satan shall you be helped the better to enjoy the rest which remaineth to the people of God. Put yourselves in array against sin and Satan. All ye that bend the bow shoot at them, spare no arrows, for your enemies are rebels against God. Go ye up against them, put your feet upon their necks, fear not, neither be ye dismayed, for the battle is the Lord's and he will deliver them into your hands. Be ye very courageous, remembering that you have to fight with a stingless dragon. He may hiss, but his teeth are broken and his poison fang extracted. You have to do battle with an enemy already scarred by you Master's weapons. You have to fight with a naked enemy. Every blow you give him tells upon him, for he has nothing to protect him. Christ hath stripped him naked, and divided his armour, and left him defenceless before his people. Be not afraid. The lion may howl, but rend you in pieces he never can. The enemy may rush in upon you with hideous noise and terrible alarms, but there is no real cause for fear. Stand fast in the Lord. Ye war against a king who hath lost his crown; ye fight against an enemy whose cheek-bones have been smitten, and the joints of whose loins have been loosed. Rejoice, rejoice in the day of battle, for it is for you but the beginning of an eternity of triumph.

I have thus endeavoured to dwell upon the first part of the text, Christ on the cross divided the spoil, and he would have us do the same.

II. The second part of our text refers not only to the dividing of the spoil, but to **THE TRIUMPH**. When a Roman general had performed great feats in a foreign country, his highest reward was that the senate should decree him a triumph. Of course there was a division of spoil made on the battle-field, and each soldier, and each captain took his share; but every man looked forward rapturously to the day when they should enjoy the public triumph. On a certain set day the gates of Rome were thrown open; the houses were all decorated with ornaments: the people climbed to the tops of the houses, or stood in great crowds along the streets. The gates were opened, and by-and-bye the first legion began to stream in with its banners flying, and its trumpets sounding. The people saw the stern warriors as they marched along the streets returning from their blood red-fields of battle. After one half of the army had thus defiled, your eye would rest upon one who was the centre of all attraction: riding in a noble chariot drawn by milk-white horses, there came the conqueror himself, crowned with the laurel crown and standing erect. Chained to his chariot were the kings and mighty men of the regions which he had conquered. Immediately behind them came part of the booty. There were carried the ivory and the ebony, and the beasts of the different countries which he had subdued. After these came the rest of the soldiery, along, long stream of valiant men, all of them

sharing the triumphs of their captain. Behind them came banners, the old flags which had floated aloft in the battle, the standards which had been taken from the enemy. And after these, large painted emblems of the great victories of the warrior. Upon one there would be a huge map depicting the rivers which he had crossed, or the seas through which his navy had found their way. Everything was represented in a picture, and the populace gave a fresh shout as they saw the memorial of each triumph. And then, behind, together with the trophies, would come the prisoners of less eminent rank. Then the rear would be closed with sound of trumpet, adding to the acclamation of the throng. It was a noble day for old Rome. Children would never forget those triumphs; they would estimate their years from the time of one triumph to another. High holiday was kept. Women cast down flowers before the conqueror, and he was the true monarch of the day.

Now, our apostle had evidently seen such a triumph, or read of it, and he takes this as a representation of what Christ did on the cross. He says, "Jesus made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Have you ever thought that the cross could be the scene of a triumph. Most of the old commentators can scarcely conceive it to be true. They say, "This must certainly refer to Christ's resurrection and ascension." But, nevertheless, so saith the Scripture, even on the cross Christ enjoyed a triumph. Yes! while those hands were bleeding the acclamations of angels were being poured upon his head. Yes, while those feet were being rent with the nails, the noblest spirits in the world were crowding round him with admiration. And when upon that blood-stained cross he died in agonies unutterable, there was heard a shout such as never was heard before for the ransomed in heaven, and all the angels of God with loudest harmony chanted his praise. Then was sung in fullest chorus, the song of Moses, the servant of God and of the Lamb, for he had indeed cut Rahab and sorely wounded the dragon. Sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

I do not feel able, however, this morning, to work out a scene so grand, and yet so contrary to everything that flesh could guess as a picture of Christ actually triumphing on the cross—in the midst of his bleeding, his wounds, and his pains, actually being a triumphant victor, and admired of all. I choose, rather, to take my text thus: the cross is the ground of Christ's ultimate triumph. He may be said to have really triumphed there, because it was by that one act of his, that one offering of himself, that he completely vanquished all his foes, and for ever sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. In the cross, to the spiritual eye, every victory of Christ is contained. It may not be there in fact, but it is there virtually; the germ of his glories may be discovered by the eye of faith in the agonies of the cross.

Bear with me while I humbly attempt to depict the triumph which now results from the cross.

Christ has for ever overcome all his foes, and divided the spoil upon the battle-field, and now, even at this day is he enjoying the well-earned

reward and triumph of his fearful struggle. Lift up your eyes to the battlements of heaven, the great metropolis of God. The pearly gates are wide open, and the city shines with her bejewelled walls like a bride prepared for her husband. Do you see the angels crowding to the battlements? Do you observe them on every mansion of the celestial city, eagerly desiring and looking for something which has not yet arrived? At last, there is heard the sound of a trumpet, and the angels hurry to the gates—the vanguard of the redeemed is approaching the city. Abel comes in alone, clothed in a crimson garb, the herald of a glorious army of martyrs. Hark to the shout of acclamation! This is the first of Christ's warriors, at once a soldier and a trophy, that have been delivered. Close at his heels there follow others, who in those early times had learned the coming Saviour's fame. Behold them a mighty host may be discovered of patriarchial veterans, who have witnessed to the coming of the Lord in a wanton age. See Enoch still walking with his God, and singing sweetly—"Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints." There too is Noah, who had sailed in the ark with the Lord as his pilot. Then follow Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Moses, and Joshua, and Samuel, and David, all mighty men of valour. Harken to them as they enter! Every one of them waving his helmet in the air, cries, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, unto him be honour, and glory, and dominion, and power, for ever and ever." Look, my brethren, with admiration upon this noble army! Mark the heroes as they march along the golden streets, everywhere meeting an enthusiastic welcome from the angels who have kept their first estate. On, on they pour, those countless legions—was there ever such a spectacle? It is not the pageant of a day, but the "show" of all time. For four thousand years, on streams the army of Christ's redeemed. Sometimes there is a short rank, for the people have been often minished and brought low; but, anon, a crowd succeeds, and on, on, still on they come, all shouting, all praising him who loved them and gave himself for them. But see, *he* comes! I see his immediate herald, clad in a garment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about him loins. The Prince of the house of David is not far behind. Let every eye be open. Now, mark, how not only angels, but the redeemed crowd the windows of heaven! He comes! He comes! It is Christ himself! Lash the snow-white coursers up the everlasting hills; "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in." See, he enters in the midst of acclamations. It is he! but he is not crowned with thorns. It is he! but though his hands wear the scar, they are stained with blood no longer. His eyes are as a flame of fire, and on his head are many crowns, and he hath on his vesture and on his thigh written, **KINGS OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.** He stands aloft in that chariot which is "paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem." Clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, he stands confessed the emperor of heaven and earth. On, on he rides, and louder than the noise of many waters and like great thunders are the acclamations which surround him! See how John's vision is become a reality, for now we can see for ourselves, and hear with our ears the new

song, whereof he writes : " They sung a new song, saying, thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof : for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests : and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders : and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands ; saying with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever." But who are those at his chariot wheels ? Who are those grim monsters that come howling in the rear ? I know them. First of all there is the arch enemy. Look to the old serpent, bound and fettered, how he writhes his ragged length along ! his azure hues all tarnished with trailing in the dust, his scales despoiled of their once vaunted brightness. Now is captivity led captive, and death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire. With what derision is the chief of rebels regarded. How is he become the object of everlasting contempt. He that sitteth in the heavens doth laugh, the Lord doth have him in derision. Behold how the serpent's head is broken, and the dragon is trampled under foot. And now regard attentively yon hideous monster, *Sin*, chained hand in hand with his satanic sire. See how he rolls his fiery eye-balls, mark how he twists and writhes in agonies. Mark how he glares upon the holy city, but is unable to spit his venom there, for he is chained and gagged, and dragged along an unwilling captive at the wheels of the victor. And there, too, is old Death, with his darts all broken and his hands behind him—the grim king of terrors, he, too, is a captive. Hark to the songs of the redeemed, of those who have entered into Paradise, as they see these mighty prisoners dragged along ; " Worthy is he," they shout, to live and reign at his Almighty Father's side, for he hath ascended up on high, he hath led captivity captive, and received gifts for men.

And now behind him I see the great mass of his people streaming in. The apostles first arrive in one goodly fellowship hymning their Lord ; and then their immediate successors ; and then a long array of those who through cruel mockings and blood, through flame and sword, have followed their Master. These are those of whom the world was not worthy, brightest among the stars of heaven. Regard also the mighty preachers and confessors of the faith, Chrysostom, Athanasius, Augustine and the like. Witness their holy unanimity in praising their Lord. Then let your eye run along the glittering ranks till you come to the days of Reformation. I see in the midst of the squadron, Luther, and Calvin, and Zwingli, three holy brothers. I see just before them Wickliffe, and Huss, and Jerome of Prague, all marching together. And then I see a number that no man can number, converted to God through these mighty reformers, who now follow in

the rear of the King of kings and Lord of lords. And looking down to our own time I see the stream broader and wider. For many are the soldiers who have in these last times entered into their Master's triumph. We may mourn their absence from *us*, but we must rejoice in their presence with the *Lord*. But what is the unanimous shout, what is the one song that still rolls from the first rank to the last? It is this; "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever!" Have they changed the tune? Have they supplanted his name for another? Have they put the crown on another head, or elevated another hero into the chariot? Ah, no: they are content still to let the triumphant procession stream along its glorious length; still to rejoice as they behold fresh trophies of his love, for every soldier is a trophy, every warrior in Christ's army is another proof of his power to save, and his victory over death and hell.

I have not time to enlarge further, or else I might describe the mighty picture at the end of the procession; for in the old Roman triumphs, the deeds of the conquerer were all depicted in paintings. The towns he had taken, the rivers he had passed, the provinces he had subdued, the battle he had fought, were represented in pictures, exposed to the view of the people, who with great festivity and rejoicing, accompanied him in throngs, or beheld him from the windows of their houses, and filled the air with their acclamations and applauses. I might present to you first of all the picture of hell's dungeon's blown to atom's. Satan had prepared deep in the depths of darkness a prison-house for God's elect; but Christ has not left one stone upon another. On the picture I see the chains broken in pieces, the prison doors burnt with fire, and all the depths of the vasty deep shaken to their foundations. On another picture I see heaven open to all believers; I see the gates that were fast shut heaved open by the golden lever of Christ's atonement. I see one, another picture, the grave despoiled; I behold Jesus in it, slumbering for awhile, and then rolling away the stone and rising to immortality and glory. But we cannot stay to describe these mighty pictures of the victories of his love. We know that the time shall come when the triumphant procession shall cease, when the last of his redeemed shall have entered into the city of happiness and of joy, and when with the shout of a trumpet heard for the last time, he shall ascend to heaven, and take his people up to reign with God, even our Father, for ever and ever, world without end.

Our only question, and with that we conclude, is, have we a good hope through grace that we shall march in that tremendous procession? Shall we pass under review in that day of pomp and glory? Say, my soul, shalt thou have an humble part in that glorious pageant? Wilt thou follow at his chariot wheels? Wilt thou join in the thundering hosannas? Shall thy voice help to swell the everlasting chorus? Sometimes, I fear it shall not. There are times when the awful question comes—what if my name should be left out when he should read the muster-roll? Brethren, does not that thought trouble you? But yet I put the question again. Can you answer it? Will you be there—shall you see this pomp? Will you behold him triumph over

sin, death, hell at last? Canst thou answer this question? There is another, but the answer will serve for both—dost thou believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? Is he thy confidence and thy trust? Hast thou committed thy soul to his keeping? Reposing on his might caust thou say for thine immortal spirit—

“ Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee ?”

If thou canst say that, thine eyes shall see him in the day of his glory: nay, thou shalt share in his glory, and sit with him upon his throne, even as he has overcome and sits down with his Father upon his throne. I blush to preach as I have done this morning on a theme far beyond my power; yet I could not leave it unsung, but as best I might, sing it. May God enlarge your faith, and strengthen your hope, and inflame your love, and make you ready to be made partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, that when he shall come with flying clouds on wings of wind, ye may be ready to meet him, and may with him ascend to gaze for ever on the vision of his glory.

May God grant this blessing, for Christ's sake. Amen.

A Morning Homily.

“ He maketh sore, and bindeth; he woundeth, and his hands make whole.”
Job, 5, 18.

HAS this been your experience lately? Have you been made sore by the heavy scourge of pain and wounded by the nails of your cross? Do not look at second causes. Men may have been the instruments, but God is the Agent. The cup has been presented by a Judas, but the Father permitted it, and it is therefore the cup that the Father hath given you to drink. Shall you not drink it? How much must he love you to dare to inflict this awful discipline, which makes your love and trust, which he values so infinitely, tremble in the scale.

But do not look back on what you have suffered, look on and up. As surely as he has made sore, he will bind up; as soon as he has wounded, his hands will begin to make whole. Consider the reparative processes of nature. So soon as the unsightly ruin of chasm yawns, nature begins to weave her rich festoons, to cover it with moss and lichen; let the flesh be punctured or lacerated, the blood begins to pour out the protoplasmic material to be woven into a new fabric. So, when the heart seems bleeding its life away, God is at work binding up and healing. Think of those dear and tender hands that fashioned the heavens and touched the eyeballs of the blind, as laid upon you to make you whole. Trust him! He loves infinitely, and will suffer none that trust in him to be desolate.—*The Christian*.

Our Minister's Wife and her Noble Life.

CHAPTER V.—A FAITHFUL MISTRESS.

TO the surprise and gratification of many, Mrs. Goldacre gradually came round, so as to be able in the course of six months to limp out of doors with the aid of a walking-stick. At the end of a year from the time she had had her unexpected stroke she was so far restored as to be able occasionally to visit her friends abroad, and also to resume, to a moderate extent, her much loved work of calling upon the poor and needy in the village. But very little did her up, and her medical man laid special stress upon her not to over-exert herself too much for fear of serious consequences. Then she found other, and to her very congenial employment, in nursing a fine boy to which her daughter had given birth. In this, however, as well as in other matters she was much assisted by a young woman whom Mrs. Barton had for some time engaged as a servant, and to whom I shall now have to call the reader's attention.

It so happened, that soon after Mrs. Goldacre was so seriously taken ill, Mrs. Barton determined to engage a servant, and sought my advice on the matter. It did not take me long to decide upon recommending one whom I believed to be a suitable person. Helen Dabster was the youngest

daughter of a tradesman in the village, who had a large family, and who was very desirous of getting one or two of his numerous daughters into situations for which they were fitted. One had already left home, and Helen who was twenty-one years of age had expressed her desire to go out to service. But her father, who was a God-fearing man, fearful of the temptations to which she might be subjected, hardly liked the thought of her leaving the village, and, therefore, jumped at the suggestion, I ventured, at Mrs. Barton's desire, to make to him to give her a trial at the manse. Helen, who was a member of the church, and but recently brought in through special evangelistic services that had been held at the Chapel, gladly consented to go: and a most trustworthy and industrious servant she proved herself to be.

She was not a tall girl, but stout and well made. Though not positively handsome, she had a pleasing face, rosy cheeks, fine piercing eyes, and luxuriant masses of auburn hair, in the adornment of which she seemed to take much pride. She had a winning and merry laugh which captivated all with whom she came in contact, and specially young men. But the lower part

of her face, full compressed lips, and often scornful look when things did not please her, showed that she had a large amount of firmness and decision of character that enabled her to stand up for herself when assailed, and to take any step she thought fit regardless of consequences. Occasionally restless, she gave way to fits of temper, which Mrs. Barton found it hard both to curb and endure; but such was her emotional and forgiving spirit that whatever was said to her when these fits wore over, she was ever ready to confess her errors and to make amends for any pain that she had unfortunately inflicted. On the whole, Mr. and Mrs. Barton were much satisfied with her, and so far as they could do treated her as a member of the family rather than as a domestic.

But now a circumstance occurred, that for the time being, tended to cast a shadow of anxiety over the household. Helen had not been with Mrs. Barton a year, when she began after the services, and when it was her half day out, to stay out later at night than was agreed upon. At first, her mistress paid little heed to it, but certain rumours having come to her ears, she determined on the next evening that it happened to take the young woman to task. And this was not long in coming. Mrs. Goldacre had gone to bed: Mr. Barton was away from home conducting special services, and at last Helen came hurriedly in far later even than usual.

In a kind but firm tone, Mrs. Barton said, "Helen, you are now an hour and a quarter beyond your stipulated time. You should have been in by nine o'clock, and it is now a quarter past ten. How is this? Surely your parents have

not kept you at home until this late hour!"

"No ma'am! I'm very sorry, but I did not know it was so late until I heard the church clock strike ten."

"Then you were out of doors," said Mrs. Barton, looking at her keenly, "and I am afraid it only corroborates what I have heard."

"And pray what have you heard, ma'am?" said Helen, blushing and confused.

"Why, that you have taken up with that scapegrace of a character, Jack Wreckham; and have been seen walking out with him when you ought to have been back here, assisting me, or preparing for bed."

"Please, who told you that, Mrs. Barton?" asked Helen somewhat angrily.

"Never mind who told me, Helen, it is enough for you to know that I have heard it from more sources than one: and that out of regard for yourself and your present and future welfare, I have thought it my duty to give you warning that if you keep company with such a young man, I fear you are on the road to ruin."

"But, Mrs. Barton, I am not keeping company with him, though I must honestly confess that I have walked out with him occasionally."

"I had faith enough in you, Helen, to believe that you would confess the truth if appealed to, for I have never caught you in a falsehood yet, and trust that I never shall do so. But do you not think that you are making a mistake when you affirm that although you walk out with him occasionally you are not keeping his company?"

"Well, I certainly am not

positively engaged to him, though he has asked me to be. In fact, he has pressed me hard to night to say I will be."

"But you have not said you would be at any future time, have you?" asked Mrs. Barton, earnestly.

For a few moments the young woman kept silence, as if she feared to commit herself, and then with a sudden rise of temper said, "Mrs. Barton, I wish you wouldn't ask me such questions; I think I am old enough to judge for myself without being interfered with in these matters by anybody."

"Helen, said Mrs. Barton, rather sternly, do you look upon me as a friend or as a foe?"

"I suppose you are a friend," was the answer rather sulkily given.

"You not only suppose it Helen, but you know it, replied Mrs. Barton, coolly. You have now been with us for over ten months and until now you have never given me any serious reason for complaint. A quicker, more industrious and cheerful girl I could not wish to have. But I know what this staying out late at night, and walking with such a young fellow as Jack Wreckham means. It means evil to yourself and nothing but evil; and, therefore, I am acting as your best friend when I take this matter in hand and give you a faithful warning. You know the text my husband took the other Sabbath evening, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." Now, if by my earnest talk I wound you, you may depend upon it I do so in faithfulness, and for your body and soul's good. What are you? You are a professed Christian, and what is more, I believe a real one. Up to

the present, you have walked very consistently, but this conduct of your's bodes no good. For what is Jack Wreckham? A wild, fast sort of young man, who keeps company like himself, goes to the public house, swears, and even walks out with other girls, besides yourself. If he ever comes to our chapel it is only because he wishes to be with you, and when once he has gained your consent, this chapel going will soon cease. That he is fascinating in his manner I have no doubt, or so many young women would not be so ready, as the saying is, to 'run after him.' But, young as I am, my dear girl, I have lived long enough to see that unless a young man has not Christian principle to guide him, and temperance habits to uphold him, promise what he may to the object of his choice, it is but a poor lookout for the unfortunate lass that accepts him. Shall I tell you a true story, Helen?"

"If you like, ma'am."

"A minister was here the other day and he gave me the incident. He said, on the Lord's day afternoon he held a young women's Bible Class. In that class was one young woman in whom he was deeply interested. She was likely to join the church when she came in contact with just such a young fellow as Jack Wreckham. He warned her several times against forming an alliance with him, but all to no purpose. He won her over, and ultimately she was married to him. But before marriage, it was found that she had disgraced herself, and not long after the wedding a child was born. Then he took to drinking worse than ever, and gambling too, and rarely came home till the early hours of the morning. In vain she remonstrated, for th

more she blamed him the worse he became, until he brutally used her and even turned her and her child out of doors. At last her proud spirit could brook such ill usage no longer. She determined, therefore, to put an end to it. Late one night, he came home and found the door unfastened. There was no light in the house, and he stumbled up-stairs. He called to his wife, but there was no answer. Then he felt his wife's face on the bed, and it was cold. Trembling all over, hastily he struck a light, and started back with horror and amazement. There, upon the bed,

with her body swollen and half undressed, lay his wife with her child, both dead. The inquest held soon afterwards showed that she had first given a dose of rat poison to her child, and had then taken a stronger dose herself, both of which had proved fatal. Oh, Helen, beware, beware of the tempter, for you know not what you are doing, unless in this most important matter you have the assurance that, in choosing your future partner, as well as pleasing yourself, you are doing that which is well pleasing unto God."

(To be continued.)

"CLING TO THE ROCK."

Two children were playing in a railway cutting among the mountains of America. As the train came on, whistling to warn them out of the way, the little sister caught up the boy of three, and placing him in a cleft of the ragged rock, in which there was only room for one, bade him, "Cling to the rock!" Then, rushing across to the other side, she had barely time to press herself against the opposite rock, to secure her own life. In her anxious alarm for the child's safety, she cried continually, "Cling to the rock, Johnnie, cling to the rock!" Had he not clung to the rock he must have lost his foothold and perished.

The earthly story has indeed a heavenly meaning.

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

There is safety for us in the cleft of the Rock of Ages: and, blessed be God, there is room there not for *one* only, but for *all* who will see their danger and cling to the Rock. "And the Lord said, I will put thee in a cleft of the Rock."

FAITH AND UNBELIEF.

FAITH sees more in a promise of God to help than in all other things to hinder; but *unbelief*, notwithstanding God's promise, saith, How can these things be?

Faith will give comfort in the midst of fears; but *unbelief* causeth fear in the midst of comforts.

Faith maketh great burdens light; but *unbelief* maketh light ones intolerably heavy.

Anecdotal Illustrations and Meditations from C. H. Spurgeon's Works.

Gathered by

T. W. MEDHURST, CARDIFF.

“NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME.”

I REMEMBER a man of God, who was talking to a young lady to whom he had spoken many times about her soul. At last he said to her:—“Well, Hannah, you do intend to come to Christ one day?”

She replied, “Yes, sir, I do intend.”

“Well, now, will you give me a date when you will come to Christ? You are twenty now, will you come to the Lord Jesus Christ when you are thirty? Will you put that down as a definite promise?”

“Well, sir, I should not like to promise that, because I might be dead before I was thirty. Ten years is a long time, and I might be dead and gone before that time, I hope I shall know the Lord before that.”

“Well, Hannah, we will say nine years, then; that is to be the time that you fix when you will yield to the mercy of God.”

“Well, sir, I hope it will be before then.”

“No, the bargain is made; you will have to run risks for nine years, you know. You make the bargain that you will come to Christ in nine years time; let it stand so, and you must run the risk.”

“Oh, sir! it would be an awful thing, a dreadful thing, for me to say that I would wait nine years, I might be lost in that time.”

“Well, suppose we say that you will serve the Lord in twelve months' time; will you just take this year, and spend it in the service of Satan, and then, when you have enjoyed yourself that way, give your heart to Christ?”

“Somehow, the young woman felt that it was a long time, and a very dangerous time, so she answered:—“I should not like to be hung over an awful chasm, and for somebody to say, ‘I will pull you up at the end of a year, and set your feet on a rock.’”

No, she could not bear that thought; and as her minister pressed her to set a time, and brought it down by little and little, at last she said, “Oh, sir, it had better be to-night! Pray to God that I may now give my heart to the Lord Jesus Christ, for it is such a dreadful

thing to be without a Saviour. I would have Christ as mine this very night."

So I put it to you, yield to Christ at once, and do not keep on saying, "I hope it will not be long before I become a child of God." "To-day if ye will hear this voice, harden not your hearts."

"NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION."

"You know how people often talk when they owe you money; they promise to pay you "next Monday." Then, when the next Monday comes, they say that, unfortunately, there was a remittance which they fully expected on the Saturday, but it did not come; they feel quite certain it will come on Wednesday morning, and they will be round at your house with it, or, would you mind calling upon them at noon on Wednesday? When you call on Wednesday, they are so sorry; such a thing never happened to them before, but they lost a purse when they were out in the street, so could you allow them another month's credit? That is how they go on, until at last you say, "Well, now, look here, will you tell me once for all when you will pay me? Do fix a day." And you think you have done something when you get a day for payment fixed at last. So shall I think that there is something gained, if there is a deliberate attempt made to fix some kind of time when you will yield yourself to Christ; and, of all the times that I can think of, my experience suggests to me that I had better quote to you this passage of scripture, "To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." To-day is in your power, it is here at present; it has almost gone, flying with the setting sun, but you have to-day at present, therefore use it, for to-morrow is not yours, and to-morrow may never come for you. How long will it be ere you trust in Jesus? *How long is it to be?* HOW LONG IS IT TO BE? Had it not better be NOW? God grant that it may be NOW, that you will humble yourself before the Lord, for Jesus' sake! You have waited too long already, and you do not find it easier from day to day, neither will you if you still delay to submit to the Lord; therefore yield to Him at once. God help you to do so. Why not, as thou art, say to-day:—

"Just as I am—without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come?"

THE POSSIBILITIES WITHIN LITTLE CHILDREN.

I read the other day a pleasing anecdote of what one lamb may come to. A ewe brought forth three lambs, and the brutal shepherd threw the third into the hedge, that there might be the more milk for the other two. A poor woman passing by begged for the thrown away lamb, employed her utmost care in nursing it by means of a sucking bottle, and reared it till it could eat grass for itself. She

turned it upon the common, and in due course it produced her twins ; by care she at length raised a whole flock of sheep from the single ewe, and in process of time, she became a woman of considerable estate. See what one poor half-dead lamb may yet produce. Who knows what one poor trembling soul may yet bring forth ? Jesus knows that perhaps a boy may be here who will be the spiritual father of scores and hundreds of thousands ere he dies. There may be in the congregation of to-day a CHRYSOSTOM or an AUGUSTINE. Right among us may sit a little WHITFIELD, or a young LUTHER, or some other of honourable character, who shall lead many to Christ. There was a dreadful snowstorm one sabbath morning when Dr. Tyng, of New York, set out to preach, and when he reached the church, there was ONLY ONE POOR LITTLE GIRL there. Most preachers would have gone home when one child made up the whole of the congregation ; but Dr. Tyng went through the services as earnestly as if the pews had been crowded. He preached to THE LITTLE GIRL, and God gave him that girl's soul, and never was he better repaid. To his knowledge SHE HAD BEEN THE MEANS OF BRINGING SOME TWENTY-FIVE TO THE LORD JESUS, AND AMONG THEM WAS ONE OF HIS OWN SONS. The greatest orator, the most spiritual teacher, the most useful evangelist, may not dare to despise one of Christ's little ones. It were worth while for all the ministers in England to journey round the world to save the soul of a single shoeblack, or of one girl in the workhouse. VALUE THE LITTLE ONES BY THEIR POSSIBILITIES, and you will reckon the lamb to be an untold treasure, worthy to be preserved in the casket of your loving care. LUTHER's schoolmaster always used to take off his hat to his boys when he entered the schoolroom, because, he said, he did not know what they might become, and had he known that MARTIN LUTHER had been there, he could not have done better than he did. JESUS CHRIST knows what He can make of little children in heaven, and so He carries "them in His bosom," because they shall be for ever near the Father's throne to behold His face. He has learned to estimate them at their eternal value ; a value which His grace has put up on them, and which He never forgets. The possibilities of blessing within one little saved child who shall estimate but the LORD, who knoweth all things ?

THE TRUE AND THE GOOD.

I HAVE a strong faith in the connection of truth with goodness. I suspect any statement to be false, however plausible it may be, the assenting to which makes a person wicked or proves him to be so. I cannot believe that to be true which a man must be wicked in order to believe, or which he cannot believe without becoming wicked.

The Wonder of Wonders.

By HENRY COUSENS.

WHEN "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the Knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," (2 Cor. iv. 6.) A new order of thoughts follows; He is the supreme *object* of our Faith, and Divine Revelation its principal *subject matter*, it purifies the heart, works by love, and is of the operation of the Holy Ghost.

The exercise thereof as it centres in God Himself, of course leads to the contemplation of the "Unsearchable Greatness" of the Almighty. His Divine Attributes and Perfections; and the more *intently* such considerations engage our thoughts, the more deeply and elaborately do we become conscious of our own inferiority, as objects of His Creative power, in whom we live, move, and have our being.

The more enlarged our apprehensions become, concerning His Infinite Majesty Glory, and Greatness, the more Wonderful doth His Words, Works, and Ways, appear to our Finite minds—The Heavens, the Earth, the great and wide Sea all teem with Wonders. All the inconceivable myriads of His Creation that liveth, moveth, and breatheth, are the Work of His Hand, and are in our eyes marvellously Wonderful.

But let it be a fixidity in our minds, that although (all) the multifarious displays of the Infinite Wisdom and power of God in the first Creation which have continued through successive ages and generations unto this day, are incomprehensively Wonderful, they are, nevertheless, demonstrateable *Facts* The Works of the Lord are great, sought out by them who take pleasure therein.—*We* ourselves are fearfully and wonderfully made, *the comprehension of which* is too high, we cannot attain unto it—but it is so, *in Fact*.

The design of this brief Article is to direct particular attention to "The Wonder of Wonders," which just here shall be named *to be*, "the Lord Jesus Christ and Him Crucified," and all that relates to His coming into this world to save sinners: *Who He Was, who He is, what He voluntary condescended to become*, for the purposes of the Redemption and Salvation of guilty men ruined by Sin: *where He ascended, after He had fulfilled all His Ancient undertakings according to the Everlasting Covenant; and the secured results of His Finished Work on behalf of all His Redeemed, we must refer our readers to the Divine Scriptures for the revealed detail concerning*—which are all *Facts* without controversy, although our limited powers of perception are so weak, as only to view them at present, as through a glass darkly

The Prophet Isaiah speaks of *Him*, 9 chap., 6th and 7th verses. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Councillor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, etc., etc." John also, 1 chap., 1, 2, 3, and 14th verses, was Divinely commissioned to declare; that, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

The Incarnation of Christ the Lord *is*, if we may be allowed *so to speak* with profound reverence, "The masterpiece of God," produced by the Lord, the Holy Ghost through the instrumentality of the Virgin Mary, in accordance with Divine purpose, promise, and performance. Christ was God before he became Sinless Man, but never was man without being *also* God, in a complexity of Nature and essence. This stupendous *Fact*, perceived and grasped by Faith, will greatly aid us in our own considerations and conclusions concerning "The Wonder of Wonders."

As it has pleased the Lord Jehovah to display the exceeding riches of His Love, Mercy, and Grace, toward fallen guilty man, in, through, and by the Lord Jesus to the praise of His glory, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures; *all* relating to the Life, Words, Works, and Ways, of the Wonderful and Adorable Redeemer, must *necessarily* be marvellous in our eyes. His victorious sufferings, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension to Heaven where He now is; Angels, and Principalities, and Powers, being subjects unto Him, are full of solid encouragement and strong consolation to His Saints, as is *also* His coming again to glorify them in both parts of their nature for ever. He is their available helper and supreme recourse *now*; and absent from the body they *will be* present with Him; of course unto them who believe He *is* precious, but *then* He will be increasingly and inconceivably precious.

It is the height of folly and danger for any persons to despise the Divine Scriptures: such reject the counsel of God *against themselves*. Anyone who has got into a very deep ditch of mud and mire, is better employed by considering how to *get out*, than phylosifying about *how they got into it*—that part of the situation can be *deferred*; *how to get out* is the present pressing *point*. We are all in the ruin of the fall of our first parents, through sin—the primary enquiry of all pretending to be wise, should of course be, is there any sure remedy for my desperately bad *circumstances*? We point to "The Wonder of Wonders," and it is one of God's verily, that "Whosoever believeth in *Him* shall not perish but have everlasting life." It is a fact for exultation among the Saints of God, that no penitent sinner under the canopy of the heavens who sincerely seeks Divine mercy, pardon, and salvation, through the wonderful Redeemer shall ever *be refused*.

The prospects of the Disciples of Christ are bright and glorious, the inheritance of the Saints in light, comprise fulness of joy and pleasures

for ever more. The prospects of those who continue to despise and reject the "Wonder of Wonders," and receive the writ to exchange worlds while red-handed in rebellion against God, it is fearful and terrible to contemplate.

Sin in the sight of the Lord omniscient, is beyond our comprehension. It is exhibited in all that pertains to the necessity of the costlessness of the ransom price required to be paid for redemption of sinners by no less a glorious person than "The Wonder of Wonders," in order to fully meet all the claims of Divine justice. He died for the offences of His redeemed, and was raised for their justification. He wrought out and brought in an everlasting righteousness by His perfect obedience to the Divine law which is *unto and upon* them that practically believe and trust in Him.

All these things are very wonderful of course, but we are speaking of *God's great Salvation* of sinful man steeped in guilt. The ten thousands and thousands of the Angelic Host could not make a sparrow, or a fish. The Magicians of Egypt, when they failed had to tell Pharaoh "This is the finger of God,"—and the foregoing points of *fact* are submitted for the permeating of all the announcements of faithful ministers of Christ, and all Gospel teachers, and the habitual consideration of all Christian persons, irrespective of denominationalism.

The writer does not believe it right to deceive our fellow men, or *waste* their time by the extraneous matter imported into sermons to such a vast extent, as must be fairly acknowledged is the case, *often and often*; in sacred matters we must deal with *facts*, to be *honest*; and much wisdom is required in doing so as occasion serves. Who, then, is sufficient for these things? As in aforesaid, so now, our only sufficiency is of God. Our business is to seek that sufficiency, and we are warranted in expecting all Divine help needed.

"JUST AS I AM."

It is said of a celebrated artist who wished to paint a great picture of the Prodigal Son, that he had a great difficulty in finding a man who looked degraded enough and wretched enough to sit as a model. At length he met a man in rags, looking as degraded and wretched as a man could look. The artist asked him to come the next day, as he was, that he might paint him. The man went as asked, but, to the artist's great surprise and annoyance, he did not appear in his rags, but respectably dressed.

"Did I not tell you," said the artist, "to come to me just as you were? You may go away again. I can't accept you as you are."

Many sinful people act very much like this wretched man. They will not go just as they are to their Saviour, but try to make themselves, as they think, more decent, more respectable, more righteous, *before* going to Him. Beware of this dangerous delusion. By doing this we are dressing ourselves in our own righteousness, rather than in the righteousness of *the Lord our Righteousness*.

Arrow Points.

By Pastor J. CLARK.

Every affliction is a call to reflection.

Where there's sin there's danger.

What God wants you to do you can do, or God would not want you do it.

The rougher the road, the sweeter the rest.

He that loves sin finds it hard to leave it.

Your neighbour's faults are no excuses for your own.

Better lack gold than grace.

Christ's bondage is better than the devil's freedom.

One may travel fast and far, but he can never get away from himself.

To-day's sin may be to-morrow's sorrow.

No crookedness of life can be straightened out by death.

Better be a saint in rags than a sinner in satin.

Hold to Christ with conscience clear
Every day throughout the year.Will thy spirit heavenward flee
When thy last day dawns on thee ?*Bass River, Nova Scotia*

Reviews.

The Christian Pictorial. A religious illustrated weekly. Vol. 3, August, 1896, to February, 1897. Alexander & Shephard, 21, Fumival-street, London.

Every page is bright and beautiful. For a penny religious weekly it is a marked success, and we know nothing more that can be desired, and when produced in this volume proves it is a rich repository of religious instruction for all classes and ages. A picture gallery of favourite places and events; a pictorial array of worthy men and women who have earned laurels for themselves in the Master's vineyard, a record of the chief events and doings of the day, and, withal, the always acceptable stories, "More Echoes from the Welsh Hills," by the Rev. David Davies. The whole elegantly and substantially bound.

The Early Churches of Great Britain Prior to the Coming of Augustine, by J. Hunt Cooke. Alexander and Shephard.

We can scarcely conceive of any thoughtful Englishman to whom this volume will not be acceptable. Yes, the English Churches before Augustine have a history, and we are thankful for the same. Mr. Cooke has produced a book which must have cost him considerable research, and we are indebted to him for giving us in brief the facts which his labour has brought out. He says, at the present day there are three great classes of Catholic Churches in our land, for all claim Catholicism in the true sense of the term. There is the

Roman Catholic, the Anglican Catholic, and the Scripture Catholic. He shows in this very truly interesting book that the early Christians of Great Britain most resemble the Scripture Catholics. Not organised under either Roman headships or State control. Taking the Holy Scripture as their supreme rule of faith, and recognising only the Headship of Christ. We hope it may have extensive circulation, and will find a place in all our Sunday School libraries.

Testimony of Recent Scottish Presbyterianism to the Principles of the Baptists. A Baptist Catechism with Pede-Baptist proofs prepared and collated by Rev. James Black, M.A. Alexander & Shephard.

A capital three-penny tract, on baptism taught by the Presbyterian and confirming our teaching on Believers' Baptism.

On the Threshold of Three Closed Lands. The Guild Outpost in the Eastern Himalayes, by Rev. J. A. Graham, M.A. Introduction by Sir Charles A. Elliott, K.C.S.I., LL.D. One hundred and twenty illustrations. Edinburgh: R. & R. Clark; London: A. & C. Black.

One of the most interesting books on Missionary work of the times, and shows the prayerfulness, devotedness, and sincerity of Christian men and women working for souls amidst much difficulty. The lands are closed, but the Word of God is not bound, and all the story points forward to a rich harvest.

The Higher Criticism. The great Apostasy of the Age, by D. K. Paton. Passmore & Alabaster, Paternoster Buildings.

We are quite in accord with the writer and endorse this teaching. Higher criticism has done nothing for Sceptics or Christians, but produce doubt and unbelief. We are glad that a presentation edition is issued, and trust much good may come of it.

Sin Punished but Sins Forgiven. The simple way of salvation of the first century. H. R. Alenson, Paternoster Row.

Great is the mystery of Godliness and it is a relief to begin at the BEGINNING of the first century and ask, amidst so many and contradictory views on foundation truths, what were the beliefs and resting places of the first converts to Christianity. *How simple, how clear, how brief the Creed*, but how safe and happy the believers. The writer has not made his views known in these pages without making as many difficulties as on the other side.

Part 18 of *The Treasury of David* has been received with comments from Psalms 73 to 78. Binding cases now ready for Vols. 1 to 3. Passmore & Alabaster.

The Treasury (American), Gay & Bird, Bedford Street, Strand.

This month, as always, answers again to its title. The Lenton-Timely occasion is illustrated by very excellent pictures of The Agony in the Garden, Christ weeping over Jerusalem, and The Olive Trees of Gethsemene.

The Religious Tract Societies' Serials are to hand. *The Cottager & Artisan*, *Friendly Greetings for the Cottager*, *The Child's Companion*, and *Dots for our Children*, the latter not to be supposed for little children.

The Sunday at Home with its splendid picture of Gethsemene, from a painting by Hafmann, and Part 5 of *Sunday Hours* for boys and girls, *Good Works*, for young and old, for Sunday reading. *The Leisure Hour*, an old favourite with which we couple *Light in the Home* and *The Boys' and Girls' Own* with instruction and amusement, form a series which must be an immense power for good in various circles of readers, and we have to call special attention to No. 21 of excellent women, making our loved Queen the exception to the rule, of making these biographies hitherto to consist only of the lives of exaltant women who have finished their work.

Great Thoughts for April opens with a very fine picture of Jesus and His mother, and from end to end carries out its title. *Great Thoughts, Mothers and Daughters*, and *Helping Words* are worthy to be in every home. The latter has an illustrated article by the Rev. E. G. Gange.

The Quiver, Cassell & Co., April number, amid a number of good chapters, has one of special interest by Earl Compton, M.P., *The Story of the Ragged School*, illustrated with a picture of the first Ragged School. *Momentoes of Protestant Reformers*, by Special Commissioners. Profusely illustrated, and *My Visit to Armenia*, by G. B. Burgin, illustrated by photographs.

We have received specimen copy of *Sunday Reader* No. 1, Vol 1, with a very beautiful coloured plate presented with No. 1. Also to hand *Life and Light, In His Name*, *The Monthly Record* of the Protestant Evangelical Mission, and the *Monthly Reporter*, and *Gleanings for the Young*, of the British and Foreign Bible Society. *Our Own Magazine*, *The Baptist Magazine*, *The Sword & Trowel*, and *The Irish Baptist Magazine* are good average numbers.

Denominational Intelligence.

CHANGES IN THE PASTORATE.

Rev. J. Cameron Taylor, from Burslem, to Zion Church, Bramley, Leeds.

Rev. D. Rees, from Aberfau, to Glascoed Church, Pontypool.

Rev. J. Howell Rees, Narberth, from Aberystwyth College, to Griffithstown, near Pontypool.

Rev. B. J. Cole, from Lossiemouth, N.B., to Orangefield Church, Greenock.

Rev. F. C. Hughes, from Borough-road Church, to Berkhamsted.

Rev. Philip A. Pepperdene, from Pastors' College, to Soham Cambs.

Rev. L. J. Shakleford, from Adelaide, to Clitheroe.

Rev. W. Owen, from Swansea, to Queen's-park Church, Manchester.

Rev. A. S. Evans, from Cardiff College, to Carmell Welsh Church, Sirhowy.

Rev. J. H. Roberts, from Swansea, to Welsh Church Penderyn, Glam.

Rev. T. Reeves, has accepted the pastorate of Tirzah Church, Michaelstone-y-Vedw, near Cardiff.

Rev. A. A. Savage, from Gorleston, Great Yarmouth, to Salter's Hall Chapel, Islington.

Rev. J. S. Geale has resigned the pastorate of Queen-square Church, Brighton, which he has held for seventeen years.

Rev. William Turner, owing to continued ill-health, has resigned the pastorate at Mill-street, Bedford.

RECOGNITIONS.

Rev. E. B. Woods has been recognised as minister at Clarendon Hall, Leicester. Revs. J. Thew, J. E. Roberts, W. Evans, J. Cornish, A. H. Tolhurst, W. Y. Fullerton, J. C. Forth, and Mr. T. J. Lennard, (Clarendon-park Congregational Church) took part.

Mr. A. E. Calver has been ordained to the pastorate at Thornaby-on-Tees. Professor McCaig gave the charge to the church at the morning service on Sunday, and the charge to the pastor in the evening. At a public meeting on Monday, Alderman W. Anderson presided, Revs. J. T. Feltham, D. Ross, J. B. Uffen, T. Roberts, and D. Pryse, took part.

PRESENTATIONS.

Farewell sermons have been preached by Rev. Wm. C. Minife at Lansdowne Church, Bournemouth. At a meeting on the following day he was presented with a clock, an illuminated address, and a purse containing £50. At a farewell meeting, over which Mr. G. Pearce presided, Revs. J. Ossian Davies, W. V. Robinson (former pastor), Thomas Evans, C. H. Stanton, and C. H. Parrett, took part.

Dr. Usher, a purse with £30 and an address from Orplington Church, on resigning the pastorate.

Rev. H. Trueman, a marble clock from Chesham Church, on resigning the pastorate.

Rev. A. Holden, a purse of gold and clock from Hornchurch Church, on his marriage.

Rev. H. J. Preece, a cheque from the church at Maidenhead, in recognition of nine years' services, on his resignation.

Mr. G. Bartlett, an illuminated address and a marble clock from the church at Andover, in recognition of more than thirty years' service to the church, of which he has been both deacon and Sunday-school superintendent, Mrs. Bartlett, a silver teapot.

Rev. Richard Richard, a bicycle and thirty-one guineas from Cothamgrove Church, Bristol, on completing ten years' pastorate; Mrs. Richards, a drawing-room timepiece and a purse of twelve guineas.

Rev. G. Simmons, an address, with silver cruets, etc., from the church at Sidcup.

Rev. G. T. Bailey, a purse of £30 and a gold watch chain from Vicarage-road Church, Leyton, E.

NEW CHAPELS.

The foundation-stones of a new chapel, a memorial of Christmas Evans, the famous Welsh preacher, have been held at Llangefni, Anglesey. The building will cost £2,000. At the meeting which followed addresses were given by Principal Morris, Bangor; Revs. Dr. Davies, Carnarvon; E. Evans, Bangor, and D. Davies, Llandudno.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS.—St. John's Free Church was reopened on March 14th after alterations, and a Baptistry have been placed in it. The Rev. J.

Mountain, who has been immersed, and has become a Baptist Minister, preached to crowded audiences on the Lord's Day, and on Thursday, after a Public Tea, a Meeting was held in the chapel to recognise Mr. Mountain as the Minister. Frank East Esq., J.P., presided, and addresses were delivered by Pastors James H. Blake, Wenn, J. McAuliffe, Walker, and Messrs. Caley, Read, Verrell, and Smellic.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Welsh Baptists of Canarvonshire have published the following statistics showing the proportions of their members to the population of each county:—Anglesea: Baptist churches, 36, members 2,117 (one in every 24 of the population). Canarvonshire: churches 37 members, 2,539, (one in every 46). Merionethshire: churches 21; members, 1,213 (one in every 40). Denbigshire; churches, 50; members, 3,685, (one in every 32). Flintshire: churches 23; members, 747 (one in every 103). Montgomeryshire: churches, 22; members 1,475 (one in every 39). Radnorshire: churches, 25; members 2,179 (one in every 10). Cardiganshire: churches, 22; members, 2,192, (one in every 28). Carmarthenshire: churches, 77; members 14,250, (one in every 9). Pembrokeshire: churches 63; members, 10,924 (one in every 8). Glamorganshire: churches, 257, members, 41,371 (one in every 16). Breconsire: churches, 36; members, 2,402 (one in every 23). Monmouthshire: churches 107; members, 14,858 (one in every 16).

Tonbridge.—April 7th. A sale of work took place at High street Baptist Chapel, for the purpose of paying the remaining debt on the Organ. Its original cost £350, had been paid except £38. The Sale was opened by W. Vinson Esq. of Orping-

ton, and realised £32, leaving a small balance of a few pounds, which will be raised at once.

Tunbridge district Churches of the Kent and Sussex Associations, held their meeting at High street Chapel, March 31st. Afternoon Meetings Councillor Finch presided, and an address was delivered by Rev. C. Rudge of Sevenoaks, on the Church for the Times, followed by an interesting discussion. In the evening, Frank East Esq., J.P. presided, and addresses were delivered by the Chairman, Dr. Usher, Rev. J. T. Atkinson of Sandhurst, D. Chapman of Yalding. Dr. Usher moved a vote of condolence with widow Mrs. James Smith of Tunbridge Wells. A vote strongly expressing dissent with the action of our Government in connection with the Eastern Question, and condemning any attempts to maintain the integrity of the Empire of the Great Assassin, was moved by James H. Blake. Both resolutions were carried unanimously.

The Poor Ministers Clothing Society held at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, will be glad to receive parcels of new or second hand clothing for distribution among poor ministers and their families, who are labouring in country districts, where the income in many cases does not amount to £50 a year.

MRS. S. BARNETT, *Hon. Sec.*

BAPTISMS.

Anstruther, N.B.—March 14, Three, by H. Edwards
Ayr: Fort-street.—March 7, Six, by H. D. Brown
Bardwell, Suffolk.—March 11, Three, by G. F. Wall
Barnoldswick: Bethesda.—March 28, One by A. T. Brainsby
Beckington.—April 1, Seven, by W. Price

Birmingham: Small Heath.—March 28, Three, by F. J. Smythe
Bishop's Stortford.—March 26, Two, by W. Walker
Belfast: Great Victoria-street.—March 24, Four, by C. S. Donald
Buckley, Flintshire.—March 28, One, by W. Jenkins
Calvary, Treforest.—March 28, Two, by Evan Lewis
Coalville, Leicestershire.—March 28, One, by J. H. Grant
Caxton.—March 10, Two, by W. Kelsey
Crews: Union-street.—March 28, Two, by J. Thomas
Devonport: Pembroke-street.—April 4, Four, by J. Hines
Dundee: Ward-road.—March 7, Four, by D. Clark
Dudley: New-street.—March 28, Two, by E. Milnes
Elgin.—March 21, Two, by J. F. Taviner
Glasgow, Cambridge-street.—March 21, Five, by E. Last
Gold Hill, Chalfont, Bucks.—March 4 Three; 7, One, by T. Davies
Hull: George-street.—Seven, by J. E. Shephard
Ibstock, Leicester.—March 21, Four, by A. E. Johnson
Iwerne Minster, Dorset.—March 14, One, by T. Yauldron
Leeds: Bunley-road.—April 4, Four, by F. W. Walter
Leeds: Hunslet Tabernacle.—March 28, Four; 29, One, by A. E. Greening
Leicester: Dover-street.—March 22, Nine, by A. H. Tolhurst
Macclesfield: St. George's-street.—March 23, Six, by E. A. Hobby
Maindee, Newport, Mon.—March 28, One, by A. T. Jones
Mill Hill, Chadderton.—March 28, Six, by F. Oliver
Manchester: Higher Openshaw.—March 31, One, by L. M. Thomas
Mitcham.—April 1, Five, by J. T. Figg
Mount Pleasant, Pontsey.—April 4, One, by D. H. Jenkins
Meltham, Yorks.—March 11, Two, by W. Owen
Maestag, Zion.—March 21, Two, by W. Harries
Nantgwyn, Radnorshire.—March 20, Two, by T. D. Jones
Oldham: Pitt-street.—March 28 Four by W. Hughes

Pembroke Dock: Bush-street.—Twelve, by R. C. Roberts
Pembrey Tabernacle.—March 21, One, by W. E. Watkins
Preston: Pole-street.—March 21, Five, by A. Pritter
Risca: Moriah.—March 21, Two, by J. O. Jenkins
Rugby.—March 14, 1 wo, by J. Young
Rhyl: Brighton-road.—March 14, Three, by E. T. Davies
South Bank, Yorks.—March 14, Five, by D. M. Fryse
Sowerby Bridge.—March 9, One, by J. Fox
Sutton-in-Craven, Yorks.—February 28, Nineteen, by F. W. Pollard
Shegness, St. Paul's.—March 28, One, by G. Goodchild.
St. Helier's, Jersey.—March 28, Three, by W. Bonser
South Leith.—March 28, One, by P. Tait
Sunningdale, Berks.—March 28, Two, by F. Burnett
Sheffield, Cemetery-road.—March 21, Four, E. by Carrington
Tubbermore, co., Londonderry.—March 14, Two, by G. Marshall
Tylorstown, Pontypridd.—March 14, Three, by W. F. Walters
Tonbridge.—April 12, Seven, by James H. Blake.
Todmorden, Roomfield Chapel.—March 28, Twelve, by H. Biggs
Upton-on-Seven.—March 24, Two, by W. T. Shepherd

Worcester, Sansome Walk.—March 28, Five, by J. B. Johnston, M.A.
Whittlesea, Windmill-street.—March 14, Three, by H. B. Fleming.
Whitwick.—March 21, Nine, by J. H. Grant

LONDON DISTRICT.

Barking, E..—March 29, Four, by H. Trueman
Bow-road.—March 8 and 28, Six, by F. H. King
Brentford: North-road, W.—March 28, Three; April 18, One, by R. Mutimer
Bermondsey S.E..—March 28, Four, by A. V. G. Chandler
Chiswick: Annandale-road.—March 28 and April 1, Seven, by A. G. Edgerton
Clapham Junction: Meyrick-road.—March 28, Two, by R. E. Sears
East Ham.—March 11, Seven, by R. Sloan
New Cross-road.—March 28, Five, by T. Jones
Poplar: Cot.on-street.—March 28, Four, by W. Joynes
Raleigh Park, Brixton-hill.—March 28, Three, by A. Dickerson
South Bermondsey.—March 10, Fourteen, by T. E. Howe
Stratford-grove.—March 28, Five, by W. H. Stevens

NEVER FORGET.

JOHN NEWTON, when his memory was nearly gone, used to say that, forget what he might, he never forgot two things: first, that he was a great sinner; second, that Jesus Christ was a great Saviour.

Go to God as a sinner, if you question your right to go in any other character: he always receiveth sinners.

In every company remember you profess to be a member of Christ, a son of God, a temple of the Holy Ghost.

THE
BAPTIST MESSENGER:

AND

Evangelical Treasury

AND

CHRONICLE OF THE CHURCHES

FOR THE YEAR 1897.

LONDON

61, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C

Predestination and Calling.

A SERMON BY THE LATE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

“ Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called.—Romans viii. 30.

THE great book of God’s decrees is fast closed against the curiosity of man. Vain man would be wise; he would break the seven seals thereof, and read the mysteries of eternity. But this cannot be; the time has not yet come when the book shall be opened, and even then the seals shall not be broken by mortal hand, but it shall be said, “ The lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book and break the seven seals thereof.”

“ Eternal Father, who shall look
 Into Thy secret will ?
*None but the Lamb shall take the book,
 And open every seal.*”

None but he shall ever unroll that sacred record and read it to the assembled world. How then am I to know whether I am predestinated by God unto eternal life or no ? It is a question in which my eternal interests are involved ; am I among that unhappy number who shall be left to live in sin and reap the due reward of their iniquity ; or do I belong to that goodly company, who albeit that they have sinned shall nevertheless be washed in the blood of Christ, and shall in white robes walk the golden streets of paradise ? Until this question be answered my heart cannot rest, for I am intensely anxious about it. My eternal destiny infinitely more concerns me than all the affairs of time. Tell me, oh, tell me, if ye know, seers and prophets, is my name recorded in that book of life ? Am I one of those who are ordained unto eternal life, or am I to be left to follow my own lusts and passions, and to destroy my own soul ? Oh ! man, there is an answer to thy enquiry ; the book cannot be opened, but God himself hath published many a page thereof. He hath not published the page whereon the actual names of the redeemed are written ; but that page of the sacred decree whereon their *character* is recorded is published in his Word, and shall be proclaimed to thee this day. The sacred record of God’s hand is this day published everywhere under heaven, and he that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto him. O my hearer, by thy name I know thee not, and by thy name God’s Word doth not

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declare thee, but by thy character thou mayest read thy name; and if thou hast been a partaker of the calling which is mentioned in the text, then mayest thou conclude beyond a doubt that thou art among the predestinated—"For whom he did predestinate, them he also called." And if thou be called, it follows as a natural inference thou art predestinated.

Now in considering this solemn subject, let me remark that there are two kinds of callings mentioned in the Word of God. The first is the *general call*, which is in the gospel sincerely given to everyone that heareth the word. The duty of the minister is to call souls to Christ, he is to make no distinction whatever—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." The trumpet of the gospel sounds aloud to every man in our congregations—"Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." "Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man," (Prov. viii. 4.) This call is sincere on God's part; but man by nature is so opposed to God, that this call is never effectual, for man disregards it, turns his back upon it, and goes his way, caring for none of these things. But mark, although this call be rejected, man is without excuse in the rejection; the universal call has in it such authority, that the man who will not obey it shall be without excuse in the day of judgment. When thou art commanded to believe and repent, when thou art exhorted to flee from the wrath to come, the sin lies on thy own head if thou dost despise the exhortation, and reject the commandment. And this solemn text drops an awful warning: "How shall ye escape, if ye neglect so great a salvation." But I repeat it, this universal call is rejected by man; it is a call, but it is not attended with divine force and energy of the Holy Spirit in such a degree as to make it an unconquerable call, consequently men perish, even though they have the universal call of the gospel ringing in their ears. The bell of God's house rings every day, sinners hear it, but they put their fingers in their ears, and go their way, one to his farm, and another to his merchandise, and though they are bidden and are called to the wedding (Luke xiv. 16, 17, 18), yet they will not come, and by not coming they incur God's wrath, and he declareth of such,— "None of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper." (Luke xiv. 24.) The call of our text is of a different kind; it is not a universal call, it is a special, particular, personal, discriminating, efficacious, unconquerable, call. This call is sent to the predestinated, and to them only; they by grace hear the call, obey it, and receive it. These are they who can now say, "Draw us, and we will run after thee."

In preaching of this call this morning, I shall divide my sermon into three brief parts.—First, I shall give *illustrations of the call*; secondly, we shall come to *examine whether we have been called*; and then, thirdly, *what delightful consequences flow therefrom*. Illustration, examination, consolation.

I. First, then, for ILLUSTRATION. In illustrating the effectual call of grace, which is given to the predestinated ones, I must first use the picture of Lazarus. See you that stone rolled at the mouth of the

sepulchre? Much need is there for the stone that it should be well secured, for within the sepulchre there is a putrid corpse. The sister of that corrupt body stands at the side of the tomb, and she says, "Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days." This is the voice of reason and of nature. Martha is correct; but by Martha's side there stands a man who, despite all his lowliness, is very God of very God. "Roll ye away the stone," saith he, and it is done; and now, listen to him; he cries, "Lazarus, come forth!" that cry is directed to a mass of putridity, to a body that has been dead four days, and in which the worms have already held carnival; but, strange to say, from that tomb comes a living man! that mass of corruption has been quickened into life, and out he comes, wrapped about with grave-clothes, and having a napkin about his head. "Loose him and let him go," saith the Redeemer; and then he walks in all the liberty of life. The effectual call of grace is precisely similar; the sinner is dead in sin; he is not only in sin but *dead* in sin, without any power whatever to give to himself the life of grace. Nay, he is not only dead, but he is corrupt; his lusts, like the worms, have crept into him, a foul stench riseth up into the nostrils of justice, God abhorreth him, and justice crieth, "Bury the dead out of my sight, cast it into the fire, let it be consumed." Sovereign Mercy comes, and there lies this unconscious, lifeless mass of sin; Sovereign Grace cries, either by the minister, or else directly without any agency, by the Spirit of God, "Come forth!" and that man lives. Does he contribute anything to his new life? Not he; his life is given solely by God. He was dead, absolutely dead, rotten in his sin; the life is given when the call comes, and, in obedience to the call, the sinner comes forth from the grave of his lust, begins to live a new life, even the life eternal, which Christ gives to his sheep.

"Well," cries one, "but what are the words which Christ uses when he calls a sinner from death?" Why, the Lord may use any words. It was not long ago there came unto this hall, a man who was without God and without Christ, and the simple reading of the hymn—

"Jesus lover of my soul,"

was the means of his quickening. He said within himself, "Does Jesus love me? then I must love him," and he was quickened in that selfsame hour. The words which Jesus uses are various in different cases. I trust that even while I am speaking this morning, Christ may speak with me, and some word that may fall from my lips, unpremeditated and almost without design, shall be sent of God as a message of life unto some dead and corrupt heart here, and some man who has lived in sin hitherto, shall now live to righteousness, and live to Christ. That is the first illustration I will give you of what is meant by effectual calling. It finds the sinner dead, it gives him life, and he obeys the call of life and lives.

But let us consider a second phrase of it. You will remember while the sinner is dead in sin, he is alive enough so far as any opposition to God may be concerned. He is powerless to obey, but he is mighty enough to resist the call of divine grace. I may illustrate

it in the case of Saul of Tarsus : this proud Pharisee abhors the Lord Jesus Christ ; he has seized upon every follower of Jesus who comes within his grasp ; he has haled men and women to prison ; with the avidity of a miser who hunts after gold, he has hunted after the precious life of Christ's disciple, and having exhausted his prey in Jerusalem, he seeks letters and goes off to Damascus upon the same bloody errand. Speak to him on the road, send out the apostle Peter to him, let Peter say, "Saul, why dost thou oppose Christ? The time shall come when thou shalt yet be His disciple." Saul would turn round and laugh him to scorn—"Get thee gone thou fisherman, get thee gone—I a disciple of that impostor Jesus of Nazareth! Look here, this is my confession of faith; here will I hale thy brothers and thy sisters to prison, and beat them in the synagogue and compel them to blaspheme and even hunt them to death, for my breath is threatening, and my heart is as fire against Christ." Such a scene did not occur, but had there been any remonstrance given by men you may easily conceive that such would have been Saul's answer. But Christ determined that he would call the man. Oh, what an enterprise! STOP HIM? Why he is going fast onward in his mad career. But lo, a light shines round about him and he falls to the ground, and he hears a voice crying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." Saul's eyes are filled with tears, and then again with scales of darkness, and he cries, "Who art thou?" and a voice calls, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." It is not many minutes before he begins to feel his sin in having persecuted Jesus, nor many hours ere he receives the assurance of his pardon, and not many days ere he, who persecuted Christ, stands up to preach with vehemence and eloquence unparalleled, the very cause which he once trod beneath his feet. See what effectual calling can do. If God should choose this morning to call the hardest-hearted wretch within hearing of the gospel, he must obey. Let God call—a man may resist, but he cannot resist effectually. Down thou shalt come, sinner, if God cries *down* ; there is no standing when he would have thee fall. And mark, every man that is saved, is always saved by an overcoming call which he cannot withstand ; he may resist it for a time, but he cannot resist so as to overcome it, he *must* give way, he *must* yield when God speaks. If he says, "Let there be light," the impenetrable darkness gives way to light ; if he says, let there be grace," unutterable sin gives way, and the hardest-hearted sinner melts before the fire of effectual calling.

I have thus illustrated the call in two ways, by the state of the sinner in his sin, and by the omnipotence which overwhelms the resistance which he offers. And now another case. The effectual call may be illustrated *in its sovereignty* by the case of Zaccheus. Christ is entering into Jericho to preach. There is a publican living in it, who is a hard, griping, grasping, miserly extortioner. Jesus Christ is coming in to call some one, for it is written he must abide in some man's house. Would you believe it, that the man whom Christ intends to call is the worst man in Jericho—the extortioner? He is a little short fellow, and he cannot see Christ, though he has a great

curiosity to look at him ; so he runs before the crowd and climbs up a sycamore tree, and thinking himself quite safe amid the thick foliage, he waits with eager expectation to see this wonderful man who had turned the world upside down. Little did he think that He was to turn him also. The Saviour walks along preaching and talking with the people until he comes under the sycamore tree, then lifting up his eyes, he cries—"Zaccheus, make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide in thy house." The shot took effect, the bird fell, down came Zaccheus, invited the Saviour to his house, and proved that he was really called not by the voice merely but by grace itself, for he said, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give unto the poor, and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore unto him fourfold ;" and Jesus said, "This day is salvation come unto thy house." Now why call *Zaccheus* ? There were many better men in the city than he. Why call him ? Simply because the call of God comes to unworthy sinners. There is nothing in man that can deserve this call ; nothing in the best of men that can invite it ; but God quickeneth whom he will, and when he sends that call, though it come to the vilest of the vile, down they come speedily and swiftly ; they come down from the tree of their sin, and fall prostrate in penitence at the feet of Jesus Christ.

But now to illustrate this call in its effects, we remind you that Abraham is another remarkable instance of effectual calling. "Now the Lord had said unto Abraham, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee," and "by faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed ! and he went out, not knowing whither he went." Ah ! poor Abraham, as the world would have had it, what a trial his call cost him ! He was happy enough in the bosom of his father's household, but idolatry crept into it, and when God called Abraham, he called him alone and blessed him out of Ur of the Chaldees, and said to him, "Go forth, Abraham !" and he went forth, not knowing whither he went. Now, when effectual calling comes into a house and singles out a man, that man will be compelled to go forth without the camp, bearing Christ's reproach. He must come out from his very dearest friends, from all his old acquaintances, from those friends with whom he used to drink, and swear, and take pleasure ; he must go straight away from them all, to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. What a trial to Abraham's faith, when he had to leave all that was so dear to him, and go he knew not whither ! And yet God had a goodly land for him, and intended greatly to bless him. Man ! if thou art called, if thou art called truly, there will be a going out, and a going out alone. Perhaps some of God's professed people will leave you ; you will have to go without a solitary friend,—maybe you will even be deserted by Sarah herself, and you may be a stranger in a strange land, a solitary wanderer, as all your fathers were. Ah ! but if it be an effectual call, and if salvation shall be the result thereof, what matters it though thou dost go to heaven alone ? Better to be a solitary pilgrim to bliss, than one of the thousands who throng the road to hell.

I will have one more illustration. When effectual calling comes to a man, at first he may not know that it is effectual calling. You remember the case of Samuel: the Lord called Samuel, and he arose and went to Eli, and he said, "Here am I, for thou calledst me." Eli said, "I called not, lie down again. And he went and lay down." The second time the Lord called him, and said, "Samuel, Samuel," and he arose again, and went to Eli, and said, "Here am I, for thou didst call me," and then it was that Eli, not Samuel, first of all perceived that the Lord had called the child. And when Samuel knew it was the Lord, he said, "Speak; for thy servant heareth." When the work of grace begins in the heart, the man is not always clear that it is God's work: he is impressed under the minister, and perhaps he is rather more occupied with the impression than with the agent of the impression; he says, "I know not how it is, but I have been called: Eli, the minister has called me." And perhaps he goes to Eli to ask what he wants with him. "Surely," said he, "the minister knew me, and spoke something personally to me, because he knew my case." And he goes to Eli, and it is not till afterwards, perhaps, that he finds that Eli had nothing to do with the impression, but that the Lord had called him. I know this—I believe God was at work with my heart for years before I knew anything about him. I knew there was a work; I knew I prayed, and cried, and groaned for mercy, but I did not know what was the Lord's work; I half thought it was my own. I did not know till afterwards, when I was led to know Christ as all my salvation, and all my desire, that *the Lord* had called the child, for this could not have been the result of nature, it must have been the effect of grace. I think I may say to those who are the beginners in the divine life, so long as your call is real, rest assured it is divine. If it is a call that will suit the remarks which I am about to give you in the second part of the discourse, even though you may have thought that God's hand is not in it, rest assured that it is, for nature could never produce effectual calling. If the call be effectual, and you are brought out and brought in—brought out of sin and brought to Christ, brought out of death into life, and out of slavery into liberty, then, though thou canst not see God's hand in it, yet it is there.

II. I have thus illustrated effectual calling. And now as a matter of EXAMINATION let each man judge himself by certain characteristics of heavenly calling which I am about to mention. If in your Bible you turn to 2 Timothy, i. 9, you will read these words—"Who hath saved us, and call us with an holy calling." Now here is the first touchstone by which we may try our calling—many are called but few are chosen, because there are many kinds of call, but the true call, and that only, answers to the description of the text. It is "an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." This calling forbids all trust in our own doings, and conducts us to Christ alone for salvation, but it afterwards purges us from dead works to serve the living and true God. If you are living in sin, you are not called; if you can still continue as you were before your pretended conversion, then it is no conversion at all; that man who is called in

his drunkenness, will forsake his drunkenness; men may be called in the midst of sin, but they will not continue it any longer. Saul was anointed to be king when he was seeking his father's asses; and many a man has been called when he has been seeking his own lust, but he will leave the asses, and leave the lust, when once he is called. Now, by this shall ye know whether ye be called of God or no. If ye continue in sin, if ye walk according to the course of this world, according to the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, then are ye still dead in your trespasses and your sins; but as he that hath called you is holy, so must ye be holy. Can ye say, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I desire to keep all thy commandments, and to walk blamelessly in thy sight. I know that my obedience cannot save me, but I long to obey. There is nothing that pains me so much as sin; I desire to quit and rid of it; Lord help me to be holy?" Is that the panting of thy heart? Is that the tenor of thy life towards God, and towards his law? Then, beloved, I have reason to hope that thou hast been called of God, for it is a holy calling wherewith God doth call his people.

Another text. In Philippians, iii. 13, 14, you find these words. "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Is then your calling a high calling, has it lifted up your heart, and set it upon heavenly things? Has it lifted up your hopes, to hope no longer for things that are on earth, but for things that are above? Has it lifted up your tastes, so that they are no longer grovelling, but you choose the things that are of God? Has it lifted up your desires, so that you are panting not for earthly things, but for the things that are not seen and are eternal? Has it lifted up the constant tenor of your life, so that you spend your life with God in prayer, in praise, and in thanksgiving, and can no longer be satisfied with the low and mean pursuits which you followed in the days of your ignorance? Recollect, if you are truly called it is a high calling, a calling from on high, and a calling that lifts up your heart, and raises it to do the high things of God, eternity, heaven, and holiness.

In Hebrew iii. 1, you find this sentence. "Holy brethren partakers of the heavenly calling." Here is another test. Heavenly calling means a calling from heaven. Have you been called, not of man but of God? Can you now detect in your calling, the hand of God, and the voice of God? If man alone call thee, thou art uncalled. Is thy calling of God? and is it a call to heaven as well as from heaven? Can you heartily say that you can never rest satisfied till you

———"behold his face
And never, never sin,
But from the rivers of his grace,
Drink endless pleasures in."

Man, unless thou art a stranger here, and heaven is thy home, thou hast not been called with a heavenly calling, for those who have been so called, declare that they look for a city which hath foundations,

whose builder and maker is God, and they themselves are strangers and pilgrims upon the earth.

There is another test. Let me remind you, that there is a passage in Scripture which may tend very much to your edification, and help you in your examination. Those who are called, are men who before the calling, groaned in sin. What says Christ?—"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Now, if I cannot say the first things because of diffidence, though they be true, yet can I say this, that I feel myself to be a sinner, that I loathe my sinnership, that I detest my iniquity, that I feel I deserve the wrath of God on account of my transgressions? If so, then I have a hope that I may be among the called host whom God has predestinated. He has called not the righteous but sinners to repentance. Self-righteous man, I can tell thee in the tick of a clock, whether thou hast any evidence of election. I tell thee—No; Christ never called the righteous; and if he has not called thee, and if he never does call thee, thou art not elect, and thou and thy self-righteousness must be subject to the wrath of God, and cast away eternally. Only the sinner, the awakened sinner, can be at all assured that he has been called; and even he, as he gets older in grace, must look for those higher marks of the high heavenly and holy calling in Christ Jesus.

As a further test,—keeping close to Scripture this morning, for when we are dealing with our own slate before God there is nothing like giving the very words of Scripture,—we are told in the first epistle of Peter, the second chapter, and the ninth verse, that God hath called us out of darkness into marvellous light. Is that your call? Were you once darkness in regard to Christ; and has marvellous light manifested to you a marvellous Redeemer, marvellously strong to save? Say soul, canst thou honestly declare that thy past life was darkness and that thy present state is light in the Lord? "For ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of the light." That man is not called who cannot look back upon darkness, ignorance, and sin, and who cannot now say, that he knows more than he did know, and enjoys at times the light of knowledge, and the comfortable light of God's countenance.

Yet again. Another test of calling is to be found in Galatians, the fifth chapter, and the fifteenth verse, "Brethren, ye have been called into liberty." Let me ask myself again this question, Have the fetters of my sin been broken off, and am I God's free man? Have the manacles of justice been snapped, and am I delivered—set free by him who is the great ransom of spirits? The slave is not called. It is the free man that has been brought out of Egypt, who proves that he has been called of God and is precious to the heart of the Most High.

And yet once more, another precious means of test in the first of Corinthians, the first chapter, and the ninth verse. "He is faithful by whom ye were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." Do I have fellowship with Christ? do I converse with him, commune with him? Do I suffer *with* him, suffer *for* him? Do I sympathise with him in his objects and aims? Do I love what he loves; do I hate what he hates? Can I bear his reproach! can I

carry his cross; do I tread in his steps; do I serve his cause, and is it my grandest hope that I shall see his kingdom come, that I shall sit upon his throne, and reign with him? If so, then am I called with the effectual calling, which is the work of God's grace, and is the sure sign of my predestination.

Let me say now, before I turn from this point, that it is possible for a man to know whether God has called him or not, and he may know it too beyond a doubt. He may know it as surely as if he read it with his own eyes; nay, he may know it more surely than that, for if I read a thing with my eyes, even my eyes will deceive me, the testimony of sense may be false, but *the testimony of the Spirit must be true*. We have the witness of the Spirit within, bearing witness with our spirits that we are born of God. There is such a thing on earth as an infallible assurance of our election. Let a man once get that, and it will anoint his head with fresh oil, it will clothe him with the white garment of praise, and put the song of the angel in his mouth. Happy, happy man! who is fully assured of his interest in the covenant of grace, in the blood of atonement, and in the glories of heaven! Such men there are here this very day. Let them "rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice."

What would some of you give if you could arrive at this assurance? Mark, if you anxiously desire to know, you may know. If your heart pants to read its title clear it shall do so ere long. No man ever desired Christ in his heart with a living and longing desire, who did not find him sooner or later. If thou hast a desire God has given it thee. If thou pantest, and criest, and groanest after Christ, even this is his gift; bless him for it. Thank him for little grace, and ask him for great grace. He has given thee hope, ask for faith; and when he gives thee faith, ask for assurance; and when thou gettest assurance, ask for full assurance; and when thou has obtained full assurance, ask for enjoyment; and when thou hast enjoyment, ask for glory itself; and he shall surely give it thee in his own appointed season.

III. I now come to finish up with CONSOLATION. Is there anything here that can console me? Oh, yes, rivers of consolation flow from my calling. For, first, if I am called then I am predestinated, there is no doubt about it. The great scheme of salvation is like those chains which we sometimes see at horse-ferris. There is a chain on this side of the river fixed into a staple, and the same chain is fixed into a staple at the other side, but the greater part of the chain is for the most part under water, and you cannot see it: you only see, it as the boat moves on, and as the chain is drawn out of the water by the force that propels the boat. If to-day I am enabled to say I am called, then my boat is like the ferry-boat in the middle of the stream. I can see that part of the chain, which is named "calling," but, blessed be God, that is joined to the side that is called "election," and I may be also quite clear that it is joined on to the other side, the glorious end of "glorification." If I be called I must have been elected, and I need not doubt that, God never tantalised a man by calling him by grace effectually, unless he had written that man's name in the Lamb's book of life. Oh, what a glorious doctrine is that of election, when a man can see himself to be elect. One of the reasons why many men kick

against it is this, they are afraid it hurts them. I never knew a man yet, who had a reason to believe that he himself was chosen of God, who hated the doctrine of election. Men hate election just as thieves hate Chubb's patent locks: because they cannot get at the treasure themselves, they therefore hate the guard which protects it. Now election shuts up the precious treasury of God's covenant blessings for his children—for penitents, for seeking sinners. These men will not repent, will not believe; they will not go God's way, and then they grumble and growl, and fret, and fume, because God has locked the treasure up against them. Let a man once believe that all the treasure within is his, and then the stouter the bolt, and the surer the lock, the better for him. Oh, how sweet it is to believe our names were on Jehovah's heart, and graven on Jesus' hands before the universe had a being! May not this electrify a man with joy, and make him dance for very mirth?

“Chosen of God ere time began.”

Come on, slanderers! rail on as pleases you. Come on thou world in arms! Cataracts of trouble descend if you will, and you, ye floods of affliction, roll if it so be ordained, for God has written my name in the book of life. Firm as this rock I stand, though nature reels and all things pass away. What consolation then to be called: for I am called, then I am predestinated. Come let us wonder at the sovereignty which has called us, and let us remember the words of the apostle, “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things, which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

A second consolation is drawn from the grand truth, that if a man be called he will certainly be saved at last. To prove that, however, I will refer you to the express words of Scripture: Romans xi. 29,—“The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” He never repents of what he gives, nor of what he calls. And, indeed, this is proved by the very chapter out of which we have taken our text. “Who he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified,” everyone of them. Now, believer, thou mayest be very poor, and very sick, and very much unknown and despised, but sit thee down and review thy calling this morning, and the consequences that flow from it. As sure as thou art God's called child to-day, thy poverty shall soon be at an end, and thou shalt be rich to all intents of bliss. Wait awhile; that weary head shall soon be girt with a crown. Stay awhile; that horny hand of labour shall soon grasp the palm branch. Wipe away that tear; God shall soon wipe away thy tears for ever. Take away that sigh—why sigh when the everlasting song is almost on thy lip? The

portals of heaven stand wide open for thee. A few winged hours must fly: a few more billows must roll o'er thee, and thou wilt be safely landed on the golden shore. Do not say, "I shall be lost; I shall be cast away." Impossible.

"Whom once he loves he never leaves,
But loves them to the end."

If he hath called thee, nothing can divide thee from his love. The wolf of famine cannot gnaw the bond; the fire of persecution cannot burn the link; the hammer of hell cannot break the chain; old time cannot devour it with rust, nor eternity dissolve it, with all its ages. Oh! believe that thou art secure; that voice which called thee, shall call thee yet again from earth to heaven, from death's dark gloom to immortality's unuttered splendours. Rest assured, the heart that called thee, beats with infinite love towards thee, a love undying, that many waters cannot quench, and that floods cannot drown. Sit thee down, rest in peace, lift up thine eye of hope, and sing thy song with fond anticipation. Thou shall soon be with the glorified, where thy portion is; thou art only waiting here to be made meet for the inheritance, and that done, the wings of angels shall waft thee far away, to the mount of peace, and joy, and blessedness, where

"Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut it,"

thou shalt rest for ever and ever. Examine yourselves then whether you have been called.—And may the love of Jesus be with you. Amen.

The Path of Prayer.

AS I passed a path leading to a prayer room, I noticed it was grown over with grass, weeds, and moss. It was a sad indication that social prayer had been neglected. The feet of supplicants had not trodden the path of prayer, had not gathered to avail themselves of the privilege of unitedly speaking to God, and so receiving mutual blessings. The spirit of prayer had declined on their minds, the exercise of prayer had been neglected at their homes, and at the prayer room. The decline of prayer is the decline of the spiritual life, and love of joy and hope in the soul. The decline of zeal, courage, and perseverance in Christian work; of patient endurance in trouble, of manful resistance in temptation, and of enduring hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Seek to the heavenly Father who hears prayer, to Jesus, who intercedes for us, and to the Spirit to revive within us the spirit of prayer.

Our Minister's Wife and her Noble Life.

CHAPTER VI.—HELEN'S FATAL MISTAKE.

“**M**RS. BARTON, I have given him up.”

“Given who up, Helen?”

“Jack Wreckham, ma'am.”

“I am truly glad to hear of it for your own sake, Helen. But if I may, with a woman's curiosity, presume to ask you, how came it about?”

“Well, ma'am, you remember that bit of talk you had with me a fortnight ago. To tell you the plain truth, although I said little about it at the time, I really felt mad at what you said, and I did not go to bed in the best of moods. But the more I thought about it the more I came to see that you were right. So the next time I met him by appointment I told him that although I liked his company—for you know, as you have said, he is very fascinating, Mrs. Barton—I would walk out with him no more, as I felt certain of this that if we were married his ways and mine would never agree, and, therefore, it was best to cut the acquaintance off short at once. This made him regular savage, and he said it was all fudge; he was sure somebody had been telling me a lot of lies about him, and as he could have any girl he choose it did not matter a straw to him whether I had him or not. Well, this fired me up, and, so turning my back on him,

I told him he was at perfect liberty to go after any girl he liked, and thus we parted, and I have never seen him since.”

“Well, Helen, you may depend upon it that you have lost nothing by the course you have pursued. You are very young yet, and if you wish to get married I have no doubt in the course of time if you as a Christian girl seek the Lord in the matter, you will meet with a far more suitable partner than Jack Wreckham is ever likely to make you. Men that think so highly of themselves as to suppose with their selfish egotism that they can have anybody they choose, have, as a rule, very low ideas of womankind, and when they marry are more likely to treat their poor wives as tools rather than as their equals. Stick to your guns, Helen, and in doing so you may depend upon it in the long run you will find yourself on the right side.”

It was quite evident that Helen's would-be suitor was quite offended at her decision. But Helen cared little about his wrath, and expressed herself as contented with her position. And this became more manifest when a very respectable young man of the name of Daniel Rowley, who was a very useful member of the church, ventured to solicit her to

keep his company. As he was in every way a suitable person, it might have been supposed that he would have gained the day. But, strange to relate, after walking out with him for a few times, she, to his great grief, threw him up, giving Mrs. Barton as her reason for doing so "that she had tried to like him and she couldn't." Thus the matter dropped, and about a couple of years afterwards the same young man was united to another member of the church, both of them living together most happily.

In the meanwhile, however, an unexpected event occurred that threw Mrs. Barton into consternation. Twelve months had elapsed since Helen had given up Jack Wreckham, when, unfortunately, she was once thrown more into his company. She had been asked out on her "half-day off" to a friend's house where some repairs were being executed at which the young man was engaged. A violent gale had thrown down part of a wall, and he, being a stonemason, had undertaken the job. The sight of Helen seems to have set on fire again his old passion, and he determined to stay at his work until she left for home, and if possible renew the acquaintance. Taken thus by storm, Helen, who had really always had some sort of liking for the young fellow, was persuaded before they parted, by his urgent entreaties, to meet him again. The upshot of it was that, believing him to be passionately attached to her, and relying on his own statements that he had become a thoroughly reformed man, in the course of a short courtship she promised to be his wife, and, accordingly, gave Mrs. Barton a month's notice to leave. To her sorrow, and with

an instinctive belief that Satan's hand was in this work for Helen's harm, she reluctantly accepted the notice, secured another servant, and heard the church bells ring a merry peal on the day on which Helen Dabster had become Mrs. Wreckham.

But Mrs. Barton was not alone in entertaining the supposition that in uniting herself to this questionable young man Helen Dabster had given herself up to life-long misery. As soon as her parents heard of her engagement they did their very best to persuade their wayward daughter to break it off, but without avail. In an angry mood she said to her mother, "I tell you, mother, I like him, and I will have him cost what it will." If he has been wild that is no reason why he always should be, and I feel confident that if I marry him I shall be able to make him better. You let me alone, I know what I am doing; if it does turn out wrong, it's me that will have to rue it, and if I am prepared for the consequences what does it matter to anybody!" Her mother much hurt by this unkind speech saw that remonstrance was useless, and with a sad heart made preparations for the wedding.

Time passed on, and little was heard of Helen. Her husband for months appeared to be steady, never went to the public house, relinquished his gambling habits, and, having a fairly good income, made his newly-married wife a comfortable home. But, alas! the change was not destined to be permanent. Soon after the birth of their first-born child, while Helen was seated up late at night waiting for her husband's return home, a stumbling of feet was heard outside the house. The door was rudely opened by a

young man, who had evidently been drinking, but was not so drunk as not to be able to aid his more drunken companion to reach his abode. With a grin on his face, and in a jocular tone, he said to Mrs. Wreckham, as he pushed her husband in,

"Here, missis, this is your master; he's been boozing at the Green Donkey, and had a tumble or two on the road home, and if I hadn't helped him he'd a been lying by the roadside now. Good night!" and then he vanished.

A wretched sight, indeed, her husband looked. He was what is termed dead drunk, and half covered with mud; for it had been raining heavily, and the roads were very dirty. On being pushed in he tumbled on the floor, and, with a muttered oath at once resigned himself to sleep. To say that Mrs. Wreckham was shocked is to say the least. Such an event she had never anticipated, for although he had for some few weeks occasionally come home a little later than usual, she readily believed his statement that he had been detained by business, and never expected that he had only just left the public-house. But now the real state of things burst upon her, and she saw clearly that she was allied for life to a liar, a drunkard, and, probably, a gambler. Then, while her besotted husband lay snoring deeply in the middle of the floor, there came back to her with force, like a new revelation, the warning which Mrs. Barton had so kindly given her above a year ago, when she had stayed out so late, and how foolishly she had been led by outward appearances and false statements to cast her good counsel to the winds. What now could she do? Absolutely nothing. To this

man she was bound irretrievably, and, come what might, she must, as she told her mother accept the consequences.

It is not my intention to enter into the details of Mrs. Wreckham's after life. Such details of ill-fated marriages with their horrors may be read in any of the daily or weekly newspapers in cases *ad infinitum*. It is enough to say that Helen Wreckham's case proved to be no exception to the general rule. From the night her drunken husband was bundled in a helpless lump of humanity her home became a scene of constant misery. Twice in the course of years was it broken up and the furniture sold by auction. Semi-starvation, blows and brutal usage became the order of the day, and just as she was thinking, by the advice of her friends, to seek an order of magisterial separation, the Angel of Death unexpectedly stepped in, and gave her a final separation of another kind. After eight years' of misery on her part, her wretched husband fell ill of inflammation of the lungs, which, largely owing to his drunken habits, and the accumulation of stone dust, quickly carried him off. He died with a curse upon his lips, and Helen Wreckham, steeped in poverty, could only give him a decent burial through the aid of relatives and friends.

Left a widow with four children when a little over thirty-two years of age, she had to battle hard for a livelihood both for herself and them until they had reached their teens. But once more seeking the Lord, she found Him to be the God of the widow and the Father of the fatherless. Aided by Mr. and Mrs. Barton, good situations were obtained for each of th

children as they grew up. And then her own end came. As she had for some years suffered from an affection of the heart, a complication of other diseases set in, which, in conjunction with the hardships she had endured, accelerated her death. But she died triumphantly. Assured as a true penitent of her heavenly Father's forgiveness, she seemed to long for her departure as the weary child longs for rest. While Mrs. Barton and myself stood by her, she clasped her old mistress by the hand, and when speaking of the goodness of the Lord to her in spite of all her sins, with her dying breath asked our minister's

wife to give her a promise that she would look as kindly after her orphan children as she had after herself. That promise, it is needless to say, faithfully given was just as faithfully kept. It is pleasant to record that, owing to their mother's good training, not one of the children followed in their father's bad ways. They were all at separate times received into the church, and, as active members of it, are hoping to see the glorious day when their work on earth is done, of again meeting their mother, to part no more in heaven.

(To be continued.)

Why not Build Higher.

A YOUNG LADY was gradually dying of consumption. As she sat at the open window she saw a couple of little birds come and build their nest on a branch not very high from the ground. Day by day she watched them and observed first the little nest, then the eggs, then the nestlings. As she watched them day by day, she used to shake her head and say of the parent birds, "Silly birds, why not build higher?" And then when the little nestlings came and began to show their heads above the nest, the burden of her exclamation was still. "Why not have built higher?" One morning when she took her accustomed seat at the window lattice, she saw the nest all torn to pieces, and the ground strewn with the feathers of the poor little nestlings and marks of violence all around, and then she said, "Ah! did I not say you ought to have built higher? Had you built higher your offspring would have been secure from harm, and this dire mishap would not have befallen you." And we, my friends, when we come to cross the river of death, if ever we fail to get to the better land, when we look back it will be with the bitterest remorse that we shall cry out, "Why did I not build higher? Why did I not lay up my treasure in heaven, instead of spending my time and my money on the meat which perisheth on pleasures which pass away in a moment?"

When did Infant Baptism Begin ?

By J. MOUNTAIN,

Minister of St. John's Road Free Church, Tunbridge Wells.

ONE evening, about a week after the conversation previously recorded, the new Vicar called again upon Mr. and Mrs. Smithers. He was evidently agitated, for he began by saying :

"I am very sorry, Mr. Smithers, that your arguments against infant baptism are spreading all through the parish. People's minds are in a regular ferment, and several mothers have already refused to have their babies christened. This is a serious state of things, and I must do something to alter it, or else my bishop will call me to account. You see, Mr. Smithers, in the Church of England, everything depends upon infant baptism. If mothers won't bring their babies to be baptized, they won't be likely, when they are grown up, to have them confirmed, and unless people are confirmed, or are willing to be confirmed, I cannot administer to them the Holy Communion. So you see how serious is the state of things."

MR. SMITHERS: "Of course I do. Truth is always 'serious,' and it always causes a ferment when people allow it to work in their hearts. But my advice to

you is: Don't you trouble about your bishop. Follow the Truth, and let your aim be to please Jesus Christ, no matter what your bishop may say or do."

THE VICAR: "But I don't see my way to renounce infant baptism; for does it not come down to us from the earliest times?"

MR. SMITHERS: "No, it does not. It is an invention of priests, and it did not originate until long after the Apostolic age?"

THE VICAR: "But did not the Jews, long before the time of Christ, baptize the infant children of proselytes?"

MR. SMITHERS: "There is not a shred of trustworthy evidence to support that statement. The Old Testament never mentions such a custom, nor does the Apocrypha, nor do the writings of Josephus and Philo, nor does the New Testament, nor do any of the Fathers of the first *three centuries* after Christ!"

"The first *allusion* to it is in the Mishna, which was composed in the third and fourth centuries of the Christian era; and the first *distinct mention* of it is in the Babylonian Gemara, which was

compiled in the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries. The following authors all testify that the baptism of Jewish proselytes did not originate until after the time of Christ: Dr. Lardner, Dr. R. Hawker, Dr. D. Jennings, Dr. Doellinger, Professor Meyer, Professor De Wette, Dr. Geikie, Dr. P. Fairbairn, Dr. Owen, and Professor Godet.

"It is true that there were 'divers washings' among the Israelites long before the time of John the Baptist. But except in one point, namely, that they were all immersions, they differed entirely from Christian baptism. The solemn rite of baptism, performed by one person upon another, and accompanied by the confession of sin, was first introduced by the forerunner of our Lord. As Professor Godet says, 'The very title *Baptist* given to John sufficiently proves that it was he who introduced the rite.'"

THE VICAR: "Well, that seems all clear; but were not infants baptized by John the Baptist?"

MR. SMITHERS: "John the Baptist! Why, the Scriptures never say a single word in favour of such a conjecture. Besides, the very idea of baptizing infants was foreign to John's mission. He came preaching that people should 'repent.'—Matt. iii. 2. But infants cannot repent. His baptism is called 'the baptism of *repentance*.'—Mark i. 4. Hence we read that the multitude who came to his baptism came 'confessing their sins.'—Matt. iii. 6. But infants cannot confess sin. Moreover, his baptism is also called a 'baptism *unto* repentance.' Hence those who were baptized were to live a life of repentance, and to 'bring forth fruits meet for

repentance.'—Luke iii. 8. But infants cannot do these things. Therefore, John could not possibly have baptized babies."

THE VICAR: "I feel the force of your argument; but did not Christ say, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me.'"

MR. SMITHERS: "He did. But these words have no more to do with infant baptism than they have to do with the bringing of Joseph's bones out of Egypt. If our Lord had been accustomed to baptize babies, the disciples would not have 'rebuked' those who brought their little ones to Him. And although he was 'displeased' at the harsh conduct of the disciples, yet He did not sprinkle the children that were brought to Him; nor do the Scriptures say that He commanded His disciples to sprinkle them. He simply 'took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them.'—Mark x. 16. From this we may learn that infants should be brought to Jesus to be blessed, not to the font to be sprinkled."

THE VICAR: "Your reasoning seems perfectly sound, but was not infant baptism practised in the Apostolic age?"

MR. SMITHERS: "There is not a particle of evidence to prove it. When our Lord gave His Apostles their great Commission, he told them first to 'make disciples,' then to baptize them, and, after that, to teach them obedience to all His commands.—Matt. xxviii. 19., r.v. And wherever the Apostles went they carried out that command. They preached the Gospel, baptized their believing converts, and then instructed them in the way of the Lord more perfectly. Throughout the whole New Testament there is not a single command enjoining infant

baptism, a single direction concerning infant baptism, nor a single instance illustrating infant baptism."

THE VICAR: "Well, I must admit that I cannot dispute what you say. There is no Scriptural authority for infant baptism. And yet, do we not find that it was practised very early after the times of the Apostles?"

MR. SMITHERS: "No, we do not. It was not invented until long after the Apostolic age. The Fathers belonging to the first century were: Clemens, Ignatius, Polycarp, Papias, Hermas, and Barnabas. But not one of them mentions the baptism of infants. The fathers of the second century were: Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Theophilus of Antioch, Tatian, Minucius Felix, Irenæus, and Clemens of Alexandria; but not one of them names infant baptism."

THE VICAR: "That is certainly a striking fact. If infant baptism had been customary throughout the Church in the first and second centuries, surely some one of these thirteen writers would have mentioned it."

MR. SMITHERS: "Of course they would. But, as a matter of fact, the first writer who mentions the baptism of children is Tertullian, who wrote at the beginning of the third century. The superstitious invention had then come into operation, but Tertullian censured it in the following words, 'The Lord indeed says, "do not hinder them from coming unto Me." Let them come, then, provided they are growing up; let them come provided they are learning—provided they are being taught whence they come. Let them become 'Christians'—that is, be 'baptized'—

when they shall become able to know Christ. Why should an innocent age hasten to the remission of sins?"

THE VICAR: "This passage from Tertullian certainly makes it clear that he disapproved of infant baptism."

MR. SMITHERS: "Indeed, it does. And it will be all the more clear to you if you bear in mind that Tertullian in the above passage was referring to children who were old enough to 'ask for salvation.' As Baron Bunsen well says, 'Tertullian's opposition is to the baptism of young, grown children; he does not say one word about new-born babes. The Church instituted *child* baptism in the sense of *children from six to ten years of age*. The baptism of new-born babes *grew out* of that of children advancing towards the age of youth.'"

THE VICAR: "Then it would appear that the innovation began first with the baptism of children who had some knowledge and understanding, and that afterwards it developed into the baptism of infants."

MR. SMITHERS: "Quite so. It was not until the Council of Carthage, held in the middle of the third century, that the baptism of new-born babes was formally adopted. As Baron Bunsen has rightly observed, 'Cyprian was the first Father, who, impelled by a fanatical enthusiasm, and assisted by a bad interpretation of the Old Testament, established infant baptism as a principle.'"

THE VICAR: "But was not Cyprian a very superstitious man, and full of all sorts of priestly notions?"

MR. SMITHERS: "He was. He not only advocated that infants should be baptized, but also

that they should receive the Lord's Supper! So you will see that his opinion as to infant baptism ought to be regarded by Protestants as utterly worthless. For infant baptism is just as much opposed to the Bible as infant Communion."

THE VICAR: "From what you say, infant baptism seems to have begun about the end of the second century, and to have originated in superstition."

MR. SMITHERS: "You are quite right. It was born in superstition, cradled in superstition, clothed in superstition, and fed on superstition; and from its very commencement it has been the fruitful source and

occasion of superstition. But all through the ages it has been opposed by many of the most spiritual of God's servants. And now that multitudes are seeing that infant baptism is the fountain-head of the stream of sacerdotalism and Ritualism which is deluging our land, all true Protestants should renounce it and condemn it as an unscriptural, superstitious, and pernicious invention."

THE VICAR: "Well, I thank you for your plain words and your lucid exposition, and I promise you that the question of infant baptism shall be made the subject of my most serious study and my most earnest prayer."

Think again : a story about the Queen.

It is related that, during the first few days of the reign of Queen Victoria, then a girl between nineteen and twenty years of age, some sentences of a court-martial were presented for her signature. One was death for desertion; a soldier was condemned to be shot, and his death warrant was presented to the Queen for her signature. She read it, paused, looked up to the officer who laid it before her, and said, "Have you nothing to say in behalf of this man?" Nothing; he has deserted three times," said the officer. "Think again, my lord," was the reply. "And," said the gallant veteran, as he related the circumstances to his friends (for it was none other than the Duke of Wellington), "seeing her Majesty so earnest about it, I said, he is certainly a bad soldier; but there was somebody who spoke as to his good character, and he may be a good man for aught I know to the contrary." "Oh, thank you a thousand times!" exclaimed the youthful Queen; and hastily writing "pardoned," in large letters on the fatal page, she sent it across the table, with a hand trembling with eagerness and beautiful emotion.—BIBLE CLASS MAGAZINE, 1854.

Hints for Teachers and Workers,

THE SUFFERING SAVIOUR.

Read Isaiah liii. 1-12.

INTRODUCTION.—The prophet here very pathetically dwells on the sufferings of Christ in thus carrying out our complete redemption; What He would have to experience to finish our salvation. He indeed had to bear the heavy load of sin for our sake. The whole weight of sin was laid upon Him.

“ Upon the Cross of Jesus,
 Mine eye at times can see
 The very dying form of One,
 Who suffered there for me.”

We should think of the great love which prompted the Lord Jesus Christ to endure the fearful ignominy for our sake. It was infinite love that brought Him more than eighteen centuries ago to leave His beautiful home above to wear a crown of thorns, indeed, His love cannot be fully described. 1 John iii. 1.

“ My love is oftimes low,
 My joy still ebbs and flows:
 But peace with Him remains the same,
 No change Jehovah knows.”

Let us notice a few practical applications:—

- (1) *Christ's love was great and enduring.*
- (2) *Christ lowly and humble although King of all.*
- (3) *Christ willing to give salvation and pardon.*
- (4) *Christ, living among men and despised.*
- (5) *Christ bearing all suffering and ignominy for our sake.*

The Everlasting Arms.

WHAT tho' the way be rough and steep?
What tho' we stumble as the blind?
There's joy reserved for those who weep—
The Everlasting Arms are kind.

What matters it if sorrows come?
What, tho' the night be dark and long?
The darkest cloud but hides the sun—
The Everlasting Arms are strong.

What tho' life's ocean surges high?
Tho' adverse winds high toss each wave?
"Be not afraid! 'tis only I;"
The Everlasting Arms can save.

What tho' besieged by sin and strife
The heart and flesh but sink and qua?
"I am the Way, the Truth, the Life;"—
The Everlasting Arms ne'er fail.

Remember, flames consumes but dross,
To pure gold adds but brighter charms;
Beneath the banner of the cross
Behold the Everlasting Arms.

In life's fierce conflict, faithful be;
'Tis only they who win the crown;
When death disrobes mortality,
The Everlasting Arms reach down.

"How much trouble he avoids who does not look to see what his neighbour says or does or thinks, but only to what he does himself, that it may be just and pure; or, as Agathon says, looks not around at the depraved morals of others, but runs straight along the line without deviating from it."—MARCUS AURELIUS.

How to fill a Chapel.

AFTER laying the Memorial stone of a new chapel at Faversham, the late Rev. C. H. Spurgeon said, "He hoped that when the chapel was built it would become a question, How was it to be filled? He had in his time sent a good many ministers out, and some time ago he was applied to for one that would "fill the chapel." He replied, that he had not one of that size, and then the church told him that that was not what they meant, but a minister that could draw a congregation together. But let him remind them that it was not for a minister to fill a chapel; it must be done by the congregation; they must get people to come and hear their minister, and there were many ways of doing it. He had often remarked the common sense of very poor people. He once met a man going across Clapham Common with a large barrow, in which was a very small parcel. He could not help remarking to the man that it was curious that he should have so large a barrow for so small a parcel, and he replied, "Yes, it is curious, but there are more curious things than that, for I have been about the whole day and have not met a gentleman who looked as if he would give me a pint of beer till I met you." Well, that man had his mind bent on that one thing and he took the straight road to it at once. So they must act if they wished to fill their chapel. He firmly believed that if they had the will to increase their congregation they could do it. For instance, he believed it might be done by their repeating to others some nice little extracts from the excellent sermons they heard. If they did this they would soon have plenty of hearers, and then the blessing would follow.

A sharp and deserved retort.

AN episcopal Clergyman of the State church, once said tauntingly to a Baptist Minister;—"Your people should be called *ducks*, not sheep, we nowhere read of sheep being dipped under water."

Quickly the Baptist minister replied, "Perhaps not *in your Prayer Book*, but I read *in my Bible*. As a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, whereof everyone beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them. SONG OF SOLOMON, vi. 6. Your people are all so *weak* they cannot bear WASHING, so you have to sprinkle a few drops of water upon them, and they are all *barren* together.—T.W.M.

Reviews.

Pardon and Assurance, by the late Rev. William D. Patton, Dromara, Co. Down. Edited, with a Biographical Sketch, by Rev. John M. Ilveen, the Crescent Church, Belfast. Edinburgh and London: Oliphant, Anderson, and Ferrier.

The opening lines of the life-sketch prepared us for a most soul-strengthening book. He was a great winner of souls. He aimed directly at the Conversion of Sinners, and Sinners in large numbers were converted. The work itself shows that he not only possessed the wisdom that wins souls, but that he possessed the further faculty of building and strengthening the Child of God in their most Holy Faith. The chapters on the happiness of being a Christian, Christ's work finished and free to all, groundless fears, and the last three chapters, how assurance is to be got, assurance of salvation, and why some real Christians have not assurance, are most helpful in establishing the Believer in the faith and freedom of the Gospel of Christ.

Chips from My Log, by John Burnham (C. H. Spurgeon's Evangelist), with an Introduction by Pastor Thomas Spurgeon, Metropolitan Tabernacle. Illustrated. Baptist Tract and Book Society, Gray's Inn Road, W.C., or of John Burnham, Brentford.

Mr. Spurgeon in his first words says, Truth to tell neither Mr. Burnham nor his Chips require any introduction from me, and he also describes one special quality of the book—These Chips are by no means Dry ones. The writer of these few lines has had a very special pleasure,

not only in the joy of knowing the success with which God has blessed the years of labour of our brother in bringing souls to Christ, but from sundry knowledge of Mr. Burnham, and also from many of the scenes of his labour and his early acquaintances being associated with our own work in the days gone by. If the reader of these lines wishes for a book full of life and incident, and also a stimulus for the work in the Lord's vineyard, then by all means obtain this book. Mr. Burnham says if you send an order for six or more it will afford him pleasure to write your name in one extra, and present it to you.

Gold Chains; or, Finding God by Prayer, by Russell Henry. Elliot Stock, Paternoster Row.

An excellent little book, containing five chapters—giving arguments for prayer, and urgent advices that all should wait upon the Lord in prayer.

Great Thoughts. A. W. Hare, Hutton Street, Whitefriars, E.C. The number before us inaugurates a new volume, which will be of special interest in this Diamond year of Her Majesty's reign, as it will deal largely with the prominent figures of the Victorian Era. *Mothers and Daughters*. The first weekly issues ready May 21st. *Helping Words* contains another of the late Sir John Millais' illustrations of the Parables—the Unmerciful Servant—with an article by the Rev. W. L. Watkinson. The *Prize Reciter* offers a silver medal for reciting pieces taken from this journal.

The May number of the *Sunday at Home* contains 54 Portraits of Repre-

sentative Missionaries of the Nineteenth Century, with notes by Rev. Richard Lovett, M.A. All who are interested in missions should purchase this series of portraits. Also we invite the attention of teachers to the *Boys' Sunday Monthly*. 24 pages, copiously illustrated, one penny monthly. It will be a favourite with the boys' for Sunday reading, as the *Boys' Own Paper* gives a constant supply of articles, suggestions, and plans for the week-day with untiring freshness. The *Girls' Own Paper* has an illustrated story by Isabella Nyvie Mayo, and a new serial story, "The Romance of a Laundry Girl." Also a bright frontispiece. "Somebody Coming."

The *Quiver* for May contains an Illustrated Paper by Pastor Thomas

Spurgeon on Divine Preparation. Also a Pictorial Account of Sunday with the King and Queen of Denmark. *The Treasury* (American) gives its Baptist readers a worthy reply to the question, Why I am a Baptist? by Rev. R. S. McArthur, D.D. *The Treasury of David*, by C. H. Spurgeon (Passmore and Alabaster, part 19) finishes the third volume, and commences the fourth volume, with title page and index. *The Sword and Trowel* gives its readers a picture of Mrs. C. H. Spurgeon and friends at the cutting of the first sod for the new chapel at Bexhill. *The Baptist Magazine* leads off with a good likeness of the Rev. Timothy Richards, and sketch by Rev. J. B. Myers. *Life and Light, In His Name, Gospel Echo*, and *The Irish Baptist Magazine* are to hand.

Our Meetings.

The *Baptist* and *Freeman* newspapers have again done us good service in reporting the meetings, speeches, and sermons, delivered at the Annual Meetings of 1897. The first meeting of the Baptist Union was held at Bloomsbury Chapel. The Rev. E. G. Gange was elected President for the year, and delivered a few words of farewell to the retiring President. From the Report, it appears the Baptist Union has distributed during the year to ministers and widows on the Annuity Fund and to the pastors and churches, aided by the Home Missions Church Extension Augmentation and Education Funds, upwards of £13,000. The *Handbook* reports the death of 33 ministers, and since the *Handbook* was published 12 other ministers have died. Among them Edward Stevenson, of Loughboro; James Smith, of Tunbridge Wells; Frederick Pugh, of Swindon. And among our leaders Joseph Mead,

of Brockley; John Eastly, of Maze Pond Chapel; and Dr. Henry Dunkly, who in his early days was connected with the Church at Leamington under the pastorate of Dr. Octavius Winslow.

At the Second Session, the President occupied the Chair, and delivered a strong address on *A Look Round*, which was most enthusiastically received. All our Missionary Meetings, Baptist Zenana Mission in India and China, the Young People's Missionary Association, the Prayer Meeting, the Annual Members' Meeting, the Bible Translation Society (which we wish had a name which would be more informing to the junior members of our churches), the Annual Missionary Meeting, and the gatherings connected with the Pastors' College, &c., all present causes for gratitude, and with one voice urge us to the motto:—"Forward be our watchword."

Denominational Intelligence.

CHANGES IN THE PASTORATE.

Arthur S. Langley, from Manchester College, to Newcastle-under-Lyme.

Rev. J. Scillely, from Bridlington, to Plumstead.

Rev. E. W. Davies, Ton, Rhondda Valley, to Holyhead.

Rev. W. Lewis, from Aberystwith College, to Ffynnonhenry Chu Carm.

Rev. E. Williams, from Cardiff College, to the church at Hay.

Rev. W. Williams, from Ferryside, to Blaengarw.

Rev. Frank Smith, B.A., from Oxford, to Manvers-street, Bath.

Rev. F. Fells, of Hartley Row, to Martyrs' Memorial Church, Beccles.

Rev. C. E. Stone, from Middlesborough, to Union Church, Luton.

Rev. W. Tooke, from Bury St. Edmunds, to Clare, Suffolk.

Rev. J. McNeil, from Rawdon College, to Denholme.

Rev. Sim Hirst, B.A., from St. Andrew's, Fife, to Fishergate Chapel, Preston.

Rev. O. Tidman, from Blaenavon, to Noddiffa Church, Abersychan.

Rev. R. Lloyd Morris, from Zoar, Henllys, and Mount Pleasant, Llantarnam, to Forge Side, Blaenavon.

Rev. R. K. Clifford, from Regent's Park College, to Barking Road Tabernacle, Plaistow.

Rev. E. J. Hughes, from Cardiff College, to the Welsh Church at Ynyshir.

Rev. D. H. Rees, from Bangor College, to the Welsh Church at Colwyn Bay.

Rev. G. J. Whitting, from Dolton, to Okehampton.

Rev. Edward Smith, from Rawdon College, to Morecambe.

RECOGNITIONS.

Rev. J. C. Taylor has been recognised as pastor of Zion Chapel, Bramley. Revs. D. G. Lewis, H. Ellis, F. W. Walter, and D. Lindsay took part.

Rev. Theodore Beckett has been recognised as pastor at Bildeston. Professor McCaig, Revs. T. M. Morris and W. E. Croft took part.

Rev. R. W. Davies, of Bangor College, has been ordained to the pastorate of Cemmaes and Garregfaur Churches. Revs. Silas Morris, H. C. Williams, and T. Griffiths took part.

Rev. J. H. Roberts, Raven Hill, Swansea, has been ordained pastor of Siloh Church, Penderyn, Breconshire.

MICHAELSTONE, CARDIFF. — Ser-

vices in connection with the ordination of Rev. S. Reeves to the pastorate of the Tirzah Church were held on Thursday, April 15. The charges to pastor and church were delivered by Revs. D. J. Hiley (Bristol) and R. Lloyd (Castleton). Rev. T. Thomas (Risca) also preached morning and evening.

Rev. E. Tidman, of Cardiff College, has been ordained to the pastorate of Nazareth English Chapel, Mountain Ash. Principal Edwards gave the charge to the minister, and Rev. H. Watkins addressed the church.

NEW CHAPELS.

The memorial stone of a new chapel at Bowerchalke, near Salisbury, has been laid by the Countess of Pembroke. Rev. W. Evans, of Downton, conducted the service, and gave an address. In responding to a vote of thanks to the Countess, the Earl of Pembroke expressed his pleasure at being able to render assistance to a church belonging to a different denomination from his own, and his hope that while recognising their respective differences, all denominations would be able to work side by side with increasing harmony and goodwill.

The church at Nuneaton has purchased a site (at a cost of £718 4s.), at the corner of Manor Court Road and Wellington Street, for new chapel and Sunday schools. The town is rapidly growing. The present building is totally inadequate to the requirements of the increasing congregation and Sunday schools. The present schoolroom is at the top of the chapel. The pastor (Rev. J. R. Mitchell) commenced his second year's pastorate amidst encouraging prospects. Twenty-nine members have joined the church during the past year.

The first sod on the site of a new chapel, which it has been decided to erect at the corner of Buckhurst

Road, Bexhill - on - Sea, was cut by Mrs. Spurgeon. It will be designated "Beulah Church." Towards the cost there is £1,000 in hand.

PRESENTATIONS.

R. Foster Jeffrey, a purse with 110 guineas from Folkestone Church, and a purse with 20 guineas from the "True Blue Club" on leaving for Belfast.

Mr. R. W. Cowdery, a purse with £16 5s. from Herne Bay Church, in recognition of services rendered during the absence of the pastor.

Rev. W. J. Young, a cheque from Sulgrave Church in recognition of eight years' ministry.

Rev. R. Heyworth, a purse of gold from Zion Church, Edge Side, on resigning the pastorate.

Rev. H. J. Preece, a cheque for £20 from the church at Maidenhead; Mrs. Preece, a writing-case from the members of the Sunday afternoon "Bible Hour," and a table cover and framed address from the Meeting.

Rev. A. Mursell, a gold watch and a book from the Christian Endeavour Society, Stockwell.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A new Welsh church has been formed at the Board Schools, Tony-pandy, as a result of the Forward Movement Campaign, initiated in Mid-Rhonda by the Baptist Church of Zoar, Penygraig.

A new church has been formed at Lampeter, Cardiganshire. For the present meetings are held in the Town Hall, but it is intended to erect a new chapel as soon as possible.

JAMAICA.—The annual report of Jamaica Baptist Union shows that there are now 179 churches in the Union, with a membership of over

35,000 and over 4,000 inquirers; 1,775 persons have been baptized during the year, a smaller number than in any year since 1882. An address by Rev. James Balfour, the chairman, on "Our Place and Power as a Denomination in Jamaica," is bound up with the report.

RECENT DEATH.

Rev. William Frith, pastor of the Memorial Church, Westcliffe, Southend-on-Sea, died on Thursday, April 29th, after a severe illness. About a year ago, he resigned Emmanuel Church, Harringay, and on account of health removed to Southend. His pastorates previous to Harringay were at Kensington and Gunnersbury. He entered the ministry in 1861.

BAPTISMS.

- Ashdown*, Essex.—April 18, Six by T. H. Smith
- Arlington*, Glos.—May 9, Four, by A. Gray
- Aston-on-Clun*, Shropshire.—May 9, Four, by W. Williams
- Ayr*, Fort-street.—May 9, Two by H. D. Brown.
- Aberyschan*, (English).—April 11, Two, by J. O. Hughes
- Abergwynfi*—April 5, Twenty-two, by J. M. Jones
- Bardwell*, Suffolk.—April 6, Two, by G. F. Wall
- Batley*.—May 28, Eleven, by F. Wynn
- Bethseda*, Barnoldswick.—May 2, Five, by A. T. Brainsby
- Bildston*, Suffolk.—April 26, Three, by E. T. Beckett
- Bury*, Chesham.—April 26, Six, by F. J. Greening
- Bradfield*, Suffolk.—May 2, Two by W. Dixon
- Chenies*, Bucks.—April 25, Three, by T. A. Judd
- Coningsby*, near Lincoln.—April 29, Two, by A. Evans
- Cardiff*, Hope.—March 21, Four; April 13, Three, by T. W. Medhurst
- Coxall*, near Knighton.—April 25, Five, by W. Williams
- Crook*.—April 18, Three, by A. G. Barton
- Coggeshall*, Essex.—April 18, Two, by G. H. F. Jackman
- Crewe*, Union-street.—April 18, Two, by J. Thomas
- Devonport*, Morice-square.—April 18, Fourteen, by A. A. Harmer
- Dolton*.—April 18, Twelve, by G. J. Whiting
- Dundee*, Ward-road.—April 18, Two, by D. Clark
- Diss*, Norfolk.—April 25, Five, by J. Easter
- Dunley*, New-street.—April 25, Two, by E. Milnes
- Exmouth*.—April 25, Two, by W. Cork
- Elgin, N.B.*—April 11, Two, by J. F. Taviner
- Elland*, Upper Edge, Yorks.—April 11, Nine, by T. R. Lewis
- Fleet*, Lincs.—April 18, Six, by W. F. Dart
- Garway*, Herefordshire.—April 25, Four, by C. Morgan
- Guisley*, Yorks.—April 25, Seven, by R. Scott
- Gold Hill*, Chalfont, Bucks.—March 30, One, by T. Davies
- Great Ellingham*, Attleboro.—March 30, One, by T. H. Sparham
- Great Yarmouth*, Tabernacle.—April 28, Eight, by T. B. Curry
- Glasgow*, Cambridge-street.—April 18, Eight, by E. Last
- Grimby*.—April 15, Five, (one 74 years old), by J. Edmonds
- Great Ellingham*, Attleboro'.—April 27, One, by T. H. Sparham
- Hartlepool*.—May 9, Three, by C. W. Vaughan
- Huddersfield*, Scapegoat-Hill.—May 2, Two, by T. R. Lewis
- Kelso, N.B.*—May 9, Four, by J. W. Kemp
- Knighton*.—May 2, One, by W. Williams
- Kegworth*.—April 26, Two, by T. Adamson
- Louth*, Eastgate.—April 15, and 22, Seven, by F. Norwood
- Leeds*, Hunslet.—April 25, Five, by A. E. Greening
- Leicester*, Providence, Newarke-street.—April 25, Seven, by A. E. Realf
- Leeds*, Burley-road.—April 26, Three, by F. W. Walter.

- Llantarnam*, Mon.—April 25, Eight, by E. Robinson
- Long Preston*, Yorks.—May 9, Eight, by F. T. Wildgoose.
- Malborough*.—April 6, Four, by G. W. Ball.
- Mountain Ash*: Nazareth.—April 8, Fifteen, by E. V. Tidman
- Maesyberllan*, Brecon.—April 13, (in the river), by G. H. Llewelyn
- Merthyr Vale*: Zion (English).—April 14, Seventeen, by H. P. Jones
- Middleton, Cheney*.—April 18, One, by C. Saville
- Merthyr-Tydvil*, High-street. — April 25, Seven; April 28, One, by A. Hall
- Mold*, Flintshire.—April 25, Four by T. Morgan
- Newport*, Mon., Duckpool-road.—April 25 Two, by A. T. Jones.
- Norwich*, Orford Hill.—April 25, Three, by W. Gill
- Newport*, Mon., East Usk Road.—April 18, One, by Augustus Purnell.
- Nantgwyn*, Radnorshire.—April 16, Three, by T. D. Jones.
- Owestry*, Salop-road.—April 18, Six, by M. M. Thomson.
- Oldham*, Pitt-street.—April 25, Seven, by W. Hughes
- Pembroke Dock*, Bush-street.—April 25, Five, by R. C. Roberts
- Penyrheol*, Breconshire.—April 25, Two, by J. L. Williams
- Preston*, Pole-street.—April 25, One, by A. Prier.
- Pontypridd*, Glam.—April 25, Eight, by E. E. Probert
- Risca*, Moriah.—May 9, Two, by J. O. Jenkins
- Ryde, I. W.*, George-street.—April 11, Two, by E. B. Pearson
- Sarn*, Mont.—April 11, Four, by A. G. Jones, Ph.D.
- South Leith, N.B.*—April 11, Three; 18, One, by D. Tait.
- Shegnesi*, St. Paul's.—April 18, Four, by G. Goodchild
- Sheffield*, Cemetery-road.—April 25, Seven, by E. Carrington.
- Stoke St. Gregory*, Somerset.—April 16, Four, by B. W. Osler
- Southampton*, East-street.—April 25, Five, by B. J. Gibbon
- St. Austell*, Cornwall.—April 25, Five, by E. Osborne.
- West Harlepool*.—April 18, One, by A. W. Culwood
- Wollaston*.—April 25, One, by A. Hewlett
- Worcester*.—May 9, Six, by J. B. Johnston, M.A.
- Westgate*, Rotherham.—April 16, Seven, by J. Collinson.
- Wirksworth*.—April 18, Thirteen, by B. Noble

LONDON DISTRICT.

- Alperton*, Middlesex.—April 11, Eight, by A. J. W. Back
- Camberwell, S.E.*—April 18, Three, by J. W. Linnecar
- Chiswick, W.*—April 15, Six; 25, Two, by A. G. Edgerton
- Devonshire-square, N.*—April 29, Eleven, by J. P. McKay
- East Ham*.—April 8, Seven, by R. Sloan
- Harrow-on-the-Hill*.—April 15, Two, by W. Dyson
- Lee, S.E.*, Bromley-road.—April 25, Four, by J. W. Davies
- Putney*.—April 18, Four, by S. H. Wilkinson.
- The "Lighthouse"*, Bow Common, E.—April 11, Two, by T. J. Haggard
- Plumstead*, Station-road.—April 18, Twelve, by G. Barron
- Penge Tabernacle*.—March 21, One; April 28, Two, by J. Wesley Boud
- Wood Green, N.*—April 11, Seven, by W. W. Haines
- Waltham Abbey*, Paradise-row. — May Four, by G. Kilby

THE
BAPTIST MESSENGER:

AND

Evangelical Treasury

AND

CHRONICLE OF THE CHURCHES

FOR THE YEAR 1897.

LONDON

61, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C

Man's Ruin and God's Remedy.

A SERMON BY THE LATE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass that everyone that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live."—Numbers xxi., 8.

I DO not propose this morning to explain again the mystery of the brazen serpent. As many of you well remember, not long ago I preached upon that subject, and endeavoured to expound it in all its lengths and breadths. I have a somewhat similar object at the present time, the details may indeed be different, but after all the moral will be the same.

Man has very many wants, and he should be grateful whenever the least of them is supplied. But he has one want which overtops every other: it is the want of bread. Give him raiment, house him well, decorate and adorn him, yet if you give him not bread, his body faints, he dies of hunger. Hence it is that while the earth when it is tilled is made to bring forth many things that minister unto the comfort and luxury of men, yet man is wise enough to understand that since bread is his chief want, he must be most careful concerning corn. He therefore sows broad acres with it, and he cultivates more of this, which is the grandest necessary, than he doth of anything else in his husbandry. I feel that this is the only excuse I can offer you for coming back again constantly and continually to the simple doctrine of the salvation of the sinner through Christ Jesus. There are many things which *the soul* wants: it needs instruction, it needs comfort, it needs knowledge of doctrine and enlightenment in its experience; but there is one grand need of the soul, which far surmounts every other, it is the want of salvation, the want of Christ; and I do feel that I am right in repeating again, and again, and again, the simple announcement of the gospel of Christ for poor perishing sinners. At any rate, I know I seldom feel more happy than when I am preaching a full Christ to empty sinners. My tongue becomes something like Anacreon's harp. It is said of it, it resounded love alone. And so my tongue longs to resound Christ alone, and give forth no other strain, but Christ and his cross; Christ uplifted, the salvation of a dying world; Christ crucified, the life of poor dead sinners. I pray that this morning many here present, who have no clear views of the plan of salvation, may now see for the first time how men are saved through the lifting up of Christ,

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just, as the poor Israelites in the wilderness were saved from the fiery serpents by lifting up the brazen serpent on the pole.

Solemnly addressing you this morning, I shall need your attention to two things. First—and here, remember, I am about to speak to sinners dead in trespasses and sins—I want your attention to *your ruin*, and next I shall want your faithful consideration of *your remedy*.

I. First of all, oh, unregenerate man! thou who hast heard the Word, but hast never felt its power, let me entreat thee, lend me thine ears, while I talk to thee of a solemn subject that much concerns thee. **MAN, THOU ART RUINED!** The children of Israel in the wilderness were bitten with fiery serpents, whose venom soon tainted their blood, and, after intolerable pain, at last brought on death. Thou art much in the same condition. Thou standest there, healthy in body and comfortable in mind, and I come not here to play the part of a mere alarmist; but I do beseech thee, listen to me while I tell thee, neither more nor less than the simple but dreadful truth concerning thy present estate, if thou are not a believer in Christ.

O sinner! there are four things that stare thee in the face, and should alarm thee. The first thing is *thy sin*. I hear thee say, "Yes, I know I am a sinner as well as the rest of mankind;" but I am not content with that confession, nor is God content with it either. There are multitudes of men who make the bare confession of sinnership, the general confession that all men are fallen; but there are few men who know how to take that confession home, and acknowledge it as being applicable to them. Ah! my hearers, ye that are without God and without Christ, remember, not only is the world lost, but you are lost yourself; not only has sin defiled the race, but you yourself are stained by sin. Come, now, take the universal charge home to yourself. How many have your sins been? Count them, if you can. Stand here and wonder at them. Like the stars of midnight, or as the sands by the sea shore, innumerable are thine iniquities. Twenty, thirty, forty or fifty, perhaps more than fifty years have rolled over thy head, and in any one of these years thy sins might outcount the drops of the sea. How innumerable, then, have they become in **ALL** thy life! And what if thou shouldst say they are but little ones, yet since they are so many how great has the mountain become. Though they were but as grains of sand, yet are they so many that they might make a mountain that would soar above the stars. Pause, I beseech thee, and let thy conscience have play for a moment. Count over thine iniquities, turn over the pages of thine history, and tell the blots, if thou canst, and count the mistakes. But no, thou art committing fresh sins whilst thou art recounting these, and the denial of thy innumerable sins were but the multiplication of them. Thou art increasing them, mayhap, even whilst thou art telling them. And then think how aggravated they have been. I will not venture to mention the grosser sins into which some of you have fallen. It may be that I have here those who have cursed God to his face, who have asked him to blast their limbs and to destroy their souls. I may have those here who have ventured even to deny God's existence, though they have been walking all their lives in the midst of his works, and have even received the breath in their nostrils from him. I may have some who have despised his Word, laughed at

everything sacred, made a jest of the Bible, made a mockery of God's ministers and of his servants. Call, I beseech you, these things to your remembrance, for though you have forgotten them, God has not. You have written them in the sand, but he has engraven them as in eternal brass, and there they stand against you. Every crime that you have done is as fresh in the memory of the Most High as though it were committed yesterday; and though you think that the repentance of your grey old age might almost suffice to blot out the enormities of your youth, yet be not deceived. Sin is not so easily put away; it needs a greater ransom than a few expressions of regret or a few empty tears. Oh, call, ye great sinners, call to your recollection, the enormities you have committed against God. Let your chambers speak, let your beds bear witness against you, and let the days of your feasting, and your hours of midnight rioting—let these things rise up to your remembrance. Let your oaths roll back from the sky against which they have smitten, and let them return into your bosom, to awake your conscience and bestir you to repentance. But what am I saying? I have been talking of *some* men who have committed great iniquity. Ah! sinner, be thou whos'er thou mayest, I charge thee with *great* sin. Brought up in the midst of holy influences, nurtured in God's house, it may be that some of my unregenerate hearers this morning, may not be able to remember a single instance of blasphemy against God. It may be that you have never outwardly done despite to any sacred thing. Ah, my hearer, bethink thee, thy sin may be even greater than that of the profligate, or the debauchee, for *thou* hast sinned against light and against knowledge; *thou* hast sinned against a mother's prayers and against a father's tears; *thou* hast rebelled against God's law, knowing the law. When *thou* wast sinning, conscience pricked thee, and yet thou didst sin. Thou knewest that hell was the portion of the ungodly, and yet thou art ungodly still. Thou knowest the gospel of Christ; thou art no ignorant. Thy mother took thee in her arms to the house of God, and here thou art even now. Every sin thou hast committed receives a greater aggravation on account of the light thou hast received, and the privileges thou hast enjoyed. Oh, my hearer, think not that thou canst escape in this thing; thy sin hath bitten thee with a terrible bite. 'Tis no flesh wound as thou drest, but the venom hath entered into thy veins. 'Tis no mere scurf upon the surface, but the leprosy lies deep within. Thou hast sinned. Thou hast sinned continually. Thou hast sinned with many aggravations. Oh, may God convict thee of this charge, and help thee to plead guilty to it. Can you not some of you, if you are honest to yourselves, call to remembrance peculiar sins that you have committed. You recollect your sick bed, and your vow you made to God—where is it now? You have returned like the dog to its vomit, and the sow that was washed in her wallowing in the mire. You remember that prayer that you offered in the time of your distress: you remember too that God graciously delivered you; but where is the thanksgiving that you promised to him? You said you would give him your heart; but where is it? In the black hand of the devil still! You have been a liar to God, you have deceived him, or you have pretended at least that you would give him your soul, and you have not done so.

And think, too, of certain special sins you have committed after receiving special warning. Do you not remember going out from the house of God with a tender conscience, and then running into sin to harden it again? Do you not remember, some of you, how after being alarmed and startled, you have gone your way, and gone to your evil companions, and laughed away the impressions that you have received? This is no mean sin—to strive against the striving Spirit, and to resist the influence that was drawing you to the right path. I beseech you, call to recollection your sins. Come, don't be cowards. Don't shut up the book, open it. Look, and see what you have been, and if you have been that which you are ashamed of, I beseech you to look it in the face, and make acknowledgment and confess it. There is nothing to be gotten by hiding your sins. They'll spring up, man; if you dig as deep as hell to hide them, they'll spring up. Why not now be honest, and look at them to-day, for they'll look at you bye-and-bye, when Christ shall come in the clouds of judgment? If you look not at them, they'll stare you in the face with a look that will wither your soul and blast it into infinite torment and unutterable woe. Your sin, your sin, should make you tremble and feel alarmed.

But I go further. Sinner, thou hast not only thy sin to trouble thee, but there is a second thing, there is *the sentence of condemnation gone out against thee*. I have heard of some ministers talk of men being in a state of probation. No such thing; no man has a state of probation at all. Ye are condemned already. You are not to-day, my unregenerate hearers, prisoners at the bar about to be tried for your lives. No, your trial is over, your sentence is past already, and you are now this day condemned. What though no officer has arrested you, though death has not laid his cold hand upon you, yet Scripture saith, "He that believeth not is condemned already because he believeth not on the Son of God." Man, the black cap is on the judge's head. He even now declares thee lost, nay more than this, if thou wouldst rightly know thine own estate, thou art standing—mark that, my careless hearer—thou art standing under the gallows, with the rope on thine neck, and thou hast but to cast off from the ladder by the hand of death, and thou art swinging in eternity lost and ruined. If ye only knew your position, ye would discover that ye are criminals with your necks on the block this morning, and the bright axe of justice is gleaming in this morning's sunlight, and God alone knows how long it is ere it shall fall, or rather how soon thou shalt feel its keen edge, and its edge shall be stained with thy blood. Thou art condemned *already*. Take that home, man. Thy sentence is signed in heaven and sealed and stamped, and the only reason why it is not carried out is because God in mercy respites thee. But thou art condemned, and this world is thy condemned cell from which thou shalt soon be taken to a terrible execution.

Now you do not believe this. You think that God is putting you on your trial, and that if you behave as well as you can, you will get off. You think that in some future day you may yet blot out your sin. But when the criminal is condemned, there is no room left for good behaviour to alter the sentence. When a capital sentence is passed

upon him that sentence is not to be moved by anything that he can do. And your sentence is passed, passed by the judge of all the earth, and nothing you can do can alter that sentence. The law leaves no room for repentance. Condemned you are and condemned you must be, unless that one way of escape, that I am forthwith about to explain, shall be opened to you by God's rich grace—you are condemned *already*.

Now let me ask you one question ere I leave this point. Sinner, you are condemned to-day. I ask you this, whether you do not deserve it? If you are what you should be, and what I hope the Lord will make you, you will say, "Deserve it, ay, that I do!" If I never committed another sin, my past sins would fully justify the Lord in permitting me to go down alive into the pit. The first sin you ever committed condemned you beyond all hope of self-salvation, but all the sins you have committed since then have aggravated your guilt, and surely now the sentence is not only just, but more than just. You will have one day, if you repent not, to put your finger on your lips and stand in solemn silence, when God shall ask you whether you have anything to plead why the sentence should not be carried into execution. You will be compelled to feel that God condemns you to nothing more than you deserve—that his sentence is just—a proper one on such a sinner as thou hast been.

Now, these two things are enough to make any man tremble, if he did but feel them—his sin and his condemnation. But I have a third to mention. Sinner, there is this to aggravate thy case and increase thy alarm—*thy helplessness*, thy utter inability to do anything to save thyself, *even* if God should offer thee the chance. Thou art to-day, sinner, not only condemned, but thou art dead in trespasses and sins. Talk of performing good works—why, man, thou canst not. It is as impossible for thee to do a good work whilst thou art what thou art, as it would be for a horse to fly up to the stars. But thou sayest, "I will repent." Nay, thou canst not. Repentance is not possible to thee as thou art, unless God gives it to thee. Thou mightest force a few tears, but what are those? Judas might do that and yet go out and hang himself, and go to his own place. You cannot repent of yourself. Nay, if I had to preach this morning salvation by faith apart from the person of Christ, you would be in as bad a condition as if there was no gospel whatever. Recollect, sinner, thou art so lost, so ruined, so undone, that thou canst do nothing to save thyself. The wound is so bad that it cannot be cured by any mortal hand. Thine inability is so great, that unless God pull thee up out of the pit into which thou hast fallen, thou must lie there and rot to all eternity. Thou art so undone that thou canst neither stir hand, nor foot, nor lip, nor heart, unless grace help thee. Oh, what a fearful thing it is to be charged, tried, condemned, and then moreover, to be bereft of all power. You are to-day as much in the hand of God's justice as a little moth beneath your own finger. He can save you if he will, he can destroy you if he pleases, but you yourself are unable to escape from him. There is no door of mercy left for you by the law, and even by the gospel there is no door of mercy which you have power to enter, apart from the help which Christ affords you. If you think you can do anything, you have

yet to unlearn that foolish conceit. If you fancy that you have some strength left, you have not yet come where the Spirit will bring you, for he will empty you of all creature pretension, and lay you low and dash you in pieces, and bray you in a mortar and pound you till you feel that you are weak and without strength, and you can do nothing.

Now have I not indeed described a horrible position for a sinner to be in—but there is something more remaining, a fourth thing. Sinner, thou art not only guilty of past sin, and condemned for it, thou art not only unable, but if thou wert able, thou art so bad that thou wouldst *never be willing* to do anything that couldst save thyself. And even if thou hadst no sins in the past, yet art thou lost, man, for thou wouldst go on to commit sin for the future. For this know—thy nature is totally depraved. Thou lovest that which is evil, and not that which is good. "Nay," saith one, "I love that which is good." Then thou lovest it for a bad motive. "I love honesty," says one. Yes, because it is the best policy. But dost thou love God? Dost thou love thy neighbour as thyself? No, and thou canst not do this, for thy nature is too vile. Why, man, thou wouldst be as bad as the devil, if God were to withdraw all restraint and let thee alone. Were he but to take the bit out of thy mouth, and the bridle from thy jaws, there is no sin that thou wouldst not commit. Dost thou deny this? Dost thou say, "I am willing; I am willing to be holy and to be saved." Then God has made thee so; for if not thou wouldst never be so by nature. If thou shouldst go out of this hall and say, "I hate such preaching as that;" I should but reply, "I knew you did." Though one should say, "I will never believe that I am so lost as that," I should say, "I did not think you ever would—you are too bad to believe the truth;" and if you should say, "I will never be saved by Christ; I will never bow so low as to sue for mercy and accept grace through him;" I should not be surprised, for I know thy nature. Thou art so desperately bad that thou hatest thine own mercy. Thou dost despise the grace that is offered to thee—thou dost hate the Saviour that died for thee, for if not, why dost not thou turn now, man. If thou art not so bad as I say thou art, why not now down on thy knees and cry for pardon? Why not now believe in Christ? Why not now surrender thyself to him? But if thou shouldst do this, then I would say, "This is God's work, he has made thee do it, for if he had not done it thou wouldst not have been humble enough to bow thyself to Christ." Let Arminianism go to the winds; let it be scattered for ever from off the face of the earth; man is totally unable to feel his misery or seek relief; if he were able, he is totally unwilling. The sinner could not help the Holy Ghost, even if the Holy Ghost wanted the help of man to perfect his own operations. What! can it be possible that any man will say the creature is to help the Creator—that an insect of an hour is to be yoked with the Ancient of Days—the Eternal—that the clay is to help the potter in its own formation? Why even if we grant the power, where would be the sympathy or the willing hand? Man hates to be saved. He loves darkness, and if he hath the light, it is because the light thrusts itself upon him. He loves death with a fatal infatuation, and if he be made alive, it is because the Spirit of God quickens him, converts his wicked heart,

makes him willing in the day of his power, and turns him unto God.

Have I not now this morning read a most awful indictment against you? Mark, I mean it for every living man, woman, and child in this hall, who has not faith in Christ. You may be fine gentlemen or grand ladies; you may be respectable tradesmen and very upright in your business, but I charge you before Almighty God with being sinners, condemned sinners, sinners that cannot save yourselves, and sinners, moreover, that would not save yourselves if you could, unless grace made you willing, you are sinners unwilling to be saved. What a fearful indictment is this read in the face of high heaven! May some sinner as he hears it be compelled to say, "It is true, it is true, it is true of me: O Lord have mercy upon me;"

II. Having thus set up before you the hard part of the subject—**THE SINNERS RUIN**—I now come to preach of **HIS REMEDY**.

A certain school of physicians tell us that "*like cures like*." Whether it be true or not in medicine, I know it is true enough in theology—*likes cures like*. When the Israelites were bitten with the fiery serpents, it was a serpent that made them whole. And so you lost and ruined creatures are bidden now to look to Christ suffering and dying, and you will see in him the counterpart of what you see in yourselves. While you are looking to him, may God fulfil his promise and give you life. A remedy to be worth anything must reach the entire disease. Now Christ on the cross comes to man as man is; not as he may be made, but as he is. And it doth this in the four several respects which I have already described.

I charge you with sin. In Christ Jesus behold the sinner's substitute—the sin-offering. Do you see yonder man hanging on the cross; he dies an awful death. In him prophecy receives a terrible accomplishment; of him Almighty vengeance makes a tremendous example. Jehovah hath cast off and abhorred; he hath been wrath with his anointed. The terrors of the Lord are heavy on his soul. And why does that man Jesus Christ die?—not as himself a sinner, but as numbered with transgressors. O soul! if thou wouldst know the terrors of the law, behold him who was made the curse of the law. If thou wouldst see the venom of the fiery serpent's bite, look to yonder brazen serpent; and if thou wouldst see sin in all its deadliness look to a dying Saviour. What makes Christ die? Sin! though not his own. What makes his body sweat drops of blood? Sin! What nails his hands? What rends his side? Sin! Sin doth it all. And if you are saved it must be through yonder sin-offering, yon, dying bleeding lamb. "But," saith one, "my sins are too many to be forgiven." Stop awhile; turn thine eye to Christ. Sometimes when I think of my sin I think it is too great to be washed away, but when I think of Christ's blood, oh, I think there can be no sin great enough for that to fail in cleansing it every whit. I seem to think, when I see the costly price, Christ paid a very heavy ransom. When I look at myself I think it would need much to redeem me, but when I see Christ dying I think he could redeem me if I were a million times as bad as I am. Now, remember Christ not only paid barely enough for us, he paid more than enough. The Apostle Paul says, "His grace abounded"—"super-

abounded" says the Greek. It ran over: there was enough to fill the empty vessel, and there was enough to flood the world besides. Christ's redemption was so plenteous, that had God willed it, if all the stars of heaven had been peopled with sinners, Christ need not have suffered another pang to redeem them all—there was a boundless value in his precious blood. And, sinner, if there were so much as this, surely there is enough for thee.

And then again, if thou art not satisfied with Christ's sin-offering, just think a moment; God is satisfied, God the Father is content, and must not thou be? The Judge says, "I am satisfied; let the sinner go free, for I have punished the Surety in his stead;" and if the Judge is satisfied, surely the criminal may be. Oh! come, poor sinner, come and see; if there is enough to appease the wrath of God there must be enough to answer all the requirements of man. "Nay, nay," saith one, "but my sin is such a terrible one that I cannot see in the substitution of Christ that which is *like* to meet it." What is thy sin? "Blasphemy." Why Christ died for blasphemy: this was the very charge which man imputed to him, and therefore you may be quite sure that God aid it on him if men did. "Nay, nay," saith one, "but I have been worse than that; I have been a liar." It is just what men said of him. They declared that he lied when he said, "If this temple be destroyed I will build it in three days." See in Christ a liar's Saviour as well as a blasphemer's Saviour. "But," says one, "I have been in league with Beelzebub." Just what they said of Christ. They said that he cast out devils through Beelzebub. So man laid that sin on him, and man did unwittingly what God would have him do. I tell thee, even that sin was laid on Christ. Come, sinner, there is not a sin in the world with one exception which Jesus did not bear in his own body on the tree. "Ah, but," says one, "when I sinned, I sinned very greedily. I did it with all my might. I took a delight in it. Ah! soul, and so did Christ take a delight in being thy substitute. He said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!" Let Christ's willingness respond to the suggestion that thy greediness in sin can make it too heinous to be forgiven. "Ah!" crieth another, "but, sir, I acted ever with such a bad heart: my heart was worse than my actions. If I could have been worse I would. Among all my companions in vice there was not one who was so greedy of it and black in it as I." Well, but, my dear hearer, if thou hast sinned in thy heart, remember Christ suffered in his heart. His heart-sufferings were the heart and soul of his sufferings. Look and see that heart all pierced, and the blood and water flowing therefrom, and believe that he is able to take away even thy heart of sin, however black it may be.

"Yes," I hear another self-condemned one exclaim, "but I sinned without any temptation. I did it deliberately in cold blood. I had become such a wicked, beastly sinner, that I used to sit down and gloat over my sin before I committed it." Ah, but sinner, remember before Christ died he thought of it; ay, from all eternity he mediated on becoming thy substitute. It was a matter of premeditation with him, and, therefore, let his forethought put aside thy forethought. Let

the greatness of his previous thought upon his sacrifice, put away the grievousness of thy sin, on account of its having been committed in cold blood. Does there yet come up some sobbing voice—"I have been worst than all the rest, for I did my sin by reason of a covenant which I made with Satan. I said, 'If I could have a short life and a merry one, I would be content;' I made a covenant with death, and I made a league with hell." And what if I am commissioned to tell you that even this bite is not incurable? Remember, Jesus the Son of God made a covenant on thine account. It was a greater covenant than yours, not made with death and hell, but made with his Father on behalf of sinners. I want, if I can, to bring out the fact, that whatever there is in thy sins there is its counterpart in Christ. Just as when the serpent bit the people, it was a serpent that healed them, so if you are bitten by sin, it is, as it were, thy sin's substitute; it is thy sin laid on Christ that heals you. Oh, turn your eyes then to Calvary, and see the guilt of sin laid upon Christ's shoulders, and say, "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows," and looking at him thou shalt live.

Secondly, here is a remedy for *the condemnation*. I said, you were not only sinners, but condemned sinners. Yes, and Christ is not only thy substitute for sin, but he is thy condemned substitute too. See him. He stands at Pilate's bar, is condemned before Herod and Caiaphas, and is found guilty. Nay, he stands before the awful bar of God, and though there is no sin of his own put upon him, yet inasmuch as his people's sins were laid on him, justice views him as a sinner, and it cries, "Let the sword be bathed in his blood." Christ was condemned for sinners that they might not be condemned. Look up, look away from the sentence that has gone out against you, to the sentence that went out against him. Are you cursed?—so was he. "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Are you condemned?—so was he, and there was one point in which he excelled you; he was executed, and that you never shall be, if you look to him now, and believe that he is able to save you, and put your trust in him.

In regard to the third particular. Our utter helplessness is such, that as I told you, we are unable to do anything. Yes, and I want you to look at Christ; was not he unable too? You, in your father Adam, were once strong, but you lost your strength. Christ, too, was strong, but he laid aside all his omnipotence. See him. The hand that poises the world hangs on a nail. See him. The shoulders that supported the skies are drooping over the cross. Look at him. The eyes whose glances light up the sun are sealed in darkness. Look at him. The feet that trod the billows and that shaped the spheres are nailed with rude iron to the accursed tree. Look away from your own weakness to his weakness, and remember that in his weakness he is strong, and in his weakness you are strong too. Go see his hands; they are weak, but in their weakness they are stretched out to save you. Come view his heart; it is rent, but in his cleft you may hide yourself. Look at his eyes; they are closing in death, but from them comes the ray of light that shall kindle your dark spirit. Unable though thou art, go to him who himself was crucified through

weakness, and remember that now "he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." I told you you could not repent, but if you go to Christ he can melt your heart into contrition, though it be as hard as iron. I said you could not believe; but if you sit down and look at Christ, a sight of Christ will make you believe, for he is exalted on high to give repentance and remission of sins.

And then the fourth thing. "Oh," cries one, "you said we were too estranged to be even willing to come to Christ." I know you were, and therefore it is he came down to you. You would not come to him, but he comes to you this morning, and though you are very evil, he comes with sacred magic in his arm, to change your heart. Sinner, thou unwilling, but guilty sinner, Christ stands before thee this morning, he that was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, a man and a brother born for adversity. And he puts his hand to-day in thy hand, and he says, "Sinner, wilt thou be saved?" Then trust in me. Ah! if I preach the gospel, you will reject it, but if *he* preaches it you cannot. Methinks I see the crucified one finding his way in that thick crowd under the gallery, and going between the ranks seated here, and above, and everywhere, and as he goes along, he stops at each broken-hearted sinner, and says, "Sinner, will you trust *me*? see here I am, the Son of God, yet I am man. Look at my wounds, see still the nail-marks, and the prints of the thorn-crown. Sinner, will you trust *me*?" And while he says it, he graciously works in you the grace of faith. But are there any who looking him in the face, can reply, "Thou crucified one we cannot trust thee, our sins are too great to be forgiven?" Oh, nothing can grieve him so much as to tell him that. You think that you are humble; you are proud; despising Christ while you think you are despising yourself. And is there one in all this great assembly who says, "This is all twaddle, I care not to hear such preaching as this?" Nay, I do not ask thee to care for what I speak; but Jesus the crucified one is standing by thy side, and he asks thee, "Sinner, have I ever done anything to offend thee; have I ever done thee a displeasure? What hurt hast thou ever suffered at my hands? Then why dost thou persecute thy wife for loving me—then why hate thy child for loving one that did thee no hurt?" "Besides," sayeth he, and he takes the veil from his face, "did you ever see a face like this? It was marred by suffering for men—for men that hate me too, but whom I love. I need not have suffered. I was in my Father's house, happy and glorious; love made me come down and die. Love nailed me to the tree, and now will you spit in my face after that?" "No," said a young man to me this last week, "I found it hard to love Christ, but," said he, "once upon a time I thought, well, if Christ never died for me, and never loved me, yet I must love him for his goodness in dying for other people." And methinks if you did but know Christ, you must love him. Thou wouldst say to him, "Thou dear, thou suffering man, didst thou endure all this for those that did hate thee? Didst thou die for those that murdered thee? Didst thou shed thy blood for those that drew it from thy veins with cursed iron? Didst thou dive into the depths of the grave that thou mightest lift out rebellious ones who scorned thee and would have none of

thee? Then dissolved by thy goodness I fall before thy feet and I weep. My souls repents of sin—I weep—Lord accept me, Lord have mercy upon me.”

Did you think I have run away from my point? So I had, but I have brought you back to it. You know I was to show that Christ could overcome our depravity. And he has done it in some of you while I have been speaking. You hated him, but you do not hate him now. It may be, you said you would never trust him, but you do trust him now. And if God has done this in your heart, this is the true end of hearing; the best way of keeping to the subject, is for the subject to be brought home to the heart. Ah! dear hearers, I wish I had a better voice this morning. I wish I had more earnest tones and a more loving heart, for I do feel when I am preaching about Christ, that I am a poor dauber. When I want to paint him so beautiful, I am afraid you will say of him, he is not lovely! No, no; it is my bad picture of him; but he is lovely. Oh! he is a loving Lord. He has bowels of compassion; he has a heart brimful of tenderest affection; and he bids me tell you—and I do tell you that—he bids me say, “This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief.” And he bids me add his kind invitation, “Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls. Do not believe what the devil tells you. He says that Christ is not ready to forgive; oh! he is more willing to forgive than you are to be forgiven. Do not believe your heart, when it says, that Christ will shut you out, and will not pardon you; come and try him, come and try him; and the first one that is shut out, I will agree to be shut out with him. The first soul that Christ rejects after it has put its trust in him—I risk my soul's salvation with that man. It cannot be. He never was hard-hearted yet, and he never will be. Only believe, and may he himself help thee to believe. Only look at him, and may he himself open thine eyes and enable thee to look, and this shall be a happy morning. For though I may have spoken feebly, as I am too conscious I have, God will have worked powerfully; and unto him shall be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

HYMNS NOT SECONDARY.

IT is a very shallow view to look upon hymns as merely an interlude between more important service. On the contrary, they are the wisest means of conveying spiritual truth. A papal writer in the eighteenth century says, “The whole people is singing itself into the Lutheran doctrine.” And Coleridge says, “Luther did as much for the Reformation by his hymns as by his translation of the Scriptures.” It is a well-known saying of Sir Philip Sydney, “Let me make the ballads of a nation, and I care not who makes its laws.” Was not Paul divinely right when he said, “Teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs”?

Our Minister's Wife and her Noble Life.

CHAPTER VII.—AN OLD MAID'S STORY.

IT has, as I have already intimated, for I know not how long a time, been an erroneous notion that a minister's wife must necessarily be a public person: and on that account take a prominent part in almost everything that pertains to the church and congregation. Judged by this standard, I do not hesitate to affirm that Mrs. Barton as a minister's wife, admittedly fell grievously short. Neither by constitutional temperament or the possession of natural gifts, was she designed to take the lead. Like the modest violet, she preferred the shade to the full blown public gaze, and to be in the rear rather than in the front. Naturally reserved only those who were fully admitted into her confidence became acquainted with her sterling qualities, and learned thoroughly to understand her. In all her life, so far as I knew her, she only took the lead once, and that was in our own sewing class. In that by the unanimous desire of its members she was chosen as secretary and treasurer, and admirably indeed did she fulfil the functions of her office. But further than this, as a public person—if in this respect she might be called a public person at all!—she declined to go. Her *forte* lay in dealing with individual cases, and

in this respect she did splendidly. To her own husband and family, as I have every reason for knowing full well, she was all that a wife and mother could be; and there was not a female member in the church and congregation, but felt that in the time of perplexity and trouble, in Mrs. Barton she was sure to find one of her best friends. It was in this specially that the nobility of her life consisted. She firmly declined to neglect domestic duties for church affairs: and in this decision her husband fearlessly upheld her, and I believe rightly too.

To show this will be my endeavour in the remainder of these chapters: and I ask the reader's kind indulgence if as an illustration I venture first to give my own case. I am now, and long have been, what is termed an old maid. Miss Kent I have always been and Miss Kent I always expect to be. Now there is an incorrect idea abroad that old maids are such because they could not have been anything else. But that does not necessarily follow. It has been my privilege to know in my time a goodly number of old maids, and there are very few of them that could not have worn the wedding ring, as the lawful wives of some, who, in their earlier days sought them

had they so chosen. But a variety of reasons prevented their acceptance of the offer, and so old maids they lived and old maids they died. But passing by these and keeping to my own case I will relate it in order to show the personal debt I owe to Mrs. Barton; and I may add that but for this it never would have been written.

Without entering into details concerning offers made to me before my father and mother's deaths which I did not see my way clearly to accept I will refer to one which I did accept. Among the members of the church was a deacon named Mr. Guilford. He was thirty-two years of age and I was twenty-nine. Being in a good position, a thorough going Christian, and a most useful worker in the cause, and moreover a good son to his parents, all who knew him held him in honour. In fact, I am not going too far in saying that several female friends in the village would gladly have accepted his overtures had he offered them his heart and hand. But to my surprise his attentions were fixed upon myself, and the revelation came to me most unexpectedly.

One evening I had been at a week-day meeting, when as I came out of the large vestry he came up to me and asked if he might go home with me, as he had something important to communicate.

Never dreaming what that "something important" was, but supposing that it had reference to church work of some kind or other I willingly consented.

As soon as we were alone, in a somewhat abrupt and tremulous tone, he said, "Now, Miss Kent, you know it is never my habit to

beat about the bush. What I have to say on any point I say right out. You are aware that I have a good business and can keep a wife comfortably. Well, I want a wife. It is true that I live happily enough with my dear parents, but notwithstanding that, for some time past I have felt very much as if I should like a home of my own. And I do not flatter you when I say it is seeing and being with you that has put that idea into my head. For months I have quietly watched you, and turned the matter over in my mind: and the more I have thought about it, the more have I been drawn towards you, and felt if I could procure you as my partner for life my happiness would be complete. Of course, I have no right to ask you for an answer in the affirmative or negative at once; but I thought it best to let you know my mind, and I can assure you my earnest prayer is that for your own future happiness you may come to a right decision."

To say that I was stunned by this sudden and unexpected proposal is to say the least. Knowing too, as I have said, that had he been pleased to make advances to females more eligible than I believed myself to be, I cannot help confessing that on reflection, with a woman's vanity, I felt in a certain degree flattered by his choice. Still, never having thought about the matter, I deemed it due both to him and myself to ask him to give me a week or two's grace before I finally decided either to keep his company or not. With this request he cheerfully acquiesced, and with a cordial shake of the hand, we parted at my own door, and I was left alone to ponder

over the matter and to lay it before the Lord.

Into further details it will not be expected for me to enter. Suffice it to say that owing to his persuasive power, the desired leave to keep my company was given, and that it consolidated in a courtship of one year, and I am not ashamed to say it, the happiest year of my life. In nearly all things we were agreed, and as Christians we sought in our respective ways to aid each other in the service of the Lord. I had also every reason to believe from the congratulations that poured in upon me from all quarters that the match was looked upon with favour by our nearest and dearest friends. The more I came in contact with him the more I admired and respected him, and can say sincerely that if ever my heart's affection was set upon a man it was upon George Guilford.

But alas! a serious circumstance occurred that blasted my fondest hopes. A year's courtship being by him deemed sufficient, he obtained my leave to make preparations for the marriage: and as it was arranged that we should dwell together in my house extra furniture was purchased, and the legal notice was given to the registrar to be at our chapel at a certain date. As this date happened to be New Year's Day we both looked forward to it with joyous anticipation of spending together "A Happy New Year." Presents poured in and the last day of the old year arrived—a day never to be forgotten. It opened with a dreadful fog which deepened as the wintry day wore on. As may be judged I was very busy making preparations for the

morning, when about five o'clock, as I sat down to tea, Mrs. Barton came in looking as pale as death.

Supposing something was the matter either with her husband or child, I was the first to speak, and said, "Oh! Mrs. Barton, how bad you look! What has occurred? Is all right at home?"

"Yes, thank God," she said as soon as she could find breath to speak. "Then you have not heard?"

"Heard what?" Mrs. Barton, I asked, beginning instinctively to feel that she had some personal bad news to communicate.

"Of the awful railway accident that has happened, and of the lives that have been lost."

"Not a word, Mrs. Barton. The fact is I have been very busy all day, and the deep fog has doubtless prevented visitors coming in. What dreadful news have you got to tell?"

"Oh! Henrietta," she cried, throwing her arms around my neck and looking as if her heart would break, "do bear up when I tell you. It was hard work for me to come and tell you what I have to say, but I felt it to be the best to crush my own feelings for your sake, and to be the first to let you know lest some thoughtless person should come in and give you a shock that you might never get over."

I knew now that something awful must have occurred, and in as calm a tone as I could command asked her to tell me straight out what had happened. My feelings even to this day will not permit me to tell what passed between us. All that I can do is to condense in a few lines the sad story she told. It appeared that as a passenger train was nearing Colchester, through the engine-

driver and guard not being able to see the signals to stop, the train, when running at a moderate speed collided with a luggage train which was being shunted, the result of which was that ten lives in the front carriages were lost, and not a few were severely wounded. In the second composite carriage which was wrecked sat Mr. Guilford who was picked up out of the wreckage, so fearfully mutilated as to be hardly recognisable. Of course, he was dead, and my only consolation was, that it was proved afterwards at the inquest that death must have been instantaneous. It was judged by all my friends best that I should never see his remains, and I fell in with the suggestion. For months afterwards I was hardly myself; and how I could have borne up had it not been for the real heartfelt practical sympathy shown me by Mrs. Barton, as well

as by her worthy husband, and many Christian friends I cannot tell. Once reason nearly reeled, and then Mrs. Barton would have me come to the manse, and while there she acted towards me as a sister, even my own flesh and blood. When I attended the funeral she walked by my side, and did all she could both by impressive silence, or a sympathetic word to give me needful support. It was thus I began the new year so bright in anticipation, so sad in reality. Why my anticipated conjugal happiness should have been so blasted I know not, nor do I care to enquire; but this I know, that the Psalmist is right when he says, "Thy way, O God, is in the sea, Thy path in the deep waters, and Thy footsteps are not known," and there, and there alone, I strive to rest.

(To be continued.)

HOW LONG HAVE I TO LIVE.

JOHN FOSTER has appropriately compared our life to a sealed reservoir, from which is running a small quantity of water always—the flowing stream being just the representation of the term of our life. But the reservoir is sealed, and we have no means of seeing how far the water has run, and how much remains, or whether there be enough for to-morrow.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

IN the Bible there are no Latinisms; and where is the life of our language to be found in such perfection as in the translation of the Bible? We will venture to affirm that no one is master of the English language who is not well read in the Bible, and sensible of its peculiar excellencies. It is the pure well of English. The taste which the Bible forms is not a taste for big words, but a taste for the simplest expression, or the clearest medium for presenting ideas. Remarkable it is, that most of the sublimities of the Bible are conveyed in monosyllables.—*Dr. Whewell.*

Anecdotal Illustrations and Meditations from C. H. Spurgeon's Works.

Gathered by T. W. MEDHURST, CARDIFF.

MISSIONARY CONVERTS.

I spoke yesterday with a man of God who has been preaching the gospel in the New Hebrides, where till lately the people were cannibals, and, by God's grace, he has brought hundreds, if not thousands, of the former savages to become Christians; and the good brother, when he spoke of his hardships, said, "Ah, but you do not know in England the joys of those who preach to cannibals!" True, most of the missionaries who first went out were **KILLED AND EATEN**, and our friend escaped by the skin of his teeth! So, I looked at him again to hear what his special and peculiar joys were. "Oh!" he said, "the joy of converting a cannibal to Christ is a greater blessing than can be known by you, who only bring ordinary people to the Saviour, and," he added, "I tell you that there are no Christians that I know of that excel my converted cannibals. If you want to see the Sabbath Day sacredly kept, you must come into my place, and see how these people used to be cannibals, keep it. Those who were accustomed to eat their fellow-men, now never rise without prayer, and never sit at the table without asking a blessing. There is not a Christian household but has **FAMILY PRAYER IN IT, MORNING AND EVENING**. These people walk with God, and live close to Christ, and as I look at them, it seems such a joy to have been the means of bringing these **CANNIBALS TO CHRIST**." I am afraid there are many nominally Christian people who are not half so good as those converted cannibals. What is the reason of it? It is because they seem to have God's life poured into them abundantly, and some of us have but little of it. Jesus came, not only that we "might have life," but that we might have life "**MORE ABUNDANTLY**."

THE NAME WRITTEN.

Some years ago, my esteemed brother, Mr. John B. Gough, out of his great love for me, sent me a very valuable walking stick. It must have cost him a large sum of money, for it was made of ebony, and it had a gold head to it, with pieces of Californian quartz curiously worked into the head of the stick. I cannot say that it was of much practical use to me, but still I valued it as a present from Mr. Gough. One night, a thief got into my house, and stole my walking-stick, and the man, of course, broke up the stick, and took off the gold from the head. He brought it down to a pawnbrokers not far from here; he had hammered and battered it as much as he could; but when the pawnbroker looked carefully at it, he saw the letters,

"S-P-U-R-G-E-O-N."

"Oh!" said he, to the man, "you stop a bit," which, of course, was just what the thief did not do. I got my gold back again because my name was in it; though the man hammered it, there was my name, and the gold was bound to come back to me, and so it did. Now, when the LORD once writes His name in your heart, He writes His law within you; and though the devil may batter you, God will claim you as His own. When God's Law is written in a man's heart, that heart becomes Divinely Royal Property, for the King's Name is there, and the heart in which God has written His Name can never perish.

TAKE HEED HOW YE HEAR.

Says one, "I do not hear the Word to prove it." No, of course you do not. You may have heard the story of the lady who was present when Mr. Ebenezer Erskine preached at a Scotch communion service; she thought she had never heard such a man in all her life, he preached Christ so sweetly that she was charmed. She enquired where he was to preach the next Sabbath, and she left her own place of worship to go and hear Mr. Erskine again; but it was a dreadfully dry discourse, she said, and she was foolish enough to go in to the vestry, and to say to the preacher, "My dear sir, I have been bitterly disappointed in hearing you this morning. I heard you last Sabbath, and you so extolled Christ that I enjoyed the service above measure, and I thought I would come again to hear you, and now I have got nothing." Replied the good man, "No, Madam, last Sabbath *you went to worship God, and to feed on Christ*, so you received the blessing you sought; to-day, *you came to hear Mr. Erskine*, and you have heard me; but you have missed the blessing." Oh, dear friends, beware of going to places of worship *merely* to hear men! Of course, you must hear a man speaking, but go with this view, to see Jesus, and be praying all the time: "Lord, speak to me through the minister, speak to me through the hymn, speak to me through the prayer, speak to me through any part of the service—ay, speak through the speaker's not speaking if thou wilt—only do Thou speak to me, let those dear lips of Thine drop sweet smelling myrrh into my soul!" Pray thus, and you shall not be disappointed, be you sure of that.

GOD SEES WITH A COMPASSIONATE EYE.

I know a sister in Christ, who did me great good one day. I had helped a man many times, poor wretch that he was. I never clothed him but he sold his garments in a day or two; I never helped him but he sank in deeper degradation than before, and, at last, after he had been rigged out afresh from top to toe, and a situation found for him, and he was put in a position for getting on in life, he came here again, and, when I saw him, I shrank back from him. I felt indignant with him, but our sister—a better Christian than I—lifted up both her hands, and began to cry. The man was covered with vermin, and he had evidently been drinking hard; and she lifted up her hands, and she cried: "O poor creature, we have done all we can to save you, and you will go to hell"; and she stood and cried as if he had been her own child. And I believe that is how God feels for us poor sinners, for He

cannot bear to see them act as they do. If you are coming back to Him, that is the compassionate way in which he is looking at you. He spies you out, and like as Jesus wept over Jerusalem, so does the great Father weep over sinners grieving that they will be so desperately wicked and foolish as to destroy their own souls.

WHOLE-HEARTEDNESS.

I have seen boys bathing in a river in the morning. One of them has just dipped his toes in the water, and he cries out, as he shivers, "Oh, it's so cold!" Another has gone in up to his ankles, and he also declares that it is fearfully chilly. But, see! another runs to the bank, and takes a header. He rises all in a glow. All his blood is circulating, and he cries, "Delicious! what a beautiful morning! I am all in a glow! The water is splendid! That is the boy for enjoying a bath. You Christian people who are paddling about in the shallows of religion, and just dipping your toes into it—you stand shivering in the cold air of the world which you are afraid to leave. Oh, that you would plunge into the river of life! How it would brace you! What tone it would give you! In for it, young man! In for it! Be a Christian out and out. Serve the Lord with your whole being. Give yourself wholly to Him who bought you with His blood. Plunge into the sacred flood by grace, and you will exclaim:—

"Oh, this is life! Oh, this joy,
My God, to find Thee so!
Thy face to see, thy voice to hear,
And all Thy love to know."

PARENTAL INSTRUCTION.

The Israelites were told to personally instruct their children concerning "the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments which the LORD" their God had commanded them. When they asked the meaning of the various ordinances of God's House, their parents were to tell them. They were not to refer them to the priest, but they were themselves to instruct their children in the things of God. In our own case, however much we may love and appreciate the Sunday-school system, and we cannot love it too much, I hope we shall never forget that the first duty towards the child belongs to the parents. Fathers and mothers are the most natural teachers for God to use in the salvation of their children. I am sure that, in my early youth no teaching ever had such an impression on my mind as the instruction of my mother; neither can I conceive that, to any child, there can be anyone who will have such influence over the young heart as the mother who has tenderly cared for her offspring.

I am sure that, if we love God, we shall long that our children may love Him too. If your trade has supported you, and brought you in a competence, you will naturally wish to bring your son up to it. And, on a far higher platform, if God has been a good God to you, your deepest desire will be that your children should serve the same Divine Master through all the days of their life.

The Last Wish.

A MOTHER sat beside the bed
Where her sick child was laid,
Beneath the withering touch of
death,
She saw her fair child fade.

"Now tell me why that earnest
look,
My precious one most dear,
What wish unsaid is on thy lips?"
The mother bent to hear.

Then raised the boy his loving
eyes,
In death more purely bright,
And through his sorrows darkness
streaked,
There rays of heavenly light.

"O mother, when I'm in my
shroud,
And in my coffin laid,
Then do not gather flowers for me,
Let no sweet wreath be made."

"And why, my child?" the
mother said
And checked her tears the while,
"Did'st thou not ever love them
well,
And watch their opening smile.

T'was always thy delight to bring
The earliest flowers to me,
Then tell me why I may not twine
A rosebud wreath for thee."

The bright tears glistened in his
eyes,
As the fair child replied,
"My Saviour wore no crown of
flowers,
When for my sins He died.

A crown of sharpest thorns
instead
Was placed upon His brow;

How can I with a rosebud wreath,
Depart towards Him now?"

Yes, blessed child, for well a
wreath
Graces the victor's brow;
And thou through Christ the sin-
less One,
Art more than conqueror now.

There is a crown of amaranth,
For thee in heavenly bowers,
For He has worn the crown of
thorns,
That thou might'st wear the
flowers.

One sweetly, solemn, earnest
thought,
Comes to me o'er and o'er:
I'm nearer to my home to-day,
Than I have been before.

I'm nearer to my Father's house,
Where many mansions be;
I'm nearer to the great white
throne,
Nearer the jasper sea.

I'm nearer to the bounds of life,
Where I shall leave its care;
I'm nearer laying down my head,
Nearer my crown to wear.

But in the dreary space between,
Slow winding through the night
Doth lie that dim and unknown
stream,
Which leads at last to light.

O Father, make me trust Thee
more,
Strengthen my feeble faith,
And let me feel as if I trod,
This unknown shore of death.

THE
BAPTIST MESSENGER:

AND

Evangelical Treasury

AND

CHRONICLE OF THE CHURCHES

FOR THE YEAR 1897.

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On Divine Illumination.

By HENRY COUSENS.

“ For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”—2 Cor. iv., 6.

THE similitude used by our Apostle in this precious and confirmatory and instructive Scripture is taken from the first chapter of the book of Genesis—in the the first three verses we read, “ In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, ‘ Let there be light,’ and there was light.” In the sixteenth verse we may read, “ And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; he made the stars also.”

This is very wonderful, as it displays the Glory of God in His infinite wisdom, power, and goodness; but I do not know that it is *more* marvellous than the illuminating, regenerating, quickening Grace of God named by the Apostle above. Real, vital, spiritual religion is a *great fact* and a *grand secret*; none but the Saints of God can *understand* our Text—but *they can*, in their measure and degree of Divine Teaching.

In Psalm xxv., 14, we read, “ The *secret* of the Lord is with them that fear him, and He will shew them His covenant.” And in Psalm xxxvi., 9, “ For with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light shall we see light.” A beautiful illustration of our text is the ninth verse of of First Epistle of Peter in the second chapter, “ But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”

My wish is to *familiarise* the minds of the people of God with the language of our text, that they may thereby *enter into* the priceless blessing of Divine Illumination, which has distinguished them *as* led by the Spirit of God and are the Sons of God, and joint heirs with Christ, as in Rom. viii., 14-17.

Regenerating grace not only quickens sinners, who were dead in trespasses and sins, into spiritual life, but delivers them from the power of

darkness, and translates them into the Kingdom of Christ. Faith is also given which worketh by love, purifies the heart, and is of the operation of the Holy Ghost. The decisions of the Scripture are so explicit, and the marks and evidences of real religion are so plain and many, that it is not an easy thing for persons to be ignorant or uncertain *whether* they love God or *do not*, whether they walk by faith or by sight, whether they *mind* earthly things, or set their affection *principally* on things above. We *cannot* pursue an unknown good, and we *shall* not pursue an unvalued one.

The ultimate end of the Blessed God in all His works is the manifestation of His own glory; foreseeing that man who He was about to create would fall into sin, and entail ruin upon himself and his posterity, determined to glorify His perfections by rescuing an innumerable multitude of them, and conferring upon them the marvellous blessings of salvation. In this grand plan of redemption, He purposed to display His glory in quite another way *than that* in which He *had* displayed it in the work of creation. In the *latter*, He had signally manifested His *wisdom, power, and goodness*; but in redemption, *divine mercy, disinterested love, and sovereign grace* were to be brought *prominently forward*: yet all this was to be done in perfect consistency with His holiness and justice; the honours of the divine law were to be maintained inviolate, and no disparagement to arise to the Moral Governor of the world while dispensing the blessings of His grace to the sons of guilt and wretchedness.

Now this Divine purpose, the result of infinite wisdom, centres in the glorious complex Person, and all perfect work of the great Lord Jesus Christ; therefore as we obtain glimpses of the Blessed Redeemer by faith, from the priceless Scriptures, or the means of grace through the gracious influences of the Holy Ghost, &c., we obtain *renewed* glimpses of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

While in a state of nature's darkness, we do not discern any superlative worth in the Lord Jesus—and Isaiah's description is still correct in the fifty-third chapter, second verse, of *our* estimation of Him; but *after* our understandings are *enlightened* by the Holy Ghost, He becomes all in all to us, and as we go on under Divine teachings *everything that relates to Him is interesting to us*; we cannot love, praise or value Him *sufficiently to satisfy ourselves*, the *entire* of His meritorious work is of the highest importance to us. We rejoice in the extension of His Kingdom and His glory, and unto us who believe in Him He is truly precious.

What shall we say to those, who know Him not, nor desire the knowledge of His ways, but persistently live in the rejection of His Holy Word, and the neglect of their souls highest interests. It will be a terrible thing to exchange worlds some day without repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, therefore we direct them to Isaiah. lv., 6-7.

Every time you consent to do wrong you weaken your character and corrupt your heart.

Reviews.

Science Talks to Young Thinkers; Facts and Fancies about Flowers, by Margaret Moyes Black, with 14 Illustrations from Water Colours by C. C. P. Edinburgh and London: Oliphant, Anderson, and Ferrier.

This will be a prompter to all young thinkers and lovers of the flower garden. It also clothes with increased interest our charming *wild flowers* as they are *strangely* called. Snowdrops, day's-eyes, violets, anemones, forget-me-nots, primroses, &c., &c., are dealt with in a manner, which shows the writer to be in love with her subject. The illustrations are chaste and beautiful, also a cheerful binding. It would prove an acceptable present to our young people.

Kingless Folk and Other Addresses on Bible Animals, by Rev. John Adams, B.D., Inverkeilor. Oliphant, Anderson, and Ferrier. Volume VIII, of the Golden Nail Series of Addresses to the Young.

It has been our pleasure to say a word of approval of each of the former volumes, and in glad recognition of the fact and the right of the children to some portion of our public services in the sanctuary on the Lord's Day we willingly give prominence to any writings helping to this end. We have before us eighteen well-written articles on the Kingless Folk, and we feel sure this cheap and instructive book will be of service to all who have to interest and address the young, either in our schools or our congregations.

Heaven; an Enquiry into what Holy Scripture reveal and suggests of the glories of the Father's House, by J.

Hunt Cooke. Baptist Tract and Book Society, Gray's Inn Road, Holborn, W.C.

The pen and heart of the writer has done much good service for readers aforesaid, but we think the author in his present contribution was in one of his best moods. It is written with care, and there is an absence of the speculative so often seen in writings on this subject. Here are twenty-one chapters all about Heaven, the outcome of some years study, and bringing to the writer a joy and reward which he would gladly share with others. The Master Jesus directed the sad hearts and weeping eyes of His disciples to the Father's House, and we are sure that many a weary pilgrim who reads this book will, while passing through the Valley of Shadow, be cheered while catching glimpses of the future Home.

Saved and kept, Counsels to Young Believers and Christian Endeavourers, by F. B. Meyer, B.A. Morgan and Scott, 12, Paternoster Buildings.

This precious little book is issued on the 50th birthday of this highly-useful and esteemed writer. We are glad that he has dedicated it to the Young Believers of the Christian Endeavour Societies, and we feel sure thousands will read and be profited. Mr. Meyer's writings, his style and soul-helping words, needs no commendation from us. Only we urge our young friends to get the book and read and pray.

The Story of Baptist Home Missions, by Charles Brown. Published for the Baptist Union by Veale, Chifferiel

and Co., Cursitor Street, E. C., Centenary year, 1897.

Notwithstanding Mr. Brown's fears, we think he has done his work admirably, and deserves our warmest thanks. It is impossible for the seniors to read this history of Baptist Home Missions, its origin, its founders, and its transitions without considerable emotion, and as we look at the likenesses of the worthies of the past: Dr. Steadman, Abraham Booth, Dr. Rippon. In youth and in age we thank our God for the *men*, the *work*, and this *history*. We are sure the Juniors will be greatly helped in their interest in our Home Mission by a perusal of the work.

Baptismal Regeneration in the Church of Scotland, an open letter to Dr. John Macleod, of Govan, by Dr. Theophilus. Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier.

This is a reply to a recently-published manifesto. The reply is by a former follower of Dr. Macleod, and his promptings may be gathered from the following quotation. "In this way lies priestism. No priest but the One Mediator shall come between my soul and God my Father. This way lies Sacramentism. No ordinance, however precious, shall come betwixt my soul and Jesus my Saviour. That way lies Churchism. No institution, however sacred, shall come between my soul and the Holy Ghost my Divine Teacher and Guide.

A Literary Gent. A Study in Vanity and Dipsomania. By Coulson Kernahan. Ward Lock and Co.

A terrible story. It makes one shudder to read it, and overwhelms us when we know its details to be facts. It is an illustration of how intoxicating drink can totally destroy will power.

May No. 1, Volume XV., *The Treasury of Religious Thought* (American). Gay and Bird, Bedford Street, Strand.

We call attention to the first number of a new volume as a good time to order this best of magazines for ministers, local preachers, and all Christian workers.

The Boys' Own have issued its Summer extra, connected with the 60th year of Her Majesty's reign. It is edited by G. Andrew Hutchinson, Esq., and is a very full and successful summer issue. *The Girls' Own* Summer Part, the Queen of Queen's Diamond Jubilee Number, very bright, well-written stories, useful chapters, good illustrations—several of which are descriptive of the history of our Queen. Part 7, volume II., of *Sunday Hours for Boys' and Girls'*, marvellous success, wonderfully adapted for the youth of both sexes. We equally commend to parents for their boys, *The Boys' Sunday Monthly*, one penny. *The Leisure Hour* and *Sunday at Home* for June are excellent, and full of Diamond Jubilee interest right in the home. *The Cottager* and *Artisan* and *Friendly Greetings* are to hand. We have only room to say how much they must be appreciated in their circle of readers. The Religious Tract Society is doing wonderful good service to the souls of men.

The Quiver Jubilee Number. Cassell and Co.

This number is above the average as it is special for the Diamond Jubilee; it also has capital reading for the young. *The Precocious Child*, by E. S. Curry, illustrated by Gordon Brown; and *Lost on the Downs*, the children's story, by Edith E. Cuthell, illustrated by Enoch Ward, are good; short articles also on *Christian Life and Work* are very good.

We should like to say a word about the June number of *Great Thoughts*, which never lags behind the foremost of our monthlies; and also *The Helping Words* and *The Prize Reciter*. But we can only call attention to *Mothers and Daughters*

with picture for framing likeness of our Queen, only one penny; one of the wonders of the month.

The Treasury of David part 20, to hand. Passmore and Alabaster.

The publishers are now entering on Volume IV. The cover for binding Vols. I., II. and III. may be had at 1/4 each or 1/6 by post.

We have only space to acknowledge worthy magazines or worthy objects, &c., which have our sincere benediction. *In His Name* (Ragged School Union), *The Bible Societies' Monthly*, and *Gleanings for the Young*, *The Monthly Record of the Protestant Evangelical Mission, Night and Day* (Dr. Barnardo's; *The Bulletin*, that yearly record of the Anti-Gambling League. *The Rossendale Baptist Monthly*; *Life and Light*, with likeness of our Queen; the Re-

port of Irish Baptist Mission, and our magazines, *The Sword and Trowel* and *The Baptist*.

We call the attention of our readers to the effort being made to raise a fund in connection with the almost sudden death of our beloved brother, late Pastor James Smith, of Tunbridge-Wells. The object of the proposed fund will be to help the widow and erect a headstone at the grave and place a bronze memorial in Chapel. We shall be happy to receive subscriptions sent direct to us, or to the office of the *Baptist Messenger*, 56, Paternoster Row.

We can also inform our readers that shortly will be published a *Life of Our Departed Brothers*, which will appear in volume form, and edited by one who was in close union and fellowship with the Departed for thirty-five years.

Denominational Intelligence.

CHANGES IN THE PASTORATE.

Rev. W. H. Griffith, from Greenock, to Westgate-road Church, Newcastle.

Rev. D. Carter, from Bristol College, to Beckington.

Rev. P. Williams, from Tredegar, to the Welsh Church at Bootle.

Rev. B. Williams, from Denbigh, to Tabernacle Church, Llwynhendy, South Wales.

Rev. A. J. Grant, from Barry-road Church, Dulwich, to Lake Street, Leighton Buzzard.

Rev. W. Crispin, from Brighton-grove College, to Zion Church, Bolton.

Rev. C. L. Gordon, from Hatherleigh to Wantage.

Rev. W. B. Griffiths, from Cefn Coed, to Tabor Church, Llantrisant.

Rev. J. F. Matthews, from Audlem, to Latchford, Warrington.

Rev. F. G. Kemp, from Wigan, to Aldershot,

Rev. C. A. Charter, B.A., from

Rawdon College, as assistant to Rev T. Forbes, M.A., Edinburgh.

Rev. Berkeley G. Collins, from Midland College, Nottingham, to Bluntisham, Hunts.

RECOGNITIONS.

Rev. Fred G. Benskin, late of Regent's Park College, has been recognised as pastor of West End Chapel, Hammersmith. Principal Gould gave the charge to the pastor, and Rev. W. R. Skerry, President of the London Association, the charge to the church. Dr. S. G. Green offered the dedicatory prayer. A crowded public meeting was held, at which many speakers congratulated the new pastor on his charge, and the church on securing its pastor. Rev. Dr. Bruce, who has been forty-three years in Huddersfield, Mr. Benskin's native town, gave a bright account of his "young friend's" personal history; Alderman Brooke, President of the Yorkshire Association of Baptist

Churches, spoke highly of the pastor, for whose sake alone he had come up to London. Rev. F. J. Benskin, of Huddersfield, the father of the pastor, delivered a bright appeal for "sympathy from the pews."

Rev. Ivor H. James, late of Heywood, Manchester, has been recognised as pastor at Andover. Revs. D. O. Davis and J. Hasler (late pastor) took part.

Rev. W. G. Hailstone, formerly of Reading, has been recognised as pastor at Poole. Revs. C. Joseph, G. B. Stallworthy, H. T. Dibben, W. D. Summers, S. Hemington, and J. E. Tunmer took part.

Rev. F. C. M. Bucks, of the Midland College, Nottingham, has been ordained to the pastorate of Hillsborough Church, Sheffield.

Rev. F. C. Shellard has been recognised as pastor of Providence Church, Penknapp, Westbury, Leigh. Rev. W. P. Laurence gave the charge to the pastor, and Rev. W. Price addressed the church. Revs. P. H. Michael, J. Clark, G. W. Roughton, W. Pearce, and W. Fry took part.

Rev. T. M. Richards has been recognised as pastor of Beulah English Church, Rhydney. Principal Silas Morris preached.

Rev. Sim Hirst has been recognised as pastor of Fishergate Chapel, Preston. Revs. W. Medley, J. E. Roberts, W. J. Hunter, and J. Heath took part.

Rev. G. H. Gill has been recognised as pastor at Gosberton. Revs. C. M. Hardy, J. N. Britton, and J. F. Kington took part.

Rev. J. W. Hamby has been recognised as pastor of Portmahon Church, Sheffield. Revs. J. G. Williams, G. Hester, A. C. Carter, W. H. Ibberson, A. G. Haste, and F. E. M. Buck took part.

Rev. F. G. Harrison, formerly of the Congo Mission, has been recognised as pastor of the church at Uley, Gloucestershire. Rev. W. J. Henderson preached in the afternoon. At the public meeting Mr. King, C.C., presided.

PRESENTATIONS.

Rev. B. A. Millard, £70 from Goodall-street Church, Walsall, and a reading lamp from the Literary Society, on his marriage.

Rev. Walter Hobbs, a gold watch from the Lambeth Board of Guardians, "in consideration of the great interest he has taken as a Guardian in the welfare of the poor."

Mr. R. W. Clarke, books from Kingsdown Church.

Miss A. Cheston, a marble time-piece from Creech St. Michael Church, Taunton, in recognition of services as organist.

Rev. J. W. Hamby, a time-piece from Clayton Church, and a framed photograph from the Christian Endeavour Society on leaving for Sheffield; Mrs. Hamby, an electro-plated tea-urn.

NEW CHAPELS.

A new chapel is being erected in Queen's Road, Wimbledon (Rev. C. Ingrem). It is of Early English style, and will seat about 1,000 persons. The Baptistry is lined with marble. The cost is £4,750. Memorial stones were laid by Mrs. Thomas Spurgeon, Mr. F. L. Edwards, Mr. S. J. Pocock, Mr. F. H. Freeth, Mr. G. H. Denne, and the pastor. £541 was realised.

Foundation stones have been laid at Fleckney of a new chapel to seat 250, and a new schoolroom to accommodate 200. The cost is estimated at £730, towards which £300 has been secured.

Foundation stones for enlarged chapel and Sunday-schools have been laid at Kirton-in-Lindsey (Rev. W. Smith) by Mr. E. Bainbridge, M.P., Alderman Dobson, and others.

A new chapel erected at Heaton, Newcastle, was opened by Colonel W. M. Angus. Rev. E. G. Gange preached; the Mayor of Newcastle (Councillor J. Goulden) and Rev. T. D. Landels also took part. £200 was realised.

Memorial stones of a new chapel in the Antrim-road, Belfast (Rev. C. S. Donald) have been laid by Mrs.

W. J. Wright (of New York), Mrs. R. G. Glendinning, and Mrs. A. Gibson. The total cost of the building will be £3,700, of which £2,500 is in hand.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Metropolitan Tabernacle Colportage Association, founded by the late C. H. Spurgeon, has now completed thirty years of service. The cost of a man in any district is from £70 to £80 a year, and subscriptions have to reach £45 from friends for any district to be occupied. The report presented at the annual meeting in the Metropolitan Tabernacle by the hon. secretary, Mr. C. H. Carpenter, showed that the sales for 1896 amounted to £7,495. In the same period the income amounted to £4,547, the expenditure being £4,625, the subscriptions amounting to £1,817. The general sales included the following: Bibles, 6,393; Testaments, 4,438; 154,243 book packets; 134,537 Scripture texts; and 152,419 penny stories. Besides all these there was a gratuitous distribution of 61,567 tracts; and close upon 350,000 visits were paid to the poor and others in their own homes. The total value of the sales since 1866 has been £197,420. The death of Mr. Brook- ing, the trade manager, has been much felt; a subscription was raised for his widow, and one of his daughters has been received into the Stockwell Orphanage. At the annual meeting Mr. Thomas Spurgeon pre- sided.

The Herts Union held its annual meetings in Tilehouse-street Chapel, Hitchin. Rev. James Stuart, of Watford, read the circular letter on the "Education of the Young in our Distinctive Principles." The sermon was preached by Rev. J. W. Ewing. The business meeting was presided over by Mr. Alderman Fisk, J.P., of St. Albans, when the Secretary, Rev. C. M. Hardy, presented the report, and Mr. John Marnham, J.P., the financial statement. At the public meeting addresses were delivered by

Rev. John Matthews, of the Free Church Council, Mr. R. F. Moffat, and Mr. Sturgess.

Rev. F. C. Hughes, late of Borough-road, London, has been visited at Berkhamstead by his old Bible-class, and presented with a study chair and illuminated address. Mrs. Hughes was also presented with an album and hymn and chant book, Mr. T. Thompson and Miss Thompson making the presentations. The party paid a visit to Ashbridge, Earl Brownlow having thrown open his gardens for the day.

Enlarged Sunday-school buildings have been opened in connection with Penge Tabernacle (Rev. J. Wesley Boud). Rev. T. Greenwood preached, and Alderman Belsey gave an address to Sunday-school workers. Revs. A. Chew, W. Gloster, W. Burrows, A. Sears, J. Pamment, A. Ashley, T. B. Ashley, A. Dallman, H. J. Hadlow, and W. H. Croaker were among the speakers. The collections amounte to £122.

RECENT DEATHS.

Thomas Smith, a former Pastor of the Church at Harrow-on-the-Hill, passed peacefully to the home of glory on Sunday morning, March 21st, 1897.

He was devout, bright, joyous, feeling the power of God's truth, and living by its direction with exemplary diligence. For many years he had been a Deacon, and for nearly twenty years of his earlier life was the Pastor. These were days of zeal, labour, and blessing. In one of his outdoor sermons, for instance, he so set forth the gospel that a young Harrow schoolboy, who was listening from a neighbouring garden, felt the truth, and carried the impression on his mind and heart, till eventually he became a godly man, and ultimately a Christian minister.

Among the other services rendered by him to the Harrow Baptists, during his pastorate, was the erection of the beautiful little church in which they worship now. The funds were

largely gathered by the efforts of Mr. Smith and one of his brothers, and the collecting book has some singular names in it. One of them, for instance, is the present Marquis of Bute! Another was an old Quaker, who felt some conscientious scruple in subscribing to such an erection, so he arranged the matter with himself by giving Five Pounds to *pull the old Chapel down!*

Mr. Smith was firmly attached to Evangelical Nonconformity. The prosperity of his later days brought no alteration in this respect, except, possibly, a somewhat widened liberality. Possibly, he would have avowed himself a Calvinist to the last, but he was on the best terms with the resident Methodist Minister (Rev. J. Poulton), who took part in the funeral service.

Mr. Smith enjoyed the friendship of the late Mr. Spurgeon, and of certain well-known brethren of an elder day. As to any remaining points in his character, it may be said that he was thoughtful, kind, a lover of children, and a friend to his Pastor, to whom his death is a felt and substantial loss.

Starting as a church-goer, he found his way to the Baptists, and was an emphatic Free Churchman to the end. On perfectly good terms with the Clergy, he yet desired that his own Pastor (assisted by Mr. Poulton, mentioned above) should conduct the interment service in the Churchyard, without sound of bell, or other needless form. But his firmness was, apparently, not misunderstood. Several clergymen attended his funeral—one of them being the Rev. J. E. C. Weldon, M.A., Head Master of the Harrow School. There were also present: R. Bosworth Smith, Esq., M.A. (whose books some of our readers may have read), and several others of the Masters. And so, with closed shops on either side of Harrow's busiest street, the devoted old Baptist was carried to his resting-place on the beautiful hillside, there to wait the resurrection call.—W. D.

BAPTISMS.

- Abingdon*.—May 26, Two, by W. H. Doggett.
Ashby-de-la-Zouch.—May 24, Fifteen, by J. D. T. Humphreys.
Aldershot.—May 16, One, by E. P. Connor.
Appledore, Devon.—June 6, Two, by S. J. Somers.
Belfast: Great Victoria-street.—May 13, One, by C. S. Donald.
Blakeney, Gloucester.—May 16, Six, by S. I. Robins.
Bourton-on-the-Water.—May 16, Two, by G. A. Ambrose.
Buckley, Flintshire.—May 16, Three, by W. Jenkins.
Burry Port.—May 16, Twenty-three, by W. E. Watkins.
Broad Clyst, Devon.—May 9, Two, by D. P. McPherson.
Birmingham, Victoria-street.—May 30, Seven, by J. Dowse.
Blackpool, Union Chapel.—May 30, Eight, by H. C. Wagnell.
Bolton, Zion.—May 30, Three, by T. Hes.
Beverley.—May 30, Two, by T. Gardiner.
Cheltenham, Cambry.—June 2, Seven by H. A. B. Phillips.
Carlton, Notts.—May 23, Three, by A. Gibson.
Chadderton, Oldham.—May 19, Five, by F. Oliver.
Canterbury.—May 16, Three, by H. K. Kempton.
Cardiff, Bethany.—May 30 Six, by W. E. Winks.
Cardiff, Hope.—May 30, Five, by T. W. Medhurst.
Carmarthen, Tabernacle.—May 31. Six, by E. U. Thomas.
Chadderton, Lancs., Mills Hill.—May 30, Three, by F. Oliver
Coalville, Leicestershire.—May 30, Four, by J. H. Grant
Crewe, Union-street.—May 30, Five, by J. Thomas
Dunnington.—May 27, Three, by C. Chrys
Derby: Junction-street.—May 23, Four, by P. A. Hudgell

Exeter: South-street.—May 16, Four, by D. P. McPherson
Elgin.—May 30, One, by F. Tarrald
Exmouth, S. Devon.—May 31, Five, by R. A. Good
Esher.—May 30, Two, by G. Head
Glasgow, Cambridge-street.—May 23, Eight ; May 26, Four, by E. Last
Glasgow, Frederick-street.—May 30, Two, by E. Aubrey
Golborne, Lancs.—June 6, Six, by E. L. Jones
Glasbury, Breconshire.—May 30, Two, by J. Williams
Hartlepool.—May 28, Two, by C. W. Vaughan
King Stanley.—May 17, Three, by P. G. Scorey
Liverpool, Bootle.—May 18, One, by L. W. Lewis at Stanley-road Chapel, kindly lent
Leeds, Burley-road.—May 30, Six, by F. W. Walter
Leominster.—June 5, One, by J. Coles
Leigh, Lancs.—May 30, Four, by G. Booker
Manchester, Coupland-street.—May 30, Five, by H. J. Morley
Manchester: Higher Openshaw.—May 23, One, by L. M. Thomas
Manchester: West Gorton, Clowes-street.—Two, by W. A. Livingstone
Middletown, Cheney.—May 30, Two, by C. Saville
Mitcham.—May 27, Two, by J. T. Fieg
Nantwich.—May 23, Two, by W. H. Williams
Netherfield, Notts.—May 19, Three, by A. Gibson
Nuneaton.—May 30, Three, by J. R. Mitchell
Oldham, Pitt-street.—May 30, Five, by W. Hughes
Padtham, Lancashire, Horeb.—May 31, Eight, by D. Muxworthy
Prickwillow, Cambs.—June 6, Six, by A. D. Campbell
Ramsseat: Cavendish Church.—May 23, Five, by T. Hancock
Ryde, I.W., George-street.—May 23, Two, by E. B. Pearson
Rhayader, Radnorshire.—May 9, Three, by W. E. Thomas
Skegness, St. Paul's.—May 16, Two, by G. Goodchild
South Leith, N.B.—May 9, Four ; 16, Four ; 23, Two, by O. Tait
Salterton: Devon.—May 23, One, by D. Cork

Stanningley.—May 23, Two, by W. Blomfield
Stockport, Greek-street.—May 30, Two, by W. H. Thomas
Tondu: Carey Chapel.—May 9, Three, by J. Jones
Treforest, Calvary.—May 30, One, by E. Lewis
Tonbridge, High-street.—May 23, Three, by J. H. Blake
Tonypanyd, Bethel.—June 6, One, by D. Davies
Wainsgate.—June 6, Three, by D. Lindsay
West Row, near Mildenhall.—June 6, One, by J. Fowler
Winchester.—May 30, Six, by A. W. Wood
Ystalyfera, Soar.—May 30, Two, by W. Jones
Yarcombe, Devon.—June 6, Four, by J. Powell

LONDON DISTRICT.

Bermondsey, S.E.: Abbey-street.—May 30, Three, by A. V. G. Chandler
Brentford, Park Chapel.—May 23, Five, by T. G. Pollard
Bow-road, E.—May 30, Ten, by F. H. King
Barking, E.—May 17, Four, by H. T
Blackheath, S.E.—May 23, Four, by Mackenzie
Chelsea.—May 30, Eight, by J. Spence
Chiswick, Annandale-road.—May 30, by A. G. Edgerton
Devonshire-square, N.—May 20, Nineteen, by G. P. McKay
East Dulwich: Amott-road.—May 23, Three, by G. W. Beale
James-street, E.C.—May 16, Six, by W. H. Chillman
Lewisham-road, S.E.—June 3, Five, by Wearham
Henge Tabernacle.—June 2, Nine, (2 grandfather, nearly 80, and a grandson, 14, among the number), by J. Wesley Boud
Poplar, Cotton-street.—May 30, Three, by W. Joynes
Thornton Heath, Beulah Chapel.—May 30, Nine, by T. Latdner
Willesden Green, N.W.—June 3, One, by W. J. Sears
Woolwich, Tabernacle.—May 25, Fifteen, by J. Wilson

Search the Scriptures.

A SERMON BY THE LATE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."—Isaiah viii. 20.

WHEN men will not learn of God, how huge their folly grows! If they despise the wisdom that is from above, how grievously does God allow them to prove their own ignorance! When a man will not bow down before God the Most High, immediately he buildeth for himself an idol; he maketh an image of wood or stone, and he degradeth himself by bowing before the work of his own hands. When men will not receive the Scripture testimony concerning God's creation, straightway they begin to form theories that are a thousand times more ridiculous than they have ever endeavoured to make the Bible account of it, for God leaveth them, if they will not accept his solution of the problem, to grope for another, and their own solution is so absurd, that all the world except themselves hath sense enough to laugh at it. And when men leave the Sacred Book of Revelation, ah! my friends, where do they go? We find that in Isaiah's time they went to strange places; for he says in the 19th verse, that they sought unto familiar spirits, unto wizards that did peep and mutter; yea, they sought for things concerning the living, amongst the dead, and became the dupes of necromancers. It is marvellous that the men who most of all rail at faith are remarkable for credulity. One of the greatest unbelievers in the world, who has called himself a free-thinker from his birth, is to be found now tottering into his tomb, believing the veriest absurdity that a child might confute. Not caring to have God in their hearts, forsaking the living fountain, they have hewn out to themselves cisterns which are broken, and hold no water. Oh! that we may each of us be more wise, that we may not forsake the good old path, nor leave the way that God hath prepared for us. What wonder we should travel amongst thorns and briars, and rend our own flesh, or worse than that fall among dark mountains, and be lost amongst the chasms thereon, if we despise the guidance of an unerring Father. Seek ye in the word of God, and read. Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and these are they that testify of Jesus Christ.

I feel at this particular crisis of religious affairs, it is imperative upon the Christian minister to urge his people to hold fast the

doctrines of the truth—the words of God. This seems likely to become the age of preaching, rather than the age of praying. We now see everywhere large congregations assembling in halls and abbeys to listen to the word preached; and it is an ominous sign of the times, that these preachings are not only espoused by the orthodox, but even by those whom we have considered to be at least somewhat heretical from the old faith of the Protestant Church. It becomes, therefore, a serious thing; for it is most probable—and may not every wise man see it?—that whosoever may now arise who hath some powers of oratory and some graces of eloquence, will be likely to attract the multitude, preach he what he may, though the word that he should utter be as false as God's Word is true, and as contrary to the gospel as hell is opposed to heaven. Doth it not seem probable that in this age he would attract a multitude of followers? And is it not also very likely that through that spurious charity which is now growing upon us, who would gag the mouth of honest reprovers, we shall find it hard to rebuke the imposter when he arises, and difficult to expose the falsehood, even though it may be apparent unto us. We are now happily so commingled together, the Dissenter and the Churchman have now become so friendly with each other, that we have less to dread the effects of bigotry, than the effects of latitudinarianism. We have some reason now to be up on the watch-tower, lest haply some should arise in our midst, the spurious offspring of these happy times of evangelical alliance, who will claim our charity, whilst they are preaching that which we in our hearts do totally condemn. And what better advice can the minister give in such times as these? To what book shall he commend his hearers? How shall he keep them fast? Where is the anchor which he shall give them to cast into the rocks? or where the rocks into which they should cast their anchor? Our text is a solution to that question. We are here furnished with a great answer to the inquiry—"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

First, I shall endeavour this morning to urge you to bring *certain things*, to which we are afraid a superstitious importance may be attached. "to the law and to the testimony." Secondly, I shall try to show the *good effects* that will follow, if each one of you rigidly bring everything you hear and believe, "to the law and to the testimony." And, thirdly, I shall give you some *powerful reasons* why you should subject everything to this sacred touchstone; and close by offering you *some little advice* how you may do this truly and profitably.

I. Permit me to urge upon you the bringing of CERTAIN THINGS "to the law and to the testimony."

1. First, I would have you bring the ideas engendered in you by your early training, to the test of the Book of God. It is very much the custom of people to say, "Was I not born in the Church of England? Ought I not therefore to continue in it?" Or, on the other hand, "Was not my grandmother an Immersionist? Ought not I, therefore to continue in the Baptist denomination?" God forbid that I should say aught against your venerable and pious relatives; or that you should pay any disrespect to their teaching! We always respect

their advice, even when we cannot receive it, for the sake of the person who offers it to us; knowing that their training, even should it have been mistaken, was nevertheless well meant. But we claim for ourselves, as men, that we should not be fed with doctrines as we were fed in our helpless infancy, with food chosen for us: we claim that we should have the right of judging whether the things which we have received and heard, are according to this Sacred Book; and if we find that in aught our training has been erroneous, we do not consider that we are violating any principle of affection, if we dare to come forth from our families, and join a denomination holding tenets far different from those which our parents had espoused. Let us each recollect that as God has given every man a head on his shoulders, every man is bound to use his own head, and not his fathers. God gave your father judgment. Well and good: he judged for himself. He has given you a judgment: judge for yourself too. Say, concerning all that you have received in your early childhood, "Well, I will not lightly part with this, for it may be of sterling gold; but, at the same time, I will not blindly hoard it, for it may be counterfeit coin. I will sit down to the study of the Sacred Book, and I will endeavour, as far far as I can, to unprejudice myself. I will read the Bible, just as if I had never heard any preacher, or had never been taught by a parent; and I will there endeavour to find out what God saith, be it what it may, I will believe and espouse, hoping that by his grace I may also feel the power of it in my own soul.

2. Remember, also, to bring the preachers of the gospel to this standard. A great many of you know but very little about what gospel is. The general notion of the mass is, that we are everyone of us right; that though to-day I may contradict some one else, and some one else may contradict me, yet we are all right; and though it is treason to common sense to believe such a thing, yet this is a common idea. Some men always believe like the last speaker. Should they hear the most hyper of hyper-Calvinists, they believe with him the fullness of the doctrine of reprobation; should they hear on the morrow the lowest of Arminians, they believe with him the most universal of redemptions and the most powerful of free-wills. Should they then hear the genuine Calvinist, who preaches that man hath destroyed himself, but in God is his help found, perhaps then they think the man contradicts himself, and for once they rebel against their teachers. but it is probable that they should hear such a person again, they will be easily reconciled to seeming contradictions; for to them it is just the man's appearance, just the man's way of saying the thing, that they like, and not the thing that he says. Just as I have heard of holy Mr. Durham, the writer of that sweet book on Solomon's Song. If I had lived in his time, I should never, I think, have wanted to hear any other preacher; I would have sat, both by night and day, to receive the sweet droppings of his honied lips. But in his time there was a young preacher, whose name is totally forgotten, who church was crowded to the door, and Mr. Durham's meeting-house hard by forsaken. The reason of that is, because the mass of people do not lay hold upon what is said, but upon how it is said: and if it is said smartly, said prettily, and said forcibly, that is enough for them

though it be a lie; but if the truth be spoken, that they will not receive, unless it be attended by some graces of oratory and eloquence. Now, the Christian that has got above his babyhood, does not care about how the man says it; it is the thing that is said that he cares about. All that he asks is, "Did he speak the truth?" He just gets hold of the corn. To him the straw is nothing, and the chaff less. He cares not for the trimming of the feast, nor for the exquisite workmanship of the dish; he only cares for that which is solid food for himself.

Now, my dear friends, I claim for myself, when I enter this pulpit, the right of being heard; but I do not claim the right of being believed, unless the words that I speak shall be in accordance with this Sacred Book. I desire you to serve me as I would have you serve everybody else—bring us each "to the law and to the testimony." I thank God, of my bible I have no need to be ashamed. I sometimes am ashamed of this translation of it, when I see how, in some important points, it is not true to God's Word; but of God's own Word I can say, it is the man of my right hand, my meditation both day and night; and if there be aught I preach that is contrary to this Word, trample it in the mire, spit upon it, and despise it. The truth lieth here. It is not what I say, but what my God saith, that you are demanded to receive. Put myself and put all my brethren into the sieve; cast us each into the fire; put us into the crucible of truth; and what is not according to God's Word must be consumed like dross.

3. There is another class of men quite contrary to those I have referred to. These men are their own preachers! they believe no one but themselves. and without knowing it, there is every reason for them to hate the Pope, because "two of a trade never agree," they being Popes themselves. These persons, if they hear a truth preached, judge of it not by the Bible, but by what they think the truth ought to be. I have heard a person, for instance, say, when he has heard the doctrine of Election, or of particular Redemption, "Well, now, the doctrine does not please me. I do not like it." And then he begins to urge some objection which he has forged upon his own anvil, yet never trying to quote a Scripture text to refute it, if he can; never turning to some old saying of the Prophets, and endeavouring to find out that the doctrine was an error, but only judging of it by his own opinion, by his wishes as to what the truth ought to be. What would you think of a man who should say to an astronomer, "Now, it is of no use your telling me that the constellation of Scorpio is of such-and-such a shape; I tell you, I do not like the look of it. My dear fellow, I don't think that the constellation of Scorpio ought to have been made that shape: and I think this star ought to have been put just here, instead of there: and then all would be well." The astronomer would simply smile at him, and say, "Your opinion does not signify, because it does not alter facts. If you think I am wrong, your right way to disprove me is not to say where you think the stars ought to be, but just come and take a look through my telescope and see where the stars *are*." Now, it is just the same with the truth. People say, "I do not like such a truth." There is no refutation in it. The question is,—Is it in the Bible? Because if it is there, like it or not like it, it is a fact, and all the minister has to do is to report the facts that he finds there. Why, the

astronomer cannot put the stars in a row, like a row of gas lights, to please you; and the minister cannot put the doctrines into a shape in which you would wish to have them cast. All the astronomer does is to map them out, and say, "That is how they are in the sky:" you must then look at the sky, and see whether it is so. All I have to do is to tell you what I find in the Bible; if you do not like it, remember, that is no refutation of it, nor do I care for your liking it or not liking it; the only thing is.—Is it in the Bible? If it is there I shall not stop to prove it. I do not come here to prove a doctrine at all. If it is in the Bible, it is true: there it is; I tell it out: reject it, and you do to your own condemnation; for you yourself believe the Bible to be true, and I prove it to be there, and therefore it must be true.

Should it be according to thy mind? Wouldst thou like to have a Bible made for the devices of thine own heart. If it were, it would be a worthless thing. Wouldst thou desire to have a Gospel according to thy wishes? Then with some of you it would be a Gospel that allowed lasciviousness. Wouldst thou wish to have a revelation made that should pamper thee in thy lusts, and indulge thee in thy pride? If so, this know, God will never stoop to feed thy haughtiness or wantonness. The Bible is a God-like book; he demands thy faith in it; and though thou kickest against it, this stone can never be broken; but, mark thee, thou mayest be broken upon it, yea, it may fall upon thee and bruise thee to powder. Bring, then, I beseech thee, your own thoughts and your own sentiments to the touchstone of the truth; for "if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

4. And just do the same with all books that you read. This is the age of book-making and book-writing. Nowadays, what with periodical literature and the books upon our shelves, our Bibles do not get much read. I will tell you a truthful story as it was told me yesterday. There was a young man, who is now a student for the ministry, so extraordinarily ignorant was he of his own Bible, that upon hearing a young minister mention the story of Nebuchadnezzar's being driven out from men, until his nails did grow like bird's claws, and his hair like eagle's feathers, he said to the minister at the close of the sermon, "Well, that was a queer story you told the people, certainly: where did you fish that up?" "Why," said the minister, "have you never read your Bible? Can you not find it in the Book of Daniel?" The young man had read a great many other things, but never read his Bible through, and yet was going to be a teacher of it! Now, I fear that the same ignorance is very current in many persons. They do not know what is in the Bible: they could tell you what is in the *Churchman's Penny*, or the *Christian's Penny*, or the *Churchman's Magazine*, or the *Wesleyan Magazine*, or the *Baptist Magazine*, or the *Evangelical Magazine*, and all that; but there is one old magazine, a magazine of arms, a magazine of wealth, that they forget to read—that old-fashioned book called the Bible. "Ah!" said one, when he came to die, who had been a great classic, "I would to God I had spent as much time in reading my Bible as I have spent in reading Livy. Would to God I had been exact in my criticisms of Holy Scripture as I was in criticisms upon Horace!" Oh! that we

were wise, to give the Bible the largest share of our time, and ever to continue reading it, both by day and night, that we might be as trees planted by the rivers of water, bringing forth our fruit in our season ! Let us remember, as ministers of the Gospel what M'Cheyne beautifully said, " Depend upon it," said he, " it is God's Word, not man's comment upon God's Word, that saves souls ; " and I have marked, that if ever we have a conversion at any time, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the conversion is rather traceable to the text, or to some Scripture quoted in the sermon, than to any trite or original saying by the preacher. It is God's Word that breaks the fetters and sets the prisoner free ; it is God's Word instrumentally that saves souls ; and therefore let us bring everything to the touchstone. " To the law and to the testimony ; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

II. Now I pass to my second point. Brethren let me show you some of the GOOD EFFECTS that you will derive from a minute and careful study of the law and testimony of God.

1. First, remember, that unless you study the Word of God, you will not be competent to detect error. A man may in your hearing preach downright falsehood, but you will not be qualified to judge concerning that falsehood unless you have studied the Word of God. You and I would not be fit to sit on the judgment bench of some of the superior courts of our land, because we are not acquainted with the intricacies of the law. We could not quote precedents, for we have not been learned therein. And so no man is able to judge concerning the thing that he hears, unless he is able to quote Scripture—unless he understands the Word of God, and is able to perceive and to know what it means.

But I hear some one say, that the Bible is so difficult a book that he is sure he never could understand it. Mark thee, man, the Bible is so plain a book that he that is willing to understand it may do so ; it is so plain that he that runs may read, and read while he runs ; yea, it is so plain that the simpler a man is, the more easily he can understand it. All the learning that man ever received is rather a hindrance than a benefit when he comes for the first time to read the Word. Learning may untie many a knot afterwards ; it may unravel many a mystery in after times ; but we have heard deep-minded critics say, that at first they would have given all the world, if they could have thrown their learning aside, just to read the Bible as the humble cottager reads it, and believe it as God's Word, without any quibbles of criticism. You know how Mrs. Beecher Stowe represents Uncle Tom reading it, He could not read it fast ; so he just spelt it over letter by letter, and word by word ; and the Bible is one of the books, she says, that always gains by that way of reading. You recollect how he read it. " Let—not—your—hearts—be—— ; " and then he stopped at the long word ; and he fumbled it out at last, and it was "*troubled*. Ye believe in God, believe also in me." Why, it gets sweeter from your being a long time reading it ; and so far from your want of learning disqualifying you from understanding the Bible, the mass of it is all the more understandable from the simplicity of your heart. Come ye, and search the Scriptures ; they are no such mysterious tables or learned volumes of

hard words as some men say. This is no closed book as the priest would tell us; it is a volume which the Sunday School child may understand, if the Spirit of God rests upon his heart. It is a book which the horny handed workman may comprehend as well as the learned divine, and many such have become exceedingly wise therein. I say again, read your bibles, that you may be qualified to detect error.

2. But again: I do not like a man who is always looking out for error. That man has got some error in his own heart, depend upon it. They say, "Set a thief to catch a thief;" and it is very likely that there is some love of error in your heart, or else you would not be so ready to suspect it in other people. But let me give you another reason. Search your Bibles; for then, when you are in a matter of dispute you will be able to speak very confidently. There is nothing gives a man so much power amongst his fellows as confidence. If in conversation I am contradicted as to any sentiment that I propound, if I have got Scripture at my fingers' ends, why I laugh at my opponent, and though he be never so wise and has read ten times more books than I have ever seen, I just smile at him, if I can quote Scripture; for then I am confident—I am sure—I am certain about the matter—for "thus saith the Lord," is an argument that no man can answer. It makes a man seem very foolish when he has to speak in a diffident manner. I always think that certain elegant ministers, who are afraid of being called dogmatical, and who therefore propound the Gospel as if they did not hardly like to say they were sure it was true—as if they thought so, they nearly thought so—still they did not think so quite enough to say they knew, but leave it to their hearers. I always think they show the littleness of their minds in so doing. It may be a great thing to doubt, but it is a great thing to hold your tongue while you are doubting, and not to open your mouth till you believe, and then, when you do open your mouth, to say the thing you know is true, and stick to it, not as an opinion, but as an incontrovertible fact. No man will ever do much amongst his fellows till he can speak confidently what he knows to be revealed.

Now, Bible readers, you can attain this confidence, but you can get it nowhere else but at the foot of Scripture. Hear ministers alone, and ye shall be led to doubt, for one of them shall confound what his brother sought to prove; but read your Bibles, and when ye get the Word legible by its own light, impressed upon your own hearts by the Holy Spirit, then

"Should all the forms that men devise,
Assault your faith with treacherous art,
You'll call them vanity and lies,
And bind the gospel to your heart."

3. Furthermore, search the Scriptures, and bring everything you hear to this great test, because in so doing you will get a rich harvest of blessing to your own soul. I suppose there is scarce a text in Holy Scripture that has not been the instrument of the salvation of a soul. Now, "he that walketh among wise men will be wise;" and he that walks amongst the wise men that wrote Holy Scriptures stands at least

the highest probability of being made wise unto salvation. If I desired to put myself into the most likely place for the Lord to meet with me, I should prefer the house of prayer, for it is in preaching that the Word is most blessed; but still I think I should equally desire the reading of the Scriptures; for I might pause over every verse, and say, "Such a verse was blessed to so many souls; then, why not to me; I am at least in the pool of Bethesda; I am walking amongst its porches, and who can tell but that the angel will stir the pool of the Word, whilst I lie helplessly by the side of it, waiting for the blessing?" Yea, the truth is so great, that God has blessed every word of Scripture, that I remember a striking anecdote of the conversion of a man by a passage of Scripture that did not seem adapted for any such purpose. You know that chapter in Genesis, that very dull chapter, where we read, "and Methuselah lived 969 years, and he died," and such a one lived so many years and he died? We have heard of its being read once in public; and a man who stood there, when he heard the words often repeated, "and he died," thought, "Ah! and I shall die!" And it was the first note of warning that had ever struck his seared conscience, and was the means under God of bringing him to Jesus. Now, read the Scriptures for this reason. If you desire salvation, and if you are panting after mercy, if you feel your sin and want salvation, come ye to this sea of love, to this treasury of light, to this wardrobe of rich clothing, to this fountain of bliss; come ye and have your wants supplied out of the fulness of the riches of Jesus, who is "evidently set forth" in this Word, "crucified among you."

III. And now let me endeavour as briefly as I can, to urge upon you yet again the constant and perpetual reading of the Word of God, not only for the reasons that I have now propounded, but for others more important. Many false prophets have gone forth into the world: I beseech you, then, if ye would not be led astray, be diligent in the study of the Word of God. In certain parts of Dr. Livingstone's travels, he tells us, that his guides were either so ignorant or so determined to deceive him, that he could have done far better without them than with them; and he had constantly to refer to his compass, lest he should be led astray. Now, I would not say a hard thing if I did not believe it true; but I do solemnly think that there are some professed teachers of the Word, who are either so ignorant of spiritual things in their own hearts, or else so determined to preach anything but Christ, that you might do better without them than with them. and hence you have an absolute necessity to turn perpetually to this great compass by which alone you can steer your way. I scorn a charity that after all is not charity. I must tell you what I believe; Some would have me now stand here and say, "All that are eminent preachers are most certainly truthful preachers." Now, I cannot say it. If at any time I hear a man preach the doctrine of Justification by Faith alone, through the merits of Christ, I give him my hand, and call him my brother, because he is right in the main thing; but when I do that I am a long way from endorsing many other of his sentiments. It may be that he denies the effectual power of the Spirit in conversion; it may be he does not hold the doctrine of the entire depravity of the human race—does not insist upon free sovereign grace—does not hold

forth and teach the doctrine of substitution and satisfaction through Christ. Now, I will not so befool myself as to tell you that wherein that man differs from the Word of God he is true. No doubt that man may be blessed for your salvation; but there may be a curse upon his ministry notwithstanding; so that while you may be saved by it, you may be all your lifetime subject to bondage through it, and you may go groaning, where you ought to have gone singing—crying, where you might have had a sacred burst of joy. You sit under such-and-such a man who has been made the means of your conversion; but he tells you that your salvation depends upon yourself, and not upon the power of Christ. He insists upon it that you may, after all, fall from grace and be a cast-away; he tells you that although you are saved, God did no more love you than he loved Judas; that there is no such thing as special love, no such thing, in fact, as Election. He tells you that others might have come to Christ, as well as yourself—that there was no extraordinary power put out in your case, more than in any others. Well, if he does not lead you to glory in man, to magnify the flesh, and sometimes to trust in yourself, or else lead you to distress yourself where there is no need for distress, I should marvel indeed, inasmuch as his doctrine is false, and must mislead you. It may be the means of your salvation, and yet it may fail in many points to minister to your edification and comfort. Therefore, if ye would not be thus misled, search ye the Scriptures.

But ah! there is a solemn danger of being absolutely misled. Ye may hear all that the minister says, but he may forget to tell you: the vital part of the truth; he may be one who delights in ceremonies, but does not insist upon the grace therein; he may hold forth to you the rubric and sacrament, and tell you there is efficacy in obedience to the one, and attention to the other, and he may forget to tell you that, "Except a man be born again of the Spirit he cannot see the kingdom of God." Now, under such a ministry you may not only be misled, but alas! you may be destroyed altogether. He may be one who insists much upon morality of life; he may tell you to be honest, just, and sober; but mayhap he may forget to tell you that there is a deeper work required than mere morality; he may film the surface over, and never send the lancet into the deep ulcer of your heart's corruption. He may give you some palliating dose, some medicine that may still your conscience; he may never say to you, "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked;" he may be one of those that prophecy smooth things, that does not like to disturb you. And oh! remember that your minister may be the instrument in the hands of Satan of blindfolding your eyes and leading you to hell, while all the while you thought you were going to heaven. Ah! and hear me yet; I do not exclude myself from my own censure. It may be possible—I pray God it may not be so—that I myself have mistaken the reading of Holy Scripture, that I may have preached to you "another gospel which is not another," and therefore I demand of you that my own teaching, and the teaching of every other man, whether by pen or lip, should be always brought "to the law and to the testimony," lest we should deceive you and lead you astray. Ah! my hearers, it would be an awful thing, if I should be the means of leading you into the gulf.

Although in some measure your blood must be on my head, if I deceive you, yet I beseech you, remember that I am not further responsible for your souls than my power can carry me. If you are misled by me, after this solemn declaration of mine, you shall be as verily guilty as if I had not misguided you; for I charge you, as ye love your own souls, as ye would make sure work for eternity, put no more trust in me than you would in any other man, only so far as I can prove, by infallible testimony of God's Word, that what I have said is true. Stand ye always to this. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." I heard a story once that I remember to have told before, of some young person going out of the place, and saying, "Well, I don't like Mr. Spurgeon at all; he is so high in doctrine; he said so-and-so." And then the young body quoted a text out of the Bible as a very wicked thing that I had said—something about the potter having power over the clay. So the friend who was with her said, "It was Paul said that, not Mr. Spurgeon." "Ah!" said she, "and I think the Apostle Paul was a great deal too high too." Well, we are very glad to incur censure of that sort, and will not at all object to go with Paul wherever he may go; but we do beseech you never at any time to take our bare saying for a thing, but always to turn to your Bible and to see whether it is so. That is a good habit some Christian fathers have; when the boys and girls come home, they say, "Well, now, what was the text?" And then the father wants them to tell over what the minister has said! and even the small boy knows something, and tells something or other that the minister said from the pulpit. Then the father turns to his Bible to see whether these things be so. Then he endeavours to explain the hard things; so that they become like those noble Bereans, who were more noble than those of Thessalonica, because they searched the Scriptures, whether those things were so.

And now I may just hint at one or two peculiarities in that which I have ever preached to you, which peculiarities I desire you most anxiously to inquire into. Now, take nothing at second hand from me, but try all of it by the written Word. I believe and I teach that all men by nature are lost by Adam's fall. See whether that be true or not. I hold that men have gone astray, that no man either will or can come to Christ except the Father draw him. I, if I be wrong, find me out. I believe that God, before all worlds, chose to himself a people, whom no man can number, for whom the Saviour died, to whom the Holy Spirit is given, and who will infallibly be saved. You may dislike that doctrine; I do not care: see if it is not in the Bible. See if it does not there declare that we are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," and so on. I believe that every elect of God must assuredly be brought by converting grace from the ruins of the fall, and must assuredly be "kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation," beyond the hazard of ever totally falling away. If I be wrong there, get your Bibles out, and refute them in your own houses. I hold it to be a fact, that every man who is converted will lead a holy life, and yet at the same time will put no dependence on his holy life, but trust only in the blood and righteousness of Jesus

Christ, And I hold, that every man that believes, is in duty bound to be immersed. I hold that baptism of infants to be a lie and a heresy; but I claim for that great ordinance of God, Believer's Baptism, that it should have the examination of Scripture. I hold, that to none but believers may immersion be given, and that all believers are in duty bound to be immersed. If I am wrong, well and good; do not believe me; but if I am right, obey the Word with reverence. I will have no error, even upon a point which some men think to be unimportant; for a grain of truth is a diamond, and a grain of error may be of serious consequence to us, to our injury and hurt. I hold, then, that none but believer's have any right to the Lord's Supper; that it is wrong to give the Lord's Supper indiscriminately to all, and that none but Christians have a right either to the doctrines, the benefits, or the ordinances of God's house. If these things be not so, condemn me as you please, but if the Bible is with me your condemnation is no avail.

And now I charge you that are now present to read your Bibles, for one thing. Read your Bibles to know what the Bible says about *you*; and some of you when you turn the leaves over, will find the Bible says, "Thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity." If that startles you, turn over another page, and read this verse—"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" and when you read that, turn to another and read. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord." I pray you, put not away your Bibles till their dust condemns you; but take them out, bend your knees, seek for the Spirit of divine teaching, and turn ye these pages with diligent search, and see if ye can find there the salvation of your souls, through our Lord Jesus Christ. May the blessing of God rest upon you in so doing, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

A REMARKABLE DREAM.

I DREAMED I saw Christ curing a distempered person. I immediately applied to Him for my own healing. He asked, "In what respect?" I answered, "I want spiritual healing and forgiveness of sins." He seemed to doubt whether I truly desired it. I fell upon my knees and besought Him earnestly, on which He said with a gracious look, "Thy sins are forgiven thee; go and sin no more." I was transported at the words, and wept tears of joy and great abundance. My reflection on waking was: "I had as full assurance from the Word of God of the remission of sins, and as plain a command to sin no more, as if it were spoken to me by a voice from heaven, or by Christ Himself in person: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though One rose from the dead."—*Adam's Private Thoughts.*

Our Minister's Wife and Her Noble Life.

CHAPTER VIII.—A DAUGHTER'S LOVE.

SOME few persons who knew Mrs. Barton and have survived her have asked me if I am writing her biography. My answer has invariably been, "Certainly not." Intimate as I was with her the materials at my disposal would ill fit me for such a task, not to speak of the limited space allotted to me in writing this serial. To be distinctly understood, although I have entitled this narrative, "Our Minister's Wife and her Noble Life," all that I can do is to place on record such incidents in that life as I trust will answer my purpose. And what is that purpose? My aim is to show by illustrations drawn from Mrs. Barton's history that the nobility of a minister's wife's life consists, not as many people suppose in the public work she may do which may be blazed abroad, but in her private life, and in the performance of innumerable actions of which in thousands of cases the public know little or nothing. At this I have already hinted, and, therefore, no necessity exists for my dwelling any further on the subject.

Like the wives of deacons, officers, and members of the church and congregation, Mrs. Barton, in the course of her career, had heavy domestic

trials to sustain. Of these, while Mr. Barton remained at Colcheston, and when he removed to other spheres of labour—for he was called upon to occupy several during his dear partner's life—I knew a great deal. One of her earliest and, at that time, her heaviest was the case of her mother. Though, as already noted, Mrs. Goldacre, after months of weariness and pain, got pretty well over her first stroke, two years after her arrival amongst us most unexpectedly she was seized with a second, and shortly afterwards, at intervening periods with other strokes which made her a permanent invalid for the remainder of her life. To Mrs. Barton this was a source of much sorrow, inasmuch as these strokes not only left her parent partially helpless, but, in addition, at times made her extremely melancholy. As it is not my temperament to dwell on the dark side, I will say nothing about it except what Mrs. Barton told me in her own words:

"You see," Miss Kent," she observed, "I know what my mother was better than anyone. You, too, know what she was when she first came to Colcheston. A brighter and more cheerful woman could not be found. But these dreadful strokes have changed her entirely.

Her loss of memory and inability to grasp the real situation in which she is placed causes her to imagine all sorts of things that make both myself and my husband at times most miserable. Though independent, as far as pecuniary means are concerned, she often supposes she is absolutely dependent, and she frets over it in a way that grieves us sorely. Whatever I do for her as a daughter, either by day or night, is done most cheerfully, and I can conscientiously say that I only feel too happy in any measure in being able to contribute to the comfort of one I love so well. But notwithstanding all I say or do she will insist that she is a great burden to us, and often wishes she was dead. Then she has most depressing doubts about her future state of happiness, and these melancholy fits last sometimes for weeks and months. To show you what I mean I will tell you a droll story which, while it indicates the state of her mind, at the same time has a humorous side to it that cannot help but make you smile.

"One morning, when she was in this depressed mood, I went to my husband and said, 'Joseph, will you please go upstairs and see my mother, and do what you can to comfort her: if you will I shall be glad.'

'He accordingly went up, and seating himself by her side, as she lay in bed the following conversation ensued':—

"'Well, mother, how are you this morning?'

"'Oh, Joseph, I'm very bad, very bad.'

"'And pray what makes you so bad?'

"'Oh! I'm afraid I'm going to the bad place.'

"'Not you, indeed, why Satan wouldnt have you in his territory.'

"'Not have me,' she said in surprise, 'why how is that?'

"'Don't you like prayer meetings?' asked my husband.

"'Like them!' she said, 'I think I do; I only wish I could go to them, that I do.'

"'Just what I thought. Now let me suppose that you go to the 'bad place,' as you call it, what would happen? Well, Satan would come looking round, and, being a stranger, he would soon spy you out. 'Hallo!' he would say, 'what are you doing here? Here's a woman that likes prayer meetings, turn her out, turn her out; people that like prayer meetings have no business here.' So out you would have to go. That's why I say you will never go to the 'bad place.'

"'Well, you do not know, Miss Kent, how that cheered poor mother. She was happy for days afterwards, and has often referred to it since as a source of real comfort to her.'

I could not help but laugh at this incident, while at the same time I felt sorry that anyone like Mrs Goldacre should be brought so low as to need such simple childlike kind of consolation. How Mrs. Barton bore it all for five years can be known to God alone. But never could a daughter be more attentive to an afflicted mother, and that, too, while she had her own small family to look after, with sickness and bereavement. Once she lamented to me her inability at this trying period to do more for the cause than she could, and well do I remember how I relieved her mind by the relation of the following incident, which was told me by a minister who once stayed at my house.

He said that in the course of pastoral visitation he came in contact with a bright young lady who constantly wheeled her invalid mother out in a bath chair. Once she entered into conversation with him, and regretted deeply what she deemed to be the useless life she was leading.

"Useless," he said, "I consider you are leading a most useful life."

"How do you make that out?" she asked.

"In giving nearly all your time to your mother when most she really needs it," he replied. "Look, Miss Holland," he added, "If we are Christians, God appoints us the work we have to do. Now what is my work? Is it not to preach, to visit, and, like my Master, to 'go about doing good.'" Now, knowing this to be my work, if I neglect it the blood of souls rests upon my head. In the same manner God has been pleased to give you your work. And what is that work? To look after your dear mother, to wheel her about, and in every way to contribute to her well-being in such a manner as to make her latter days as comfortable as they can be made. Now, Miss Holland, in doing this work you are just as much in the path of duty as I am when occupying the pulpit or being engaged in pastoral visitation, and the time will come when the Lord will say to you in cheering words of approbation, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these ye have done it unto Me." No other reward than that can any of us expect, even though our name should be trumpeted throughout the world."

Well, you have no idea what good that simple remark did to

that young lady. From that time she was thoroughly resigned to surrender her talents and time to contribute all to her mother's welfare; and I have no doubt whatever that in the last great day for her loving self-sacrificing duty she will receive as hearty encomiums from the Judge of all the earth as the greatest mintsiers in the land for the public work that they have accomplished. What a mercy it is, Mrs. Barton, that our dear Saviour looks not so much at the quantity of our work as the quality. Done to Him the smallest action is as valuable as the largest. How often I have thought of those quaint lines of George Herbert, and how sweet they have been to me!—

"Teach me my God and King

In all things Thee to see
And what I do in anything
To do it as for Thee.

A man that looks on glass
On it may stay his eye,
Or if he pleaseth through it pass,
And then the heaven espy.

All may of Thee partake,
Nothing can be so mean
Which with this tincture *for thy*
sake
Will not grow bright and
clean.

A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine,
Who sweeps a room, as for Thy
laws
Makes that and the action fine.

This is the famous stone
That turneth all to gold,
For that which God doth touch
and own
Cannot for less be told."

I always take it, Mrs. Barton, that George Herbert in writing

those magnificent verses made his memory immortal. If he had only written these he would have done service for Christ and the church never to be forgotten. They knock on the head once and for ever the idea that God can only be served by the great, or by doing great things. The small duties of life performed from purity of motive are as precious in His eyes as the greatest that man can perform, and seeing that life is made up mostly of the performance of such duties I can imagine no greater incentive for the "man of one talent" not to hide it in the earth, but to use it to the best advantage nobly and usefully."

Often afterwards Mrs. Barton used to refer to my narration of this incident as having given her hope and courage, and it will be well if it tends to do the same for the hundreds of ministers' wives who by the force of circumstances are placed in the same predicament as Mrs. Barton. In such innumerable cases it is not in their power to come to the front, and it is most unreasonable for them to be expected to do so. In their own homes, like other Christian women, they find their legitimate

sphere of labour, and in doing that, and whatever else they can do outside of it without infringing on that, they will carry out the purpose God has graciously assigned to them, and in doing which faithfully they will meet with His approval whether they do with that of churches or not.

But the time came when Mrs. Goldacre was suddenly called home. A final stroke almost deprived her of the power of speech, but she died most peacefully. Conscious to the last by muttering sounds and signs she gave all around to understand that she had no fears, no doubts whatever, but was only too happy to depart to be with Christ, whom she had so long loved and served and waited for. She was followed by many in Colcheston to the grave, who wept sincerely at her removal, regretting as they did that her working career in the village had been cut so short. But they knew that she was better off, and doing nobler work elsewhere, and with that source of consolation they committed her body to the dust "in the sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection unto life eternal."

(To be continued.)

GEMS FROM RUTHERFORD.

CHRIST'S *not answering is an answer*, and says,—Pray on, go on, cry on; for the Lord holdeth His door fast bolted, not to keep you out, but that you may knock, and it shall be opened.

That Christ and a sinner should be one, and share heaven between them, is the wonder of salvation. What more could love do?

If we knew ourselves well, to want temptations is the greatest temptation of all.

Losses for Christ are but our goods lodged in the bank in Christ's hand.

It is a small thing to see Christ in a book, as men see the world in a map; but to come near unto Christ, to love Him and embrace Him, is quite another thing.

Jehovah-Jirah : or, The Lord will Provide.

BY REV. G. PHILLIPS, (RADNOR).

"And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-Jireh : as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."—Genesis xxii., 14.

THE expression of the text is as sweet as it is comprehensive. The Lord will provide. The Lord will see to it. In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen. The occasion was the solution of a dark problem in the history of Abraham. In obedience to God's command, Abraham was in the act of offering up his son Isaac to God, when an angel interrupted him, or rather the God of angels, who said, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything to him, for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me." And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

Man's extremity was thus God's opportunity. A flood of light was poured upon the darkness of the scene.

God having thus wonderfully *proved* his servant Abraham, he was not only supported to pass honourably through the trying ordeal, but also enabled to have a more sublime view of the character of the great God from that memorable spot, as indicated by the appellation Jehovah-Jireh, a consoling title to the people of God, and ever true, irrespective of time or space.

I. *In the Realm of Nature* God has anticipated and provided for man's wants. In the order of Creation man was created last, not because he was least, for man is the masterpiece of God's creative work, and the work was preparatory for man's comfort. Man was not introduced into an empty dwelling. The earth was clothed in verdure, beauty, and fruitfulness, and the heavens garnished with brilliant lights prior to the creation of man.

The vast treasures also beneath the surface of the earth God prepared for the service of man. If the testimony of scientific men, based on the study of geology, be in harmony with the truth of the Bible, that matter may have passed through several processes, involving long periods of time, that forests may have sprung up, flourished, faded, and fallen, and decomposed in the bowels of the earth, to form the immense coal beds so indispensable for the comfort and use of man. Although there may have been no human eye to view the works of God in the hoary past, still there was no waste of power. It all demonstrates how our Divine Parent anticipated the wants of His

numerous family in storing the earth with such variety and abundance of valuable minerals and treasures beneath its surface. Forming electricity also which man by his skill has been enabled to harness, and now to send his messages over a great portion of the globe with a velocity that is truly marvellous.

God's works in the realm of nature are evidently in harmony with the appellation, Jehovah-Jireh.

II. *In the Plan of Grace.* Man was placed in the most beautiful spot of this beautiful earth, holy and happy, and surrounded by everything conducive to his true welfare. But, alas, man in honour did not continue. Sin entered through disobedience, and death by sin. The result was expulsion from Eden under sentence of death, in its three-fold character, natural, spiritual, and eternal. A deplorable picture of our first parents, thus closing the gates of Bliss against themselves with their own hands.

God, however, quickly interposed by His merciful enquiry as to His rebellious children, lest they should sink in despair. The first promise was uttered, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." This promise shone as a bright star in the dark firmament of the troubled soul, and had the same tendency as the star of Bethlehem to guide to the second Adam, the Lord from heaven who should restore the wanderer, and regain another Paradise of greater beauty and splendour. God seeing from eternity the fall of man, prepared for his being lifted up from the horrible pit and the miry clay. The Lamb was slain in purpose from the foundation of the world, and after all necessary preparation, and the fulness of the time had come, "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem us from the curse of the law, and that we might obtain the adoption of sons."

Through the holy life, atoning death, and triumphant resurrection and ascension to Heaven as our Redeemer and Intercessor, we are pardoned and saved through faith in the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.

The sublime redemptive scheme we regard in its origin and accomplishment as the result of God's infinite wisdom and foresight, together with His boundless love in providing the Lamb of the burnt offering, and giving His Beloved Son to bleed and die for us. His name has ever been Jehovah-Jireh.

In making His grace effectual on the sinner's heart, He provides the means.

"Jesus sought me when a stranger
Wandering from the fold of God."

The "Parable of the Prodigal Son," that pearl of parables, is a striking illustration of the provision made and the welcome given by God to penitent sinners.

What a welcome was given the Prodigal by his Father, and what provision what was made for his need and comfort. The best robe, the ring, shoes put on his bleeding feet, the rich feast, and the music, emblem of the reception of all true penitents. Every need is met, all fulness provided. The feast ready, God ready to welcome. The Spirit and

the Bride say come. The robe of Christ's righteousness ready to adorn the naked soul. Angels ready to rejoice over the repenting sinner. In the mount of communion with the Lord it is seen how he anticipates all wants and provides for them, as indicated by His title, Jehovah-Jireh.

III. *In the Path of Providence.* Divine providence is a great deep, a vast and complicated machinery, yet faith can realize the fact that there is an Infinite mind guiding and controlling all to a happy issue. The Psalmist says, "Thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness." Preventing there does not mean obstructing, but anticipating, going before, and providing for man's needs.

Amidst the chequered scenes in life's journey, God goes before His people. In the deep waters of sorrow, and in the fires of trial He is with them. In climbing the hills of difficulty, His "everlasting arms are underneath," amidst danger there is a Zoar near. If the thunder-storm bursts, He has always placed the lightening conductor ready to protect His children. We only need strong faith in God to realize that all is well whether in prosperity or adversity, in life or in death.

The late Mr. Spurgeon mentioned of a devout farmer, who had the motto "God is love," placed on the vane, and high uplifted on the end of his barn, indicating that from whatever point of the compass the wind blew the motto was the same, and when the home would be darkened by sorrow and bereavement, and loved ones laid low in death, the motto would remain in all its truth and power. The same motto I have seen in a cemetery in Buckinghamshire on a neat gravestone of a person who had passed away in the midst of life. The name, age and date given, and prominently marked above the ruins of death the sentence, "God is love." The Christian can realize through faith that Christ is the Resurrection and the Life, hence His flesh may rest in hope, for all them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. All through life and in death. The Lord will provide.

IV. *Then in the Kingdom of Glory.* God has taken into consideration man's being in all its entirety and extent. He has provided for the immortal mind worthy of Himself. God hath prepared a city which hath foundations. A kingdom that cannot be moved. A crown of glory that fadeth not away.

Our Saviour said, "In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you." He went to Gethsemane and Calvary and the grave, and burst the barriers of the tomb, ascending up to Heaven to give us a right and title through faith in Him to enter in through the gates in harmony with the rectitude of God's moral government. The beauty and splendour of the home provided exceeds all description.

The streets of gold, walls of jasper, and gates of pearl, are some of the chief treasures earth can furnish to set it forth. But it doth not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is, and bask for ever amidst the glory of that immortal life.

God has not only prepared the home of purity and glory, but he also prepares us for the exalted position, through the Holy Spirit's influence,

in connection with the Atoning Blood of Jesus, our advocate and Redeemer. As expressed by the late Dr. P. Binney :—

“ These, these prepare us for the sight
Of majesty above :
The sons of ignorance and night
Can dwell in the Eternal Light
Through the Eternal Love.”

With all the tenderness and love of the fond mother providing for the welcome home of the son returning from a foreign clime does God manifest in providing for His children. The true mother by the time expected for the arrival has the repast ready, possibly the chair placed at the table, flowers are also arranged to make the scene more bright. She even, with her own hand, smoothes the pillow to make it more soft upon which her son is to rest his head.

So God has the feast of the marriage supper of the Lamb ready, the seat in bliss ready, many loved ones gathered from earth as flowers there. Parents and children, pastors and teachers gone before, waiting to welcome those who come after God by such means, causing them to be willing to launch away when the solemn moment comes to join the family above.

The chief attraction being the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the valley. To be with Christ, the Lamb slain in the midst of the Throne.

The great American Evangelist, Mr. Moody, narrates the incident of a fond mother who was taken from a dear little girl. Friends, seeing the mother was dying, took the little child to their home. After the funeral was over, they took the little one back to her home. As soon as she entered, she called out, “ Mother ! ” went from one room to another, crying out, “ Mother ! ” But in vain, for the mother’s ear was sealed, and her voice was silent in death.

The little girl, exhausted and distressed, said, “ Take me back. This is not my home. I cannot find mother.”

So Heaven would lose its charm if Jesus, our adorable Saviour, were not there.

He is the Central Orb from whom will emanate scintillations of glory for evermore.

May we possess that living faith in God that will prompt to obedience and active service, and resigning our all to Him, assured that the God of Abraham and the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is ever to His people Jehovah-Jireh all along the line of their being through time and all eternity.

Let the careless who are living without hope and without God in the world take encouragement to come to Him, and to seek a living union of soul with Him, so that the Divine light might shine to see their true state as sinners, and the beauty and suitableness of Jesus as their only Saviour : and that the Holy Spirit might infuse into their souls that faith which works by love, and that prompts to the yielding up all to God. He will then prove to such Jehovah-Jireh and protection will be ever afforded them under the shadows of the wings of the Almighty.

"Fear Not."

O CLING not, trembler, to life's fragile bark ;
 O It fills—it soon must sink !
 Look not below, where all is chill and dark ;
 'Tis agony to think
 Of the wild waste. But look, O look above,
 And see the outstretched arm of love.

Cling not to this poor life. Unlock thy clasp
 Of fleeting, vapoury air ;
 The world, receding, soon will mock thy grasp.
 But let the wings of prayer
 Take heaven's own blessed breeze, and flee,
 And life from God shall enter thee.

Look not so fondly back on this false earth ;
 Let hope not linger here.
 Say, would the worm forego its second birth,
 Or the transition fear
 That gives it wings to try a world unknown ;
 Although it wakes and mounts alone ?

But thou art not alone ; on either side
 The portal friends stand guard ;
 And the kind spirits wait thy course to guide,
 Why, why should it be hard
 To trust our Maker with the soul he gave,
 Or Him, who died that soul to save ?

Into His hands commit thy trembling spirit,
 Who gave His life for thine.
 Guilty, fix all thy trust upon His merit ;
 To Him thy heart resign.
 O, give Him love for love, and sweetly fall
 Into His hands, who is thy All.

JOSIAH CONDER.

Dan Ryan.

[T was a happy thought on the part of Pastor J. J. Kendon that, more than thirty years ago, gave birth to an organized effort to meet the spiritual needs of the teeming masses from Slumdom that annually visit our Kentish Hop-gardens. Most pleasing results have followed these efforts in renewed hearts and homes, not the least interesting of which is the latest that has recently come to light.

"Just a Bermondsey boy, and a rough one at that!" was the verdict of the City Missionary, as he told me the story of Dan Ryan. The Missionary knew him, for in his work over the wide parish of Bermondsey he had often met him, and received a goodly share of banter and rough horse-play in return for his efforts to reclaim Dan and his boon companions from the paths of sin.

He was an Irishman, as his name indicates; he avowed himself a Roman Catholic; his lip and life proclaimed him a veritable son of sin. He eked out a precarious existence, picking up a casual job when and wherever he could; often at his wits' end to find food to keep body and soul together. Thus it happened that he found his way into Kent, with many others of his class from the alleys, lanes, and courts of Bermondsey.

In the neighbourhood of Goudhurst, the "Hop-pickers' Mission" was in full swing, seeking to "lift up the fallen"; and among our devoted workers was the Missionary from Bermondsey.

The season was exceptionally wet and trying; so that many of the poor "hoppers," instead of laying in a stock of health by their migration to Kent, as in former years, found, alas! when too late, they had sown the seeds of disease and death.

The incessant rains also seriously interfered with our ordinary Mission-work; still, what we were able to do, was "not in vain in the Lord."

Dan was not a little surprised one morning to see his Bermondsey Missionary step up to the bin for a friendly chat; but, under the usually civilizing influence of our Mission, he did not receive him unkindly, nor lavish upon him the usual banter. He even consented to come to a hoppers' tea and meeting in a neighbouring barn, provided by a godly farmer and his wife.

The Missionary started early for the intended sanctum, with some misgivings as to whether Dan would keep his word; but Dan was there before him, and ready to lend a hand in clearing the barn of farming implements—a plough, chaff-cutter, harrow, waggon or two, and sundries. Also in spreading the tables, afterward in clearing for the

meeting, distributing tracts and hymn-sheets, he was much in evidence, as one who meant to make the meeting "go."

It was noticeable how eagerly—yea, hungrily—he listened as the Missionaries told "the old, old story of Jesus and His love." Not in vain did he thus hang on the preacher's lips for the word of life, as we subsequently found.

Months rolled by; the season and its services were well-nigh forgotten by us in the ever-present and pressing claims of duty. In his casual visits to the Infirmary, our Bermondsey Missionary was startled one day at hearing his name faintly called from a sick pillow. Stretched there was the wreck of a once stalwart young man, so pale and wasted that the Missionary failed to recognise the poor fellow. But Ryan knew him—had good reason to know him!—and with grateful tears told his story of divine mercy. The terribly severe weather of September had been too much for him; he caught the chill which sealed his death warrant; but *he found Christ* through the message of that meeting in the barn, and now was ready for, and almost eagerly awaiting, his approaching end, able with the Psalmist to say, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me."

The "Hop Mission" work is emphatically a "work of faith," both the season and sphere of service being limited, and much of the seed sown by the wayside, to be gathered in the "Great Harvest Day." Yet it would not be difficult to multiply instances of this kind in proof of the usefulness of the "Hop-picker's Mission"—as our sketches in these pages, in former years, bear witness.

Among the many claims upon the generosity of God's stewards, there is a danger that old-established, well-tried missions may be forgotten, and languish for want of funds, hence this incident as a "reminder."

The need is as great as ever, and help sent in promptly will be well and worthily bestowed. The season only lasts through September; it is, therefore, obvious that those who would have fellowship with us in this good work must send at once, and thus enable us to measure our means, and place our men in the field without delay. The smallest donation thankfully received.

Parcels of tracts, boots, clothing, etc., should be sent per S.E.R., Carriage Prepaid, *only* to Pastor J. J. Kendon, Marden Station.

Contributions to Pastor J. J. Kendon, Goudhurst, Kent; Mrs. C. H. Spurgeon, Westwood, Upper Norwood (naming the Mission); or to the Hon. Assis. Secretary, John Burnham, Fern Bank, Brentford.

A little annoyance is often harder to bear in the right spirit than a great trouble.

God is not in haste but His aim is sure.

Praise not the crop until it is stacked.

It is not necessary to plough and sow fools—they grow of themselves

The Sailor Boy Saved!

AT one of Mr. Moody's meetings in London, a gentleman said the following case had occurred recently in the West of England. A poor woman whom he knew had a wild boy who had run away three times. At last he went off to sea, leaving his father and mother in great sorrow. Although only sixteen years of age he was a drunkard and blasphemer. His mother continued in prayer, and about a month previously she sent to him and said, "Will you come to see Willie, he has come home in great distress." He accordingly went to her house, and found her sailor boy come back, and in an anxious state of mind. He asked him, "How did you become so anxious?" And what was the lad's reply? He said, "When I was at sea a thought sometimes came over me: suppose Christ was to appear suddenly, and take away His people, leaving the bad behind, what a dreadful thing it would be for me!" He need only to add that this reckless youth had found the Saviour, and was now labouring for the Lord. What encouragement this case gives to parents who have wild and reckless children to pray on their behalf!

"He Bought Me; I am His."

IN the slave mart in one of the Southern States years ago there was a young girl, eighteen years of age, for sale. The other slaves were not troubled at their position; they had perhaps been brought to the hammer too often. Possibly they had had bad masters, so that it might have been a good thing for them to have exchanged owners. But this poor girl was just breaking her heart, the anguish was plainly shown on her countenance. A gentleman, seeing her crying, asked her what was the matter with her, "Oh! sir," she replied, "I have had a kind master, and I do so dread stepping up to be sold." "Well," he thought, "that being so, I will buy you myself." Her turn came, and she was put up for sale. The gentleman made a bid, and someone else made a bid against him. She anxiously looked on as they were bidding one against the other. Finally the hammer went down, and to her joy she belonged to him. "Well, now," said he to her, "I will give you your freedom." She did not know what it meant. At last he said, "Well, I must go." She then fairly woke up "What, going away, then I shall follow you; I will follow you wherever you go; I am not my own, you bought me!" "Ah!" but said he, "I give you your freedom." "And I give it you back," she replied. Well, he took her with him. The people who visited his house saw how she anticipated the wants of himself and family. "How very extraordinary," they said. They could not understand it. All she could say was "He redeemed me when a slave; he bought me himself; he gave me my liberty, and I gave it back to him." Just so is it with our Divine Master and his people. We are Christ's servants because He made us free. "He redeemed us, and gave Himself for us."

Reviews.

Alpha and Omega; or, God in Human Life, by Rev. William Middleton. Morgan & Scott, 12, Paternoster Buildings.

We are glad to know that a second edition of this truly Bible-teaching book has been called forth. Its seven chapters are full of instruction and promotion of the Glory of God as the Alpha and Omega in human life. In our study of the sacred Scriptures, God must be put first. In our public worship God must be put first. In our inner experience God must be put first. In our life-work God must be put first. These are the subjects dealt with in the first pages, and are dealt with in a spirit of earnest consecration, which continues to breathe in its teachings to the closing words of the last chapter.

When the Trees Bud; or, Spring Cometh for the Grace of God hath Appeared, by Ernest Judson Page, author of the *Clue to the Ages*. Baptist Tract and Book Society, Gray's Inn Road, London. One Shilling, nett.

The writer expects adverse criticisms, but for us we have none. Our words to the principles propounded are *Welcome*. Christian union based on compromise can do but little if any good in the end. Our first desire should be, Buy the truth and sell it not. When for Christian union the different sections of the one Church are inspired, as the writer puts it, with enthusiasm, and exclaims, *Back to Christ*. And

the thoughts of all brethren are—We are *one in the Master's life, one in the Master's will, and one in the Master's truth, and one in the Master's plan*. We are one in Him, and the Church will be filled with transfiguring glory, and the world will *hear, see, and believe*.

Cassell & Company are publishing in parts a most timely work, *Illustrations of the Queen's Empire*. The photographs are very excellent, and no expense has been spared to make them good and effective. Part 3, *How the Queen's Subjects Worship*, contains Dr. Parker Preaching on Christmas Morning in the City Temple, an Outdoor Service in Wales, also the Baptism of a Believer, A Scene on a Yorkshire Hillside. To us it is a very interesting and instructive picture. The description begins, *This rather strange scene, &c., &c.* Well it may be strange, but to us there is something stranger, that such a ceremony should be strange amongst the followers of Him, who was Himself immersed in the River of Jordan. Part 4 will illustrate Workers in the Queen's Empire. The *Quiver* has a good chapter by the Bishop of Derry, On Being Persecuted.

Great Thoughts for July is as always full up to the hilt of good instructions and healthy reading. Our difficulty is to call attention to its best pages. They are all good, and it is one of the good sides of modern literature that it should find so large a circulation. We are still reminded that it is Jubilee year by the likeness of our beloved Queen. We were also interested in the likeness, birth and

parentage, of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy. *Helping Words* and *Reciter* are to hand.

In His Name, the Record of the Ragged School Union. We welcome this monthly of one of our best institutions. We think the *Morning Chronicle*, so nearly always right, was in mistake, in a recent issue, when it seemed to think the Ragged School Union belonged to the past, and we were glad to see the article in the *Echo*, giving a very stimulating account of its present work.

The Religious Tract Society's serials are to hand. Part 8 of *Sunday Hours*, with an illuminated frontispiece of God Save the Queen, and the Boys' and Girls' Tribute to the Queen, and *The Boys' Own* and *The Girls' Own Papers*. The former with its striking frontispiece on Discord—were never better for the young people. *The Leisure Hour* is enriched by an illustrated article by Sydney C. N. Goodman, The Walls of Constantinople, also The Sphinx of Modern London. *The Sunday at Home* has a contribution from the pen of Dr. Monro Gibson, Facts of Experiences and Truths of Life, The Inner Eye and Ear. For circulation as tracts we recommend *Friendly Greetings*, and *The Cottager and Artisan*.

Part 21, *The Treasury of David*, by C. H. Spurgeon. This part of Mr. Spurgeon's great work brings us to the eighty-ninth Psalm. Passmore & Alabaster,

The Treasury of Religious Thought (American). Gay and Bird, Bedford Street, Strand.

Contributes a pictorial article on the Diamond Jubilee, a good likeness of our Queen, also the Houses of Parliament, and outline of sermon by Dr. W. P. Morgan, preached in Trinity Church, New York.

The Popedom Defined and Defended by the Pope. A dispassionate Review upon the Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII. upon the Unity of the Church, by Dawson Burns, D.D. Ideal Publishing Union, Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street.

A calm searching review, exposing the pretension and mistakes of His pretended Infallible Holiness. We are much indebted to Dr. Burns for this timely review.

The Yorkshire Baptist Year Book speaks of the work and vigour in our Yorkshire Churches, and *The Irish Baptist, The Sword and Trowel*, and *Baptist Magazine* are to hand. The latter containing a specially good likeness of our worthy brother, Pastor Townsend, of Wandsworth, late of Canterbury.

"I TOOK CARE OF THE LAMBS."

A GENTLEMAN was walking over his farm with a friend, exhibiting his crops, herds of cattle, and flocks of sheep, with all of which his friend was highly pleased, but with nothing so much as his splendid sheep. He had seen the same breed frequently before, but had never seen such noble specimens—and with great earnestness he asked how he had succeeded in rearing such flocks. His simple answer was "I take care of my lambs, sir." Here was all the secret—he took care of the lambs!

Denominational Intelligence.

CHANGES IN THE PASTORATE.

Rev. W. Usher, M.D., from Orpington, to Tunbridge Wells Tabernacle.

Rev. E. D. Tranter, from Driffild, to Barnsley.

Rev. G. H. F. Jackman, from Coggeshall, to Pembroke-street, Devonport.

Rev. T. Walton, from Pearl-street, Cardiff, to Hay, Breconshire.

Rev. E. Palgrave Davy, from Patna, North India, to Gorse-lane, Swansea.

Rev. A. E. Phillips, from Pastors' College, to the newly-formed church at Wellingborough.

Rev. G. H. Hore, B.A., from Bristol College, to Abbot-street Hall, Dunfermline.

Rev. M. Lister Gaunt, from Helston, Cornwall, to Sandown, Isle of Wight.

Rev. S. S. Sarson, from Pastors' College, to Gorse-hill, Swindon.

Rev. S. A. McGracken, from the Irish Baptist Home Mission, to Hendon, N.W.

Rev. F. G. Kemp, from Wigan, to Aldershot.

Rev. Kuk Bryce, from Chatteris, Cambs., to the Nottingham Tabernacle.

RECOGNITIONS.

Rev. J. McNeil has been ordained to the pastorate of Southgate Church, Denholme. Rev. W. Gray preached, Professor Medley delivered the charge to the pastor, and Professor D. Glass addressed the church.

Rev. A. A. Savage has been recognised as pastor of Salter's Hall Church, Baxter-road, Islington.

Revs. W. H. Harwood, J. H. Shakespeare, A. Bax (the former pastor), G. McKay, A. A. Savage, of Ingatestone (father of the pastor), R. O. Johns and F. A. Jones took part. Mr. Harding attended as a delegate from pastor's former church at Gorleston.

Rev. W. C. Minifie has been recognised as pastor of Sion Chapel, Bradford. Rev. C. Spurgeon preached. Revs. J. H. Hollowell, T. G. Tarn, W. Stevenson and Rowland Evans took part.

Rev. W. Hussey Griffith, late of George-square Church, Greenock, has been recognised as pastor of Arthur Hills' Church, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Rev. W. J. Evans has been recognised as pastor of the new church at Dunoon. Revs. D. M. Macgregor and E. Thomas took part.

NEW CHAPELS.

The new chapel erected in Walton Road, East Moseley (Rev. G. F. Harper), has been opened. It seats 250, and has cost £550, towards which about £100 is in hand. Rev. Wm. Cuff preached; Revs. E. A. Carter, W. Baxter, F. C. Carter, C. Ingre, S. H. Moore, and G. Wright took part.

A new chapel has been opened at Harlech. Rev. Abel J. Parry and Rev. T. James, missionary from India, took part in the opening services.

Memorial stones of a new chapel to seat 350 persons have been laid at Oadby. The site was presented by Mrs. Ellis, and the cost of the building is estimated at £2,000, towards which the Baptist Church Extension

Society had promised £400, in addition to £450 already secured. The collection at the stone-laying amounted to £119.

Foundation-stones of a new Welsh chapel have been laid at Barry Dock in connection with the cause carried on in a schoolroom near Florastreet. The building, which will bear the name of the present room, "Salem," is designed in the Gothic style, will be 50 feet long and 40 feet wide, and will be sufficient to accommodate about 700. Towards the estimated cost of the building the sum of over £600 has already been collected, no less than £200 being collected at the stone-laying.

A new chapel is being erected in Tump-road, Blackheath, Wolverhampton, to seat 500, at cost of £1,200. Memorial stones have been laid by Rev. F. O. Yates and Mr. J. W. Tiptaft.

Memorial stones of the new Birchcliffe Chapel, Hebden Bridge, have been laid by Mrs. Jos. Thomas, Mrs. J. Greenwood, Mrs. J. B. Brown, and Mr. D. Eastwood. The estimated cost is £9,000, the greater part of which has been raised. Donations and collections amount to £830.

A new chapel has been opened at Morley, with sermons by Rev. C. Spurgeon. The cost of the building will be about £3,200, towards which £2,100 has been raised.

Mrs. C. H. Spurgeon laid the foundation-stone of the new chapel at Bexhill-on-Sea for the congregation under the pastorate of J. S. Hockey. The chapel, which is in the fourteenth century Gothic style, will seat 600 persons. The present building is to be used as a Sunday-

school and lecture-hall. The inscription on the stone says: "This stone was laid July 7, 1897, by Mrs. C. H. Spurgeon, to the glory of God, and in perpetual remembrance of her beloved husband's blameless life, forty years' public ministry, and still continued proclamation of the Gospel by his printed sermons." Revs. C. Spurgeon, T. Spurgeon, and Archibald G. Brown delivered addresses. Towards the cost of the building £2,000 has been raised.

PRESENTATIONS.

Rev. G. J. Cliff, having resigned the pastorate of King-street Church, Wigan, owing to breakdown in his health, the members of the church and congregation have presented him with a testimonial and purse of gold.

Rev. J. Kemp has been presented by Immanuel Church, Southsea, with an illuminated address and a purse of fifty guineas; an arm-chair has been presented to Mrs. Kemp.

Rev. George Durrell, £80 from Hockliffe-street Church, Leighton Buzzard, on closing a ministry of twenty-two years, and books from the church at Heath, at which he officiated on Sunday afternoons.

Rev. G. Short, an illuminated address from the Free Churches in Salisbury; a cheque for £120 and an album, from Brown-street Church, Salisbury; Mrs. Short, a portrait of her husband.

Rev. S. H. Moore, a purse of gold from New Malden Church.

Rev. W. Turner, an illuminated address and £100 from Mill-street Church, Bedford, on resigning the pastorate; Mrs. Turner, a gold watch.

My work is my delight. In it I desire to spend and to be spent. I think and hope that I have no other desire in my soul than to be the means of winning sinners for Christ. My anxiety is that my tongue may be ever engaged in proclaiming this salvation, and that my words and actions may be always pointing to the Cross.—*Williams*.

BAPTISMS.

Abingdon.—June 27, Four, by W. H. Doggett
Baugor (English).—June 30, One, by W. R. Saunders
Burwell, Cambs.—June 6, Six, by G. Stone
Braintree.—June 13, Two, by A. Curtis
Builth Wells.—June 11, Seven, by H. Evans
Bideford.—June 23, Ten, by F. Durbin
Burnley: Enon.—June 23, Three, by J. Heath
Crawley, Sussex.—June 10, Two, by J. McAulane
Chadderton: Mills Hill.—July 4, Two, by F. Oliver
Darkhouse, Coseley.—June 30, Three, by W. Bennett
Dudley.—June 27, Two, by E. Milnes
Dundee: Ward-road.—June 6, Three, by D. Clark
Edinburgh: Stockbridge.—June 18, One, by P. Crawford
Earlstown, Lancs.—June 13, Three, by F. E. Miller
Garston Tabernacle, near Liverpool.—May 30, Two, by J. Thomas
Glasgow, Cambridge-street.—June 13, Six; 23, Four, by E. Last
Glasgow, Springburn.—June 6, Two; July 4, Four, by J. Horne
Great Ellingham.—June 27, One, by T. H. Sparham
Harston, Cambs.—June 27, Three, by F. Potter
Hull.—Five, by J. E. Shephard
Hastings, Trinity Chapel.—July 3, Twenty-three, by J. Fox
Huddersfield, Lockwood.—June 30, Seven, by G. Archer
Hartlepool.—June 8, One, by C. W. Vaughan
Kimberley.—July 4, Two, by A. Gibssn
Leeds, Hunslet.—June 27, One, by A. E. Greening
Leeds, Burley-road.—June 27, Five, by F. W. Walter
Leamington, Warwick-street.—June 27, Seven; 30, One, by A. Phillips
Largo, Fifeshire.—June 9, Four, by W. Pulford
Llandough, Cardif.—June 13, Three, by J. Thompson
Manchester: West Gorton, Clowes-street.—June 20 by W. A. Livingstone

Oldham, N. Hants.—June 30, Two, by J. T. Lane
Pontyclun, R.S.O.—June 20, Two, by L. T. Evans
Rhymney, Beulah.—June 20, Five, by T. M. Richards
Rawtenstall.—June 27, Six, by A. S. Hollinshead
Rugby.—June 27, Two, by J. Young
South Leith.—June 27, One by D. Tait
Scapegoat Hill, Huddersfield.—June 6, One, by T. R. Lewis
Southport Tabernacle.—June 2, Eleven, by T. I. Edwards.
Stanningley.—July 4, One, by W. Bloomfield
Tubermore, co. Derry, Ireland.—June Three, by G. Marshall
Tondu: Carey Chapel.—July 4, One, by M. Jones
Velindre, Radnorshire.—July 4, One, by W. G. Mansfield
West Hartlepool.—June 20, Four, by A. W. Curwood

LONDON DISTRICT.

Bermondsey, S.E.: Abbey-street.—June 20, Three, by A. V. G. Chandler
Blachheath, Shooter's Hill-road.—June 27, Four, by W. L. Mackenzie
Child's Hill.—June 27, Eight, by J. Poulton
Clapham Junction: Meyrick-road.—June 27, Four, by R. E. Sear
Enfield, N.—June 20, Four, by G. W. Whit
Hartington, W.—June 27, Three, by W. F. Edgerton
Harringay, N.—June 27, Six, by G. T. Edgl
Lee, S.E. Bromley road.—June 27, Two, by J. W. Davies
Penge Tabernacle.—June 30, Three, by J. W. Boud
Plumstead, Station-road.—June 27, Fo J. Seeley
South Bermondsey, Ilderton-road.—June Nine, by T. E. Howe
Stratford New Town, E.—June 20, Sixteen, by C. M. Owen
Willesden-green, N.W.—June 27, Five, by W. J. Sears

Paul's Desire to Depart.

A SERMON BY THE LATE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

"Having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better."—*Phillippians i., 23.*

WE know that death is not the end of our being. By a confident faith we are persuaded that better things await us in another state. We are speeding onwards through our brief life like an arrow shot from a bow, and we feel that we shall not drop down at the end of our flight into the dreariness of annihilation; and we shall find a heavenly target far across the flood of death. The force which impels us onwards is too mighty to be restrained by death. We have that within us which is not to be accounted for, if there be not a world to come, and especially, as believers, we have hopes, and desires, and aspirations, which cannot be fulfilled, and which must have been given us purposely to make us miserable, and to tantalize us, if there be not a state in which everyone of these shall be satisfied and filled to the brim with joy. We know, too, that the world into which we shall soon be ushered is one which shall never pass away. We have learned full well by experience that all things here are but for a season. They are things which shall be shaken, and, therefore, will not remain in the day when God shall shake both heaven and earth. But equally certain are we that the inheritance which awaits us in the world to come is eternal and unailing, that the cycles of ages shall never move it; that the onflowing of eternity itself shall not diminish its duration. We know that the world to which we go is not to be measured by leagues, nor is the life thereof to be calculated by centuries. Well does it become every one of us then, professing the Christian name, to be questioning ourselves as to the view which we take of the world to come. It may be there are some of you now present who call yourselves believers, who look into a future state with shuddering and awe. Possibly there may be but few here who have attained to the position of the apostle, when he could say, that he had a desire to depart and to be with Christ. I take it that our view of our own death is one of the readiest tokens by which we may judge of our own spiritual condition. When men fear death it is not certain that they are wicked, but it is quite certain that if they have faith it is in a very weak and sickly condition. When men desire death we may not rest assured that they are therefore righteous, for they may desire it for

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wrong reasons; but if for right reasons they are panting to enter into another state, we may gather from this, not only that their minds are right with God, but that their faith is sanctified and that their love is fervent.

I hope that the service of this morning may have the effect of leading everyone of us to self-examination. I shall endeavour while preaching to search myself, and I pray that each one of you may be led to hear for himself, and I beseech you to put home each pertinent and personal question to your own souls, while in a quiet, but I hope in a forcible manner, I shall endeavour to describe the apostle's feelings in prospect of departure.

Three things I shall observe this morning. First of all, *the apostle's description of death*; secondly, *his desire for it*; and thirdly, *the reasons which justified such a decision*.

I. THE APOSTLE'S DESCRIPTION OF DEATH. We are to understand this of course as being a description not of the death of the wicked, but of the death of the righteous. And you will remark the apostle does not call it an *arrest*. In the death of the wicked, the sheriff's officer of justice doth lay his clay-cold hand upon the man's shoulder, and he is his prisoner for ever. The serjeant-at-arms in the names of the justice which has been incensed, puts his fetters about his wrists, and conducts him to the prison-house of despair and everlasting torment. In the Christian's case however, there is no such thing as an arrest, for there is no one that can arrest him. We sometimes talk of death arresting the believer in the midst of his career, but we misuse terms. Who shall arrest a man against whom there is neither conviction nor accusation? Who is he that condemneth the man for whom Christ has died? Nay, further, who shall so much as lay anything to the charge of God's elect? How then can the Christian be arrested? It is no such thing; it is an arrest of the ungodly, but not of the believer.

Nor does Paul speak of the sinner's death as being a sudden *plunge*. This is a proper description of the death of the ungodly. He stands upon the brink of a precipice, and beneath him there is a yawning and bottomless gulf. Through thick darkness he must descend, and into it his unwilling spirit must take a desperate leap. Not so the believer. His is no leap downwards; it is a climbing upwards. He has his foot upon the first round of the ladder, and joyful is the hour when his Master saith unto him, "Come up higher; ascend to another guest-chamber, and here feast upon richer dainties than those I have given thee below." Aye! 'tis no leap in the dark. 'Tis no plunge into a cold sea; 'tis simply a departure.

Let me describe what I think the apostle means by the figure of a *departure*. Many deaths are preceded by a long season of sickness, and then I think we might picture them by the departure of a ship from its moorings. There lies the ship in its haven; there is a friend of yours about to journey away to some distant clime. You will never see his face again in the flesh. He is going to emigrate; he will find a home in another and he hopes a happier land. You stand upon the shore; you have given him the last embrace. The mother has given to her son the last kiss, the friend has shaken him by

the hand for the last time, and now the signal is given; the anchor is taken up; the rope which held the ship to the shore is loosed, and lo, the ship is moving, and she floats outward towards the sea. You look, you still wave your hand, as you see the ship departing. Your friend stands on some prominent spot on the deck, and there he waves his handkerchief to the last. But the most sharp-sighted of friends in such scenes must lose sight of one another. The ship floats on; you just now catch a sight of the sails, but with the strongest telescope you cannot discover your friend. He is gone; it is his departure. Weep as you may, you cannot bring him back again. Your sorrowful tears may mingle with the flood that has carried him away, but they cannot entice a single wave to restore him to you. Now even so is the death of many a believer. His ship is quietly moored in its haven. He is calmly lying upon his bed. You visit him in his chamber. Without perturbation of spirit he bids you farewell. His grip is just as hearty as he shakes your hand, as ever it was in the best hour of his health. His voice is still firm, and his eye is still bright. He tells you he is going to another and a better land. You say to him, "Shall I sing to you?"—

"Begone unbelief, my Saviour is near?"

"Oh! no," says he, "sing me no such hymn as that; sing me—

"Jerusalem my happy home,
Name ever dear to me,
When shall my labours have an end
In joy, and peace, and thee."

He bids you a last farewell. You see him for a little season even after that, although he is too far gone again to address you. It may be a partial insensibility seizes hold of him; he is like a ship that is just going out of sight; you look at his lips, and as you bow down your ear, you can catch some faint syllables of praise. He is talking to himself of that precious Jesus who is still his joy and hope. You watch him till the last heaving breath has left the body, and you retire with the sweet reflection that his spirit on a glassy sea has floated joyously to the post. Thus the believer's death is a departure. There is no sinking in the wave; there is no destruction of the vessel; it is a departure. He has gone; he has sailed over a calm and quiet sea, and he is gone to a better land.

At other times deaths are more sudden; and are not heralded by protracted sickness. The man is in health, and he is suddenly snatched away, and the place which knew him once knows him no more for ever. I am about to use a figure which will seem to you extremely homely, and certainly could not be classical. I remember to have been once a spectator in a sorrowful scene. A company of villagers, the younger branches of a family, were about to emigrate to another land. The aged mother, who had not for some years left her cottage and her fireside, came to the railway station from which they must start on their departure. I stood among the sorrowful group as a friend and minister. I think I see the many embraces which the fond mother gave to her son and daughter, and the little ones, her

grand-children, I see them even now folding their arms about her aged neck, and then bidding farewell to all the friends in the village who had come to bid them adieu. And well I remember her, who was about to lose the props of her household. A shrill sound is heard; as if it were the messenger of death, it sends a pang through all hearts. In great haste at the small village station the passengers are hurried to their seats. They thrust their heads out of the carriage window. The aged parent stands on the very edge of the platform that she may take the last look. There is a sound from the engine, and away goes the train. I remember well the instant when that poor woman leaning on her staff sprang up from the chair with which she had been accommodated, and jumping from the platform, rushed along the railway with all her might, crying, "My children! My children! My children! They are gone, and I shall never see them again." The figure may not be classical, but nevertheless I have been reminded of it by many a death. When I have seen the godly suddenly snatched away—no time to watch them—they are gone, swift as the wind itself could bear them, as if the hasty waves of the sea had buried them out of sight. It is our affliction and our trouble, but we must stand behind and weep, for they are gone beyond recall. Notwithstanding, there is something pleasant in the picture. It is but a departure; they are not destroyed; they are not blown to atoms; they are not taken away to prison. 'Tis but a departure from one place to another. They still live; they still are blessed. While we weep they are rejoicing. While we mourn they are singing psalms of praise. Remember this my brethren in the apparel of mourning, and, if you have lost friends of late, this may tend to console your spirits. Death to a believer is but a departure, yet what a departure it is! Can you and I think calmly of it? The time must come when I must depart from wife and children, and from house and home, when I must depart from everything that is dear to me on earth. The time is coming to thee, oh rich Christian, when thou must depart from all the comforts of thine estate, from all the luxuries of thine household, from all the enjoyments which thy rank confers upon thee. And oh, poor Christian, lover of thine home, the time is coming when thou must depart from thy cot, homely though it be, still dear unto thee; thou must leave the place of thy toil, and the sanctuary of thy rest. We must mount as on eagle's wings far from this world. We must bid adieu to its green fields as well as its dreary streets. We must say farewell to its blue skies and to its dusky clouds; farewell to foe and friend: farewell to all we have, alike to trial and to joy. But blessed be God it is not the last look of a criminal condemned to die, it is the farewell of one who departs to another and happier land.

The apostle's description of death, however, is not finished. He has here only pictured that which is visible. We now come to notice his discription of the invisible part of death—

"In vain the fancy strives to paint
The moment after death;
The glories which surround the saint
When yielding up his breath.

This much—and this is all we know.

They are supremely blest ;
Have done with sin, and care, and woe,
And with their Saviour rest."

This is precisely the apostle's description of the state of the believer after death. They depart; yes, but whither? To be with Christ. Just observe how quickly these scenes follow each other. The sail is spread; the soul is launched upon the deep. How long will be its voyage? How many wearying winds must beat upon the sail ere it shall be reefed in the port of peace? How often shall that soul be tossed upon the waves before it come to the sea that knows no storm. Oh tell it, tell it everywhere; yon ship that has just departed is already at its haven. It did but spread its sail and it was there. Like the old ship on the lake of Galilee, there was a storm that tossed it, but Jesus said, "Peace, be still," and immediately it came to land. Yes, think not that there is a long period between the instant of death and the eternity of glory. There is not so much as space for the intervening of a lightning's flash. One gentle sigh, the fetter breaks, we scarce can say 'tis gone, before the ransomed spirit takes its mansion near the throne. We depart, we are with Christ: more quickly than I can say the words, swifter than speech can express them they become true. They depart, and they are with Christ; the self-same instant they have closed their eyes on earth they have opened them in heaven. And what is this invisible part of death? "*To be with Christ.*" Who can comprehend this but the Christian? It is a heaven which the worldling cares not for; if he could have it, he would not pawn his meanest lust to gain it. To be with Christ is to him a thing of nought, as gold and silver are of no more value to little children than the pieces of platter with which they will amuse themselves. So heaven and being with Christ is of no value to the childish sons of earthly mirth. They know not what a mass of glory is crowded into that one sentence, "*To be with Christ.*" To the believer who understands it, it means, *vision*. "Thine eyes shall see him." I have heard of *him*, and though I have not seen his face, unceasingly I have adored him. But I shall *see* him. Yes, we shall actually gaze upon the exalted Redeemer. Realize the thought. Is there not a young heaven within it? Thou shalt see the hand that was nailed for thee; thou shalt kiss the very lips that said, "I thirst;" thou shalt see the thorn-crowned head, the bow with all the blood-washed throng; thou, the chief of sinners, shalt adore him who washed thee in his blood; when thou shalt have a vision of his glory. Faith is precious, but what must sight be? To view Jesus as the Lamb of God through the glass of faith makes the soul rejoice with joy unspeakable; but oh! to see him face to face, to look into those dear eyes; to be embraced by those divine arms, rapture begins at the very mention of it! While I speak of him, my soul is like the chariots of Amminadib, and I desire to depart and to be with him. But what must the *vision* be when the veil is taken from his face, and the dimness from our eyes, and when we shall talk with him even as a man talketh with his friend. But it is not only *vision*, it is *communion*. We shall walk with him, he shall

walk with us, he shall speak to us, and we shall speak to him. All that the spouse desired in Solomon's Song, we shall have, and ten thousand times more. Then will the time be fulfilled "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his lips, for his love is better than wine." Then we shall be able to say, "His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me." Then will he tell us his love; then will rehearse the ancient story of the everlasting covenant, of his election of us by his own true love, of his betrothal of us through his boundless affection, of his purchase of us by his rich compassion, of his preservation of us by his omnipotence, and of his bringing us safe at last to glory as the result of his promise and his blood. And then will we tell to him our love, then into his ear will we pour out the song of gratitude, a song such as we have never sung on earth, unmixed and pure, full of serenity and joy, no groans to mar its melody; a song rapt and seraphic, like the flaming sonnets which flash from burning tongues above. Happy, happy, happy day, when vision and communion shall be ours in fulness! "To be with Christ which is far better."

Nor is this all, it means *fruition* of Christ. Here we look and long to taste; or if we taste it is but a sip, and we long to drink to the full. *Here* we are like Israel in the wilderness, who had but one cluster from Eshol, *there* we shall be in the vineyard. Here do we have the manna falling small, like coriander seed, but there shall we eat the bread of heaven and the old corn of the kingdom. We have sometimes on earth, lusts, ungratified desires, that lack satisfaction; but there the lust shall be slain and the desire shall be satiated. There shall be nothing we can want; every power shall find the sweetest employment in that eternal world of joy. There will be a full and lasting fruition of Christ, and last of all upon this point there shall be a sharing with Christ in his glory, and that for ever. "We shall see him," yes, and let us have the next sentence, and "shall be like him when we shall see him as he is," O Christian, antedate heaven for a few years. Within a very little time thou shalt be rid of all thy trials and thy troubles; thine aching head shall be girt with a crown of glory, thy poor panting heart shall find its rest and shall be satisfied with fulness as it beats upon the breast of Christ. Thy hands that now toil shall know no harder labour than harp-strings can afford. Thine eyes now suffused with tears shall weep no longer. Thou shalt gaze in ineffable rapture upon the splendour of him who sits upon the throne. Nay, more, upon his throne shalt thou sit. He is King of kings, but thou shalt reign with him. He is a priest after the order of Melchisedec, but thou shalt be a priest with him. Oh rejoice! The triumph of his glory shall be shared by thee; his crown, his joy, his paradise, these shall be thine, and thou shalt be co-heir with him who is the heir of all things. Doth not this very description of the unseen part of death stir up in the heart of the believer a longing "to depart and to be with Christ which is far better."

II. I have thus, as well as I was able, spoken upon the first part. And now, my friends, let us consider THE APOSTLE'S DESIRE. How differently do men regard death. We have seen men shriek at the prospect of it. I have seen the man driven to madness when the

skeleton king has stared him in the face. Pacing up and down his chamber he has declared with many a curse and imprecation that he would not and could not die—shrieking so that you could scarcely bear his company. He has looked forward to death as the concentration of all despair and agony, and he has vainly striven, with all his might, not to die. When he felt at last that death was stronger than he, and that he must get a desperate fall in the struggle, then has he began to shriek and to cry in such a strain that scare demons themselves could excel the despair concentrated in each shriek. Others have we seen who have met death somewhat more calmly. Biting their lips, and setting fast their teeth, they have endeavoured to keep up appearances, even in the last moment, but they have endured the inward suffering, betrayed to us most plainly by the staring eye, and the awful look. Others, too, we have seen, who, callous through sin, totally deserted by God's Spirit and given up to a seared conscience, have gone to their death with idiot resignation. They have even played the madman yet more fully, and have tried to brag and bully even in the jaws of hell. Many Christians have we met—true believers—who can go so far as to say they were willing to die. Please God, whenever the solemn hour should come, they were prepared to go up to their chamber and stretch themselves upon their bed and say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." But the apostle had gone further than they. He said he had a desire to depart, and the desire was a strong one. The Greek word has much force in it. He panteth, he longeth to be gone. I might paraphrase it by one of the verses of an old hymn—

"To Jesus the crown of my hope,
My soul is in haste to be gone."

He desired not to get away from earth for he loved to serve his Master, but he desired to be with Christ, which he declared to be far better. I ask you, if you were in Paul's condition, would not such a desire contain the very fulness of wisdom. There is a ship at sea, fully laden. It has a precious cargo of gold on board. Happy is the Kingdom that shall receive the wealth that is contained within its hold. Would you not if you were a possessor of such a vessel long to be safe in port. The empty ship needs scarcely fear the water, for what hath she to lose. If it casts its ballast into the sea, what is it the poorer? But when the ship is full of treasure, well may the captain long to see it safely moored. Now Paul was full of faith and love. He could say, "I have finished my course. I have kept the faith." And what wonder, therefore, that he was longing to be safely anchored home. So the soldier, who in the midst of battle has smitten down foe after foe, knows that a high reward awaits him. He has charged upon the enemy, and driven them back in many a desperate struggle. He has already been victor. Do you wonder he wishes the fight now were over, that his laurels may be safe? If he had played the coward he might long that the campaign should be protracted, that he might redeem his disgrace. But having so far fought with honour he may well desire that the garment raised in blood, may be rolled up for ever. Ayl and so was it with the apostle. He had fought a good fight, and knew that the crown was laid up for him in heaven, and he

anticipated the triumph which Christ would give him, and what marvel that panting and longing, he said, "I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." Upon this point I am constrained to be brief, because the next division involves the whole matter, and upon this I would be somewhat longer. And may God grant that what I shall say upon it may be impressive.

III. PAUL'S REASON FOR LONGING TO DEPART. There have been—it is the part of candour to admit it—there have been other men besides Christians who have longed to die. There is the suicide who, mad, from life's history longs to be hurled, even though hell receive him. Tired of all life's troubles he thinks he sees a way to escape from his toil and from his sorrow through the grim gate of death. He stains his hands with his own blood, and red with his own gore appears before his Maker. Ah fool, to leap from *one* evil to a myriad! Ah madman, to plunge from little streams of woe into an unfathomable gulf of agony! There can be no more absurd, revolting, and insensible act, than for a man to take away his life. Setting aside the horrors of crime that surround it, how foolish the attempt to escape by rushing into the very midst of danger! The ostrich who buries her head in the sand, and when she cannot see the hunter, thinks the hunter cannot see her, is sensible and wise compared with such a man, who, rushing into the very thick of the battle, hopes in this way to escape from his enemy. How can it be thou foolish man? Is the stream too deep for thee already, and instead of seeking to find a shore by faith in God, dost thou seek the centre of the stream that thou mayest get a firmer footing there? Oh foolish generation and unwise. "Put up thy sword into thy scabbard and do thyself no harm." for harm thou wilt do if thou rush into a greater evil to escape the less.

There have been other men, who with a so called philosophic spirit, have desired to die. Some men are sick altogether of mankind. They have met with so many ungrateful and deceitful wretches that they say, "Let me get rid of them all.

' Oh for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Where rumor of oppression never more
May reach mine ear.' "

And they have thought to find this lodge in the wilderness of death; and so they long for the wings of a dove to flee away from the degenerate race of men. Not so this apostle. He was no such coward as to fly from evils; he sought to better them. The apostle loved his race; he was no man-hater. He could say that he loved them all, and thus he had prayed for them all, and had carried them in the bowels of Christ continually to the throne of mercy. Others, too, have thought by getting out of the world they should get rid of their disappointments. They have struggled very hard to get rich, or they have striven for fame, and they have not succeeded in their ambitious designs, and then they have said, "Let me die." Now the apostle was never disappointed seeking wealth for he never cared for it. He had no desire whatever beyond food and raiment. He wished for nothing more, and as for rank, that he utterly despised. He did tread beneath his feet as the mire of the streets all the honours that a man could give him. Nor

was the apostle in any sense a disappointed man. He had sought to spread his Master's fame and he had done it. He had a standard to plant and right well had he planted it. He had a gospel to preach and he did preach it everywhere with all his might. He was a singularly happy man, and therefore he had no such cowardly reasons for desiring to depart.

Others, too, have said that they wished to depart because of their great suffering. Now the apostle thought of no such dastard flight. He was ready for all weathers. He had been beaten with rods; he had been stoned; he had been shipwrecked; but he could say, "None of these things moved me, neither count I my life dear unto me." He did not wish to escape from persecution. He rejoiced therein. He had often sung a hymn in prison, besides that hymn which he had sung with Silas for his companion. He had often shouted in the prospect of the block or the flames. Nor did he wish to die because of old age, for he was not an aged man when he wrote this epistle. He was just then, I suppose, in full vigorous health, and though in prison I do think that an angel might have ransacked the whole world before he could have found a happier man than the apostle Paul, for a man's happiness consisteth not in the wealth which he possesses. In the bare dungeons of Rome, Paul, the tent maker, had a glory about him which Nero never had in all his palaces; and there was a happiness there to which Solomon in all his glory never had attained. So then, the desire of Paul to depart is for these reasons far superior to the desire to the mere philosopher, or of the disappointed worldling.

What then made Paul wish to depart? I shall put it thus—the same reasons prompt the desires of every true believer; but they can have no power whatever with many here, who have no desire to depart, because for you to die would be not happiness and bliss, but an eternal weight of misery.

First, the apostle felt a desire to depart because he knew that in departing and being with Christ he should be clean rid of sin. Paul hated sin; every true believer does the same. There have been times with us brethren and sisters, when we could say, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Sin has been our plague. Like righteous Lot in Sodom, the sins of others have vexed us; but, alas! we have had to bear a Sodom in our own hearts, which has vexed us still more. As to the trials and troubles of this world, they are nothing at all to the believer, compared with the annoyance of sin. Could he get rid of his unbelief, of his murmuring disposition, of his hasty temper—could he get rid of the various temptations of Satan, could he be clean, and pure, and perfect, he would be thoroughly satisfied. And this made the apostle long to depart. "Oh," saith he to himself, "one baptism in the stream of death and I am perfect—but to pass the chill and dreary stream, I shall stand without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, before the throne of God." The dog of hell shall follow us to the very edge of Jordan, but he cannot swim that stream. The arrows of temptation will be shot at us as long as we are here, but on the other side of Jordan these darts can never wound us more. Rejoice, then, believer, in the prospect of death, because in dying thou art once for all clean

rid of sin. When I lay down this body I have laid down every infirmity and every lust, and every temptation, and when clothed upon with that house which is from heaven, I have girt about my loins perfection and unsullied purity. But oh! ye that believe not in Christ, ye do not desire to die for such a reason as this. For you there is no such a prospect. For you to die will be but to plunge deeper into sin. You sin now, and when you die, your spirit will descend to hell, where, in the midst of fit companions, whose guilt is ripened, you shall spend an eternity in oaths and curses, and blasphemies. O sinner! to-day you sow your sins in the furrows, and when you die you shall reap the the harvest. To-day you break the clods, to-day you work in the husbandry of iniquity; then there shall be a shouting of an awful harvest home. When pressed down with the sheaves of your sins, divine justice shall bring forth the harvest of misery and torment to you. You have reason enough to long to live, because for you to die is to reap the reward of your iniquities.

Again, Paul longed to die for another reason, because he knew that as soon he should depart he would meet his brethren in faith who had gone before. This desire also prompts you and me. I long to see, though it is but a few hours since we have lost their society, those two sisters, and the dear brother, who during this week have departed in Christ. Worshipping among us but a few days ago, it seems a strange thing to talk of them as being in heaven. But there they are, far from the reach of mortal vision. At our departure we shall see them. It was our happiness to see them not long before their departure, and to mark it down as one of the notabilia of our life, that these three, all of them alike, died in quiet peace, singing themselves into heaven, never staying their song, so long as memory and breath held out. We shall see them. But we have others we are longing for. Some of you may remember the departed wife, scarce cold within her grave. Many of you look back to dear little ones taken away in their infancy, carried off to their Father's God. Many of you remember aged parents; those that taught you in the way of God: the mother from whose lips you learned the first verse of Scripture, and the father upon whose arms you were carried for the first time up to the house of God. They are gone; but the joyous reflection remains that we are going in the same direction, and that we shall meet them soon. Some of us can look back through generations and trace our pedigree through the saints, and we are longing for the time when the whole band of us, those who have gone in olden time, and those who remain may sing together that new song of praise to our common God. Beloved, we have high joys in prospect; we shall soon join the general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven. Our companions now are but poor and despised, but we shall soon be brethren with princes. Moses who was king in Jeshuron, and David who ruled over Israel, shall not be ashamed to call us brethren, for the Highest himself shall acknowledge us, and he that on the throne doth sit shall lead us unto living fountains of water, and in his gracious fellowship shall wipe away all tears from off our faces. I think that the company of apostles, and prophets, and holy martyrs and confessors, who have gone before, will be a very sweet part of the bliss of the redeemed. And all this

may make us pant to depart. But, O ye ungodly ones! ye who have never been converted, and who fear not God, this hope is not for you. You must go to your own place. And whither must you go? To your drunken companions damned before you? Must you go down to the pit with harlots and with the profane? Whither away, whither away, thou careless man, thou lover of sin? Whither art thou going when thou diest? Thine answer might well be this doleful ditty: "I am going to be the guest of devils; I am going to feast with fiends; I am going to abide with murderers, and whoremongers, and adulterers, and with such as God hath condemned. These must be my companions for ever." Methinks I see the wheat of God standing in the valley every year, about to be gathered into the garner of heaven in its own place, and yonder I see the tares, and what is the message for them? "Gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them." And who knows in what bundle you may be? You may be bound up in the same bundle with murderers and suicides. Yes, the men that you despise may be your companions in the bundle of the wicked. The drunkard and the swearer, who some of you pretendedly good people look down upon with scorn, may be your bundle companions, your bed-fellows for ever when you make your bed in hell and abide in everlasting torment.

But last of all, Paul's grand reason for desiring to depart was to be with Christ. Again I say, simple though the words be—to be with Christ, have all heaven condensed in them. Like the sounding of the silver trumpet of jubilee rings this precious sentence, "to be with Christ." Like the harps of the glorified—like the singing of the redeemed, like the hallelujahs of paradise, does this ring upon mine ears, "To be with Christ." Lift up your voices, ye seraphim! Tune your hearts anew, ye seraphs! Shout for joy, ye blood-washed, but your loudest strain cannot excel the thundering glory of this magnificent but brief sentence, "to be with Christ, which is far better." This, my beloved—this shall well repay the tiresome pilgrimage of life. This reward shall be sufficient for all our contests with temptation, for all the shame we have endured in following Christ, in the midst of a wicked generation. This, this shall be all the heaven that our largest desires shall crave. This immensity of bliss shall stretch across eternity.

But, O unbeliever, what hast thou to do with such a hope as this? Thou canst not desire to depart and to be with Christ, for what is Christ to thee? To-day thou despisest him. The man of sorrow thou esteemest not. Jesus of Nazareth thou dost not regard. He is preached to thee every Sabbath day, but thou despisest him. With many tears have I presented him to thee, but thou hast shut thine heart against him; he has knocked at thy door and there he stands shivering even now, but thou wilt not admit him. Beware, ye that despise Jesus, for in another world ye shall see him after another fashion. Ye too shall be with him, but it shall be but for an instant. Summoned before his bar, dragged reluctantly to his dread tribunal, ye shall see him whom you despise; ye shall see him and not another. But oh, with what astonishment will ye behold him, and what amazement shall seize upon you! Ye shall see him, but no longer as the humble man! his eyes shall be as flames of fire. Out of his mouth shall go a two-edged sword. About him shall be wrapped "the rainbow wreath, and robes of stcrrn,"

and he shall speak in louder tones than the noise of many waters, and in great thunderings shall he address thee, "Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire in hell, prepared for the devil and his angels." Oh "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little." Oh, go to your houses; may God the Spirit draw you to your chambers, and may you there be led to fall upon your knees, confess your guilt, and humbly seek for pardon, through that precious blood which flows freely this day, and which will freely give pardon to you if with all your heart you seek it. May God's Spirit led you so to seek that you may find, and may you and I, and all of us, in the day of our departure, see the land before us—the happy shore of heaven. May we know that as our vessel sails from earth it shall only take a hasty voyage "to be with Christ, which is far better." God the Spirit visit you now, God the Son bless you, God the Father remember you, through Jesus. Amen.

The Power of Poetry.

We all love poetry. It is easier to learn than prose. It is easier to remember than prose. It is pleasanter to recall than prose. Not once in ten will it be found that an apostate from the Gospel was saturated in childhood with Gospel hymns. Those who do not desire their children to become Christians are warned that they should not prevent them from learning and especially from singing Gospel hymns. Hymn singing will mould children into the faith of Christ. They will be thus "taught and admonished." Steep a child in Christian hymns by his own singing of them, and you may feel that he is proof against all the "isms" of the day. Bushell says of the Moravian brethren, "It is affirmed that not one of ten of the members of that church recollects any time when he began to be religious. The Moravians train their children largely by the singing of hymns that centre in Christ and true Christ-worship." In the words of the hymn sung so sweetly by Phillip Phillips—

" Singing for Jesus glad hymns of devotion,
Lighting the soul on its pinions of love;
Dropping a thought or a word by the wayside
Telling of rest in the mansions above.

Music may soften where language would fail us,
Feelings long buried will often restore;
Tones that have dropped from the lips of departed,
How we revere them when they are no more."

Thus the hymn is mighty for good through its triple force, its genuine Christian emotion, its poetry, and its music.

Our Minister's Wife and her Noble Life.

CHAPTER IX.—MR. SPRIGHTLEY'S SPEECH.

AFTER twelve years arduous labour in Colcheston most unexpectedly Mr. Barton gave the church and congregation a stunning blow. To their great surprise he sent in his resignation as pastor, and in it gave the deacons to understand that such resignation must be considered as final. "What could be the matter?" was the question asked allround. "Had there been some secret dissatisfaction existing between himself, the officers, or any members of the church?" The strangest thing was that no one seemed to know anything about it, and all conjectures as to its origin or examination proved to be ineffectual. All that we could do was to wait for the next monthly church meeting, when doubtless the enigma would be solved.

The anxiously looked for time came at last, and it is needless to say that it was one of the largest church meetings that had been held for some time. Then the revelation was made. Mr. Barton in firm but affectionate tones informed us that for some time past he had felt that his work was done as our pastor, and that being the case he longed to enter upon some other field of labour where he could break up fresh ground. He said "that while some ministers—very few he thought—

were fitted for life-long pastorates, he certainly did not belong to that number. His spirit was decidedly an evangelistic one, and as he preferred also to leave a cause in a good state rather than run the risk of leaving it by too long a stay in a bad one it would be a great joy to him if we could find some suitable successor to enter into his labours. His mind was thoroughly set on doing pioneering work elsewhere, and he believed the Lord had laid that burden upon him. Hard toil rather than ease and comfort was his delight for Christ's sake, and although he could truly assure us that it cut him and his beloved wife to the heart to be called upon to leave so many dear friends behind them, the path of duty was clear as sunlight before him, and that path he must follow at all risks and costs. He could not help but bless and praise God for the measure of spiritual prosperity that had been given him, for the souls that had been gathered in through his humble instrumentality, and for the enlargement of our chapel, which was so well-filled Sabbath after Sabbath. The fruits of that he was content some other man should reap whom God might send to us. In his case he would say without boasting that when they were privileged to

meet, even in that hallowed place, 'The sower and the reaper would rejoice together.' And now he would add that he had already spoken to a dear brother minister who, entering into his feelings, had obtained for him an introduction into just such a place as he desired, where pioneering work was greatly needed, and if when he went to supply there on the appointed date he found the Spirit of the Lord go with him and the Word tell with living power an unanimous call or anything like it would certainly be accepted."

The upshot of this church meeting was that a resolution was passed that "Seeing the church had no option with deep regret, and wishing Mr. Barton the greatest success in any sphere to which the Lord might call him, it accepted Mr. Barton's resignation," and with many tears and much handshaking with our pastor, after the acceptance of several new candidates for church fellowship this sorrowful church meeting came to a close.

It is impossible to describe the consternation in the village when this resolution was made known, Mr. Barton and his wife had been made so useful to so many that numbers questioned whether he was taking the right step. But Mr. Barton himself seemed to entertain no doubt about the matter whatever, and when in a little better than a month afterwards he received a hearty and unanimous call to the pastorate of the church already indicated, we felt that all we could do was to accept the inevitable, and have a farewell tea meeting, at which practical tokens of our love and gratitude would be given to show our appreciation of his and his good wife's labours.

To describe the meeting as reported in the local papers is not my object. Suffice it for me to say that a valuable gold watch was presented to the retiring pastor, and suitable gifts to his dear partner. The only speech that I care to give is one that was taken down in shorthand by one of our members, and which is here transcribed for the reader's benefit. It was in my opinion and in that of others the speech of the night, and I need hardly say that it had almost exclusive relation to Mrs. Barton.

Mr. Sprightley was one of our best deacons, a blunt, plain, homely, and straightforward man, with some means and generous-hearted to the core. He had received but a moderate education, but was well-known and trusted as a successful business man, and being a good speaker his appearance on the platform was invariably hailed by the audience with delight.

"My dear friends," he began, "all of us no doubt feel deeply sorry to lose our honoured pastor and his dear wife, but then if he will go, you know, we can't stop him. He believes that the Lord sent him here, and that the Lord is calling him elsewhere, and if a God-sent minister believes that, and acts up to it, why you might just as well stand in front of an express train going at the rate of sixty miles an hour, and with outstretched arms strive to stop its swift career as strive to check him. Go he must, and go he will, and the people he leaves behind must make the best of it.

"But it is not about Mr. Barton that I am going to talk at all. In the speeches that have been made—and good speeches they have been too—I've observed

that much has been said about Mr. Barton, but little about his wife, and I'm going to try and supply the deficiency (Hear, hear, from Mr. Barton). I see Mr. Barton cheers that, so I know he won't be offended, and why should he, indeed, when he knows that she is his 'better half'? (Laughter). Now, I guess the reason why the preceding speakers have said so little about Mrs. Barton; it is not because they do not respect her, or value her work amongst us, but they were afraid she might not like to hear her own praises sounded, and happen that's true (cheers). I see you agree with me, but I am not going to be bound by that sort of thing. I intend to speak out, and give the parson's wife a bit of deserved praise as well as the parson. You may laugh, but I'm in real earnest, and I'm glad you agree with me. Well, when Mrs. Barton came amongst us at first, some of us wondered why she did not take up public work like her husband, and to be straightforward some of you grumbled at it, and you know you did; it's no use denying it, not for a moment (much laughter). But we soon found out that a minister's wife may live a noble life, and yet not be at the head of every female society in the church and congregation. What a good thing she did for us when she brought her worthy mother here. Though her working time was short amongst us, it will take many years to pass away before Mrs. Goldacre is forgotten (cheers). Never shall I forget how after partial recovery from her stroke she hobbled about to visit the poor and the afflicted, and the good she did for them they will remember to their dying

day. Then came the time when she was again stricken down, and as she lay there so helpless upon her bed, I can well call to mind how once when I visited her she said, with tears rolling down her poor cheeks, "Well, Mr. Sprightly, if I cannot go among you as I used to do I can pray for you, and that I do day and night." And who can tell, my dear friends, what those lonely prayers have done for us? It may be in God's estimation they were more precious than even her most active work. I never go into our graveyard and gaze upon her tombstone but that passage of Scripture occurs to my mind, 'She hath done what she could,' and God grant that that may in substance be said of all of us!

"And then Mrs. Barton taught us a lesson. How devoted she was as a daughter to her mother! It's touching a sore point I know, but when I think how that devotion was carried out amid great domestic trials, not the least of which was the loss of two of her young children I think it points a lesson to you young people to be kind to the old folk, and do your best for 'em, and you may depend upon it that the blessing of God will rest upon you inasmuch as the fifth commandment is the only commandment with promise, "Honour thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

"Well, as I have intimated, the preceding speakers have given Mr. Barton well-deserved praise, and they've said none too much, but I should like to know after all what Mr. Barton even would have been without his wife? Mr. Barton says, 'Hear

hear' to that, as I knew he would. No one can tell what a good minister's wife does to sustain her husband in his multifarious labours like the husband himself. That, however, is not often brought to the front. While he is abroad working for the Lord, she is often patiently suffering at home, and thousands of lonely hours she has to spend in the evening waiting until he turns up to minister to his needs and do her best in all ways to fit him for his next day's work. You may depend upon it, and I say it with no disrespect to Mr. Barton—that we owe as much to Mrs. Barton as to himself. Again I see Mr. Barton agrees with me, and he surely ought to know (laughter).

“And so I might go on, but I'm afraid if I go on much further Mrs. Barton will walk out of the chapel and never forgive me. I might speak about her hospitality to the ministers that have visited us, for it is well-known throughout the denomination how she has always had an open door for them; of her help given at times by her melodious voice in the

choir; of her exertions and sacrifices to make the ladies' sewing society a success in support of all our organizations, and specially in aid of our chapel enlargement; of the help she has given from time to time to enquirers among her own sex who have visited her at the manse; and last but by no means least of the scores and scores of visits she has paid, like her departed mother, to the poor and the afflicted, some of whom have died happily blessing her for such visits to the very last. But you know all this and much more, so I will just conclude by wishing you to give Mrs. Barton a good round cheer to show how much we love and respect her, the memory of which I know she will carry with her wherever she goes.”

It is needless to say that the hearty cheer thus called for was given, and in spite of Mrs. Barton's remonstrances afterwards Mr. Sprightley, with a smiling face, left the meeting like a man who felt that in making such an eulogistic speech he had only done his duty.

(To be continued.)

THE CHARACTERISTIC OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

THE one all-embracing characteristic of the children of God is that they believe in him. They perpetuate the sublime tradition of faith. In various modes, through all sorts of discouragement, they look unceasingly to him, believing that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that seek him. This faith of theirs is the heroic element in human history. It is that which ennobles the life of our race and makes it great. It is that which has inspired every kind of virtue—patience, self-denial, self-sacrifice, superiority to the senses and their world. Could there be a more ominous symptom of a bad heart than that one should be a traitor to those who represent this great cause on earth? Could there be a surer sign that a way of feeling, thinking, acting, or speaking is wrong than this: that it separates us from those who in all ages have stood upon the side of God and faith?—*British Weekly.*

Anecdotal Illustrations and Meditations from C. H. Spurgeon's Works.

Gathered by T. W. MEDHURST, CARDIFF.

NEVER GO INTO TEMPTATION.

The man who prays, "*Lead us not into temptation,*" and then goes into it, is a liar before God. What a hypocrite a man must be who utters this prayer, and then goes off to the theatre! How false is he who offers this prayer, and then stands at the bar and drinks and talks with depraved men and bedizened girls! "*Lead us not into temptation*" is shameful depravity when it comes from the lips of men who resort to places of amusement whose moral tone is bad. "Oh," say you, "you should not tell us of such things." WHY NOT? Some of you do them, and I make bold to rebuke evil wherever it is found, and shall do so while this tongue can move. There is a world of cant about. People go to "church" and say, "*Lead us not into temptation,*" and then they knew where temptation is to be found, and they go straight into it. You need not ask the Lord not to lead you there; He has nothing to do with you. The devil and you between you will go far enough without mocking God with your hypocritical prayers. The man who goes into sin wilfully with his eyes open, and then bends his knee and says half-a-dozen times over in his "church" on a Sunday morning, "*Lead us not into temptation,*" is a hypocrite without a mask upon him. Let him take that home to himself, and believe that I mean to be personal to him, and to such barefaced hypocrites as he.

DO NOT LEAD OTHERS INTO TEMPTATION.

Some seem to be singularly forgetful of the effect of their example; for they will do evil things in the presence of their children and those who look up to them. Now I pray you consider that by ill example you destroy others as well as yourself. Do nothing, my dear brother, of which you have need to be ashamed, or which you would not wish others to copy. Do the right at all times, and do not let Satan make "a cat's paw" of you to destroy the souls of others. Do you pray, "Lead us not into temptation"? Then do not lead your children there. They are invited to such and such a family party, where there will be everything but what will conduce to their spiritual growth, or

even to their good morals; do not allow them to go. Put your foot down. Be steadfast about it. Having once prayed. "Lead us not into temptation," act not the hypocrite by allowing your children to go into it. No, not even if it be a party during the festive season.

[Remember, ye fathers and mothers, every time you absent yourself from the house of the Lord on Sunday, either morning or evening, you are setting your children a bad example which they will be sure to follow as they grow older. If they become Sabbath-breakers, let it not be because their professedly Christian parents led them into temptation by their own inconsistent example.—T. W. M.]

THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD.

The bible is the writing of the living God. Each letter was penned with an Almighty finger; each word in it dropped from the Everlasting lips; each sentence was dictated by the Holy Spirit. Albeit that Moses was employed to write his histories with his fiery pen, God guided that pen. It may be that David touched his harp, and the sweet psalms of melody drop from his fingers, but God moved his hands over the living strings of his golden harp. Solomon sang Canticles of Love, and gave forth words of consummate wisdom; but God directed his lips, and made the preacher eloquent. If I followed the thundering Nahum, when his horses plough the waters; or Habakkuk, when he sees the tents of Cushan in affliction; if I read Malachi, when the earth is burning like an oven; if I turn to the smooth page of John, who tells of love; of the rugged chapters of Peter, who speaks of fire devouring God's enemies; if I turn to Jude, who launches forth anathemas upon the foes of God, everywhere I find God speaking; it is God's voice, not man's; the words are God's words; the words of the Eternal, the Invisible, the Almighty, the Jehovah of ages. This Bible is God's Bible, and when I see it, I seem to hear a voice springing up from it, saying, "I am the Book of God! Many read me! I am God's writing! Study my page, for I was penned by God. Love me, for He is my Author, and you will see Him visible and manifest everywhere.

BELIEVERS FULLY SUPPLIED IN CHRIST.

Having Christ, the believer has all that he can possibly require. The man of God thoroughly furnished in the possession of his great Saviour. He never need to look for anything beyond, for HIM all is treasured. Does he need *forgiveness* for the past? Pardons, rich and free, are with Jesus. Grace to cover all our sin is there; grace to rise above our follies and our faults. Is it *wisdom* which we lack? He is made of God unto us wisdom. His finger shall point out our path in the desert; His rod and staff shall keep us in the way when we "Walk through the valley of the shadow of death."

In our combat with foes, do we feel want of *strength*? Is He not Jehovah mighty to save? Will He not increase power unto the faint, and succour the fallen? Need we go to Assyria or stay in Egypt for help? Nay, these are broken reeds. Surely in the Lord Jehovah

have we righteousness and strength, The battle is before us, but we tremble not at the foe; we feel armed at all points, clad in impenetrable mail, for we are fully supplied in Him. Do we deplore our ignorance? He will give us *knowledge*; He can open one ear to mysteries unknown, Even babes shall learn the mysteries of His grace, and children shall be taught of the Lord. No other teacher is required. He is alone efficient, and all sufficient. Are we at times distressed? We need not inquire for *comfort*, for in Him, the Consolation of Israel, there are fountains full of the oil of joy, and rivers of the wine of thanksgiving. The pleasures of the world are void to us, for we have infinitely more joy than they can give in HIM who has made complete.

Ah, my brother, whatever exigencies may arise, you will need to say, "I have searched but cannot find what I require," for it is and ever shall be found in the storehouse of mercy, even in Jesus Christ.

BE SURE YOUR SIN WILL FIND YOU OUT.

Coals of fire cannot be concealed beneath the most sumptuous apparel, they will betray themselves with smoke and flame; nor can darling sins be long hidden beneath the most ostentatious profession, they will sooner or later discover themselves, and burn sad holes in the man's reputation. Sin needs quenching in the Saviour's blood, not concealing under the garb of religion.

Our lives to-day are like the pictures upon the photographer's plate before he develops it; God hath but to put the soul into a bath prepared according to His divine art, and all the sins of his whole existence will stand out clear before the sinner's astonished gaze. Nothing can be forgotten, all the past must live again. Let the unconverted tremble as they think of this, and let the saved ones bless the Lord Jesus who has so blotted out their sins that no power or process can ever bring again to remembrance.

DAILY CONSECRATION.

EVERY day let us renew the consecration to God's service: every day let us in His strength pledge ourselves afresh to do His will, even in the veriest trifle, and to turn aside from anything that may displease Him. He does not bid us bear the burdens of to-morrow, next week, or next year. Every day we are to come to Him in simple obedience and faith, asking help to keep us and aid us through that day's work; and to-morrow and to-morrow, and through years of long to-morrows, it will be but the same thing to do; leaving the future always in God's hands, sure that He can care for it better than we. Blessed trust! that can thus confidently say, "This time is mine with its present duty: the rest is God's, and when it comes his presence will come with it."—*Madame Guyon*.

The Missionary Movement and Young People.

BY REV. G. D. HOOPEK, LUTON, BEDS.

ON the greatest birthday this world has ever known, when Jesus was born a babe in Bethlehem, the Angel's message to the shepherds was, "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."—Luke ii., 10. Just 19 centuries have sped their course, and two-thirds of the race have never yet heard of Christ! The first and the last have been missionary centuries, but I fear the intervening ones, with slight exceptions, have ignored the great charge, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." Let us be thankful for these past 100 years, Look at what has been done in simple faith and prayerful devotion in this grandest work the world knows, making the one great Saviour known to all people. It was on the 30th May, 1792, that William Carey preached his memorable sermon at Nottingham, from Isaiah liv., 2-3, urging we should (1) *Expect great things from God*, and (2) *Attempt great things for God*. This message from God awoke our Baptist fathers (who had the honour of being so largely the pioneers of modern missions) from their stupor, and led to a meeting that autumn, when twelve ministers formed a society to send the Gospel to the heathen, subscribed the sum of £13 2s. 6d. towards this gigantic enterprise. Brave Carey, once the village cobbler, offered to be the first missionary. How he reached India, how in 1800 he joined those men of God, Marshman and Ward, how they toiled and taught and translated the Scriptures, how in 26 years they gave their of own earnings, nearly £50,000, and in all probably some £80,000—all this is written on many a page. If any names deserve to be written in letters of gold upon the page of history, it is surely these. A hundred years ago, not a native Christian convert! In 1891, at the last census, there were in the Bombay presidency alone (where these godly men began the work) 186,000 native Christians! Of course this, and similar results throughout India, as well as other countries, must be credited to many Churches, whose workers followed in the wake of Carey. Dr. Dennis estimates the number of adherents gained to the Christian faith from heathenism during this century as nearly four millions. Surely, with glad and grateful hearts, we may say, "What hath God wrought!"

Now let us look at the other side of the picture. What is there still left undone? At our Baptist Centenary breakfast, the Rev. R. H. Lovell displayed a little diagram which he found helpful whenever he prayed "Thy Kingdom come." This little coloured chart showed, of the 1,500,000,000 people in the world, there were:—Protestants, 135,000,000; Roman Catholics, 195,000,000; Greek Church, 85,000,000; Jews, 8,000,000; Mohammedans, 200,000,000; heathen, 877,000,000.

And this after 19 centuries of Christianity! Do we not often sing:—

“Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim,
And publish abroad His wonderful name.
The Name all victorious of Jesus extol;
His Kingdom is glorious, and rules over all.”

Yet when we think of the great mass of heathen darkness where His blessed Name is not even known, might we not change our note and sing:—

“Shame on us, Christians, brothers,
His sacred Name who bear;
O, shame—thrice shame upon us,
Unless *for them* we care.”

But you may ask, how may we care? What can we do? I answer first, if you are Christ's, consider His great charge as spoken to yourself, “Go *YE* into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.” Why should God not mean *you*, when duly trained and fitted, to be His messenger to take the name of Jesus to these sons of sorrow and of darkness. Next, *pray* the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers (Matt. ix., 37-38). After all, societies may organize and colleges may train, but it is God who must call, and by His Spirit divinely qualify for this holy service. To send out men and women not thus called and fitted, however skilled in human knowledge, were a sheer waste of time and funds. I doubt if our Churches nearly grasp their responsibility as to prayer both for home and foreign work. So, in any case, may we at least, wait earnestly on God to call and fit great numbers for this new crusade.

Then, too, we have a branch of our Baptist Missionary Society, or some other, in connection with our Church. Perhaps we give something to it already. Whether we give what God would have us, or in proportion to the awful needs of the world is another matter. It has been my privilege to have a little to do with one of the largest missionary colleges in the world these last two years, and I have been struck with the numbers of bright earnest Christian young men and women consecrated to the missionary cause, but then these need support. If they give their lives to learn the languages and preach and teach and toil amid the Pagan darkness, or amidst the almost equally corrupt masses of Popery or Mohammedanism, they need food, clothing, home, etc. Is it not humiliating that with the vast increase of national wealth, most missionary societies are in debt? With larger funds, many more workers might be sent out. It *may* be wise to save against a rainy day. It *must* be wise to give to such a cause from love to Christ Himself. If, dear reader, you will ponder this matter on your knees before God, and resolve as He shall help to give systematically, to the point of self-denial, to such societies as faithfully obey His charge, you will be helping to answer the sublime prayer, “Thy Kingdom come”; you will gladden your Saviour's heart as He still sits against His treasury; and you will have the eternal joy of sharing in the greatest enterprize God ever gave to man, the evangelisation of the world.

The Knoweth the Way that I take.

By A. M. RICHARDS.

AS we grope in the shadows of earth's rayless night,
 And pray for the morning to break,
 This thought lights our way, like a rift in the clouds,—
 He knoweth the way that I take.
 He knoweth the way, and the way is his own,
 And I take it with him, not alone, not alone.

And as the rude tempests on life's surging sea
 Cause our frail bark to shiver and shake,
 So Jesus was tossed to and'fro on life's tide,
 And his is the way that I take.
 He knoweth, though stormy, the way is his own,
 And I take it with him—not alone, not alone.

And when those we've cherished are laid from our sight
 And it seems that our friends all forsake,
 So the Master was left in his anguish alone,
 And this is the way that I take.
 He knoweth, though lonely, the way is his own,
 And I take it with him,—not alone, not alone.

And in that glad morn, when the shadows shall flee
 And the day of his coming shall break,
 Our hearts will rejoice that we walked in his way,
 So let his be the way that I take.
 He knoweth the way, and the way is his own,
 And we take it with him,—not alone, not alone.

Death of a Chinese Girl.

ONE beautiful Sabbath afternoon, Wen Hsin, a Chinese girl, lay dying in our Pekin school.

We knew she must soon go, and so, as it is the custom in China, she was bathed and dressed in her grave-clothes. Her glossy black hair was knotted on top of her head with bright red cord. She wore a dark blue garment with a bit of bright trimming down the edge, snowy stockings and embroidered slippers were on her feet. Her white hands were folded peacefully, and she lay so calm we knew she was resting in the arms of Jesus, and only waiting for Him to take her spirit from the poor worn body.

It was the hour of the Sunday-School. They knew in the chapel that she was dying, and through the open window we could hear them singing, "There's a land that is fairer than day."

The busy little clock on the square red table kept on ticking, ticking, until the Sunday-School was dismissed and many of her schoolmates gathered sorrowfully around the brick bed on which the dying girl lay.

Several of her old friends came in from the neighbourhood. None of them had ever seen a Christian die before, and they gazed with wonder upon the peaceful girl, and went back to their homes with the wondrous news that Wen Hsin lay dying and was not afraid!

From such a mother had the girl been saved. Somebody in America had given thirty dollars a year to support her in a Christian school.

As she found how precious it was to have the dear Lord Jesus go with her through "the valley and shadow," she was thinking of them, the kind friends so far away, who had done so much for her.

I said to her: "Wen Hsin, do you want anything?"

"I—want—to—write—a—letter."

"Oh, you are too weak! What is it you want to say? Tell me, and I will write it for you."

Gathering up all the strength she had left, she gasped it out in her weakness, a word at a time:

"I—want—to—tell—my—American—friends—they—did—not—spend—their—money—in—vain—for—me."

Soon she closed her black eyes, and went away from the brick bed to the mansion prepared for her, but she had sent her precious message to cheer and encourage the home workers in the mission cause."—*Clara M. Cushman.*

A desire to love Christ springs from the love of Christ to us.

Wait on the Lord, He will supply you: wait for the Lord He will deliver you.

Reviews.

Richard Weavers' Life Story. Edited by Rev. James Paterson, M.A., B.D., of White Memorial Free Church, Glasgow. Morgan and Scott, 12, Paternoster Buildings.

We give most hearty welcome to this volume. The Triumph of Divine Grace in the Life and Death of Richard Weaver is worthy of permanent record, and the Editor has done well in as far as possible keeping to Weaver's own style and words. The story is a most interesting and thrilling one, and we believe cannot fail to do good wherever its pages are read.

Bells at Evening. By Frances J. Crosby. With Biographical Sketch by Robert Lowry. Morgan and Scott.

How sweetly chime those bells. They have rung out their Gospel music in every land, and their stirring peals and tender tones have been heard in thousands of homes and tens of thousands of hearts. We are sure every one will wish to read the biography of the writer of "Safe in the Arms of Jesus" and "Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine." Though blind from infancy she could put on records at eight years of age:—

"O, what a Happy Soul am I
Although I cannot see.

I am resolved that in this world
Contented I will be.

How many blessings I enjoy
That other people don't.

To weep and sigh because I'm blind
I cannot, and I won't."

We say to all read this book.

Thirty-one Parables Explained. By Louisa Horsley. Elliot Stock, Paternoster Row.

The writer's design is to help youthful readers by giving a simple and concise exposition of some of the unexplained Parables of our Lord. It contains thirty-one parables selected from the four Evangelists, and will be very helpful to young readers. Our only complaint is their brevity.

Unveiling the Papacy. Revelations of the Great Mystery. A Solemn Warning from Heaven to every British Subject. By James L. Wood. Author of the "Hidden Hand." Marshall Brothers, Keswick House, Paternoster Row.

We quite agree with the statement every man who values the freedom of his country should read and circulate this startling shilling book. Besides unveiling the Jesuits, it contains a good likeness of the Queen and Copy of the Coronation Oath.

How to be Happy and to make Others Happy. By Otto Funcke. Translated by Sophia Taylor. Hodder and Stoughton, Paternoster Row.

The title excites expectations, and the readers of the book will not be disappointed. Every chapter is brimful of good profitable reading. We were sorry when we reached the last page of a work so suggestive, stimulating and helpful.

The Lonely God. By Coulson Kernahan. Author of *God and the Ant.* Ward Lock and Co.

One of the strange Sins Series, by a writer who has again and again proved singular power in putting his thoughts in a form which compels attendance. *The Lonely God* is equal to anything yet produced by this original writer and thinker.

Space forbids us more than to call attention to our several valuable magazines. *The Treasury of Religious Thought* has a good sermon by Dr. Dixon on How to Talk with Doubters, and a brief paper on Drummond as an Evangelist. *The Quiver* for August has a valuable paper by Rev. Mark Guy Pearce on the Saints of Cæsar's Household. *The Great Thoughts* is enriched with likenesses and articles on the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone and the Earl of Beaconsfield. *Mothers and Daughters* is bright with the Beauty Spots of Wales, with pictures of Llanberis Pass and Snowdon. *The Leisure Hour* has a valuable chapter on Crewe, in the Midlands (illustrated), by W. J. Gordon. *The Friendly Greetings* gives its readers good likenesses of the Queen, 1837—1897. *The Sunday at Home* makes a very informing description of Jewish Life in the Middle Ages, by the Rev. J. A. Gurney. *Sunday Hours* packed with good things, among which, On

Women who have influenced the Young, with a likeness and chapter on Frances Ridley Havergal. *The Boys' Own and Girls' Own Papers* are as usual richly laden with treasures for our Boys and Girls. Our own magazines, *The Baptist*, contains a very excellent essay on The Beloved Disciple by Rev. J. D. Bate. Also an article, which all should read. On the Education of the Young in our Distinctive principles, by Rev. James Stuart. *The Sword and Trowel* contains an account of the memorial stone laying by Mrs. C. H. Spurgeon of the Beulah Baptist Chapel, Bexhill-on-Sea, and the addresses by Pastors Charles and Thomas Spurgeon and Pastor Archibald G. Brown.

We have received and wish all success to the objects they represent:—*In His Name, The Irish Baptist, The Boys' Penny Sunday Monthly, The Cottager and Artisan, Light in the Home, Our Little Dots, and Child's Companion, The Prize Reciter, Helping Words, Mothers and Daughters, Life and Light, The Sunday Closing Reporter, The Bible Societies Monthly and Gleanings for the Young, Monthly Records of Protestant Missions, The Gospel Echo.* Also Number 22 Part of C. H. Spurgeon's *Treasury of David*. This carries the reader to the 91st Psalm of this incomparable work. Cases from 1 to 3 for binding, 1s. 4d., or post free, 1s. 6d. each.

A unique bill has recently been found in the British Museum in London which gives some interesting items. It is the bill for burning the three heroic martyrs of England, and reads as follows: "Charge for burning the bodies of Cranmer, Latimer and Ridley: For three loads wood fagots, 12s.; item, one load furze fagots, 3s. 4d.; item, for carriage, 2s. 6d.; item, a post, 2s. 4d.; item, two chains, 3s. 4d.; item, two tables, 6d.; item, labourers, 2s. 8d.; total, £1 6s. 8d." Furze fagots came high enough, but it cost more than any mathematician can figure to hold men to the stake. It does not pay to persecute.

Denominational Intelligence.

CHANGES IN THE PASTORATE.

Rev. W. Carey Sage, B.A., B.D., from Swanage, to Duffield Church.

Rev. A. Stock, from Honiton, to Waterbarn, Lanchashire.

Rev. J. Spanswick, from Salem Church, Longford, to Weston-by-Weeden.

Rev. C. L. Gordon, from Sheepwash, to Wantage.

Rev. C. A. Ingram, from New Romney, to Brasted, near Sevenoaks.

Rev. Benjamin Williams, from Denbigh, to Llwynhendy.

Rev. J. S. Langley, from Manchester, to Burnley-road, Padiham.

Rev. E. Williams, from Cardiff College, to Burton-on-Trent.

Rev. B. J. Gibbon, from Southampton, to Bloomsbury Chapel, London.

Rev. A. Morris, from Festiniog, to Llangennech, near Llanelly.

Rev. E. Francis, from Bartholomew-street, Exeter, to Hope-street, Devonport.

Rev. W. B. Taylor, from Chesham, to Zion Church, Cambridge.

Rev. W. Hughes, from Crewe, to the mission station at Worth.

RECOGNITIONS.

Services in connection with the settlement of Rev. F. Greening Kemp (late of Wigan) as pastor at Aldershot, were held on Wednesday, August 4: Tea was provided in the schoolroom.

A public meeting followed, Deacon Evans stating how and why the church had been led to invite Mr. Kemp. A hearty reception was then given to the pastor by Rev. J. H. Loxley (Wesleyan), G. W. Dominey (Presbyterian), Mr. Musselwhite (Primitive Methodist).

Rev. W. J. Young has been recognised as pastor of the united churches at Spratton and Ravensthorpe. Rev. A. Morgan preached, and Revs. J. T. Brown, F. Neal, E. Lovell, Spedding Hall and J. Hooper, took part.

Rev. J. Francis, of Aberystwyth College, has been ordained minister of Bethania Chapel, Cwmsynog. A larger building is about to be erected.

PRESENTATIONS.

Rev. E. W. Cantrell, a cheque for £161 from the Baptist churches in Birmingham to defray the cost of a voyage to South Africa.

Rev. T. Walton, a writing-desk and purse of money from Ebenezer Church, Cardiff.

Rev. W. H. Rose, a purse of gold and an illuminated address from Providence Chapel, Reading.

Rev. J. Lloyd, cheque for £30, and silver basket to Mrs. Lloyd, on leaving Maesteg Church for Swansea.

A farewell meeting was held at Callow Land Chapel, Watford, to take leave of Rev. A. H. Horlick, who after twelve months' student pastorate, is returning to complete

his studies at Bristol College. Gifts of books and money were presented. Mr. Horlick is being succeeded by Mr. W. Hogan, another student.

NEW CHAPELS.

Memorial stones of a new chapel have been laid at Ipsley Green, Redditch, by Mrs. J. Smallwood, Mrs. W. H. Yeomans, Rev. E. W. Berry, Mrs. G. F. Hoskins, Mrs. J. S. Hanson, and Rev. C. Spurgeon (in memory of his father, Rev. C. H. Spurgeon).

A new chapel is being erected in Commercial Road, Guildford (Rev. J. Rankine), at a cost of £2,200. Foundation stones were laid by Rev. Charles Spurgeon, the Mayor (Mr. C. Whist) and others.

A new Welsh chapel, erected at a cost of £2,600, to accommodate 500 worshippers, has been opened at Cadoxton Barry.

DOUGLAS, ISLE OF MAN.—The congregation which has for some time worshipped in Regent Hall, under the ministry of Rev. R. A. Burrows has opened a new chapel. The building, which is situate between the Esplanade and Derby Terrace, and has a frontage to Castle Mona Avenue, is of two storeys, the upper one being used as the church. It is capable of seating 340 people.

In connection with the opening of the new school chapel at Slough, and the recognition of Mr. T. Cousens as student pastor, on Wednesday, July 28, a sermon was preached by Pastor Charles Spurgeon. Over 160 friends sat down to tea in the Congregational schoolroom (kindly lent for the occasion). The evening meeting was presided over by Mr. J. Corpe, of Ealing. Addresses were given by Mr. J. Benson, Revs. Jesse Aubrey, T. S. Bateman, W. Gibbs, R. F. Elder, and T. Cousens. A balance-sheet was presented which showed the total debt to be about

£500. For the opening day £22 5s. had been collected, and the proceeds of the day were over £17.

The Home Missionary Committee for North Wales report that ten new chapels are about to be erected. The Welsh chapel at Rhos is to be enlarged at an outlay of £1,000. A new mission church is to be erected at Rhostyllen at a cost of £400. A new chapel is to be erected at Pontley, and another at Moss.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Baptist Union autumn assembly at Plymouth, in October, includes a Home Mission centenary meeting in the Guildhall: Sermons by Revs. J. W. Bond; G. Hay Morgan, B.Sc.; J. Hulme; G. Howard James; J. H. Jowett, M.A., of Birmingham; E. Thomas; J. B. Johnston, M.A.; and R. Richard, of Bristol. At the closing public meeting in the Guildhall, the Chairman will be Sir Hugh Gilzean-Read, LL.D., of London, and addresses on Baptist Church Principles will follow, by Revs. J. T. Forbes, M.A., of Edinburgh; D. J. Hiley, of Bristol; and J. Thomas, M.A., of Liverpool.

WALES.—The Baptist Union of Wales has been holding its annual meetings at Neath. The Secretary's report stated that during the last sixty years the denomination had progressed in Wales as follows:—1837—churches, 296; members, 25,000; 1897—churches, 783; members, 101,791; Sunday-school scholars, 108,218; chapels, 871; sitting accommodation, 328,311; baptized during the year, 4,747. During the past 20 years the increase in the population was at the rate of 30 per cent., and the increase in membership 37 per cent. The Welsh Baptists numbered 105,000, representing an increase of 28,675 in the course of the past 25 years, or at the rate of one in 17. In North Wales it was one in

39, South Wales one in 14, England one in 127, Scotland one in 320,

AMERICA.—During the year ending July 1, the American Baptists raised a million dollars for missionary work. This includes the extinction of a large debt, towards which Mr. J. D. Rockefeller gave a quarter of a million.

Tonbridge Bible Union and Christian Endeavour is held at the Baptist Chapel, High Street, Tonbridge, as follows:—Lord's Day, 2.45 p.m.—An Hour with the Bible.—Happy, homely, and helpful meetings. Evangelistic Meetings, 8 p.m.—Sacred Songs, Solos, Testimonies, and Short Gospel Addresses. Tuesday, 8 p.m.—Christian Endeavour, in Schoolroom.—A pleasant and profitable hour.

BAPTISMS.

Abersychan: Noddfa.—July 18, Eight, by O. Tidman
Armley, Leeds.—July 11, Five, by W. Sumner
Birmingham: Aston, Christ Church.—July 25, Five, by A. W. Oakley
Blackwood, Mon., Mount Pleasant.—August 8, Three, by H. J. Harris
Braton, Wilts.—August 9, Five, by W. Fry
Brayford, N. Devon.—August 8, Five, by T. Breewood
Builth Wells.—July 9, Three, by H. Evans
Braintree, Essex.—July 11, Two, by A. Curtis
Cottensham: Old Meeting.—July 18, Five, by C. T. Allen
Crickhowel, Breconshire.—July 15, Two, by W. M. Yorwerth
Cardiff: Hope.—July 25, Two, by T. W. Medhurst
Cardiff: Llandaff-road.—July 25, Three, by Z. H. Lewis
Coxall, near Knighton.—August 1, One, by W. Williams
Elgin.—August 8, One, by J. F. Tavin
Ford, Devonport.—July 15, Three, by A. T. Head
Guisley, Yorks.—July 29, Two, by R. Scott

Great Broughton, Cumberland.—July 29, One, by A. Greer
Golborne, Lancashire.—August 1, Two, by E. L. Jones
Halwill Station.—August 1, Five, by J. Winsor
Kelso, N.B.—July 18, Four, by J. W. Kemp
Kiluburn, Newport, Fife.—July 11, Two, by D. Clark
Leeds: York-road.—Three, by C. Riseborough
Merthyr Vale.—July 11, Three, by H. P. Jones
Moriah, Risca.—July 6, Two, by J. O. Jenkins
Merthyr Tydfil Tabernacle.—July 18, Eleven, by D. Price
Nuneaton.—July 18, Eleven, by J. R. Mitchell
Okehampton.—July 3, One, by G. J. Whiting
Pembroke Dock.—July 7, One, by R. C. Roberts
Pontnewydd, Mon.—July 25, One, by D. O. Griffiths
Rishworth, Halifax.—July 28, One, by D. Jerman
Skegness: St. Paul's.—July 15, Seven; August 1, Two, by G. Goodchild
Skipton, Yorkshire.—July 25, Six, by W. Judge
Southampton, Carlton.—July 29, Three, by N. T. J. Miller
South Bank, Yorks.—July 13, Three, by D. M. Pryse
Tring: New Mill.—June 27, Seven, by H. J. Martin
Tonypandy (Bethel, English).—July 25, Two, by D. Davies
Worcester: Sansome-walk.—July 4, Five, by J. B. Johnston, M.A.

LONDON DISTRICT.

Brentford, North-road.—August 15, One, by R. Mortimer
Penge Tabernacle, S.E.—July 21, Two, by J. W. Boud
Scuth Bermondsey, Iderton-road.—July 18, Seven, by T. B. Howe
Stratford, Carpenter-road.—July 19, Four, by F. S. Passmore
Woolwich Tabernacle.—August 10, Eleven, by J. Wilson

Mr. Evil-Questioning Tried and Executed.

A SERMON BY THE LATE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

"Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean?"—2 Kings v. 12.

PROUD SELF and EVIL QUESTIONING are two of Satan's firmest allies, and two of the chief destroyers of the souls of men. Both of these adversaries attacked Naaman at once. Proud Self fell upon him and gave him the first blow, and Naaman cried, "Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper." When Proud Self had given his blow, on came his friend and helper, Evil Questioning, and he smote Naaman, and then Naaman said, "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean?" Ah! it is a hard case with a man who has to fight with two such imps as these—his own proud spirit, and that equally wicked spirit of unbelief—asking questions—evil questions—and tempting the Lord our God. Against the first, namely, our proud and righteous self, God has opened all his batteries. The ten commands are like ten great pieces of ordnance, every one of them pointed against our own pride and self-righteousness. The Bible is an opponent, even unto death, of everything like boasting, or encouraging the hope of salvation by any efforts of our own. Righteous Self is doomed to be rent in pieces, and his house to be made a dunghill; God hates him because he is an anti-Christ, and sets himself in opposition to the plenteous atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. As for Evil Questioning, he also doth much ruin among the souls of men. And as it has been my hap of late to meet him very often, I propose this morning to track him to his den, to bring him out to light, and by God's help, if his Spirit shall be here present, to fully defeat him, once for all, to the rescue of many of you. Oh, what multitudes of souls have gone to hell asking questions. Not asking "What must I do to be saved?" but asking questions about matters too high for them; asking, in fact, questions which were only meant to be some excuse for continuing in their sins, pillows for their wicked heads to lean upon; putting queries to ministers, and propounding hard and knotty points, that from the ignorance of man they might draw reasons why they should continue in their evil way, should hold on in their wicked course, and so should resist the mercy of God.

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Just listen to what Evil Questioning said to Naaman, and what Naaman said as the result of it. If I understand my text aright, it means just this: "What virtue can there be in water? Why should I be told to go and wash at all? I have washed many times and it never cured my leprosy. This dry disease is not so readily got rid of; but supposing there is some medical influence in water, why must I wash in Jordan? It is but a mere ditch; why can I not go and wash in some of my own rivers? We have medicinal streams in our own land. At any rate, Abana and Pharpar are cleaner and wider, and their current is stronger than that of the Jordan, which empties itself into the Dead Sea. And to my mind," he says, "it seems to be but a dead river at the very best. May I not go home to Samaria and there wash? A pretty thing that I should come all this way from Samaria to see this prophet, and then all he should tell me should be, 'Wash and be clean. It is absurd,' he says, "It is contrary to the nature of things; it cannot be possible, and therefore," he says, "I will not go and try it." This, you see, was Evil Questioning. What business was it of Naaman's whether there was any medicinal power in the water or not? What concern was it to him whether Abana or Pharpar were better or worse than Jordan? he need have nothing to do but with the simple command—"Go, wash in Jordan seven times, and thou shalt be clean." 'Twas his to obey, not to question. 'Twas his to fulfil the command, not to enquire into its philosophy.

Now, what Evil Questioning said to Naaman, *that* he has said to many of you, my hearers. I know there are some of you who are even to-day harbouring this arch-traitor. I pray that God by his grace may find him out this morning, that we may turn him out of your hearts.

I shall try, first of all, to *detect this old Mr. Evil Questioning*. When we have found him out, I shall try to *describe him to you* so that you may know him again the next time you meet him. Then, when we have described him, we will bring him out, and by God's help we will *execute him*; and when we have done that, I shall propose to you that we *kill all his children*, for they are a very large family. If we may believe John Bunyan, there are some nine or ten of them, and all of them the picture of their old father. I hope we shall have grace to put an end to them as well as the parent.

I. First, then, let us DETECT OLD MR. EVIL QUESTIONING.

He does not go by that name in the world. When he was brought up to be tried as a traitor, he had the impudence to tell the Judge that his name was not *Evil Questioning* at all. "My Lord," he said, "my proper name is *Honest Enquiry*, not *Evil Questioning*. There may be a man of the name of *Evil Questioning*, but I am not that person at all, and I hope it will never become a sin for a man to make an honest enquiry, and freely to ask the ground of any truth that is propounded to him. For, my Lord, if we are to take things upon mere credence, matters of faith upon the witness of men, indeed we shall soon make great fools of ourselves. My name is 'Honest Enquiry,' my Lord, and I think myself to be a very honest citizen." Since *Evil Questioning* goes by that name, then, and you will not, therefore, readily detect him, I must take you round to see if we can find him out by his speech, for it is not by his name, but by his prating, that you may know this fellow.

Now, Lord Will-be-will, according to John Bunyan, in his allegory of the Holy War, kept an officer called Mr. Diligence, who used to go about listening under people's windows, catching every word he heard, and then he would bring to his Lord intelligence if any traitor were harboured within the gates. Let me play the part of Mr. Diligence, and we will listen a moment or two while we hear old Mr. Evil Questioning talk. He is a ready fellow; he can talk upon almost any subject; I heard him the other day preach a sermon upon doctrine. He had been hearing a Calvinist minister. This minister had preached the truth as it is in Jesus, and he had earnestly exhorted him to lay hold on Christ Jesus, but Mr. Evil Questioning put it thus—"Now, if there are so many to be saved, and there are a certain number of people that are not to be saved, then it can make no difference to me, I had better leave it as it is; for if I am to be saved I shall be saved, and if I am not to be saved I shall not be saved. Besides," said he, "it is irresistible grace that saves men. Now, if God sends that grace into my heart, then I shall be saved, and if he does not, why I cannot do anything, and therefore I may as well sit still as try and do anything you know. I hear the minister say that faith and repentance are the gift of God; well, if they are the gift of God, how inconsistent he was to exhort me to believe and repent. The man does not understand logic. I shall not believe, I shall not repent. For, do you not see that it does not stand to reason that I should try to do either the one or the other, because they are both the gift of God." Thus the man satisfied himself, and while I heard him talking, I thought to myself, "I know you Mr. Evil Questioning, well, and I know your father too; you are a descendant of the old fellow that was hanged in Bad Street, in old Bunyan's time, and I only wish I had the hanging of you again." He went another day to hear an Arminian preacher. He heard this preacher talking about the universal love, and the universal mercy of God; and this minister exhorted him to lay hold on Christ. But Mr. Evil Questioning is like a spider, he can suck gall out of any flower; so he went home and he said—"Well, if God is so infinitely merciful, then my sins are very little things indeed. I need not make all this fuss and bother about them. I will just go on in them, and no doubt God will not be hard with me at the last, but will just forgive those sins off-hand, whether I believe or not. And, besides," said he, "his mercy is so lasting, that when I come to die I will just say, 'Lord, have mercy upon me,' and then I shall enter into the kingdom of heaven as well as the best of them. And what is the use of that man exhorting me to believe and to repent, for he told me I might fall from grace? I might as well not begin, as begin now, presently to leave off, so I will wait till the end of my life before I begin, and then I shall run the less risk of falling from grace afterwards." Thus he reasoned with himself. Now whenever you hear that kind of argument, you may know at once there is a traitor there. You have discovered him. That is old Mr. Evil Questioning. Do not lose a moment, run straight up to your chamber, and tell the Lord that you have found out a traitor; ask him to send at once a warrant after him, to arrest the fellow who is doing the utmost he can to destroy your soul.

Sometimes this gentleman does not preach a doctrinal sermon but it

is a practical one. I heard him the other day declaiming thus: "I do not go to any place of worship now-a-day; for to tell the truth, there is such a variety of sects and parties, and one kind of Christians finds fault with another kind, that they are not agreed among themselves, I do not mean to go and listen to them or to pay any attention to them while they are so divided and so bigoted. Besides," he said, "look at the Christians, they are no better than other people, I dare say; their best ministers, if we could catch them in a corner, are not at all superior to the rest of mankind, and as to common professors, why I lost ten pounds the other day by one of them who is a deacon. They are not a whit superior to the rest of mankind, I am sure; therefore, I shall not think about religion at all, it is all a farce and a lie. Why should I consider it? I will have nothing to do with it." There is the traitor again. At other times this man will find out some poor, lean, half-starved Christian, who has but little grace and very great misery, and he begins to talk thus. "There are your Christians, see what moping folks they are! How miserable! I never saw such a set of people in my life. Why if I were to go and listen to their minister I should drown myself in a month; they are such miserable wretches. As for me, I say let us *hope* well and *have* well; let us live merrily while we may, and if we must ever think about these serious things, let us put it off to the last." Have you never heard that gentleman? Ah, my hearers, there are some of you that have got him in your hearts, and I am only describing what you have often said to yourselves; or if I have not as yet hit upon the precise discourse of old Mr. Evil Questioning, yet I think I have tracked out some of his haunts. Does he not often give a tap at your door, and you say, "Walk in friend *Questioning*, I have a little matter to talk over with you. The minister has given me a little trouble in my conscience; come and see if you cannot put a plaster over the wound, so that I may go on in my sins comfortably, and be relieved from the troublesome necessity of changing my life and becoming a Christian." Sometimes this old fellow *Evil Questioning* goes further and tries, as he says, to lay the axe at the root of the thing. "Why," he says, "this doctrine of the atonement, this salvation by the blood of Christ, I have only just this to say about it, that a rational man cannot believe it at all. It is positively ridiculous to think of a man being saved by the righteousness of somebody else, let the Methodist believe it, I shall not. There is no reason in it." Then he begins to ask questions about the atonement, and proceeds to questions about the decrees, questions about inscrutable matters, questions about effectual calling, about total depravity, and the like, and so he runs through the whole scale of gospel truths and Bible revelations, stopping at each one and asking a question that he may find in each some apology for disobeying God, some excuse for not yielding up his whole heart to Christ, and *now* believing in him that died to save the souls of men.

I think, however, I need not give you a more accurate description than I have done of this arch-destroyer. It fact, it were utterly impossible for me to describe to you all his speeches. There is no subject which he will not handle. He is so glib of tongue and he has such sophistry of argument, that he will often persuade a man to

believe that the worse is the better reason, and make a man imagine that he is not only excusable, but even commendable, for not being a Christian, and giving up his heart to Christ. Oh! if I could but see this Evil Questioning buried seven fathoms deep, I should feel that I had an easy work to do in preaching the gospel; but, alas! when I have been the most earnest, my hearers have raised a question on the discourse, instead of yielding obedience to its precepts; and when I have sought to explain the doctrine and lay it down by the rule of the Word, I find instead of producing conviction, that one and another will be questioning the orthodoxy or the heterodoxy of it. No fruit is brought forth because ye suffer not the seed to enter into your hearts, there to work effectually to the saving of your souls. Oh, fools and slow of heart, to be for ever asking questions while time is flying, and men are dying, and hell is filling—to be questioning when there is but a step between you and death—to be trying to unriddle mysteries and to unravel secrets when you are on the borders of the tomb and your souls may soon be required of you. Oh, fools, I say, and slow of heart, but surely so ye will be to the end of the chapter, unless sovereign grace shall open your eyes to see in the face of this Mr. Evil Questioning the marks and lineaments of a child of Satan, and unless God shall give you grace to turn him out of doors, to expel him instantly, and have no more to do with him as long as you live.

But do you know while I was going my rounds this morning looking after Mr. Evil Questioning, I happened to stop at the door of a house that had the blood-mark over the lintel, and I was very much surprised to hear a voice just like old Mr. Questioning's inside that house. I could not believe my own ears, but I saw my own name on the door, and so I thought I might venture to enter, and lo, I found this old villain sitting at my own table, and what think you he was saying? Why he was talking like this, "God has promised that you shall hold on your way, but then you have so many temptations you cannot. He has promised to bless your ministry, but then the hearts of men are so hard, you might just as well give up preaching." He began to question the promises and asked how can they be fulfilled, and was beginning to make me question the vitality of my own religion. Get you gone sir, I will have nothing to do with you, and if I meet you again I hope by the grace of God I shall be able to heave a stone that will sink deep in your own crazy pate. Begone, sir, and have nought to do with me. With the child of God thou art a hated intruder. Who am I that I should question the Almighty? Who is the finite that he should ask the Infinite where is his power to fulfil his promise? No, my God

" I trust the all-creating voice,
And faith requires no more."

II. Having thus detected Mr. Evil Questioning, we will go on to DESCRIBE HIM.

Mr. Evil Questioning often boasts that he is the child of Human Reason; but I will let you know a secret or two about his parentage. Mr. Human Reason was once a very respectable man. He had a country-seat in the garden of Paradise, and he was then great and honourable.

He served his God with all his might, and many a great and marvellous thing did he discover for the good of mankind; at that time he had a family, and they were all like himself, right good and loyal. But after the fall this man married again, and he took to himself one called Sin to be his partner, and this old Evil Questioning was one that was born after the fall. He does not belong to the first family at all. The first family was not so numerous as the last. There was one called Right Judgment born at that time. I hope he is still alive, and I believe he is. But the second family was very black and of tainted blood. They did not take at all after the father, except in one point, that at the time of the fall Mr. Human Reason lost his country seat at Paradise, and together with the rest of the servants of Adam fell from his high estate and became perverted and depraved. His children are like him in their depravity, but not in their power of reasoning. They take after their mother, and they always have a predilection for sin, so that they "put darkness for light and light for darkness, bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter." The old gentleman never mentions his mother's name if he can help it. He always likes to boast that he is a lineal descendant of Human Reason, and so indeed he is, but he is a descendant of fallen Human Reason, not of Human Reason as it was in its glorious perfection. Now all the powers of Adam were by the fall spoiled and ruined. They are there, but their bias was turned from that which is good to that which is evil, and now reason is not a trustworthy guide. Enlightened by the Spirit of God it can judge righteous judgment, but unenlightened and un instructed, its bias is towards that which shall excuse man in his rebellion, which shall dishonour God, and which shall seek to raise the human race in proud rebellion against their Lord and Master.

Understand then, that the parentage of Evil Questioning lies here; man's perverted reason meets with man's love of sin, and these twain do join to bring forth these evil questions. It is not your reason that makes you talk against God, except it be your perverted reason. It is your love of sin that sets your reason on the wide-awake watch to try and discover some difficulty, and to make that a pretence why you should not be obedient to the heavenly command. Do not believe yourself when you repeat the tale told you by Satan, that you are only making honest enquires—do not believe it for a minute. The honest enquiry is content with "It is written," and there it stops. Besides, if not content with this, the truth of the Bible is proved by the most conclusive logic. It is proved to by arguments, against which all the gates of hell can never prevail. There are many excellent works which have been written, and all the arguments of modern sceptics have been refuted a thousand times over. Every objection that man can make has been already broken in pieces, and if a man be honest in his enquires, he cannot long remain an unbeliever. Do not believe that your questioning springs from honesty, but be honest with yourself, and acknowledge this, that you do not love the gospel because it is too hard for you—it wants you to give up sins that you love too much, to renounce them, and because of this, you begin to question its truth. If it did not come upon you so sorely, and deal with you so summarily, you would believe it. But because it will have you give up your sins,

you go in quest of a doubt, and put in plea after plea to gain time and hold on with the world. Though you do not doubt the justice of the law, or the truth of the gospel, ye vexatiously question both. And yet you know very well that it is beyond your questioning, for it is the eternal verity of the Eternal God.

I have thus described the old man's parentage; shall I now tell you where he had his education? After Mr. Evil-Questioning was born, he was put to the school of that old schoolmaster who has taught a great many of you—Mr. Worldly Wiseman, and this Mr. Worldly Wiseman used to make him read out of a book called "Human Maxims," and this man had learned all the logic-art of that book of Human Maxims—a book very much patronized by the sacred consistory of hell. They greatly delight in it, and would have it spread everywhere; and they would have even the prophets of God bow their knee to this Baal, and take "for doctrines the commandments of men." No wonder, therefore, that being bad at first, and essentially vicious, this education was just suited to develop his powers, and he has gone from bad to worse, till he has been known at times to question the very existence of a God, the immortality of the soul, the truth of the Bible, the divinity of Christ, in fact; he has questioned everything which can be dear to a true-hearted man, every truth which can sustain the soul in the midst of its troubles, and give it light in its seasons of darkness.

And now to come nearer still to him. I have told you his parentage and education, now as to his character. If you notice this man, it is only his talking that will strike you, and you will observe this about his talk, that he speaks about things of religion in a very different style from what he thinks about things of the world. If you meet him and he is buying or selling, he talks very rationally indeed; but when he comes to make excuses for himself and tell you why he is not converted, he talks like a fool, as he is. He would not himself act in the world upon the theories that he adopts in religion. Did I not tell you that I heard him say once, that because God had decreed, therefore he would do nothing? Now you would expect to find him, if he were honest in what he said, going out into the world and folding his arms, and saying, "Now if I am to get rich I shall get rich, and so there is an end to it; and if I am not to get rich I shall not get rich, and therefore I shall not work." No, he is as busy as a bee when he is about the things of the world, and yet he is as idle as possible when he is meddling with the things of Christ. This same man, if he has a field to sow, he knows very well that if God has ordained a harvest there will be a harvest—but he sows for all that. He can understand in his business how free-agency is quite consistent with Divine Sovereignty. He understands when he is abroad how the decree of God does not at all limit the free action of man, but when he comes to matters of godliness with regard to his own soul, then he sees a wonderful difficulty there. Ah! he sees it because he wants to see it, and a man can see anything he likes to see if he does not want to do a thing that is uncomfortable and unpleasant. If you want an excuse for going to hell, you can find a thousand, every one as bad as the other, and Mr. Evil Questioning will furnish you with any quantity of them to suit every particular case. He has excuses that will suit the Frenchman

and excuses that will suit the Englishman. He has a stock of common excuses just adapted to be sold retail to the poor, and he has many a refined excuse of every shade and colour to suit the taste of the rich. No man like him. If you want to perish, you may do it logically. If you want to go to hell riding on a syllogism, he will assist you. He will give you the most rational and comfortable conveyance if you want to go there. Only to go to his shop, he will not keep you a single moment, but serve you across the counter with the most polite bow, and send you on your way rejoicing towards the depths of perdition.

You will thus detect Mr. Evil Questioning, because he uses a logic in spiritual things that he would not use in temporal things. Here is another way by which you may discover him. This man, when he is talking about the Infinite God, always measures him by the finite rule of man. When God is in the question, who is not to be limited nor to be grasped by our comprehension, he deals as freely with the matter as if it were a mere thing of ells and inches, or of ounces and pounds. Omnipotence he forgets, and omnipresence, and omniscience, and eternity,—all these attributes of God he casts away, and he talks to God, and talks about God, as if God were nothing different from the creature that his hands have made. Have you never heard him say, "How can such a thing be done?" If he did but stop and think, he would know that it is irrational to use the word *can*, when he is speaking of an Omnipotent One. He will often say, "Will such a thing that is promised be accomplished?" If he did but pause, he would recollect that to ask a question as to whether a thing will be done, about a God who is true and faithful, is to put a wicked and blasphemous question. But still he will do it. He deals with God's promises as if they were the draft-notes of a rogue. He treats God's doctrines as if they were the utterings of a raving maniac. He will deal with substantial verities as if they were frothy dreams, the mere speculations of a deluded brain. Strange villain that he is, daring to lift his mouth against heaven, and spit his blasphemous questions against the very existence and power of the Most High.

You may know him again by another sign, for he always draws his arguments from exceptions. He meets a miserable Christian—he knows very well that where there is one miserable Christian there are a thousand happy ones—but then he puts these thousand happy ones behind. It is the one miserable one that he fixes his attention upon. If he meets with one fallen professor, he knows that there are ten thousand Christians that stand upright in the hour of temptation, and will not bend in the blast of terrors of the world when they come against him, seeking to turn him from his upright course—but no, he forgets all these: he only thinks of that one hypocrite, or that one professor, who was overtaken in an evil hour, and then he makes a syllogism like this—"One Christian has proved to be a hypocrite, therefore, as it is a bad thing to be a hypocrite, I will not be a Christian." Now, what an argument! And yet this satisfies some of you. There are some of you, when you have been once taken in by a man will say, "Ah well! I will never make a profession of religion. So-and-so made a profession! he was a bad one; therefore I will not have ought to do with it." Where is the force of this argument? If

there are bad Christians, that is a presumption in its itself that there are good ones; for if ever you see a bad sovereign in circulation, you may be sure there are some good ones, for if they were all bad we would none of us take any of them. Be sure of it, then, the name of Christian would cease to be, unless there were some good ones to keep up the current coin—the real stock in trade—on which the world grows rich. And suppose they were all bad, is that any reason why you should not be true and honest? If the church were all hypocrites, at least let me be an honest man, and serve my God truly, and with all my heart. That is the proper way of reasoning. But Evil Questioning takes exceptions, and considers them as if they were rules, and then from the exceptions draws a deduction which would not be logical, even if they were the rule, but which, seeing it is based upon the exceptions, is without a basis at all, and sinks to the ground as a mere wanton wilful falsehood.

I will only keep you one more minute upon this part of my subject. You may always know Mr. Evil Questioning by this one fact, that he invariably draws his conclusions from his wishes. When I have got an argument on hand, and the conclusion is contrary to what I would like it to be, I always think there is more likelihood that my reasoning is correct; but if the conclusion is just what my carnal heart would like it to be, I say I am afraid that my logic was at fault somewhere; for if I draw a conclusion that pleases myself, I ought to be very careful, especially when it is a matter in which my soul is concerned. We draw Justice with a bandage over her eyes, holding a pair of scales; now, whenever we are trying other people, that is exactly how our justice ought to be meted out, and so it should be when we are trying ourselves. But, my dear friends, whenever we try ourselves, we are apt to move the bandage a little up, that the right eye may see just a little, that we may manage to put, somehow or other, a little extra weight in the scale that will favour ourselves. No man is so partial a judge as the man that is trying his own character. We are very severe with others, but we are very lenient to ourselves; we keep our swords well sharpened for our enemies; but if we do hit ourselves it is with the back of the blade; we never venture to strike deep, and we always wish to have a little salve ready, some kind of extenuation. Habitually almost without knowing it we shake hands with ourselves very often, and say, "You are not so bad a fellow after all, I thought there was something amiss with you, and so there certainly is; but still there is not so much wrong with you as there is with a great many people, and you are a very respectable individual taking you for all in all." Now, if that is the conclusion you come to, suspect it, there is a flaw in the logic somewhere. Just look the reasoning through again. Cast that sum up once more, if it comes to this result, "Thou art rich," cast it up again, there is an extra figure you have put in: for the right conclusion is, if you are an uncovered man, you are naked, and poor, and miserable. Do not believe the arithmetic or the logic which would bring you to any other conclusion than this.

III. Having thus described this old enemy, after whom I am in full pursuit; I pause awhile and go on to my third division, which is, bringing him out TO EXECUTE HIM.

I must give you a bit from John Bunyan's Holy War, for it is so wonderfully suggestive, and so thoroughly worthy of its quaint author. Mr. Evil Questioning was detected harbouring four doubters, who had come to attack the town of Mansoul; when he was brought up, the indictment was that he had studied the ruin of the town of Mansoul, that he had feloniously and treacherously harboured four of the king's enemies, and that he had expressed in the hearing of one Mr. Diligence, his wish that there were ten thousand such doubters in Mansoul. The old fellow when he was brought before the bar, first denied his name, and said his real name was Mr. Honest Enquiry, but when it was proved that he was old Evil Questioning, for Lord Will-be-will in the time of his evil estate had known him very intimately, then the old fellow pleaded "Not Guilty," and he began at once to utter his defence. "I answer," said Evil Questioning, "the men that came into my house were strangers, and I took them in, and is it now become a crime in Mansoul for a man to entertain strangers? That I also nourished them is true, and why should my charity be blamed? As for the reason why I wished ten thousand of them in Mansoul, I never told it to the witnesses nor to themselves. I might wish them to be taken, and so might wish well to the town of Mansoul. I also bid them take heed that they fell not into the Captain's hands, but that might be because I am unwilling that any man should be slain, and not because I would have the king's enemies escape." So Mr. Evil Questioning was true to his name, he kept on questioning till the verdict was given, the sentence of death pronounced, and carried into execution; for they hanged him, as Bunyan says, opposite the door of his own house at the top of Bad Street. Ah! but I am afraid that he is alive now, still living and going about: I wish therefore to bring him up again to trial, and we will see if we cannot bring some charges against him; we will empanel an honest jury, and I know what the sentence will be, we shall lead him out to execution.

Men and brethren, if you have been questioning, instead of believing, if you have been making enquires, instead of saying, "What must I do to be saved?" which is the only allowable question, let me first beg of you to drive out this Evil Questioning, because he is a traitor to the King of heaven. He does not wish your good, but your ill; more than this, he is sent by Satan to prevent your obeying the commands of God: he is come to betray you. Oh! listen not to his words, though they are smoother than butter, for inwardly they are drawn swords: the drift of all he says is to keep you unreconciled to God. The great end of all he says is to make you wander further and further from the central point of bliss to make you forsake the cross, to make you follow the devices of your own heart, and so bring upon yourself inevitable destruction. Oh! I beseech you, drive him out, because he is a traitor to the great King to whom all your allegiance is due. He wants to make you an enemy to God, and to keep you so. Out with him, I pray you. Hang him! let a straight end be put to him at once: let him no more delude and ruin your souls, and make you persevere in disobedience to God.

And then, again, I beseech you turn him out, for he is a liar. All the conclusions to which he has brought you are false ones, and you

know they are. When you have sometimes in company bragged a little, and when a hard word has been said that has come home to your conscience, when you have put on a stout confidence and have begun to insinuate some doubts, you know very well you are not speaking honestly. You know there is a hell, though you often laugh at the idea; you know there is a world to come, though you argue against it. You are conscious that there is a God, though you yourself will sometimes deny it, you know very well that every conclusion to which this false reasoning of yours has brought you, is a downright falsehood, and a libel against the common-sense and sterling honesty of your nature. Oh! turn out, then, this wretch who is a descendant of the Father of Lies; and let us, each man of us, lay our hands on him as witnesses, and take up our stone to stone him.

Another accusation I bring against him is this: he has led you into a world of mischief. This habit of questioning has often blunted the edge of some sermon that you have heard; when the Word was coming right home to your conscience, this Mr. Evil Questioning has held up a shield and prevented the point from entering into your heart; besides that, have you not sometimes when under the influence of his delusive logic gone off to the place where your lust has been cultivated, and where your conscience has been lulled to sleep? You know if it had not been for these questions, you would not be found so often in the tavern, or in the casino, or in the midst, perhaps, of even worse associations than these. It is because you have tried to make yourself an infidel that you have been able to go into sin. You have felt that if you did believe, sin would become unpleasant; in fact, you would be too gross a fool if you professed to believe, and then afterwards run and cut your own throat, and destroy your own soul, by perserving in your iniquities. Oh! I beseech you, remember the mischief this wicked habit has done you: it has brought you low, very low, even to the gates of hell; and if you persevere much longer in it, as I pray God you may not, it will bring you within the portals of hell. And then, when the gate of fire is shut, there is no arm that can open it, there is no *question*, no subtle questioning, that can administer a drop of comfort to you; there is no puzzling particle of metaphysics that can be as a drop of water to cool your burning tongue. The questioning that damned you shall be the tormentor that shall vex you, and your brain carried through fiery speculations for ever be horrified and alarmed by new difficulties and new mysteries, which shall be as faggots for the flames of hell for ever and for ever. Oh! let us bring out this Evil Questioning, and hang him on a gallows high as the gallows of Haman, and God grant that we may never see him again.

I have one other charge, and then I shall have closed up the accusation. Men and brethren, this man must die, for he has been a murderer. Oh! what millions of souls has Evil Questioning sent to hell! There are many gates to hell, but this is one of the widest and it is one of the most frequented, because it is a respectable gate. Men do not like to go down to perdition without having some reason, some logic to back them up, so they carry a lie in their right hand, and then they go there quietly, to meet their damnation logically, and to reason about the flames of hell when they are lying in them. Oh! my dear hearers, let

us have done with this Evil Questioning, for if not, he will ruin us, as surely as he has ruined others. Be satisfied with "Thus saith the Lord." Take the Bible as it stands. Do not for ever be raising these doubts. Do not be busying yourself with *secret things* that are no business of yours whatever. Do not for ever be quibbling and putting these hard knotty points to us, while your poor soul is perishing for lack of that grace which alone can save you from the wrath to come. "Well," says one, "but I mean to ask questions a little longer." Ah! but my dear friend, remember the habit of evil questioning grows upon a man; and at last God will fill you with your own devices. Draws there nigh a day when you will want to believe and you cannot—when questioning will come to be a strong delusion, so that you shall believe a lie—when from merely trying to be an infidel, you shall become at last a master in the arts of Belial. Yea, you shall take your degree of Doctor in Damnation, and shall sit in the seat of the scorner, condemned, already hardened in your sin, and ripened for the fire, as those who are ready to be burned. God grant that may not be the consequence; but it will be unless Mr. Evil Questioning be speedily brought out, given up to the gallows, and never more harboured in your house.

I have thus spoken in the form of an allegory. If I have put in some words of pleasantry, it was that I might engage your attention. I feel the subject to be awful solemn, and it is necessary that we should all think of it, and I hope you will think of it none the less because it has been clothed somewhat in an allegorical form, and because I have tried to represent this evil habit as though it were an evil being that sought your destruction. My concluding head is especially addressed to the people of God, and to them I hope it will be very interesting.

IV. Old Mr. Evil Questioning is the father of a large family, and John Bunyan tells you about his family. He says, he married one called Miss No-hope, she was the daughter of old Dark, and when old Dark was dead, her uncle Incredulity took her and brought her up as his own daughter, and then he gave her to old Evil Questioning, and he had by her several children. I will give you the names of them, because it shall be my earnest endeavour to fire a shot at them this morning, as well as at their old father. Their names are these—Mr. Doubt, Mr. Legal Life, Mr. Unbelief, Mr. Wrong Thoughts of Christ, Mr. Clip Promise, Mr. Carnal Sense, Mr. Live-by-Feeling, and Mr. Self-Love. All these were the offspring of the father, and against all these a warrant was issued by the prince Immanuel that they should be hunted down, and every one of them given to the sword.

Now, I will take the eldest son, there is Mr. Doubt,—Is he not the child of Evil Questioning? Why, you can see his father's image in his face. You remember Mr. Doubt calling one day at the tent of Sarah, and his father with him, and Sarah said, "Shall I who am ninety years of age have pleasure? shall these breasts afford nourishment for a child? Here was Evil Questioning; and then Sarah laughed. That was Mr. Doubt who played off a bit of his satire, and set her laughing. Ah! bad she but believed, she might have attained a nobler commendation. It almost tarnishes her fair reputation that we must remember this of her—she was the woman who laughed at God's promise, as though it were impossible. Brothers and sisters,

Mr. Doubt has often called at your house and made you cast reflections on the promise. He has said, "How can it be true? Such a sinner as you, so weak, so vile, so unworthy." Oh believer, the promise is true; God has pledged His word and stamped his covenant with his oath. When you see a promise, never doubt; for Doubt is the descendant of Evil Questioning, and he is Diabolical from the birth up. However, I am rather apprehensive, though I punish his name to-day, and though I were to give you his portrait in the Hue and Cry, he will not get arrested just yet, or if he be arrested, I am afraid he will break his prison, and be at liberty again. For this Mr. Doubt is everywhere about the country; and I find him in many a secluded nook by the way-side, troubling some poor woman on her dying bed, and I find him, too, in many a hall where the rich man is thinking about Christ, but is kept back by this troublesome intruder, who whispers a doubt as to whether Christ will receive him. He is everywhere—but drive him out; make him hide his head, let him not be pampered and fed as he is by some people, let Doubt grow into Despair, and you shall lose your comfort, and bring sorrow into your heart for ever.

Another child is Mr. Clip-Promise. Do you know him? He does not doubt the promise, but he clips the edge of it. He makes out that it will not all be fulfilled, only a part of it. Nowhere is a proclamation issued against Mr. Clip-Promise, that whoever will arrest him shall be greatly honoured, for he is a notorious villain, by whose doings much of the King's coin was abused, therefore it is expedient that he should be made a public example. And, Bunyan says, "They did take him, and they first set him in the pillory, afterwards they tied his hands behind him and they whipped him through the streets of Mansoul, bidding all the children and servants whip him, and then at last they hanged him. And," says mine author, this may seem very hard treatment, but when one considers how much loss the town of Mansoul may sustain by the clipping of the pieces which are the coins with which they trade, I can only say I hope that all his kith and kin may be treated with the like severity. Oh! if you have attempted to cut the promise down, have done what I pray you; and do take it as it stands in all its plentifulness and grace and all its sufficiency. Judge it not by your own notions, but take it as it comes from God, shining and glittering from the mint of heaven. Take it as its full current value with the merchants, and you shall surely have its equivalent in the fulfilments which God will work to you in his providence and his grace. Moreover, I will say this unto thee, the more thou trade with this precious coin the more thou wilt prize it, as Eskiene sings—

"Let thy experience sweet decree,
If able to remind,
A Brother here, a Bethel thee,
Thy Saviour made thee free"

Then there is Mr. Wrong-thoughts of Christ. Do you know him? Well I do not know that I have met him lately, but there was a time when he and I had a great battle, and I think he had the worst of it,

for by grace I was enabled to strike him very hard. Do you know what this fellow had the impudence to tell me? He said, "Oh, Christ will never receive such a sinner as you are." And when I had come to Christ, and he received me, he said, "Oh, Christ will not hold you fast." He will if you let him, but then you will not let him, for you are such a sinner he cannot hold you, and he will not. He has often made me doubt my Master's immutability or his faithfulness, or his power to save. But as far as I am personally concerned of late, I was able to seize him, and I have laid him in prison; I think he is dying of a consumption, for I have not heard much of him lately. Glad enough shall I be to have him buried once for all. And if anyone of you are troubled with him, lock him up, do not let him keep abroad, for Wrong-thoughts of Christ is one of the worst spirits that ever came up from the pit. What! to think badly of Christ, to think of him who is all goodness, as if he were hard-hearted or unkind. Begone, Wrong-thoughts of Christ, we will not harbour thee, but will put thee in durance vile, and there shalt thou starve and die.

There are two others whom some of you may have known, Mr. Legal Life, and Mr. Live-by-Feeling. I think they were twins. Mr. Legal Life sometimes gets hold of the Christian and makes him judge himself by legal evidences, and not by evangelical evidence. When the Christian has kept a commandment, Mr. Legal Life will say, "There now you live by your works." He knows that Christians would die by their works, and that the best of them can only live by faith. And when a Christian has made a slip, and has not kept the commandment, in comes Mr. Legal Life, and he says, "You are a lost soul, for you have not kept the commandment;" though he knows right well, "that if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Yet he tries to make his life by the law which no Christian ever did do or ever will do, for the law is of death and not of life.

Then there is Mr. Live-by-Feeling, who makes us judge ourselves according to what we feel. If we feel happy and devout, "Oh," he says, "now you are in a blessed frame, the Master will accept you," anon you feel unhappy, and dull, and cold, and dead. "Oh," says Mr. Live-by-Feeling, "you are no child of God, or else you would not be like this." Now catch both these fellows, if you can, and away with them; away with such fellows from the earth. It is not fit that they should live. Come, ye Christians, and crucify them, nail them up, they are relatives of the old flesh, and let them die with the flesh; they will never bring you any good; they are the down-right direct opponents of the gospel. Away with them, for "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin;" and if we believe not on the Lord Jesus Christ, neither our feelings nor our efforts can ever save our souls in any measure whatsoever. Legal Life and Live-by-Feeling, must be put to the death.

And now I want your attention, because here is a fine opportunity for some of you to become celebrated and rich, if you are able to fulfil the commission. One of the children of old Evil Questioning was Mr. Carnal-Sense. Now John Bunyan tells us, and I believe that he is right, at least I have his authority for it, and that is no mean authority,

that there is a proclamation set up in the market place at Mansoul, that whosoever shall bring Mr. Carnal-Sense, dead or alive, to the King Immanuel, shall be made a nobleman, shall have a right to sit at the King's table every day, and moreover, he shall be made keeper of the treasury of the city of Mansoul. There you see is a noble opportunity for you. But, saith John Bunyan, "It is rather unfavourable if you are ambitious; many there were that spent much of their time in endeavouring to discover him, but they have never been able to find him; still it is well known that he is abroad, and that he frequents poor men's houses by night very much to their sorrow and grief." Now if you can but lay hold of him, see how you shall be exalted; you shall have daily fellowship with your king, and you shall have the whole treasure of God to make you rich. Well, blessed be God, we do know one thing, that is, that if we cannot kill Carnal-Sense, yet we can starve him a little, and if he will come abroad it shall be by night, for we will not let him come abroad in the day. Old Carnal-Sense, what mischief has he done!

"Judge not the Lord by carnal sense,
But trust him for his grace,
Behind a frowning providence,
He hides a smiling face."

Oh! Christians, get rid of the thought that thou canst judge thy God by carnal appearances, do not take the promise by the providence, but the providence by the promise. Do not read the book of life by thy life, but read thy life by the book of life. Have done with Carnal Sense and thou shalt be happy, thou shalt have daily fellowship with God and all the riches of his treasury.

There remains another one upon whom I must speak just for a minute. It is one called Mr. Self-Love. Ah, he is one of the biggest of the children of Mr. Evil Questioning. Now Mr. Self-Love was tried and condemned to die, but he had so many friends in the city, that they did not like to hang him outright. There was, however, a brave man in the king's army, a common soldier, a man that was used to sleep out in the fields at night, and to do much hard work—his name was Mr. Self-Denial, and coming out from the midst of the crowd, just when the prisoner was going to be acquitted, he said, "If such villains as these are winked at in Mansoul I will lay down my commission." He then took him from the crowd and had him among the soldiers, and there he was put to death. For this, the king made the common soldier a lord, and he was honoured in the town of Mansoul. "Though," says Bunyan, "there were a good many people in the town that did not like it, and they used to mutter at it, but they did not say much as long as king Immanuel was there. Oh, do you know that old Self-Love. You will never get rid of him unless you get Mr. Self-Denial to help you; unless you are ready to deny the affections and lusts, to pluck out right eyes, and cut off right hands, and to yield up one delight after another, that so self may be trodden under foot, and Jesus Christ may be all in all.

There is one other child. I have left him to the last: and then I have done with the family—Mr. Unbelief. "Now," says Bunyan,

"Unbelief was a nimble fellow." He was often caught, but he was like the hero of the wicked *Shepherd*, he always broke his prison and was out again. Although he has often been kept in hold, he has always escaped, and he is every day about somewhere or other. Oh, brothers and sisters, Unbelief is abroad to-day, he will be attacking some of you, seeking to render your jewels from you. I beseech you, do not harbour him, but do live by faith, remember you how many die by unbelief; therefore cling ye—cling to Christ.

"And when thine eye of faith is dim,
Still trust in Jesus, sink or swim;
And at his footstool bow the knee,
So Israel's God thy peace shall be."

When thine evidences are dark and thy joys are gone, still throw thine arms about the cross; and remember, thou canst never perish trusting there.

And thou, poor sinner, this last word to thee. Have done with thy questionings, end thy questions all of them, at the Cross of Christ. Look to my Master now; a look will save you. Trust Him, and you are saved—saved now and saved for ever. Cast yourself on him. Have done with your own wit and wisdom; take him to be your wisdom, your righteousness, your all, and he will not cast you away. Poor soul! he will take you in, though you are black as Satan himself. He will wash you and make you clean; he will take you to himself, and put the crown of immortality upon your head; he will robe you in the garments of glory; and you shall be his in that day when he maketh up his jewels.

RIGHT USE OF LEARNING.

THE late Rev. Caleb Evans, of Bristol, having once occasion to travel from home, wrote to a poor congregation to say that he should spend a night in their village, and that, if it were agreeable to them, he would give them a sermon. The poor people hesitated for some time, but at length permitted him to preach. After sermon he found them in a far happier mood than when he first came among them, and could not forbear inquiring into the reason of all this. "Why, sir, to tell you the truth," said one of them, "knowing that you were a very learned man, and that you were a teacher of young ministers, we were much afraid we should not understand you; but you have been quite as plain as any minister we ever had." "Ay, ay," the doctor replied, "you entirely misunderstand the nature of learning my friend; its design is to make things so plain that they cannot be misunderstood."

CHRIST left the cross and went to glory, that you might take it and follow after him.

Our Minister's Wife and her Noble Life.

CHAPTER X.—CHAPEL AND SCHOOL BEGGING.

AS I remained in Colcheston after Mrs. Barton's removal to Darkloom, and two or three other causes he was privileged to serve, before he departed this life, what I was able to ascertain of Mrs. Barton's future arose mainly from personal visits that I was favoured to pay her annually and sometimes for weeks at a stretch. What therefore I am about to record will be more in the light of sketches than of a consecutive narrative. But even in spite of this I may add that I have so much material placed at my disposal that I find a difficulty in making a selection as to what will be best to place on record. Mrs. Barton and others told me so much of what a minister's wife's life really consists of, most of it unknown to the world, that I feel a kind of hesitation in this matter which can be by the initiated better understood than expressed. As, however, both Mr. and Mrs. Barton have now entered into rest, I feel that I can say things about them which I could not say were they still dwelling on the earth.

What Mrs. Barton was at Colcheston I had indisputable proof that she was elsewhere. Wherever the Lord called her husband to labour, she felt it to be her duty in her own way to

aid him in his work. A chief part of that work proved, however, very trying to her. As the success of her husband in building causes up invariably necessitated the erection or enlargement of new buildings a great deal of what is called "chapel begging" fell to the share of both. Mr. Barton, under the auspices of Home Mission Societies did most of his in towns and villages where he was called upon to preach, and in this way he collected hundreds of pounds for the erection of buildings in which many congregations gather to hear the Gospel preached now his head lies low in the grave. But Mrs. Barton's labour in this line was exclusively confined to the places in which they dwelt. What she gathered in the shape of subscriptions, donations and trays is known to God alone, but one thing I will say it was all done by personal sacrifice. Mr. Barton's idea was that unless ministers practised what they preached their words and appeals would go for nothing, and with this creed Mrs. Barton had unbounded sympathy. "You see," he once said to me. "Miss Kent, people believe in deeds rather than mere words, and if a minister does not according to his income give himself, his people are not likely to pay much heed

to his exhortations." Now Mr. Barton did give, even when I know he could have done well with his donations at home in buying clothes for himself and family, and had not Mrs. Barton proved a good needlewoman and an excellent domestic economist, much chapel work that was done never would have been done. It was this fact so well known in the denomination that made Mr. Barton so successful in his begging tours. Asked once if he had found these tours disagreeable, he replied, "Oh, no; not at all. When the word of God reached the people's hearts on the Sunday I found it comparatively easy to reach their pockets on the Monday, and besides that I got a good deal through delivering what people were pleased to call "popular lectures," and these proved enjoyable all round. You cannot get money by scolding people any more than you can make a friend by knocking a man down; you must reach their hearts to get at their pockets." As a proof of this he gave me the following instance:—

"Once," he said, "at a chapel in the North I was engaged to preach for the weekly offering which was to go for the erection of our new chapel. It was a fairly wealthy cause, and I expected a nice sum—perhaps five or six pounds. But on entering the vestry I saw a weekly offering announcement put up to this effect, 'Weekly offering last Lord's day, £2 3s. 6d.' For the moment I stood aghast, and said to myself, 'And is this all I have come for?' Then an inward voice whispered, 'No, it is not; you have come here to deliver your Master's message; proclaim that, and it will be well with you;

for is it not written, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." You do not know how I felt rebuked, Miss Kent, but in a moment the burden was gone; I thought no more about money matters, but entered the pulpit and preached away with all my heart and soul. It was a grand day, I can assure you, one of real spiritual power, and I went to bed that night with a heart overflowing with thankfulness. The next morning in visiting a few friends, I was asked, 'Mr. Barton do you know what the weekly offering was yesterday?' 'No,' I said, 'I do not, I never once thought about it; the Lord took all that sort of thought away, and made me think of something better.' 'Well,' said the lady, 'it is the best weekly offering we've had for many a long day; it was £13 and over.' Then she told me that she had been induced through the good done to her soul to give double what she intended, and afterwards I found it to have been the case with others." The joy with which Mr. Barton took home this unexpected sum can be easily imagined, and I may add, what he did not tell me, that on this as on most such occasions all was given up to the church except what was deducted for his bare railway expenses.

In her line, too, Mrs. Barton once told me an amusing incident. While at Darkloom it was found necessary to build a new school-room, in order to accommodate the additional scholars gathered as the result of spiritual prosperity. A resolution had been passed that as a start trays should be given, each tray to be with the customary five shillings, or Mrs.

Barton and another sister were appointed to wait upon the leading friends in the congregation to solicit these trays, and with much tact she determined that they would commence their round with a certain individual.

This individual was none other than a deacon of the church, a very good man in his way with some means but rather close fisted. Finding him in his house at a suitable time, she accosted him with a smiling face thus:—

“Well, Mr. Locker, you know what we are come for.”

“I suppose you want me to put down something in your book,” he said, looking rather suspiciously.

“Just so,” she replied, “here it is.”

Handing him the book, he put down his sum, and then gave it her back again.

“This won't do,” she said, as she looked at it, “you must please give us more than this. Do you see what I have headed the list with, ‘Mrs. Barton, £1.’ That goes for four trays, and you have put down 5s. which only goes for one. You know what was said at the church meeting, that if the tea meeting was to be a success we must get £20, and that being so my husband wished me to do our very best, and as our income is nothing like yours, please alter your figure; for if you do not others that can give better than we can will say, ‘Mr. Locker has only given one tray, so we will do the same, and we shall not get half the money we want.’ Surely then you will not be behind us!”

“Then put me down for ten shillings,” he said.

“If you do that then I shall alter my figure to that amount,”

she boldly replied, “and then there will only be a pound between us.”

In his heart Mr. Locker wanted the tea meeting to be a success, but he hardly liked to part with his money. Feeling, however, the cogency of her argument, he said at last in a spirit of desperation, “Then put me down for three trays.”

Sticking to her guns, and with that rare courage which she could command on such occasions, she said, “Before I came here, Mr. Locker, I determined to give the amount you give. I put down four trays to encourage you and others, and if you will adhere to three then down I go for three. Come, Mr. Locker, make it four, and save me that trouble.”

It is almost needless to say that her winning smile and persuasive power won the day, and down went the one pound accordingly.

This story, well told, served to stimulate others, with the result that instead of getting £20 as originally contemplated when Mrs. Barton posted up her book, she was able to give in over £40, a result which not only gave universal satisfaction, but served to lay a good foundation for future effort, and no one enjoyed the report of the success achieved in this singular way more than did Mr. Locker.

But this generous and self-denying kind of giving often brought the worthy pastor and his wife and family into great straits. But “*The Lord will provide*” was his motto, and to his dying hour he said he had found that motto true. On one occasion when at Darkloom, he was sorely pressed, when a remarkable deliverance

occurred. As Mrs. Barton sat down by the fire in rather a gloomy state of mind her husband came in just before dinner, and said, "Mary will you have a sovereign?"

Thinking he was joking, "Certainly I will," she said.

Without another word he threw one into her lap.

"Now, will you have another?"

"To be sure," she said, and another was instantly given.

"Now then, will you have five more?"

She stared, as well she might, as into her lap the additional five were thrown.

"Where have you got all these?" she asked in amazement.

"Oh, I've not done yet. See, here are some more; now count if I haven't given you twenty sovereigns altogether?"

"Thank the Lord," she said, "It is truly written, 'The Lord is good a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knoweth them that put their trust in Him.' But, Joseph, where do they all come from?"

Then he told her how the Lord

had appeared for them. The Church was under the Home Mission, and received £40 per year for a certain period to aid the pastor in his aggressive work. The half-yearly grant of £20 was not due for the next three weeks, but as Mr. Barton was standing on a railway platform who should he see but the Home Mission treasurer, who, knowing nothing of his circumstances, came up to him and said, "O! Mr. Barton, your half-yearly grant will soon be due, and you may as well have it at once; it will save me from sending it you, so take it now and have done with it, and let me have the receipt." Then having given it him in another minute he was off to catch his train.

The joy there was in Mr. Barton's house that day cannot be described, and when the generous treasurer knew the good deed that he had accomplished in "due season," he felt delighted to think that in such a manner he had been able to encourage one of God's servants, in the dark hour, to go on with his self-denying labour.

(To be continued.)

NEVER JEST WITH SCRIPTURE.

It is of the greatest importance that we should resist the temptation frequently so strong, of annexing a familiar, facetious, or irreverent idea to a scripture usage, a scripture expression, a scripture text, or a scripture name. Nor should we hold ourselves guiltless, though we may have been misled by mere negligence or want of reflection. Every person of good taste will avoid reading a parody or a travestie of a beautiful poem, because the recollection of the degraded likeness will always obtrude itself upon our memories, when we wish to derive pleasure from the contemplation of the elegance of the original. But how much more urgent is the duty by which we are bound to keep the pages of the Bible clear of any impression tending to diminish the blessing of habitual respect and reverence towards our Maker's law.—*Palgrave,*

Preparation for the Pew.

By Rev. J. S. BRUCE, Pinner.

IT is generally admitted that there must be preparation for the pulpit. The minister who would be successful must *study* to shew himself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

It is not so generally admitted that there should be preparation for the pew. Yet is it likewise essential. The one is the counterpart of the other. The pew is the place where we publicly worship God, and where we hear God's Word. If the worship is to be accepted of God, and if the word is to profit us there must be preparation. Why is it needful, and in what does it consist ?

Why is it needful ? *Respect for the place* demands it. Our Lord has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." His presence consecrates the place. When Moses beheld the burning bush he stood on holy ground for God was there. When Jacob awaked after the wondrous vision at Bethel, he said, "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Just as truly the place where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ is holy ground. We should therefore, come to the place with preparation of heart. *Respect for the message* demands it. We come to hear what God the Lord shall speak. The true minister comes with messages from God, messages dealing with the momentous issues of time and of eternity. Like his Master, the Spirit of God has anointed him. His speech and his preaching is not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. The Lord has given the word, the heart should be prepared to receive it. *Self-respect* demands it. Responsibility attaches to hearing. The gospel is always a power. If it is not the power of God unto salvation, it is to condemnation. Christ has classified the hearers of the gospel. There is the seed that falls by the wayside ; that upon stony places ; that among thorns ; that likewise which falls into good ground. But good ground is prepared ground. It has been broken up ; it has been cleared of weeds ; it has drunk in the rain that has often come upon it ; it is ready to receive ; and it receives blessing from God. Certainly, then, responsibility attaches to hearing, and self-respect demands that there should be preparation for it.

In what should it consist ? First, in *anticipation*. The Psalmist was glad when they said unto him, "Let us go into the house of the Lord." So should we be. We anticipate the day. It is, as George Herbert says, the "day of all the week the best," the "day most calm, most bright,"

the "day of mirth." Sometimes the sweetest hour of the day is that when the King Himself comes near in His own house, to see the guests, to feast His saints. Faith sees the King. Faith eats of His bounties. We depart from the house, and as we review the services we often involuntarily say, "We have been in heaven to-day." Surely then there should be anticipation.

An important part of the preparation is *prayer*. The minister prays. We must pray with him and for him. We must pray that God may give him the right messages; open them up to him: by his Spirit; guide him into all the truth contained in them; grant unto him the unction of the Holy One in the delivery. We should pray that many may be brought under the sound of the Word (using our own best endeavours in furtherance of the prayer). Pray above all that the Divine Presence may be in every assembly to inspire and to receive the worship; to speak, to apply, and to bless the Word.

Preparation will include *punctuality*. Arrangements must be made whereby we may be in our places in the pew in time. To come in five minutes' late may sometimes be a necessity, but as a rule it may be avoided by a little forethought. Such forethought should be exercised, lest we grieve the Spirit of God, disturb the devotions of others, and prevent the blessing from coming to our own hearts. The guests should be found waiting for the King, and not the King for the guests.

Preparation will include *candour*. We must come to the pew with fair and open minds, ready to receive the truth which God's servant brings. The spirit and attitude of Cornelius and the company assembled in his house should be ours. "Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." We are to take heed what we hear, and how we hear; but if the messenger be a God sent messenger, his message will be a God sent message, and we must be prepared to hear all things that are commanded him of God.

Some things may need to be laid aside before we enter the pew. Our Lord has said, "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee: leave thee thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." The observance of this precept in the spirit of it is an essential part of preparation for the pew. "Lay aside all malice," says the Apostle. In the house of God, we meet as brethren; and we must worship in the spirit of brotherhood. We bring our sins that we may confess them; our sorrows, that we may receive God's consolation; our burdens, that we may cast them upon the Lord; but our malice, our envy, our grudges, we must lay them aside. They are not to be brought into the house of the Lord.

In these things then, we think, that a right preparation consists:—in the holy anticipation, in the earnest supplications preceding, in the punctual and regular attendance, in the readiness to receive the truth, in the goodwill cherished in our hearts towards our brethren and companions. Such preparation is essential. God will accept those who thus draw near to Him. He will commune with them. He will bless them. Let us see to it then that we come with prepared hearts to the appointed meeting with the Lord.

Wounded and Healed.

A MAN well-known as a notorious sinner was induced to attend a meeting at Hammersmith when God's Spirit strove mightily with him, and the whole of his past life was arrayed before him, which so worked upon him that he rushed out of the place and was hastening home when he was compelled to stop, and at the Spirit's bidding return, which he did, and forced his way into the meeting, looking as pale as a ghost, when the following dialogue ensued, betwixt a worker and himself:—

“Friend, seek the Lord now.”

“But I am such a great sinner.”

“Well, Christ is a great Saviour.”

“Oh, but I am so vile.”

“The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.”

“But, oh! my guilt.”

“But pardon is offered to the guilty.”

“Is that true?”

“It is.”

“Well, that must mean me?”

“It does my friend.”

And with a joyous face he clapped his hands, and said, “Lord I believe it.”

Why should he not? Is it not written, “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out?”—*Word and Work.*

“Boil it Down.”

WHATEVER you have to say my friend,
 Whether witty or grave or gray.
 Condense it as much as ever you can,
 And say it in the readiest way,
 And whether you write of household affairs
 Of particular things in town,
 Just take a word of friendly advice,
 Boil it down.

For if you go spluttering over a page
 When a couple of lines would do.
 Your butter is spread, so much you see,
 That the bread looks plainly through.
 So when you have a story to tell,
 And would like a little renown.
 To make sure of your wish, my friend,
 Boil it down.

When writing an article for the press,
 Whether prose or verse, just try
 To utter your thoughts in the fewest words,
 And let them be crisp and dry ;
 And when it is finished, and you suppose
 It is done exactly brown,
 Just look it over again, and then
 Boil it down.

For editors do not like to print
 An article really long,
 And the busy reader does not care
 For a couple of yards of song.
 So gather your wits in the smallest space
 If you'd win the author's crown,
 And every time you write, my friend,
 Boil it down.

This!

BY PASTOR J. CLARK.

I.

DUTIES calling here and there,
 Trials, crosses hard to bear ;
 Hopes extinguished ; anguish sore,
 Holiest service weak and poor :
 Sunlight fading ; shadows deep ;
 Hearts that ache, and eyes that weep ;
 Pleasures transient ; evils rife ;
 Labour ceaseless :—this is life.

II.

Human aid of no avail :
 Vigour, vision, hearing fail ;
 Anxious waiting ; lingering glance ;
 Pale, unanswering countenance ;
 Marble forehead ; glazing eyes ;
 Feeble, faint, expiring sigh ;
 Silent chamber ; hush of breath ;
 Heart unbeating : this is death.

III.

Glittering, pearly gates unfold ;
 Walls of jasper ; street of gold ;
 Shining angels ; spirits blest ;
 Worship—glory—gladness—rest ;
 God, its light : its theme—His grace ;
 Jesus seen with open face ;
 Anthems sweet from souls forgiven ;
 Love triumphant :—this is *the* Heaven.

Bass River, Nova Scotia.

Reviews.

Life Among the Close Brethren. Reprinted from the *British Weekly*. Hodder & Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.

We have experienced narrowness and exclusiveness on different occasions from the Sect styling themselves The Brethren, but were not prepared for the disclosures made in this book. It is a painful narrative, and we are sure all who are possessed of the Spirit of Christ will most earnestly pray that it may be the Lord's will to lead these unbrotherly brethren to seek and possess the Mind of Christ. It is right that the facts recorded by the writer should be widely known. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ He is none of His.

The Kingdom of God as set forth Historically and Prophetically in the English Bible. Elliot Stock, Paternoster Row.

The specimen numbers of the intended publication of a consecutive edition of the English Bible, to be completed in three volumes. Suggestions, &c., &c., will be gratefully received by the Editor through the publisher, Mr Elliot Stock,

The Young Men's Evangelical Bible Class Federation. List of Classes, General Council, Constitution, &c. Apply to Mr. Reginald M. Waterhouse, 24, Norfolk Road, Dalston, Secretary.

Murby's Scripture Manual. The Book of Ruth, Haggai, and Esther. Intended for the use of Students Preparing for Oxford and Cambridge Local and other Examinations. By a Practical Teacher. Valuable assistance is afforded by Murby's Manuals.

Magazines we have received from the Religious Tract Society. Its valuable periodicals suitable for all sections of the community. It's *Boys' Own* and *Girls' Own* with their healthful stimulating stories and directions for profitable pastimes. *Leisure Hour*, *Cottage and Artisan*, *Sunday Hours*, &c., &c. *The Sunday-at-Home* contains a valuable paper by Sir Edward Maunde Thompson, K.G.B., on the recently discovered small leaf Papyrus inscribed with sayings attributed to Our Lord. Also the September *Quiver* by Cassell & Co is a specially good number as containing an article on the new sayings of Our Lord by Dean Farrar; also a valuable contribution from the Rev. J. E. Enershough (accompanied with a good likeness of the writer) on Problems of the Mission Field. The right methods. *The Treasury of Religious Thought* (American) also has an article of the Newly-found Papyrus by Professor Francis Brown, D.D., of the Union Theological Seminary. *The Great Thoughts* in its marvellous variety of subjects furnishes its readers with likenesses and papers on Dr. Guthrie, Charles Darwin, and the Right Hon. Thomas Huxley, F.R.S. *Helping Words and Prize Reciter* to hand. Part 23 of C. H. Spurgeon's invaluable work, *The Treasury of David*. Published by Passmore & Alabaster. This part brings us up to the 96th Psalm. *The Bible Societies Monthly Register* and *Gleanings for the Young*, *The Animal's Friend*, and *In His Name* have our best wishes for success in their good objects. *The Baptist Magazine*, *The Sword and Trowel*, and *The Irish Baptist* are good average numbers.

Denominational Intelligence.

CHANGES IN THE PASTORATE.

Rev. John Bozier, from Ringland, to St. Clement's Church, Norwich.

Rev. Ernest G. Lovell, from Blockley, to Chipping Norton.

Rev. Edwin Smith, from Regent's Park College, to Carey Chapel, Moulton, near Northampton.

Rev. Walter Walsh, from Rye-hill Church, Newcastle-on-Tyne, to Gilfillan Memorial Church, Dundee.

Rev. J. Snow, from Sheffield, to Providence Church, Slaithwaite.

Rev. W. G. Chambers, of Cambridge, son of Rev. W. Chambers, of Shoreham, to Uxbridge.

Rev. Bosworth, from Rawdon College, to King-street Church, Wigan.

Rev. W. B. Nicolson, from Kirkin-tulloch, to Bristo-place Church, Edinburgh.

Rev. W. Kirk Bryce, from West Park-street Chapel, Chatteris, to Tabernacle, Nottingham.

RECOGNITIONS.

Rev. D. Carter has been recognised as pastor at Beckington. Revs. E. F. Robinson, W. H. Henderson, J. Aldis, A. H. Horlick, and J. S. Paige took part.

Recognition services in connection with the pastorate of Rev. S. G. Bowen have been held at the churches of Ebenezer, Pembroke and Peniel, Cemaes.

Rev. J. R. Way has been recognised as pastor of Dalton Church. Revs.

A. A. Harmer (a former pastor), G. F. Owen and E. Durbin took part.

Rev. A. S. Evans, of Cardiff College, has been recognised as pastor of Carmel Chapel, Sirhowy.

PRESENTATIONS.

Rev. W. Kirk Bryce, a gold watch from West Park Church, Chatteris.

Rev. David Ross, a purse with £30 from Northcote-street Church, Stockton-on-tees, on resigning the pastorate.

Rev. W. Skinner, a purse of gold from Presteign Church, on resigning the pastorate.

Mr. W. Bradley, a marble time-piece from Ashford Young Men's and Women's Bible-class.

Miss B. Hope, an illuminated address from London-road Church, Redhill, in recognition of eighteen years' services as organist.

Rev. J. D. Harries, an address and a purse of gold from Adulam Church, Llansamlet, on his marriage; Mrs. Harries, a cake basket and a silver jug.

Rev. J. Kempton, a case of silver plate from S. George's Church, Canterbury, as a wedding gift.

Mr. T. K. Diggle, a writing desk and a silver tea and coffee service from Bethel Church, Wortley, in recognition of fourteen years service as teacher of the Young Men's Class.

NEW CHAPELS.

A new Chapel has been erected at Rhayader, on a site given in exchange for the leasehold of the land on which the old church stood. The building

seats 260, with Sunday-schools for for 80: the cost has been £1,100. At the opening services, which were conducted in the open air, Revs. Rowe Evans, J. Griffiths and J. Williams took part: £45 was realised, making £765 raised.

Corner stones of a new Chapel at Fairhaven have been laid by Mrs. Rowson, of Lytham, and Mr. Greenwood, of Halifax. Mr. Schofield presided, and Mr. McKee, of Hollinwood, gave an address. The collections realised nearly £60. The cause was commenced three years ago, and has had a rapid growth.

The congregation of Gorbals Church (Rev. John McLean) some time ago purchased a site at Victoria place, in a growing residential part of the south side of Glasgow. Rev. F. H. Robarts, of Hillhead Baptist Church, laid the foundation stone of the new church, which is to be called Victoria-place Baptist Church, and will seat 600; a hall to hold 200 will also be built. The estimated cost is £3,000.

A new Chapel, to seat 350 persons, erected at a cost of £750, has been opened at Pokesdown. Revs. N. T. Miller, R. B. Morrison, T. L. Johnson, H. Schofield, and C. F. Stanton took part. Over £200 has been raised towards the building fund.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Ceylon—The Baptist Union of Ceylon, commenced two years ago, has held its annual meeting in Cinnamon Gardens Church, Colombo. The Union now comprises fifteen churches; forty delegates and several personal members were in attendance. Under the auspices of the Union the Larika Baptist Mission—similar to the Home Mission in this country, and which was commenced ten years ago—has been much revived, and is now contemplating a scheme of aggressive effort. The report states that, judging from results, the action

of the Baptist Missionary Society in throwing the churches upon their own resources was wise and opportune. The President of the Union is Rev. F. D. Waldoek, and amongst the speakers at the meeting was Rev. W. D. Hankinson, who with Mrs. Hankinson has recently arrived in Colombo from England.

A new church has been formed at Hertford, and the Assembly Rooms, St. Andrew-street, have been engaged for the services. At the first service, Rev. C. S. Hull preached on "Bases of Faith." On the previous evening a baptismal service was conducted at Hitchin Church by Mr. C. S. Hull.

BAPTISMS.

- Ayr*: Fort-street.—August 15, One, by H. D. Brown
- Attleborough*, Warwickshire.—August 29, Four, by W. Satchwell
- Blackpool*.—August 29, Three, by H. C. Wagner
- Blackpool*, Union Chapel.—September 5, Two, by H. C. Wagnel
- Bideford*, N. Devon.—August 29, Nine: September 1, One, by F. Durbin
- Hayford*, N. Devon.—September 1, Five, by T. Breewood
- Cheltenham*, Cambray.—September 1, Six, by A. B. Phillips
- Chester*, Milton-street.—August 12, One, by W. Povey
- Chadaerton*, Lancs, Mills-hill.—August 15, Ten, by F. Oliver
- Dalton-in-Furness*.—August 11, Three, by J. G. Anderson
- Farnworth*, Lancs.—August 29, Three, by S. Jones
- Glasgow*, Cambridge-street.—August 29, Five, by E. Last
- Glasgow*, Springburn.—September 5, Two, by J. Horne
- Geantown*.—August 29, One, by W. H. Davis
- Harrow-on-Hill*.—August 5, Three; 12, Five, by W. Dyson
- Harston*, Cambs.—August 22, Four, by F. Potter

- Iverne Minster.*—August 22, Two, by T. Yauldren
Kegworth.—August 15, Two, by T. Adamson
Leeds, Hurley-road.—August 29, Five by W. Walker
Longton, Staffs.—August 29, Five, by M. H. Whetnall
Noddfa, Abersychan.—August 29, Eight, by O. Tidman
Pandy, Abergavenny.—August 29, Four, by H. Jenkins
Preston, Pole-street.—August 29, Four, by A. Priter
Redhill, London-road.—August 29, Fourteen, by G. Davies
Rhymney, Beulah.—Three, by T. M. Richards
Sheggess; St. Paul's.—August 29, One, by G. Goodchild
Sweet Turf; Netherton.—August 29, Three, by A. Griffiths
Stow-on-the-Wold.—September 1, Two, by F. E. Blackeby
Seion, Ponkey.—August 20, Seven, by E. Mitchell
- Teignmouth.*—August 20, Four, by S. J. Thorpe
Tonbridge.—August 29, Three, by J. H. Blake
Theydon Bois, Essex.—September 1, Two, by W. Woods
Westward Ho, N. Devon.—September 5, One, by S. J. Somers
Waltham Cross.—August 22, Five, by T. Douglas
Willenhall, Lichfield-street.—August 15, Three, by J. H. Bath

LONDON DISTRICT.

- Barking Tabernacle, E.*—August 25, Six, by H. Trueman
Camberwell, S.E., Cottage Green.—August 29, Two, by J. Smith
East Dulwich, S.E.—August 29, Five, by W. Beale
Plumstead, Station-road.—August 29, Seven, by J. Seeley

Hints for Teachers and Workers.

PAUL BEGINS HIS FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

READ ACTS xiii. 1-13.

PAUL'S sermon is noted for its full and powerful vindication and demonstration of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Salvation provided by Christ is the central subject of his discourse, and no one can mistake his words, for there is no uncertain sound in them. Indeed, all his letters to the various Churches are characteristic of Christ's saving power and love towards us. How cheering that the very worst, the drunkard, the unbeliever may come and find pardon, and consolation, and rest in Christ if they return to Him for pardon. The Gospel is suited to the requirements of fallen man. Learn a few practical lessons.

1. *The Gospel of Christ the need of all men.*
2. *We must preach Christ.*
3. *There is no other name by which we can be saved.*
4. *The vilest are invited to partake of the Gospel blessings.*
5. *Accept of the offers of salvation now.*

Plymouth.

THOMAS HEATH.

The Inexhaustible Barrel.

A SERMON BY THE LATE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

"And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah."—

1 Kings xvii. 16.

IN the midst of wrath God remembers mercy. Divine love is rendered conspicuous when it shines in the midst of judgments. Fair is that lone star which smiles through the rifts of the thunder-clouds; bright is the oasis which blooms in the wilderness of sand; so fair and so bright is love in the midst of wrath. In the present instance, God had sent an all-consuming famine upon the lands of Israel and Sidon. The two people had provoked the Most High, the one by renouncing him, and the other by sending forth their queen, Jezebel, to teach idolatry in the midst of Israel. God therefore determined to withhold both dew and rain from the polluted lands. But while he did this he took care that his own chosen ones should be secure. If all the brooks are dry, yet shall there be one reserved for Elijah; and if that should fail, God shall still preserve for him a place of sustenance; nay, not only so, for God had not simply one Elijah, but he had a remnant according to the election of grace, who were hidden by fifties in a cave, and though the whole land was subject to famine, yet these fifty in the cave were fed, and fed from Ahah's table, too, by his faithful, God-fearing steward, Obadiah. Let us from this draw this inference, that come what may God's people are safe. If the world is to be burned with fire, among the ashes there shall not be found the relics of a saint. If the world should again be drowned with water, (as it shall not) yet should there be found another ark for God's Noah. Let convulsions shake the solid earth, let all its pillars tremble, let the skies themselves be rent in twain, yet amid the wreck of worlds the believer shall be as secure as in the calmest hour of rest. If God cannot save his people under heaven, he will save them in heaven. If the world becomes too hot to hold them, then heaven shall be the place of their reception and their safety. Be ye then confident, when ye hear of wars, and rumours of wars. Let no agitation distress you. Whatsoever cometh upon the earth, you, beneath the broad wings of Jehovah, shall be secure. Stay yourself upon his promise; rest ye in his faithfulness, and bid defiance to the blackest future, for there is nothing in it direful for you.

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Though, however, I make these few observations by way of preface, this is not the subject of this morning. I propose to take the case of the poor widow of Sarepta as an illustration of divine love, as it manifests itself to man; and I shall have three things for you to notice. First, *the object of divine love*; secondly, *the singular methods of divine love*; and, then, in the third place, *the undying faithfulness of divine love*—"The barrel of meal did not waste, neither did the cruise of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord."

I. In the first place, let me speak upon THE OBJECTS OF DIVINE LOVE.

1. And here we remark at the very beginning, *how sovereign was the choice*. Our Saviour himself teaches us when he says, "I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow." Here was divine sovereignty. When God would make choice of a woman it was not one of his own favoured race of Israel, but a poor benighted heathen, sprung from a race who of old had been doomed to be utterly cut off. Here was electing love in one of its sovereign manifestations. Men are always quarreling with God because he will not submit his will to their dictation. If there could be a God who was not absolute, men would think themselves gods, and hence sovereignty is hated because it humbles the creature, and makes him bow before a Lord, a King, a Master, who will do as he pleases. If God would choose kings and princes, then would men admire his choice. If he would make his chariots stay at the door of nobles, if he would step from his throne and give his mercy only to the great, the wise, and the learned, then might there be heard the shout of praise to a God who thus honoured the fine doings of man. But because he chooses to take the base things of this world, the things that are despised, and the things that are not; because he takes these things to bring to nought the things that are, therefore is God hated of men. Yet, know that God hath set apart him that is godly for himself. He hath chosen to himself a people whom he will bring to himself at last, who are his peculiar treasure, the favourites of his choice. But these people are by nature the most unlikely ones upon the face of the whole world. Men to-day sunken in sin, immersed in folly, brutalized, without knowledge, without wit, these are the very ones that God ordains to save. To them he sends the word in its effectual might, and these are plucked like brands from the burning. None can guess the reasons of divine election. This great act is as mysterious as it is gracious. Throughout Scripture we are continually startled with resplendent instances of unlimited sovereignty, and the case of this widow is one among the many. Electing love passes by the thousands of widows that dwelt in God's own land, and it journeys beyond the borders of Canaan, to cherish and preserve a heathen woman of Sarepta.

Some men hate the doctrine of divine sovereignty; but those who are called by grace love it, for they feel, if it had not been for sovereignty they never would have been saved. Ah, if we are now his

people, what was there in any of us to merit the esteem of God? How is it that some of us are converted, while our companions in sin are left to persevere in their godless career? How is it that some of us who were once drunkards, swearers, and the like, are now sitting here to praise the God of Israel this day? Was there anything good in us that moved the heart of God to save us? God forbid that we should indulge the blasphemous thought. There was nothing in us that made us better than others, or more deserving. Sometimes we are apt to think that it was the reverse. There was much in us that might have caused God to pass us by if he had looked to us. And yet, here we are, praising his name. Tell me, ye that deny divine sovereignty, how is it that the publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of heaven, while the self-righteous Pharisee is shut out? How is it from the scum and dross of this city, God picks up some of his brightest jewels, while among the learned and philosophic, there are very few that bow the knee to the God of Israel? Tell me, how is it that in heaven there are more servants than masters, more poor than rich, more foolish than learned? What shall we say of this?—"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."

2. But if there be sovereignty in the choice, I cannot omit another thought akin to it. *What undeservingness there was in the person!* She was no Hannah. I read not that she had smitten the Lord's enemies, like Jael, or had forsaken the gods of her country, like Ruth. She was no more notable than any other heathen. Her idolatry was as vile as theirs, and her mind as foolish and vain as that of the rest of her countrymen. Ah, and in the objects too, of God's love, there is nothing whatever that can move his heart to love them; nothing of merit, nothing which could move him to select them. Hark! how the blood-bought ones all sing before the throne. They cast their crowns at the feet of Jehovah, and unitedly say, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory for ever." There is no divided note in heaven upon this matter. Not one spirit in glory will dare to say that he deserved to come there. They were strangers once, and they were sought by grace. They were black, and they were washed in blood. Their hearts were hard, and they were softened by the Spirit. They were dead, and they were quickened by divine life. And all the reasons for this gracious work in and upon them are to be found in the breast of God, and not at all in them. Simple as this truth seems, and lying as it does at the very basement of the Gospel system, yet how often is it forgotten! Ah! men and brethren, ye are saying, "I would come to Christ if I had a better character. I think that God would love me if there were some good works, and some redeeming traits in my character." Nay, but hear me, my brother, God loveth not man for anything in man. The saved ones are not saved on account of anything they did; but simply because he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and he will have compassion on whom he will have compassion. Thou art in as good a place as any other unregenerate sinner on the face of the earth; why should not God have mercy upon thee? Thy merits or thy

demerits have nought to do with the matter. If God intends to bless, he looks not to what thou art. He finds his motive in the death of his own loving will, and not in thee. Oh! canst thou believe it, that black, and filthy, and diseased, and leprous though thou be, the love of God can shed itself abroad in thy heart? O my trembling hearer! do not despair, for he is able to save unto the very uttermost.

3. In continuing to regard this woman, I want you to notice that her condition was miserable too, in the very last degree. She had not only to suffer the famine which had fallen upon all her neighbours, but her husband was taken from her. He would have shared with her the last morsel that his weary limbs could earn; he would have bidden her lean her head upon his strong and faithful breast, and would have said, "My wife, if there be bread to be had thy mouth shall taste it; if there be water to drink thou shalt not thirst." But alas! he was taken from her, and she was a widow. Besides this, he had left her no inheritance. She had no patrimony, no servant. You learn this from the fact that she had not even firewood. Now, there was no reason why she should not have had that even in time of famine of bread, for there was no famine of wood, unless she had been extremely poor. Such was her extremity that she goes outside the city upon the common lands to pick up a few sticks with which she may cook her meal. She had, you see then, nothing wherewithal to buy bread, for even the fuel she must gather for herself. I told you that her husband had left her nothing, yes, he had left her something; but that something, though much beloved, was but another fountain of trouble to her. He had left her a son, her only son, and this son has now to share her starvation. I believe he was too weak to accompany his mother upon this occasion. They had been so long without food that he could not rise from the bed, or else, good soul, she would have brought him with her, and he could have helped to gather a few sticks. But she had laid him upon the bed, fearing that he might die before she reached her home, knowing that he could not accompany her because his limbs were too feeble to carry the weight of his own poor emaciated body. And now she has come forth with a double trouble, to gather a handful of sticks to dress her last meal, that she may eat it and die.

Ah, my dear friends, this is just where sovereign grace find us all—in the depths of poverty and misery. I do not mean, of course, temporal poverty, but I mean spiritual distress. So long as we have a full barrel of our own merits, God will have nothing to do with us. So long as the cruse of oil is full to overflowing, we shall never taste the mercy of God. For God will not fill us until we are emptied of self. Ah, what misery does conviction of sin cause in the breast of the sinner. I have known some so wretched, that all the torments of the inquisition could not equal their agony. If tyrants could invent the knife, the hot irons, the spear, splinters put beneath the nails, and the like, yet could not they equal the torment which some men have felt when under the conviction of sin. They have been ready to make an end of themselves. They have dreamed of hell by night, and when they have awakened in the morning it was to feel what they have dreamed. But then it has been in this very time when all their

hope was gone, and their misery was come to its utmost extremity that God looked down in love and mercy on them. Have I such a hearer in this crowd this morning? Have I not one who is smitten in his heart, whose life is blasted, who walks about in the weariness of his spirit, crying, "Oh, that I were gone out of this world, that I might be rid of sin; for oh, my burden presses upon me as though it would sink me to the lowest hell. My sin is like a millstone round my neck, and I cannot get rid of it." My hearer, I am glad to hear thee speak thus; I rejoice in thy unhappiness; and that not because I love to see thee miserable; but because this sorrow of thine is a step to everlasting blessedness. I am glad that thou art poor, for there is one that will make thee rich. I am glad that barrel of meal of thine is wasted, for now shall a miracle of mercy be wrought for thee, and thou shalt eat the bread of heaven to the full. I am glad that cruse of oil is gone, for now rivers of love and mercy shall be bestowed on thee. Only believe it. In God's name I assure thee, if thou art brought to extremity God will now appear for thee. Look up, sinner—look away from thyself—look up to God who sits upon the throne, a God of love. But if that be too high for thee, look up, sinner, to yon cross. He that hangs there died for such as thou art. Those veins were opened for sinners utterly ruined and undone. That agony he suffered was for those who feel an agony of heart like thine. His griefs he meant for the grievous; his mourning made atonement for the mourners. Canst thou now believe the word which is written?—"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Darest thou trust thyself now upon the merits of Christ? Canst thou say, "Sink or swim, my hope is in the cross." Oh, sinner, if God but help thee to do this, thou art a happy man. Thy poverty shall be removed, and like the widow of Sarepta, thou shalt know no lack until the day when God shall take thee up to heaven, where thou shalt be satisfied throughout eternity.

I do not know whether I have made what I intended to state, sufficiently clear; but I wanted to bring out is this:—Just as God sent his prophet Elijah out of pure sovereignty to a woman who deserved nothing at his hands, and just as he sent a prophet to her in the time of her greatest misery and sorrow, so is the word of God sent to you, my hearer, this morning, if you are in a similar condition.

II. Now I come to the second point: THE GRACE OF GOD IN ITS DEALINGS.

I would have you notice first of all, that the love of God towards this woman in its dealings was of the most singular character. You will notice that the first word this poor woman heard from the God of Israel was one which rather robbed her than made her rich. It was this, "Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink." It was taking something from that already much-diminished store. And then on the heels of that there came another: "Bring me I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand." This was rather demanding than bestowing. And yet singular it is, this is just the way sovereign mercy deals with men. It is an apparent demand rather than an open gift. For what does God say to us when first

he speaks? He says this: "Repent and be converted every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." But saith the soul, "I cannot repent, it is beyond my power; I cannot believe—I would that I could believe—but this is beyond my reach. And has God asked me to exert a strength which I have not? Does he demand that of me which I cannot give? I thought that he gave; I did not know that he asked of me." Ay, but soul, notice what this woman did in obedience to the command. She went and fetched the water, and she brought the morsel of the bread; and the water was not diminished by what she gave, and the bread itself was increased in the spending of it. When God saith to the sinner, "Believe," if that sinner believeth, it is not by his own power, but by grace which goes with the command. But the sinner does not know that at first. He thinks that *he* believes: he thinks that *he* repents. Why, I do not believe that the meal which the woman brought to the prophet was any meal of hers; it was meal taken out of her store, and yet not taken out of it; it was meal given her by miracle—the first instalment of miraculous provision. And so if thou believest, thou wilt say, "I have believed." Yes, it was taken out of your barrel, but still it was not your believing, it was an act of faith wrought in you. Here is a poor man with a withered arm: he wants to have that restored. Now, you will imagine that the first thing Christ will say to him will be, "Man, I will make thy withered arm alive; I will once more nerve it so that thou shalt have power to lift it." Nay, he does not say any such thing. But before he gives the man the power he says to him, "Stretch out thy hand!" Suppose he had cried out, "Sir, I cannot;" his withered arm would have hung dangling at his side till he died. But instead of that the command came; the man had the will to obey, and suddenly he had the power, for he stretched out his withered hand. What! say you, did he stretch out that hand of his own might? No, and yet he was commanded to do it. And so if you are willing to believe, if now your hearts say, "I would believe, I would repent," the power shall come with the will, and the withered hand shall be stretched out.

I do preach continually the exhortation and the command. I am not ashamed to say with the prophet Ezekiel, "Ye dry bones live! ye dead souls live." If this is esteemed unsound doctrine, I shall be yet more heretical. "Man cannot do it; why tell him to do it?" Why simply as an exercise of faith. If I tell a man to do what he can do, anybody can tell him that; but God's servant tells him to do what he cannot do, and the man does it; for God honours the command of his servant, and gives the strength with the command. To sinners dead in sin the cry is given this morning: "Do you want salvation? Believe on Christ. Would you have your sins forgiven? Look to him." Oh! do not answer, "I cannot believe, I cannot look." Instead thereof, may the Spirit of God incline your mind, so that you may say, "I will believe," and then you will believe. O may you say, "I will repent," and then you will repent. And though it be not your own strength, it will be a strength given so instantly upon the moment, that you for a time will not know whether it is your strength or God's strength, until you get further advanced in the divine life, and then

you will discover that all the strength from first to last is of God. I say that the dealings of divine grace with this woman are to be looked upon as extremely singular in that light. And yet they are but the type and the model of the dealings of God with all whom he saves.

3. Now, the next point. The dealings of love with this poor woman were not only singular, but exceedingly *trying*. The first thing she hears is a trial: Give away some of that water which thy son and thyself so much require! Give away a portion of that last little cake which ye intended to eat and die! Nay, all through the piece it was a matter of trial, for there never was more in the barrel than there was at the first. There was a handful at night, and a handful the next morning; but there never were two handfuls there at a time. To the very last there was nothing but just a little oil in the cuse. Whenever she looked at it, there was only a little glazing of oil to spread upon the meal cakes. The cuse was never full; there was not a drop more in it than there was at first. So that this woman, the first time she had eaten the meal out of the barrel, might have thought to herself, "Well, I have breakfasted in a most extraordinary manner, but where shall I find food at noon." But when she went there was just one handful more. She took that out and prepared it, and unbelief would have whispered, "But there will be none at eventide." But, however, when night came there was just enough for the hour. The barrel never filled, and yet it never emptied. The store was little, but it was always sufficient for the day.

Now, if God saves us, it will be a trying matter. All the way to heaven, we shall only get there by the skin of our teeth. We shall not go to heaven sailing along with sails swelling to the breeze, like sea birds with their fair white wings, but we shall proceed full often with sails rent to ribbons, with masts creaking, and the ship's pumps at work both by night and day. We shall reach the city at the shutting of the gate, but not an hour before. O believer, thy Lord will bring thee safe to the end of thy pilgrimage; but, mark, thou wilt never have one particle of strength to waste in wontonness on the road. There will be enough to get thee up the hill Difficulty, but only enough then by climbing on your hands and knees. You will have strength enough to fight Apollyon, but when thy battle is over your arm will have no strength remaining. Your trials will be so many, that if you had only one trial more, it will be like the last ounce that breaks the camel's back. But, nevertheless, though God's love should thus try you all the journey through, your faith will bear the trying, for while God dashes you down to the earth with one hand in providence, he will lift you up with the other in grace. You will have consolation and affliction weighed out in equal degree, ounce for ounce, and grain for grain; you will be like the Israelite in the wilderness, if you gather much manna, you will have nothing over; while blessed be God, if you gather little you shall have no lack. You shall have daily grace for daily trials.

From this interesting topic, I turn to another that is not less so. Although the Lord's dealings with this woman of Sarepta were very trying, yet they were very wise. Ye ask me—Why did not God give her a granary full of meal at once, and a vat full of oil instanter?

I will tell you. It was not merely because of God's intent to try her, but there was wisdom here.

Suppose he had given her a granary full of meal, how much of it would have been left by the next day? I question whether any would have remained. For in days of famine men are sharp of scent, and it would soon have been noised about the city, "The old widow woman who lives in such-and-such a street, has a great store of food." Why, they would have caused a riot, and robbed the house, and perhaps, have killed the woman and her son. She would have been despoiled of her treasure, and in four and twenty hours the barrel of meal would have been as empty as it was at the first, and the cruse of oil would have been spilled upon the ground. What has that to do with us? Just this: if the Lord should give us more grace than we want for the day, we should have all the devils in hell trying to rob us. We have enough to do, as it is, to fight with Satan. But what an uproar there would be! We should have ten thousands of enemies pouncing upon our stock of grace, and we should have to defend our stock against all these assailants. Now, I think while it is good for us to have a little ready money on hand, to let our real, sterling property remain in the hands of our great Banker above. Should thieves break in, as they often do, and steal my evidences and take away my comforts—they only take a few loose coppers, that I have in the house for convenience, they cannot steal my real treasure, for it is secured in a golden casket, the key of which swings at the girdle of the Lord Jesus Christ. Better for you to have an inheritance preserved in heaven for you, than to have it given to you to take care of for yourself; for you would soon lose it and become as poor as ever.

Besides, there was another reason why this woman had not her meal given to her all at once. Any meal-man knows that meal will not keep in great quantities. It soon breeds a peculiar kind of worm, and after a little while it grows musty, and no person would think of eating it. Now, grace is just of the same character. If you have a stock of grace, it breeds a worm called pride. Perhaps you may have seen that worm. It is a very prolific one. I find whenever I have a little extra stock of gifts, or grace, that this worm is sure to breed in the meal, and then soon it begins to smell musty, and is only fit for the dunghill. If we had more grace than we want, it would be like the manna of old, which when it was laid up, bred worms and stank. Besides, how much better it would be, even if it would keep, to have it fresh and fresh every day. Oh, to have the bread of heaven hot from heaven's oven every day! To have the water out of the rock, not as sailors have it in the casks for a long sea voyage, where the sweetest water ferments, and passes through many stages of decay; but, oh, to have it every hour trickling through the divine rock! to have it fresh from the divine fountain every moment, this is to have a happy life indeed!

This woman need never regret having nothing but a handful on hand, for she had thus the greater inducement to be frequent in her pleadings with God. After she had taken out a handful of meal, I think I see her lifting up her streaming eyes and saying, "Great God, it is now two years since for the first time I put the hand of faith into

this barrel, and now every morning, and every noon, and every night, I have done the same, and I have never lacked. Glory be unto the God of Israel!" I think I see her praying as she went:—"Oh, Lord, shut not up the bowels of thy compassion. Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, and fed her this many a year. Grant that the barrel may not fail me now, for I have no stock in hand; grant that there may be a handful still to spare—always enough, always all my necessities can require." Do you not see that she was thus brought into constant contact with God. She had more reasons for prayer, and more reasons for gratitude, than if she had received the blessing at once. This is one reason why God does not give you grace to spare. He will have you come to him every day, nay, every hour. Are you not glad of the plea? You can say each time you come, "Lord, here's a needy beggar at the door, it is not an idle man that is giving a runaway knock at the door of prayer, but, Lord, I am a needy soul: I want a blessing and I come."

I repeat it, the daily journey to the well of mercy is good for us. The hand of faith is blessed by the exercise of knocking at the gate. "Give us this day our daily bread," is a right good prayer; O for grace to use it daily with our Father who is in heaven!

Now, what is the drift of all this? Just this: among the thousands of letters that I continually receive from my congregation I meet with this very common question:—"Oh, sir, I feel such little faith, such little life, such little grace in my heart, that I am inclined to think I shall never hold out to the end; and sometimes I am afraid I am not a child of God at all." Now, my dear friend, if you want an explanation of this it is to be found in the text. You shall have just enough faith to carry you through your trials, but you shall have no faith to spare. You shall have just enough grace in your heart to keep you living day after day in the fear of God, but you shall have none to sacrifice to your boasting and yield to your own pride. I am glad to hear you say that you feel for your spiritual poverty; for when we know ourselves to be poor, then we are rich, but when we think that we are rich and increased in goods, then we are naked, and poor, and miserable, and are in a sad plight indeed. Oh, I want you to remember for your comfort, that though you have never two handfuls of meal in the barrel at a time, yet there will never be less than one handful; that though you will never have a double quantity of oil at one time, yet there will always be the requisite quantity. There will be nothing over, but there shall be none lacking. So take this for your comfort, as your days so shall your strength be; as your needs so shall your grace be; as the demands of your necessity, such shall be the supply of God's mercy. The cup shall be full if it does not flow over, and the stream shall always run, even though it is not always brimming the banks.

III. I conclude by bringing you to the point upon which I shall dwell but briefly—for I pray that your life may be a far fuller sermon on this text than I can hope to preach—THE FAITHFULNESS OF DIVINE LOVE. "The barrel of meal wasteth not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah." You will observe that this woman had daily necessities.

She had three mouths to feed ; she had her herself, her son, and the prophet Elijah. But though the need was threefold, yet the supply of meal wasted not. Boys have large appetites, and no doubt her son very speedily devoured that first little cake. As for Elijah himself, he had walked no less a distance than one hundred miles ; all weary with his journey, you may consider that he had a considerable appetite also ; whilst she herself, having been long subjected to starvation, would doubtless feed to the full. But though their necessities were very great at first, yet the barrel of meal wasted not. Each day she made calls upon it, but yet each day it remained the same. Now brethren, you have daily necessities. Because they come so frequently—because your trials are so many, your troubles so innumerable, you are apt to conceive that the barrel of meal will one day be empty, and the cruse of oil will fail you. But rest assured that according to the Word of God this shall not be the case. Each day, though it bring its trouble shall bring its help ; though it bring its temptation it shall bring its succour ; though it bring its need it shall bring its supply ; and though day come after day, if you should live to outnumber the years of Methuselah, and though troubles come after troubles till your tribulations are like the waves of the sea, yet shall God's grace and mercy last through all your necessities, and you shall never know a lack. For three long years the heavens never saw a cloud, and the stars never wept the holy tears of dew upon the wicked earth ; for three long years the women fainted in the streets, and devoured their own offspring for straitness of bed ; for three long years the mourners went about the streets, wan, and weary, like skeletons following corpses to the tomb ; but this woman never was hungry, never knew a lack ; always supplied, always joyful in abundance. So shall it be with you. You shall see the sinner die, for he trusts his native strength ; you shall see the proud Pharisee totter, for he builds his hope upon the sand ; you shall see even your own schemes blasted and withered, but yourself shall find that your place of defence shall be the munition of rocks ; your bread shall be given you, and your water shall be sure. The staff on which you lean shall never break ; the arm on which you repose shall never be palsied ; the eye that looks on you shall never wax dim ; the heart that loves you shall never grow weary ; and the hand that supplies you shall never be weak. Do you not remember a time in your experience, not long ago, when you came to your wit's end. You said, " I shall surely fall by the hands of the enemy." Have you fallen ? Are you not still preserved ? Look back I pray you. It is not many months ago since business was running so dead against you, that you said, " I must give it up ; ever since I have known the Lord I have had more trials than ever I had before." Have you given it up ? You have gone through fires ; let me ask you, have you been burnt ? has there been a hair of your head singed ? You have walked through waters—and deep waters have they been—have you been drowned ? You said you should be, but have you ? Have the water floods overflowed you ? When all God's waves and God's billows have rolled over you, were you destroyed ? Did they wash out your hope ? Did your confidence give way ? You once went down, as it were, into a very sea of trouble,

and you thought you would have been drowned therein like Egypt of old. Did not the water floods divide before you? Did not the depths stand upright as a heap, and were not the floods congealed in the heart of the sea? You have had high mountains in your path, and you have said, "I can never traverse this road, the mountains are too steep." But have you not climbed them, and let me ask you have you not benefited by the climb? When you have stood upon their hoary summit, has not the view of your knowledge become wider? Has not the breath of your prayer become purer and freer? Say ye, have not your visits to the cold mountains of affliction strengthened you, and braced you for more glorious efforts than before? Now, then, let the past console the future. Snatch a torch from the altars of the past, and re-ignite the dying embers of to-day. He that has been with you in time past, will not leave you in time to come. He is God; he changeth not, he will not forsake you. He is God; he lieth not, he cannot leave you. He has sworn by himself, because he can swear by no greater, so that by two immutable things—his oath and his promise—we might have strong consolation, who have fled to the refuge to lay hold of the hope that is set before us. Though the barrel of meal hold but a scanty supply, though the cruse of oil contain but a drop, that meal shall last thee to the end, that cruse of oil, miraculously multiplied, hour by hour, shall be sufficient until thou shalt gather up thy feet in the bed, and with good old Jacob, end thy life with a song, praising and blessing the angel that hath redeemed thee out of all evil.

Now, having thus addressed myself to the children of God, I hope to their comfort, I wish to say just a word or two to those whom I have come here with the hope of blessing this morning—those of you who know nothing of the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. What would you think of the condition of the man who can say, and say truly too, without a blush or stammer, "I know that I am the object of God's eternal love; I know that he has put all my sins behind his back, and that I stand before him as accepted and as much beloved as if I had never sinned." What would you say if that man could confidently add, "I know that this shall be my position in time and in eternity. God so loves me that he cannot cease to love me. He will preserve me whatever my troubles or temptations, and I shall see his face, and shall rejoice in his love eternally." Why, you answer, "If I could say that, I would give all that I am worth; if I were worth a thousand worlds I would give them all to say that." Is it, then, an unattainable thing? Is it so high beyond your reach? I tell you, and the witness that I bear is true, there are tens of thousands of men on the face of God's earth that enjoy this state. Not always can they say as much, but they still enjoy it year after year continually. There are some of us that know what it is to have no doubt as to our eternal state. At times we tremble, but at other times we can say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him unto that day." Again I hear you say, "Would to God I could say that." Well, my dear hearer, it is possible that thou shalt say it ere long; nay, to-night it may be, ere sleep shall close thy eyelids, thou mayest be among the happy men. "No," saith one,

"but I am the chief of sinners." Yes, but Christ is the Saviour of the chief of sinners. "Nay," says another, "but my character is so bad, my disposition is so evil." The Holy Ghost can change your disposition, can renew your will, and make you a new man in Christ. "Well," says a third, "I can understand that I may be pardoned, but I cannot think that I shall ever know it." That is the glory of the religion of Christ, that he not only forgives, but he tells you so: he sheds abroad in your heart a sweet consciousness of acceptance in him; so that you know better than if an angel could tell you, that you are now one of the family of God, that all your sins are gone, and that every good thing is yours by an eternal covenant. Again, saith a fourth, "I would that I could have it." Well, sinner, it is in thy way. Dost thou feel and know thyself to be undeserving, ill-deserving, and hell-deserving? Then all that is asked of thee is that thou wouldst simply confess thy sin to God; acknowledge that thou hast been guilty, and then cast thyself flat on thy face before the cross of Christ. He is able to save thee, sinner, for he is able to save to the very uttermost all that come unto God by him.

May God the Holy Spirit now send the word home, and may some who have been poor as the widow of Sarepta now find a miraculous supply of grace through Jesus Christ our Lord! Amen.

A Quarter of an Hour with a Bad Book.

ABOUT twenty-five years ago I formed a most intimate acquaintance with a young man of fine education and commanding talents, and we soon became bosom friends. One morning after school, at a street-corner, he handed me a book, which he said he could loan me for only one quarter of an hour. We stood at that corner for a few moments, while I looked at the obscene pictures and read a few pages in that polluting volume. I handed it back to him, and never saw it again; but the poison took effect, "the sin left its mark." I cannot erase the effect of the impure thoughts which in that quarter of an hour that vile book lodged in my heart, and which, may God forgive me, I harboured there. I can and do pray against the sin, and trust by God's grace yet to conquer it; but it is a thorn in my flesh, and still causes me great bitterness and anguish.

Young men! as a lover of your souls, I tell you in all sincerity that there is nothing which I would not willingly give to have the veil of oblivion cast over the scenes and the sentiments of that corrupt volume, which still haunt me like foul spectres, during my hours of private devotion in the sanctuary, and at the communion table. O, what sad work did that quarter of an hour make upon a human soul! *Young men, beware of bad books, and beware also of evil companions.*

My early friend, after well nigh accomplishing my ruin, became a dissolute man, imbibed infidel sentiments, and at last, as I greatly fear, died by his own hand. "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."—*American Messenger.*

Our Minister's Wife and her Noble Life.

CHAPTER XI.—RESCUED FROM BRUTALITY.

FOR seven years Mr. Barton remained at Darkloom, and then, as his custom was, having been privileged to do a good work and make the church self-supporting he left its supervision to a suitable successor. Two more causes were thus served when at the age of fifty-four he entered upon what proved to be his final charge.

The town that secured his services was called Bluntford, and here after six years labour he suddenly broke down and ended his days in peace. But before I come to that I wish to show another way in which Mrs. Barton as a minister's wife made herself useful. As already stated, her labours were chiefly confined to benefitting her own sex, and that not by joining societies, but by the putting forth of individual effort. She believed, like her husband, largely in dealing with persons alone, and in this respect she succeeded admirably. Her *forte* she knew full well was to deal with the individual either at home or abroad, and many are the touching incidents that might be given in addition to those already recorded to illustrate the good which in this unostentatious manner she was enabled to effect. One thing she told me at times much distressed her, and that was

the brutality with which some good Christian wives were treated by their worthless husbands. In every cause where they had laboured she stated she had come in personal contact with such cases, and sometimes she could help them by practical sympathy, but more often merely by words of consolation. "You see, Miss Kent," she said, "when women are tied to such men in nine cases out of ten there is no getting out of it. Much as they suffer they cannot leave their children to the care of such savages, and thus their lives are those of a constant martyrdom. One may say a few kind words, give advice, and tender a little aid, but after all has been said and done you have to leave the poor creatures in their misery, conscious that relief probably can only come to them in the shape of death itself." But for all that in many cases Mrs. Barton did effect real and lasting good, and two of these I will venture to place on record.

While on a visit to Bluntford I was with Mr. Barton and his wife who were about to attend on a certain Saturday a public celebration. After locking the house door we had just reached the gate when Mrs. Barton and her husband were startled by seeing a respect.

able woman from afar standing before them looking in great distress.

"What, is that you," Mrs. Thornbrow," exclaimed Mr. Barton in unfeigned surprise.

"Yes, its me, Mr. Barton, will you please take me in?"

"Take you in, certainly; but whatever brings you here?"

"I've come here," was the quick reply, "because my husband threatened to murder me."

"Oh! I am sorry," he replied. "Come in, and let's hear all about it."

We at once turned back, and then in tremulous tones the poor woman told her tale.

"You know, Mrs. Barton," she said, after having been introduced to myself, "what kind of life I lived with my husband when Mr. Barton was our pastor and how patiently I tried to bear it all. He drank then, but now he drinks more than ever. Then he used me shamefully, so much so that I often wished I was dead, but my love for my dear children bore me up, and I got all the relief from prayer that I could. But the day before yesterday matters reached a climax. He came home half tipsy late at night, and although I had provided him with a good supper he struck me, swore at me, and dragged me about the room by the hair of my head. Then my dear son interferred, but he swore that he would do for me the next night if he got the chance. As on a previous occasion in one of his mad freaks he had taken up a knife, and tried to draw it across my throat, I took my children's advice and determined to go away for a season. So late in the evening, with this small bundle, by back-

ways, I walked to the railway station, uncertain, however, as to where I should go. First I thought of this relative and then of that one, but suddenly, as if it was a voice speaking from Heaven to my soul, the news came to me, "Go to Mrs. Barton, she will look after you," and I went and took my ticket for Blunford immediately.

"But no sooner had I taken my ticket than a strange thing happened. A bad man that knew my husband well came unto the platform and recognis'd me. He asked me where I was going, and I was compelled to give him an evasive answer. Evidently suspecting that something was up, he left the station hastily, and must have gone straightway to my husband to tell him where I was. As I had to wait another hour before the train started I trembled like a leaf lest I should be caught, and I had good cause for it. The man had not been away half-an-hour before I saw my husband peering about in the dim light, and looking into the carriages to see if he could discover me. But I hid myself in a recess in the ladies waiting room, and though he peeped into it, thinking no one was there, he went away, either supposing that he was on the wrong track or that his boon companion had befooled him. Not until the train was about to leave did I dare to venture out, and you can hardly tell how relieved I was when the whistle sounded and the train was started: then I felt myself like "a bird escaped from the snares of the fowler." If there had not been a couple of ladies in the carriage I should have gone down on my knees there and then and offered up a prayer of thanks-

giving unto God. As it was I gave thanks to Him in my heart, and I feel more thankful now that I am able once more to see your dear face again."

My heart was touched with this sad recital. The persecuted woman looked like some poor creature that had been hunted by the cruel sportsmen; every sound seemed to frighten her, and ever and anon she stared at the door as if she feared that her brutal husband was following her up. Seeing her in this highly wrought nervous condition, Mr. Barton said, "You had better have some refreshment, Mrs. Thornbrow, and then go to bed, for after coming such a long journey and travelling nearly all night you must feel very weary."

"No," she said, "I am not so weary as you might think, for I got some sleep in the carriage, and if you would allow me I should like to go out with you unless you wish to go alone."

As Mrs. Barton, with a woman's insight saw that it would be probably best to occupy her thoughts with something fresh, she said, "O! do please come with us, Mrs. Thornbrow. We are only going to see the foundation-stone laying of a new public building, and watch the procession. Then when we have witnessed that Miss Kent and myself are coming home, leaving Mr. Barton to fulfil an engagement in a distant town to-morrow, where he has to preach. You perceive he has his black bag with him ready to depart by train at the appointed time, so you will be good company for us while he is away."

It did us all good to see how soon this worthy Christian woman's spirits were revived at her cordial reception. She seemed

thoroughly to enjoy all that she saw, and when Mr. Barton came home he was surprised to note by Mrs. Thornbrow's cheerful look and tone of voice what a change for the better had been wrought in her. She sat at some self-appointed stitching work as if she were thoroughly at home, and Mr. Barton jocularly complimented her on her improved appearance.

Subsequent correspondence with her wretched husband on Mr. Barton's part failed to bring the fellow to his senses, with the result that a final separation was ultimately effected, and in Blunford Mrs. Thornbrow had the happiness of seeing her children join her in a good home, situations having been secured for them chiefly through Mr. and Mrs. Barton's influence. Of Mrs. Thornbrow's husband little afterwards was heard, and that little not at all to his credit.

A second case very similar to this one was that of Mrs. Earle. She was an inhabitant of Blunford, a bright, cheery little woman, whose prayers at the weekly and after meetings used often to thrill us through and through, so pathetic were they and spiritual. Mrs. Barton once said, and in this utterance she was not alone, that to hear Mrs. Earle pray frequently did her as much good as listening to a sermon. Meek in her disposition, willing to oblige and do anything for the Lord's cause that lay in her power, a good wife and a most devoted mother, she was nevertheless so ill-used by her brutal partner as to cause the home, that otherwise might have been a little Paradise, to be converted into a veritable hell. Forced at last to separate from

him she and her children were flung upon the world, and then in Mrs. Barton she found a most sincere and lasting friend. Help was given to her that enabled her ultimately once more to have a happy home of her own, which her so-called husband without a breach of the law could not touch, and the last that I heard of her was, that she and her family were not only doing well, but that she had never felt happier in her life.

By deeds such as these Mrs. Barton did good, that eternity alone will unfold. It mattered not to her who needed her kindly counsel and help, whether they were old or young, all felt certain that in appealing to her they would find in her a firm, faithful and lasting friend. And what was best of all she never seemed to feel conscious that in any act of

this kind that she did, she was doing any more than her simple duty. To her it was a pleasure rather than a task, and the tact which she showed in going about her work made the most independent of those she served realise that in no case did they lose their self-respect by accepting the aid she so willingly proffered. Asked once why she thus devoted herself to the cause of ill-used wives and mothers, she gave perhaps the noblest answer that could possibly be given, "I do it," she said, "not only out of real pity for my suffering sisters, but for the sake of Him who having died for me on the Cross once said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these ye have done it unto Me."

(To be continued.)

The Portfolio.

“**H** EART-FELT sorrow for sin is not opposed to happiness. The example of St. Peter shows us, on the contrary, that it is the appointed means of leading the wandering sufferer back to the source of all consolation. The tears of penitence are not tears of unmingled bitterness. There is a joy connected with them, which is as satisfying and exalting as it is purifying and humbling. God Himself has pronounced the sorrow of the poor in spirit blessed, and He has not blessed it in vain. His people taste its sweetness. Their happiest hours are those which are spent in the exercise of penitence and faith, and while these exercises are in lively exercise, they envy not the inhabitants of heaven. . . .

“We have no reason, therefore, to mourn over those of our friends whom the Lord has taught to weep over their manifold sins. Their spiritual sorrow sends up, as it were, a new ray of joy into the kingdom of the blessed; and if we were holy and wise like the angels, we too should rejoice over the sinner that repenteth, and his complaining and sighs would be as music in our ears. And yet it is painful to think how many of us would rather see our children and friends trifling in the most humiliating scenes of folly and sin, than see them retiring from the crowd, as the stricken deer retires from the herd, to confess their iniquities, and to mourn and to bleed alone.”—*Rev. C. Bradley.*

Anecdotal Illustrations and Meditations from C. H. Spurgeon's Works.

Gathered by T. W. MEDHURST. CARDIFF.

“TRY HIM WI' A TEXT.”

THE reading of the Scriptures is the terror of the devils. “IT IS WRITTEN” is a weapon which the prince of devils dreads; but a man cannot readily quote or use what he never heeds. “What’s wrang wi’ ye noo? I thocht ye were a’richt,” said a ragged Scotch laddie, himself rejoicing in the Saviour, to another, who a few nights before professed to be able to trust Jesus, but who had again begun to doubt. “What’s wrang wi’ ye noo?” “Man, I’m no richt yet,” replied the other, “for Satan’s aye tempting me.” “And what dae ye then,” asked his friend. “I try,” said he, “to sing a hymn.” “And does that no’ send him awa’?” “No, I am as bad as ever.” “Weel,” said the other, “when he tempts ye again, try him wi’ a text; he canna staun that.” The promises, like a well-drawn picture, look on all that look on them with an eye of faith.

WHOLE CONVERTED CHRISTIANS.

I like to see a man renewed all over from head to foot. It is so delightful to meet your hearty Christian, who, when he gave his heart to Jesus, meant it, and devoted his whole body, soul and spirit to the good Lord who had bought him with His blood. Some of you have only got a little finger conversion, just enough to wear the ring of profession and look respectable; but oh! to have hand and foot, lungs, heart, voice, and soul, all saturated with the Spirit’s influence, and consecrated to the cause of God. We have a few such men, full of the Holy Ghost, but alas! we have too many other converts, who are rather tintured with grace, than saturated with it, and to whom *sprinkling* is a very significant ordinance, for it would appear that they never received anything but a *sprinkling of grace*. Oh, for saints in whom there will be a thorough *death and burial* to the world, and a new life in the resurrection image of the Lord Jesus Christ, *which is the true baptism of the Holy Ghost!* (Read carefully and prayerfully the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.)

THE PRAYER OF THE HEART.

The prayer of the heart is the heart of the prayer. The language of the heart cannot be imitated. WALMA, the famous actor, hearing of the death of his father, uttered a loud cry of distress. Soon after he murmured, "Oh, that I could cry like that on the stage!" Too many prayers are but stage performances; the voice of the heart is not heard in them."

The only way to keep our crowns is to cast them down at Christ's feet.

"IS THE SERMON ALL DONE?"

The sermon is not done till the hearer does it. Coming home from the kirk a little sooner than usual, the good wife was asked by her husband, "What! is the sermon all done?" She wisely answered, "No, Donald, it is all *said*, but it has not begun to be *done* yet." Many sermons are *done with*, but not *DONE*.

THE AVERAGE CHRISTIAN.

The thorough Christian is the true Christian. A man who was in the habit of saying that although he was not what he should be, still, upon the whole, he was a *good average kind of Christian*, had given orders to a Christian man to construct a fence around his property. Meeting this man some days afterwards, he asked him if he had made a good fence. "Well," was the reply, "the fence is not as it should be—it is not very strong in certain parts, and there are gaps here and there, but it is a *good average kind of fence*." The man at once, with great indignation, said, "What do you mean? Why a fence of that kind is useless!" "Quite true," was the answer, "and the man who is only a good average kind of Christian is not very much use either

STUDY CHRIST.

To be much like Christ, be much with Christ. A painter in Rome was forbidden to copy a famous picture. Determined not to be balked, he sat down in front of the pointing and looked closely and steadfastly at it for half-an-hour every morning. He then hurried home and transferred one line or feature to his canvas. So if we would spend but half-an-hour each day in contemplating the grace and beauty of our Divine Redeemer, by a spiritual process there would be a transference of those lines of grace and beauty into our characters.

AN OMITTED CONFESSION.

"*We are undeserving, ill-deserving, hell-deserving sinners.*" A confession often made in the prayers of good men a generation back, but seldom heard now. Why the omission? Is it because the men of the present day are so much better and worthier than those of the past? Is it not rather because they have a less vivid perception of the evil

of sin and of their own guiltiness? Not long since one said frankly that he did not think himself bad enough to go to hell, and there is no doubt that many are of the same opinion. They agree with the Duchess of Buckingham, who wrote to Lady Huntingdon that, "It is monstrous to be told that you have a heart so sinful as the common wretches that crawl on the earth." But there is no hope of any being admitted to heaven who are not brought to acknowledge that they might justly be sent to hell.

HOW WEAKLY CHRISTIANS ARE MADE.

WEEKLY services neglected, make WEAKLY Christians. There is a proverb in Scotland, that "Mony ane will gang a mile to hear a sang that winna gang a foot tae hear a sermon." A certain United Presbyterian Church in the North of England was the scene of two evening meetings in one week, *viz.*, an evangelistic meeting and a concert, or service of song. A Scripture reader in connection with the congregation, while on her dismal rounds, came in contact with a douce old Scotchman, a member of the church. "Now, David," queried the good woman, "are ye comin' up tae the meeting this week?" "Oh, ay," exclaimed the canny Scot, "I maun come tae the meeting; for I ken some o' the folk that's gaun to sing." "Tutts!" exclaimed the interrogator, "its no the concert; its the ither meeting I mean." "Oh!" sighed the devout Scot, "I dinna think that I can come; for you see I am sae tired at night that I can hardly STIR off my chair."

That "devout Scott" was an old hypocrite, and there are many like him. Too tired to go to the prayer meeting, but not too tired to go to the club, concert, or political meeting. Christ hates and is disgusted with lukewarm Christians.—*Revelation iii., 16.*

"It will always help me."

IT will always help me
To be kind and true,
If I ask in earnest,
What would Jesus do?
Is it hard with patience
Minding what I'm bid?
Help me heavenly Father,
To do as Jesus did.
When my heart is tempted
From the truth to stray,
Let me softly whisper,
What would Jesus say?
So my work and playing
Happy hours shall fill;
Not as I would rather,
But as Jesus will. Amen.

The Education Question.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS, PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

By REV. J. H. BLAKE, Tonbridge.

WE read in the Word of God delivered by Moses to the children of Israel, "These words which I command thee this day shall be upon thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up—and thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be for frontals between thine eyes, and thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house and upon thy gates—and ye shall teach them, your children, talking of them when thou sittest in thine house and when thou walkest by the way," and Moses in his farewell words charges the assembled people, the men, and the women, and the little ones that they may hear and that they may learn and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law, and that their children which have not known may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God. Here we are clearly taught that the work of giving religious instruction to the children was chiefly committed to parents. The school was the home, and the school-book appointed by God Himself was the Divine Word. This evidently places the responsibility on the parents, and makes our Sunday-school supplementary and helpful to their work.

In taking a brief review of the past of our Sunday-schools, the City of Gloucester and Robert Raikes take a front position. We must think of Gloucester when its streets swarmed with rogues and vagabonds who were flogged through the city weekly by scores.

The Church was asleep or else dead in formalisms. John and Charles Wesley had not begun their glorious work, and George Whitfield was only known as the boy at the Bell Inn who had robbed his mother's till. In 1722 Raikes Senior produced the first numbers of the *Gloucester Journal*. Sunday-schools there were none, and schools for the poor were only just being thought of. Raikes, the Father of Sunday-schools, was born September 14, 1735, and in 1757, at the age of 22, he became through the death of his father the head of a large and important business—still, he devoted much time and energy in visiting and endeavouring to remedy the terrible state of things in Gloucester Prison. The conception of the Sunday-school had entered into the minds of others. It remained for Raikes to give it shape and prominence, and eventually to see his work prospering all over the country.

His first effort was for the young fellows to meet him at early morning services at the Cathedral. This was followed by the opening of the first Sunday-school in 1780. The ragamuffins were required to come with clean hands and faces and hair combed, but they might come with dilapidated clothes, and also with or without shirt. The effort was a success, and soon Sunday-schools were established all over the country. In 1786 a sermon was published by the Rev. Dr. Glasse in which these words occur: "Mr. Robert Raikes, of the City of Gloucester, the instructor of the ignorant and a father of the poor, to whose piety and zeal in the first institution and subsequent encouragement of Sunday-schools every friend of religion is indebted." The Sunday-school Union was formed in 1803—some of its first committees will always be fragrant in the memory of the writer—William Groser, W. H. Watson, William Groser, and Thomas Thompson, and others did indeed,

"Make their lives sublime, and departing have left behind them
Footprints on the sands of Time."

In 1842 no less than 16,000 children were committed to jail for crime. This was depressing indeed, but there was a bright light in the black cloud. The dawn of day was manifest, there was an earnest and increasing demand for books, tracts, and Bibles. In 1843 Ragged Schools were established, the first one in a stable. Some of the first in this noble work being the Rev. Champreys, Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, John Branch and Lord Ashley (Shaftesbury). In the early days of Sunday-schools it was important to teach writing as well as reading and spelling. In 1810 the teaching of writing was abandoned. And at the present time and for many years past there are more than 300,000 Sunday-school teachers render their services free, looking for a far higher and better reward. In 1843 a discussion arose on the subject of the Union supplying catechisms. The objection being to the sale of Church of England catechisms. Eventually it was decided that no denominational catechism should be sold by the Union. No doubt this was essential to preserve the neutral constitution of the Union. But we hold most firmly the conviction that the abandoning the use of Scripture catechisms in our schools has been detrimental to our work, and we have given away one of the most effective methods of imparting the great truths of saving religion to the young.

What is our present position and objects. Writing is out of it, and the means of education is so within the reach of all that reading and spelling are not so prominent among our objects as formerly. The teaching required is to teach the young the great truths of salvation, Bible history, Bible geography, Bible Orientalisms if you please, but the main business is to show the children the way of salvation, and to bring them to the loving Saviour who has said, "Teach My lambs." So we are to *teach, train, draw, cultivate, cherish* with all prayer that we may reach the glorious climax in our work in being made wise to win souls. To this end we want *labourers* in the vineyard, teachers who live near the Master and burdened with the care of souls and possessed with a consuming desire to win them for Christ. These reasons, besides the grandeur of our objects are why we should do this

work with all our heart. First, the spread of *Romanism* in our Protestant Church. Here is the statement of no less a witness than Dean Farrer. He says, "I want, if you will allow me, to illustrate this extraordinary rapidity of Romeward Development. I learn from the tourist guide to the churches that there are 7,000 of the clergy who are avowed supporters of the Romeward movement—4,000 are members of the Church Union, and are pledged to support *vestments, lights, wafers, bread*, the Eastward position, and the mixed chalice. In the year 1882 there were 2,580 Ritualistic Churches. In the year 1892 there were 5,043. In 1802 there were 336 only in what may be called Eucharistic vestments were used, and now there are 1,029. There were only nine churches in which incense was used illegally. There are now 177. Then there were 581 which had altar lights, and now the number is 2,048. This is the development in ten years. The President of the Women's Protestant Union says these Ritualistic clergymen who are preparing the way for Romanisms number no fewer than 5,000 Church of England clergymen, and are preaching Roman Catholicism, and 1,200 are hearing private confessions. There are millions of the children of our beloved country who are being taught at the expense of the nation in all the Church of England schools the soul-destroying doctrine of the Catechism. That a sinful fallen man has power by the application of a few drops of water to change a child of wrath—as they describe the child—into a Child of God. What does all this say to us. Teachers, arouse thee, buckle on the armour and fight the battles of the Lord. The untiring efforts made by the Salisbury High Church party to capture the Board Schools ought to open our eyes to this fact that we ought to come back to the use of Bible Catechism in our Sunday-schools, and we call on the mothers to realise their responsibility and powers, and to imitate the mothers of Moses and Samuel and Jeremiah and Timothy, also of Whitfield and Wesley's, Newton, Knibb, and Spurgeon, and a host of others. Out of 121 American preachers 100 were brought to the Lord by their mothers, and of 1,000 conversions there were not one-dozen occurred after 50 years of age, only one at 85, all the others were brought in childhood or youth, and just reaching the manhood of life.

Work away

For the Master's eye is on us,
 Never off us, still upon us,
 Night and day!
 Work and pray!
 Pray! and work will be completer!
 Work! and prayer will be the sweeter!
 Love! and pray and work, the fleeter
 Will ascend upon the way!
 Live in future as in present,
 Work for both, while yet the day
 Is our own; for Lord and peasant,
 Long and bright as summer's day,
 Cometh—yet more sure, more pleasant,
 COMETH SOON A HEAVENLY DAY.
 Work away!

Good and Bad Works—Their Immortality.

THE witnesses against some men, we have reason to believe, will be crowding into the eternal world to the end of time—the indictment against them not being filled up till the last result of their iniquity is developed. A man, for example, who writes an immoral but immortal book, may be tracked into eternity by a procession of lost souls from every generation, every one of them to be a witness against him at the judgment, to show to him and the universe the immeasurable dreadfulness of his iniquity. A man whose teachings or whose influence remain behind him for evil, does in a solemn sense remain sinning in this world, long after his soul has gone forward into the land of spirits. And it must be an awful reception which such a man gives to the witnesses of his guilt, as they come into his company covered with the mantle of his sins, filled with the element of perdition ministered by his soul to theirs! It may have been the dread of that, that made the rich man in his torments beseech Father Abraham to send Lazarus to testify unto his five brethren, lest they also should come into that place of torment.

But the good works of good men are as immortal as the bad works of evil men. They, too, are swift messengers, but bright celestial ones, before the throne of God in judgment. They, too, come trooping into the eternal world as witnesses, long after the authors of them have entered on their reward. And who can tell the blessedness of such men as Baxter, Bunyan, Doddridge, Flavel, and others, when they see, generation after generation, the results and marks of their own earthly labours, in souls that follow after them to glory! No good that they have done can ever be hid. Not a cup of cold water given to a disciple, nor a widow's mite put into Christ's treasury, nor a penitent tear, nor a fervent, faithful prayer, nor any thought or deed of self-denying love, but is recorded in the book of life, and sends on its witnesses for the great day. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord! Yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."—*Dr. Cheever.*

THE LESSONS OF LIFE.

THE difficulties of life teach us wisdom; its vanities, humility; its calumnies, piety; its hopes, resignation; its sufferings, charity; its afflictions, fortitude; its necessities, prudence; its brevity, the value of time; and its dangers and uncertainties, a constant dependence upon a higher and all-protecting Power.

Reviews.

The Little Lumps of Clay and Other Addresses to Young People. By Rev. W. H. Shrewsbury. Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier, 21, Paternoster Square.

It has been our pleasure to read and also to say a good word for the whole of the Golden Nail Series of Addresses to the Young, and to what we have said we add that the present volume is equal to any of the preceding ones, and we note these features in it: The subjects selected are not the usual ones, and the method of dealing with them is novel. Instead of adhering to the sermon style the illustrative story is used.

Saved by a Child. By Parker Graham.

On Schedule Time. By James Otis. Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier.

The titles of two books of the shilling volume now publishing by this firm. *Saved by a Child* is a most touching story, and will be in request in temperance circles. *On Schedule Time* is a good illustration of business before pleasure. Both books are interesting and healthful.

Life and Labours of the Late Rev. James Smith, of Tunbridge Wells. By T. T. Ball, of Cambridge, with Preface by Pastor Charles Spurgeon.

May be ordered of S. Hunt, Monson road, or the widow, Mrs. James Smith, Hanover Road, Tunbridge Wells. Who that knew our dear brother but loved him and will wish to read his life. Mr. Ball has done his work worthily, and in contributing his knowledge and intimacy of

many years has not indulged in word painting a worthy and useful life, but has stated facts, and allowed them to testify to the grace of God in and the blessing of God on the labours of the departed. The book is illustrated with memorial pictures which give it an increasing interest. People in all parts of the Christian circle will be glad to know that this touching memoir is published at one shilling in paper covers, or in boards, one and sixpence.

Happy Hearts and other Readings. Morgan & Scott, Paternoster Buildings.

Good type, splendid pictures, beautiful binding, pages filled with the Old Gospel, and suitable for young or old and all classes of people. Such is our description of this shilling volume.

Christians Baptism, Who, How, and Why. By Pastor C. Rudge, of Sevenoaks. Arthur Stockwell & Co., 17, Paternoster Row.

Our brother has given a very worthy description of the Who, How, and Why. It is impossible to say anything new on the subject of New Testament Baptism, and we always after reading such a booklet as the above wonder how it is people cannot see the plain matter as it is written in this word. We trust this penny issue may have a large circulation.

Magazines: *The Quiver* for October will be a welcome number to multitudes in the approaching Band of Hope jubilee. Its leader and the pictures are excellent. The October part of *The Boys' Own* and *The Girls'*

Own, containing the numbers for September, with frontispiece, title pages, and index, suggest it as a good time for new subscribers. *Friendly Greetings*, with its attractive coloured picture of Too Late, opens with a picture and living story of Bunyan's early life. October number of *The Penny Boys' Monthly* has an article by Mrs. Holman C. Bentley—Animal Life on the Congo, illustrated. *Light in the Home* contains an article by Rev. E. Payson Hammond on a Remarkable Conversion from Infidelity. *The Sunday-at-Home*, *The Leisure Hour*, and *Sunday Hours* are in addition to valuable reading specially good in the frontispiece of each — *The Vagrants*, *Simplicity* and *Nazareth*. Part 24, *The Treasury of David*. Passmore & Alabaster. We give this hearty welcome. Rich with Mr. Spurgeon,

our comment and the comments of others in the Treasuries of the past, are rendered additionally valuable from its notes and homeliness. We have received *The Report of the Ragged School Union*, also the *Monthly Record of the Protestant Evangelical Union*, a specially interesting number. *The Animal's Friend*, a worthy object. *The Reporter of the Bible Society* and *Gleanings for the Young*. *The New Orthodoxy*, a monthly edited by Rev. Robert Tuck, B.A. Mr. Tuck has done valuable work in the past, and we hope the new venture may do good service. Though we could have wished for another title, as it seems to suggest to the mind what Mr. Tuck wishes to avoid. We give our heartiest best wishes to the success of our magazines, *The Baptist Magazine*, *The Sword and Trowel*, and *The Penny Irish Baptist Magazine*.

Our Meetings.

The Baptist Union Meetings held at Plymouth were largely attended. The list of delegates contained 813 names, who, with few exceptions, put in an appearance. The meetings were large, and sometimes of a most enthusiastic character. The Address by the Rev. E. G. Gange was a most enrapturing outpour on The Kingly Christ, and brought out with marked distinctness the principles of the Free Churches in their supreme allegiance to Jesus Christ their King. Excellent sermons were preached on Be Not Weary in Well-doing by Rev. W. E. Blomfield, B.A., D.D., and also by Rev. J. H. Shakespears, M.A., In that Day shall Israel be the Third with Egypt and Assyria.

The Home Missionary Meeting held in the Guildhall was crowded, and the whole of its proceedings were of a very stirring character. Perhaps no part of the proceedings deserve notice more than the Valedictory and Designation Service. The five minutes Addresses of the outgoing missions were so compressive yet so full, so brief yet so informing, such were the speeches of Rev. W. W. Milne, Rev. W. Sutton Page, Rev. F. Oliver Romford, Rev. C. H. Williams, Rev. A. E. Greening, Rev. F. Madeley, Rev. J. Jeffrey, the Group of New Missionaries. The Missionary Sermon was preached by Rev. W. L. Watkinson, and we are as heretofore indebted to *The Baptist* and *The Freeman* for their very comprehensive accounts of the whole of this meeting.

Denominational Intelligence.

CHANGES IN THE PASTORATE.

Rev. Archibald G. Brown from East End Tabernacle to Chatsworth-road Church, West Norwood.

Rev. C. H. Watkins, from Cardiff, to Coupland-street, Manchester.

Rev. F. D. Robbins, from Manor Park Church, to George-lane, Woodford.

Rev. John Field, from Walworth, to Kislbury.

Rev. T. S. Barros, from Sussex-street Church, Brighton, to the churches at Driffield and Cranswick.

Rev. T. B. Field, of Bacup, to West-street, Crewe.

Rev. T. R. Lewis, from Scapegoat Hill, Golcar, to Upper Edge Church, Elland.

Rev. A. H. Horlick, from Bristol College to Coleford, Glos.

RECOGNITIONS.

Rev. R. Rowntree Clifford, of Regent's Park College, has been ordained pastor of Barking-road, Tabernacle, Plaistow. Principal Gould gave the charge. Rev. J. R. Wood addressed the church, and Professor Green offered the ordination prayer. Revs. R. Partner, H. Bailey, J. Foster, and H. Welch took part.

Rev. William Hughes has been recognised as co-pastor of Albert-street Church, Keighley, with special charge of the station at Worth.

Rev. J. Gardner has been recognised as pastor of Enon Church, Nelson-road, Chatham. Rev. E. Marsh gave the charge to the pastor, and Rev. S. T. Belcher addressed the Church.

Rev. William Crispin, of Brighton-grove College, Manchester, has been ordained to the pastorate of Zion Church, St. John-street, Bolton. Professor Marshall delivered the charge, and Rev. Charles Williams addressed the church. Revs. H. V. Thomas, G. Williams, S. Jones, G. W. Brooker, I. Watson, H. W. Turner, and T. L. Burrows took part.

Dr. W. Usher has been recognised as pastor of Tabernacle Church, Tunbridge Wells. Rev. Charles Spurgeon preached, and Revs. W. Lewis, G. W. Cowper-Smith, J. Mountain, J. O. Jackson, R. Ridler, and W. H. Palmer took part.

Rev. H. Collard, A.T.S., late of Nottingham College, has been recognised as pastor of Belper Church. Rev. S. P. Carey gave the charge. Rev. W. F. Harris addressed the Church. Revs. E. E. Coleman, W. C. Sage, E. Walters, B. Noble, F. Knowles, W. D. Johnson, and F. Lee took part.

Rev. T. Iles, of Manchester College, has been ordained to the pastorate of Pole Moor Church, Scammonden. Rev. A. E. Greening gave the charge, and Rev. J. T. Marshall addressed the church. Revs. W. Gay, T. R. Lewis, E. Evans, W. H. Holdsworth, F. J. Benskin and R. Briggs also took part.

Rev. A. E. Phillips has been recognised as the first pastor of the new church at Wellingborough. Professor McCaig gave the charges to the pastor and to the church. Revs. J. T. Brown, W. Thomas, W.

Fidler, T. Phillips, G. Rees and F. G. Harper took part.

Rev. C. L. Gordon, of the Pastors College, has been ordained to the pastorate at Wantage. Rev. J. Dann gave the charge, and Rev. R. J. Beecliff addressed the church; Revs. H. Smith and T. H. Penrith took part.

PRESENTATIONS.

Rev. R. C. Roberts, Pembroke Dock, a gold watch and guard, gold spectacles, and an illuminated address, by his church and congregation, September 20th, on the occasion of the 21st anniversary of his present pastorate.

Rev. Charles Spurgeon, a purse of twenty-five guineas from South-street Church, Greenwich, on his forty-first birthday.

Rev. J. Bell Johnson, a dessert service and illuminated address from Sansome Church, Worcester, on his marriage.

Rev. J. Felmingham, books from Northcote-road Church, Wandsworth-common, on completion of five years' pastorate.

Rev. Thomas Moss, an American organ and illuminated address from Shepton Mallet Church, on his marriage.

Rev. J. Davies, a marble clock and purse of gold from Gold-hill Church, High Wycombe, on his marriage.

Rev. G. Rees, a cheque for £25 on completion of twenty-years' pastorate.

Rev. J. S. Geale, who has resigned the pastorate of Queen-square Church, Brighton, where he has ministered for eighteen years, has been presented at a farewell meeting, presided over by Sir Joseph Ewart, with an address and a purse of £42, Mrs. Geale at the same time receiving a silver salver.

NEW CHAPELS.

Foundation stones have been laid of a new chapel—the third on the present site—for the congregation at

King's Heath, Birmingham, now under the pastorate of Rev. James Collett. The Lady Mayoress in laying one stone deposited in it a bottle with papers removed from the foundation-stone in the old chapel; in the second stone Mrs. Colborne, who had been connected with the church about sixty years, deposited a bottle containing a written account of the work in King's Heath from the commencement. The new chapel will accommodate 550 persons; the total cost of the buildings is estimated at £7,000.

A new church has been formed at Summertown, Oxford, as an outcome of services by Rev. J. H. Moore. For the congregation a building to seat 100 has been erected in Beechcroft-road, at a cost of £630.

WALES. — Memorial-stones have been laid of a new chapel at Evans-town, Gilfach Goch. Alderman Cory and Dr. Gomer Lewis preached in the afternoon, and Revs. Waldo James and D. Davies in the evening.

RECENT DEATHS.

Rev. R. C. Roberts, Pembroke-Dock, writes: "It is with much sorrow we record the death of our dear young sister, Katie Lewis, which took place at the residence of her grandmother on Wednesday evening, September 15th, at the age of eighteen years. She was baptized by the writer in Bush Street Chapel, April 4th last, and seemed to promise to become a very active member of the church. She was an occasional teacher in the Sunday School, a member of the choir, and a pupil teacher in the Board School. But it was God's loving will to take her home to Himself after a few months illness, borne with phenomenal patience and unwavering Christian trust. Her funeral took place at the new cemetery on the following Saturday afternoon, attended by a large number of friends, including the

teachers and scholars of the Sunday School, and her fellow pupil teachers in the day school. A number of beautiful wreaths, emblematic of the love and grief of her friends, were carried in front of the funeral procession, and subsequently placed on her grave. On Sunday evening, October 3rd, the pastor preached the funeral sermon, selecting the words, "In Thy presence is fullness of joy, at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."—*Psalms xvi.*, 11.

AMERICA

The debts of the two American Baptist Boards have been cleared by cheques from Mr. Rockefeller, of 121,267 dols. to the American Missionary Union and of 250,000 dols. to the Home Missionary Society.

BAPTISMS.

Anstruther, N.B.—September 5, Two, by H. Edwards
Abercorn (English).—October 3, Five, by D. Lewis
Birchcliffe, Hebden Bridge.—October 3, Two, by J. Gay
Bangor: Penrallt-road.—September 26, Four, by W. R. Saunders
Blackpool, Union Church.—September 26, Four, by W. A. Mursell
Bolton.—September 26, Two, by W. Crispin
Battle, Zion.—September 11, One, by G. B. Richardson
Chadderton, Lanc.: Mills Hill.—September 12, Three, by F. Oliver
Dunnington.—October 1, Two, by C. Chrystal
Diss, Norfolk.—September 26, Four, by J. Easler
Faversham, Kent.—September 12, Two, by T. T. Minchin
Glasgow: Frederick-street.—September 19, One, by E. Aubrey
Glasgow: Springburn.—October 2, Three, by J. Horne
Huddersfield: Pole Moor.—October 3, Two, by T. Iles
Huddersfield: Scapegoat Hill.—October 3, One, by T. R. Lewis
High Wycombe.—September 12, Eleven, by C. Hobbs
Leeds: Burley-road.—September 26, Three, by W. Walter

Liverpool: The Brook.—September 19, One, by J. C. Elder
Monks Kirby.—September 12, Three, by J. Young
Manchester: West Gorton: Clowes-street.—September 26, Three, by W. A. Livingstone
Mansfield, Notts.—September 26, Six, by H. Firth
Nantwich.—September 27, One, by W. H. William
Naunton, Cheltenham.—October 5, Three, by E. Spanton
Neath: Orchard-place.—October 3, Six, by E. R. Evans
Okehampston.—October 3, Two, by J. Whiting
Oswestry: Salop-road.—October 3, Five, by M. M. Thompson
Pulham St. Mary, Norfolk.—September 5, One, by D. Stannard
Rugby.—September 12, Four, by J. Young
Rochdale: Milnrow-road.—September 26, Seven, by D. O. Davies
Rochdale: West-street.—September 26, Three, by D. O. Davies
Riddings, Derbyshire.—September 15, Four, by W. C. Sage, M.A., B.D.
Swansea: York-place.—September 19, Six, by D. Burwyn Davies
Stockton-on-Tees: Wellington-street.—September 8, Five, (four of these being the son and three daughters of the pastor), by the pastor F. J. Feltham
Stoke St. Gregory, Somerset.—September 25, Five, by B. W. Oster
Tonypandy, Rhondda: Bethel.—September 26, Four, by D. Davies
Treforest: Calvary.—September 26, Four, by E. Lewis
Willenhall: Lichfield-street.—September 19, Seven, by J. H. Bath
Wellingboro': New.—September 19, Six, by A. F. Phillips, (in Fuller Chapel, Kettering, kindly lent for the occasion).
West Vale, Halifax.—September 15, Five, by D. R. Lewis

LONDON DISTRICT.

Child's Hill, N.W.—September 23, Seven, by J. Foulton
Ealing Dean, W.—September 26, Six, by W. Gibbs
East Ham Tabernacle.—September 17, Four, by P. Sloan
Lewisham-road, S.E.—September 16, Three, by G. Wearham
Penge Tabernacle.—September 29, Five, by J. W. Boud
Poplar: Cotton-street.—September 26, Three, by W. Joyes
Stoke Newington, N., Devonshire-square.—September 30, Seven, by G. P. McKay
Waltham Abbey: Paradise-row.—September 19, Two, by Geo. Kilby
Woolwich Tabernacle.—September 28, Eight, by J. Wilson

A Christmas Question.

A SERMON BY THE LATE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given."—Isaiah ix. 6.

UPON other occasions I have explained the main part of this verse—"the government shall be upon his shoulders, his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God." If God shall spare me, on some future occasion I hope to take the other titles, "The Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." But now this morning the proportion which will engage our attention is this, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given." The sentence is a double one, but it has in it no tautology. The careful reader will soon discover a distinction; and it is not a distinction without a difference. "Unto us a *child is born*, unto us a *Son is given*." As Jesus Christ is a child in his human nature, he is born, begotten of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary. He is as truly born, as certainly a child, as any other man that ever lived upon the face of the earth. He is thus in his humanity a child born. But as Jesus Christ is God's Son, He is not born, but given, begotten of His Father from before all worlds, begotten—not made, being of the same substance with the Father. The doctrine of the eternal affiliation of Christ is to be received as an undoubted truth of our holy religion. But as to any explanation of it, no man should venture thereon, for it remaineth among the deep things of God—one of those solemn mysteries indeed, into which the angels dare not look, nor do they desire to pry into it—a mystery which we must not attempt to fathom, for it is utterly beyond the grasp of any finite being. As well might a gnat seek to drink in the ocean, as a finite creature to comprehend the Eternal God. A God whom we could understand would be no God. If we could grasp him he could not be infinite; if we could understand him, then were he not divine. Jesus Christ then, I say, as a Son, is not born to us, but given. He is a boon bestowed on us, "For God so loved the world that he *sent* His only begotten *Son* into the world." He was not born in this world as God's Son, but He was *sent*, or was given, so that you clearly perceive that the distinction is a suggestive one, and conveys much good truth to us. "Unto us a *child is born*, unto us a *Son is given*."

This morning, however, the principal object of my discourse, and, indeed, the sole one, is to bring out the force of those two little words, "*unto us*." For you will perceive that here the full force of the passage lies. "FOR UNTO US a child is born, UNTO US a Son is given."

The divisions of my discourse are very simple ones. First, *is it so?* Secondly, *if it is so, what then?* Thirdly, *if it is not so, what then?*

I. In the first place, *Is it so?* Is it true that *unto us* a child is born, *unto us* a Son is given? It is a fact that a child is born. Upon that I use no argument. We receive it as a fact, more fully established than any other fact in history, that the Son of God became man, was born at Bethlehem, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger. It is a fact, too, that a Son is given. About that we have no question. The infidel may dispute, but we, professing to be believers in Scripture, receive it as an undeniable truth, that God has given his only begotten Son to be the Saviour of men. But *THE* matter of question is this: Is this child born to us? Is he given to us? This is the matter of anxious enquiry. Have we a personal interest in the child that was born at Bethlem? Do we know that he is our Saviour?—that he has brought glad tidings to us?—that to us he belongs? and that we belong to him? I say this is a matter of very grave and solemn investigation. It is a very observable fact, that the very best of men are sometimes troubled with questions with regard to their own interest in Christ, while men who are never troubled at all about the matter are very frequently presumptuous deceivers, who have no part in this matter. I have often observed that some of the people about whom I felt most sure, were the very persons who were the least sure of themselves. It reminds me of the history of a godly man named Simon Brown, a minister in the olden times in the City of London. He became so extremely sad in heart, so depressed in spirit, that at last he conceived the idea that his soul was annihilated. It was all in vain to talk to the good man. You could not persuade him that he had a soul; but all the time he was preaching, and praying, and working, more like a man that had two souls than none. When he preached, his eyes poured forth plenteous floods of tears, and when he prayed, there was a divine fervour and heavenly prevalence in every petition. Now so it is with many Christians. They seem to be the very picture of godliness; their life is admirable, and their conversation heavenly, but yet they are always crying,—

“ ‘Tis a point I long to know;
 Oft it causes anxious thought:
 Do I love the Lord or no?
 Am I His or am I not?”

So does it happen that the best of men will question while the worst of men will presume. Ay, I have seen the men about whose eternal destiny I had serious questioning, whose inconsistencies in life were palpable and glaring, who have prated concerning their sure portion in Israel, and their infallible hope, as though they believed others to be as easily duped as themselves. Now, what reason shall we give for this foolhardiness? Learn it from this illustration: You see a number of men riding along a narrow road upon the edge of the sea. It is a very perilous path, for the way is rugged and a tremendous precipice bounds the pathway on the left. Let but the horse's foot slip once, and they dash downwards to destruction. See how

cautiously the riders journey, how carefully the horses place their feet. But do you observe yon rider, at what rates he dashes along, as if he were riding a steeple-chase with Satan? You hold up your hands in an agony of fear, trembling lest every moment his horse's foot should slip, and he should be dashed down; and you say, why so careless a rider? The man is a blind rider on a blind horse. They cannot see where they are. He thinks he is on a sure road, and therefore it is that he rides so fast. Or, to vary the picture; sometimes when persons are asleep they take to walking, and they will climb where others will not think of venturing. Giddy heights that would turn our brain seem safe enough to them. So there be many spiritual sleep-walkers in our midst, who think that they are awake. But they are not. Their very presumption in venturing to the high places of self-confidence proves that they are somnambulists; not awake, but men who walk and talk in their sleep. It is, then, I say, really a matter of serious questioning with all men who would be right at last, as to whether this child is born to us, and this Son given to us?

I shall now help you to answer the question.

1. If this child who now lies before the eyes of your faith, wrapped in swaddling clothes in Bethlehem's manger, is born to you, my hearer, then *you are born again!* For this child is not born to you unless you are born to this child. All who have an interest in Christ are, in the fulness of time, by grace converted, quickened, and renewed. All the redeemed are not yet converted, but they will be. Before the hour of death arrives their nature shall be changed, their sins shall be washed away, and they shall pass from death unto life. If any man tells me that Christ is his Redeemer, although he has never experienced regeneration, that man utters what he does not know; his religion is vain, and his hope is a delusion. Only men who are born again can claim the babe in Bethlehem as being theirs. "But," saith one, "how am I to know whether I am born again or not?" Answer this question also by another: Has there been a change effected by divine grace *within you?* Are you loves the very opposite of what they were? Do you now hate the vain things you once admired, and do you seek after that precious pearl which you at one time despised? Is your heart thoroughly renewed in its object? Can you say that the bent of your desire is changed? that your face is Zionward, and your feet set upon the path of grace? that whereas your heart once longed for deep draughts of sin, it now longs to be holy? and whereas you once loved the pleasures of the world, they have now become as druff and dross to you, for you only love the pleasures of heavenly things and are longing to enjoy more of them on earth, that you may be prepared to enjoy a fulness of them hereafter? Are you renewed within? For mark, my hearer, the new birth does not consist in washing the outside of the cup and platter, but in cleansing the inner man. It is all in vain to put up the stone upon the sepulchre, wash it extremely white, and garnish it with the flowers of the season; the sepulchre itself must be cleansed. The dead man's bones that lie in that charnel-house of the human heart must be cleansed away. Nay, they must be made to live. The heart

must no longer be a tomb of death, but a temple of life. Is it so with you, my hearer? For recollect you may be very different in the outward, but if you are not changed in the inward, this child is not born to you.

But I put another question. Although the main matter of regeneration lies within, yet it manifests itself without. Say, then, has there been a change in you in the exterior? Do you think that others who look at you would be compelled to say, this man is not what he used to be? Do not your companions observe a change? Have they not laughed at you for what they think to be your hypocrisy, your puritanism, your sternness? Do you think now that if an angel should follow you into your secret life, should track you to your closet and see you on your knees, that he would detect something in you which he could never have seen before. For mark, my dear hearer, there must be a change in the outward life, or else there is no change within. In vain you bring me to the tree, and say that the tree's nature is changed. If I still see it bringing forth wild grapes, it is a wild vine still. And if I mark upon you the apples of Sodom and the grapes of Gomorrah, you are still a tree accursed and doomed, notwithstanding all your fancied experience. The proof of the Christian is in the living. To other men, the proof of our conversion is not what you feel, but what you do. To yourself your feelings may be good enough evidence, but to the minister and others who judge of you, the outward walk is the main guide. At the same time, let me observe that a man's outward life may be very much like that of a Christian, and yet there may be no religion in him at all. Have you ever seen two jugglers in the street with swords, pretending to fight with one another? See how they cut, and slash, and hack at one another, till you are half afraid there will soon be murder done. They seem to be so very much in earnest that you are half in the mind to call in the police to part them. See with what violence that one has aimed a terrific blow at the other one's head, which his comrade dexterously warded off by keeping a well-timed guard. Just watch them a minute, and you will see that all these cuts and thrusts come in a pre-arranged order. There is no heart in the fighting after all. They do not fight so roughly as they would if they were real enemies. So, sometimes, I have seen a man pretending to be very angry against sin. But watch him a little while, and you will see it is only a fencer's trick. He does not give his cuts out of order, there is no earnestness in his blows; it is all pretence, it is only mimic stage play. The fencers, after they have ended their performance, shake hands with one another, and divide the coppers which the gaping throng have given them; and so does this man do, he shakes hands with the devil in private, and the two deceivers share the spoil. The hypocrite and the devil are very good friends after all, and they mutually rejoice over their profits: the devil leering because he has won the soul of the professor, and the hypocrite laughing because he has won his pelf. Take care, then, that your outward life is not a mere stage-play, but that your antagonism to sin is real and intense; and that you strike right and left, as though you meant to slay the monster, and cast its limbs to the winds of heaven.

I will just put another question. If thou hast been born again, there is another matter by which to try thee. Not only is thy inward self altered, and thy outward self too, but the very root and principle of thy life must become totally new. When we are in sin we live to self, but when we are renewed we live to God. While we are unregenerate, our principle is to seek our own pleasure, our own advancement; but that man is not truly born again who does not live with a far different aim from this. Change a man's principles and you change his feelings,—you change his actions. Now, grace changes the principles of man. It lays the axe at the root of the tree. It does not saw away at some big limb, it does not try to alter the sap; but it gives a new root, and plants us in fresh soil. The man's inmost self, the deep rocks of his principles upon which the topsoil of his actions rest, the soul of his manhood is thoroughly changed, and he is a new creature in Christ. "But," says one, "I see no reason why I should be born again." Ah, poor creature, it is because thou hast never seen thyself. Didst thou ever see a man in the looking-glass of the Word of God—what a strange monster he is. Do you know, a man by nature has his heart where his feet ought to be: that is to say, his heart is set upon the earth, whereas he ought to be treading it beneath his feet; and stranger mystery still, his heels are where his heart should be: that is to say, he is kicking against the God of heaven when he ought to be setting his affections on things above. Man by nature when he sees clearest, only looks down, can only see that which is beneath him, he cannot see the things which are above; and strange to say the sunlight of heaven blinds him; light from heaven he looks not for. He asks for his light in darkness. The earth is to him his heaven, and he sees suns in its muddy pools and stars in its filth. He is, in fact, a man turned upside down. The fall has so ruined our nature, that the most monstrous thing on the face of the earth is a fallen man. The ancients used to paint griffins, gryphons, dragons, chimeras, and all kinds of hideous things; but it a skilful hand could paint *man* accurately, none of us would look at the picture, for it is a sight that none ever saw except the lost in hell; and that is one part of their intolerable pain, that they are compelled always to look upon themselves. Now, then, see you not that ye must be born again, and unless ye are so this child is not born to you.

2. But I go forward. If this child is born to you, you are a *child*, and the question arises are you so? Man grows from childhood up to manhood naturally; in grace men grow from manhood down to childhood; and the nearer we come to true childhood, the nearer we come to the image of Christ. For was not Christ called "a child," even after he had ascended up to heaven? "Thy holy child Jesus." Brethren and sisters, can you say that you have been made into children? Do you take God's Word just as it stands, simply because your heavenly Father says so? Are you content to believe mysteries without demanding to have them explained? Are you ready to sit in the infant class, and be a little one? Are you willing to hang upon the breast of the church, and suck in the unadulterated milk of the Word—never questioning for a moment what your divine Lord reveals, but believing it on his own authority, whether it seemed to

be above reason, or beneath reason, or even contrary to reason? Now, "except ye be converted and become as little children," this child is not born to you; except like a child you are humble, teachable, obedient, pleased with your Father's will and willing to assign all to him, there is grave matter of question whether this child is born to you. But what a pleasing sight it is to see a man converted and made into a little child. Many times has my heart leaped with joy, when I have seen a giant infidel who used to reason against Christ, who had not a word in his dictionary bad enough for Christ's people, come by divine grace to believe the gospel. That man sits down and weeps, feels the full power of salvation, and from that time drops all his questionings, becomes the very reverse of what he was. He thinks himself meaner than the meanest believer. He is content to do the meanest work for the church of Christ, and takes his station—not with Locke or Newton, as a mighty Christian philosopher—but with Mary as a simple learner, sitting at Jesus' feet, to hear and learn of him. If ye are not children, then this child is not born to you.

3. And now let us take the second sentence and put a question or two upon that. Is this son given to us? I pause a minute to beg your personal attention. I am trying, if I may, so to preach that I may make you all question yourselves. I pray you let not one of you exempt himself from the ordeal, but let each one ask himself, is it true that unto me a Son is given? Now, if this Son is given to you, you are a son yourself. "For unto as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God." "Christ became a Son that in all things he might be made like unto his brethren." The Son of God is not mine to enjoy, to love, to delight in, unless I am a son of God too. Now, my hearer, have you a *fear* of God before your eyes—a filial fear which a child has lest it should grieve its parent? Say have you a child's *love* to God? Do you *trust* in Him as your Father, your Provider and your Friend? Have you in your breast "The spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father?" Are there times with you when on your knees you can say, "My Father and my God." Does the Spirit bear witness with your spirit that you are born of God? and while this witness is borne, does your heart fly up to your Father and to your God, in ecstasy of delight to clasp Him who long ago clasped you in the covenant of His love, in the arms of His effectual grace? Now, mark my hearer, if thou dost not sometimes enjoy the spirit of adoption, if thou art not a son or daughter of Zion, thou deceive not thyself, this Son is not given to thee.

4. And then, to put it in another shape. If unto us a Son is given, then *we are given to the Son*. Now, what say you to this question also? Are you given up to Christ? Do you feel that you have nothing on earth to live for but to glorify Him? Can you say in your heart, "Great God, if I be not deceived, I am wholly Thine?" Are you ready to-day to write over again your consecration vow? Canst thou say, "Take me! All that I am and all I have, shall be for ever Thine. I would give up all my goods, all my powers, all my time, and all my hours; and Thine I would be—wholly Thine." "Ye are not your own: ye are bought with a price." And if this Son of God be given to you, you will have consecrated yourself wholly to Him; and you will feel

that His honour is your life's object, that His glory is the one great desire of your panting spirit. Now is it so, my hearer? Ask thyself the question, I pray thee, do not deceive thyself in the answer.

I will just repeat the four different proofs again. If unto me a child is born, then I have been born again; and moreover, I am now, in consequence of that new birth, a child. If, again, a Son has been given to me, then I am a son; and again I am given to that Son who is given to me. I have tried to put these tests in the way that the text would suggest them. I pray you carry them home with you. If you do not recollect the words, yet do recollect to search yourselves, and see, my hearers, whether you can say, "Unto me this Son is given." For, indeed, if Christ is not my Christ, he is of little worth to me. If I cannot say he loved me and gave himself *for me*, of what avail is all the merit of his righteousness, or all the plenitude of his atonement? Bread in the shop is well enough, but if I am hungry and cannot get at it I starve, although granaries be full. Water in the river is well enough, but if I am in a desert and cannot reach the stream, if I can hear it in the distance and am yet lying down to die of thirst, the murmuring of the rill, or the flowing of the river, helps to tantalize me, while I die in dark despair. Better for you, my hearers, to have perished as Hottentots, to have gone down to your graves as dwellers in some benighted land, than to live where the name of Christ is continually hymned, and where His glory is extolled, and yet to go down to your tombs without an interest in Him, unblessed by His gospel, unwashed in His blood, unclathed of His robe of righteousness. God help you, that you may be blessed in Him, and may sing sweetly, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given."

II. This brings me to my second head, upon which I shall be brief. Is it so? IF IT IS SO, WHAT THEN? *If it is so, why am I doubtful to-day?* Why is my spirit questioning? Why do I not realize the fact? My hearer, if the Son is given to thee, how is it that thou art this day asking whether thou art Christ's or not? Why dost thou not labour to make thy calling and election sure? Why tarriest thou in the plains of doubt? Get thee up, get thee up to the high mountains of confidence, and never rest till thou canst say without a fear that thou art mistaken, "I know that my Redeemer liveth. I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him." I may have a large number of persons here to whom it is a matter of uncertainty as to whether Christ is theirs or not. Oh, my dear hearers, rest not content unless you know assuredly that Christ is yours, and that you are Christ's. Suppose you should see in to-morrow's newspaper—although, by the way, if you believed anything you saw there you would probably be mistaken—but suppose you should see a notification that some rich man had left you an immense estate. Suppose, as you read it, you were well aware that the person mentioned was a relative of yours, and that it was likely to be true. It may be you have prepared to-morrow for a family meeting, and you are expecting brother John and sister Mary and their little ones to dine with you. But I very much question whether you would not be away from the head of the table to go and ascertain whether the fact were really so. "Oh," you would say, "I am sure I should enjoy my Christmas dinner all the

better if I were quite sure about this matter," and all day, if you did not go, you would be on the tip-toe of expectation; you would be, as it were, sitting upon pins and needles until you knew whether it were the fact or not. Now there is a proclamation gone forth to-day, and it is a true one, too, that Jesus Christ has come into the world to save sinners. The question with you is whether he has saved you, and whether you have an interest in him. I beseech you, give no sleep to your eyes, and no slumber to your eyelids, till you have read your "title clear to mansions in the skies." What, man! shall your eternal destiny be a matter of uncertainty to you? What! is heaven or hell involved in this matter, and will you rest until you know which of these shall be your everlasting portion? Are you content while it is a question whether God loves you, or whether he is angry with you? Can you be easy while you remain in doubt as to whether you are condemned in sin, or justified by faith which is in Christ Jesus? Get thee up, man; I beseech thee by the living God, and by thine own soul's safety, get thee up and read the records. Search and look, and try and test thyself, to see whether it be so or not. For if it be so, why should not we know it? If the Son is given to me, why should not I be sure of it? If the child is born to me, why should I not know it for a certainty, that I may even now live in the enjoyment of my privilege—a privilege, the value of which I shall never know to the full till I arrive in glory?

Again, if it be so, another question. *Why are we sad?* I am looking upon faces just now that appear the very reverse of gloomy, but mayhap the smile covers an aching heart. Brother and sister, why are we sad this morning, if unto us a child is born, if unto us a Son is given? Hark, hark to the cry! It is the "Harvest home! Harvest home!" See the maidens as they dance, and the young men as they make mirth? Because they are storing the precious fruits of the earth, they are gathering together unto their barns wheat which will soon be consumed. And what, brothers and sisters, have we the bread which endureth to eternal life, and are we unhappy? Does the worldling rejoice when his corn is increased, and do we not rejoice when, "Unto us a child is born, and unto us a Son is given"? Hark, yonder! What means the firing of the Tower guns? Why all this ringing of bells in the church steeples, as if all London were mad with joy? There is a prince born; and therefore there is this salute, and therefore are the bells ringing. Ah, Christians, ring the bells of your hearts, fire the salute of your most joyous songs, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given." Dance, O my heart, and ring out peals of gladness! Ye drops of blood within my veins, dance every one of you! Oh! all my nerves become harp strings, and let gratitude touch you with angelic fingers! And thou, my tongue, shout—shout to his praise, who hath said to thee—"Unto thee a child is born, unto thee a Son is given." Wipe that tear away! Come, stop that sighing! Hush that murmuring. What matters your poverty? "Unto you a child is born." What matters your sickness? "Unto you a Son is given." What matters your sin? For this child shall take the sin away, and this Son shall wash and make you fit for heaven. I say, if it be so—

"Lift up the heart, lift up the voice,
Rejoice aloud! ye saints rejoice!"

But once more, if it be so, what then? *Why are our hearts so cold?* and why is it that we do so little for Him who has done so much for us? Jesus art thou mine! Am I saved? How is it that I love Thee so little? Why is it that when I preach I am not more in earnest, and when I pray I am not more intensely fervent? How is it that we give so little to Christ who gave Himself for us? How is it that we serve Him so sadly who served us so perfectly? He consecrated Himself wholly; how is it that our consecration is marred and partial? We are continually sacrificing to self and not to Him?

O beloved brethren, yield yourselves up this morning. What have you got in the world? "Oh," saith one, "I have nothing; I am poor and penniless, and all but homeless." Give thyself to Christ. You have heard the story of the pupils to a Greek philosopher. On a certain day it was the custom to give to the philosopher a present. One came and gave him gold. Another could not bring him gold but brought him silver. One brought him a robe, and another some delicacy for food. But one of them came up, and said, "Oh, Solon, I am poor, I have nothing to give to thee, but yet I will give thee something better than all these have given; I give thee myself." Now, if you have gold and silver, if you have aught of this world's goods, give in your measure to Christ; but take care, above all, that you give yourself to him, and let your cry be from this day forth,

"Do not I love Thee, dearest Lord?

Oh search my heart and see,
And turn each cursed idol out
That dares to rival Thee.

Do not I love Thee from my soul?

Then let me nothing love:
Dead be my heart to every joy,
When Jesus cannot move."

III. Well, now, I have all but done, but give your solemn, very solemn attention, while I come to my last head: IF IT IS NOT SO, WHAT THEN? Dear hearer, I cannot tell where thou art—but wherever thou mayst be in this hall, the eyes of my heart are looking for thee, that when they have seen thee, they may weep over thee. Ah! miserable wretch, without hope, without Christ, without God. Unto thee there is no Christmas mirth; for thee no child is born; to thee no Son is given. Sad is the story of the poor men and women, who, during the week before last, fell down dead in our streets through cruel hunger and bitter cold. But far more pitiable is thy lot, far more terrible shall be thy condition in the day when thou shalt cry for a drop of water to cool thy burning tongue, and it shall be denied thee; when thou shalt seek for death, for grim, cold death—seek for him as a friend, and yet thou shalt not find him. For the fire of hell shall not consume thee, nor its terrors devour thee. Thou shalt long to die, yet shalt thou linger in eternal death—dying every hour, yet never receiving the much coveted boon of death. What shall I say to thee this

morning? Oh! Master, help me to speak a word in season now. I beseech thee, my hearer, if Christ is not thine this morning, may God the Spirit help thee to do what I now command thee to do. First of all, confess thy sins; not into my ear, nor into the ear of any living man. Go to thy chamber and confess that thou art vile. Tell him thou art a wretch undone without His sovereign grace. But do not think there is any merit in confession. There is none. All your confession cannot merit forgiveness, though God has promised to pardon the man who confesses his sin and forsakes it. Imagine that some creditor had a debtor who owed him a thousand pounds. He calls upon him, and says, "I demand my money." "But," says the other, "I owe you nothing." That man will be arrested and thrown into prison. However, his creditor says, "I wish to deal mercifully with you; make a frank confession, and I will forgive you all the debt." "Well," says the man, "I do acknowledge that I owe you two hundred pounds." "No," says he, "that will not do." "Well, sir, I confess I owe you five hundred pounds;" and by degrees he comes to confess that he owes the thousand. Is there any merit in that confession? No; but yet you could see that no creditor would think of forgiving a debt that was not acknowledged. It is the least that you can do, to acknowledge your sin; and though there be no merit in the confession, yet true to his promise, God will give you pardon through Christ. That is one piece of advice. I pray you take it. Do not throw it to the winds; do not leave it as soon as you get out of Exeter Hall. Take it with you, and may this day become a confession-day with many of you. But next, when you have made a confession, I beseech you renounce yourself. You have been resting perhaps in some hope that you would make yourself better, and so save yourself. Give up that delusive fancy. You have seen the silk-worm; it will spin, and spin, and spin, then it will die where it has spun itself a shroud. And your good works are but a spinning for yourself a robe for your dead soul. You can do nothing by your best prayers, your best tears, or your best works, to merit eternal life. Why, the Christian who is converted to God will tell you that he cannot live a holy life by himself. If the ship in the sea cannot steer itself aright, do you think the wood that lies in the carpenter's yard can put itself together, and make itself into a ship, and then go out to sea and sail to America? Yet this is just what you can imagine. The Christian who is God's workmanship can do nothing; and yet you think you can do something. Now, give up *self*. God help you to strike a black mark through every idea of what you can do.

Then, lastly, and I pray God help you here, my dear hearers, when thou hast confessed thy sin and given up all hopes of self-salvation, go to the place where Jesus died in agony. Go then in meditation to Calvary. There he hangs. It is the middle cross of these three. Methinks I see him now. I see his poor face emaciated, and his visage more marred than that of any man. I see the beady drops of blood still standing round his pierced temples—marks of that rugged thorn-crown. Ah, I see his body naked—naked to his shame. We may tell all his bones. See there his hands rent with the rough iron and his feet torn with the nails. The nails have rent through his flesh. There

is now not only the hole through which the nail was driven, but the weight of His body has sunken upon His feet, and see the iron is tearing through His flesh. And now the weight of His body hangs upon His arms, and the nails there are rending through the tender nerves. Hark! Earth is startled! He cries, "Eli, Eli jama sabachthani?" Oh, sinner, was ever shriek like that? God hath forsaken Him. His God has ceased to be gracious to him. His soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death. But hark, again, he cries, "I thirst!" Give Him water! give Him water! Ye holy women let Him drink. But no, His murderers torture Him. They thrust into His mouth the vinegar mingled with gall—the bitter with the sharp, the vinegar and the gall. At last, hear Him, sinner, for here is your hope. I see Him bow His awful head. The King of heaven dies. The God who has made the earth has become a man, and the man is about to expire. Hear Him! He cries, "It is finished!" Sinner, believe in Christ. Cast thyself on Him. Sink or swim, take Him to be thy all in all. Throw now thy trembling arms around His bleeding body. Sit now at the feet of that cross, and feel the dropping of that precious blood. And as you go out each one of you say in your hearts,

"A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On Christ's kind arms I fall;
He is my strength and righteousness,
My Jesus, and my all."

God grant you grace to do so for Jesus Christ's sake. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you all, for ever and ever. Amen and Amen.

Content—Discontent.

SOME murmur when their sky is clear,
And wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear
In their great heaven of blue;
And some with thankful love are filled,
If but one streak of light,
One ray of God's great mercy gild
The darkness of their night.

In palaces are hearts that ask
In discontent and pride,
Why life is such a dreary task?
And all good things denied;
And hearts in poorest huts admire
How love has in their aid
(Love that not ever seems to tire),
Such rich provision made.

R. C. Trench.

Our Minister's Wife and Her Noble Life.

CHAPTER XII.—MADE PERFECT.

WHEN we rise from our beds in the morning we little know what may happen before night. Only this very day, as I am closing this narrative, a letter has reached me recording the fact that a good old friend of mine was coming down stairs preparing for a tea party, when he slipped and fell to the bottom, breaking one rib and crushing another. We may indeed be said to live by the hour or even the minute. In the autumn of the year 1890 I was standing in my back yard admiring the branches of a beautiful creeper, which invariably displays its beauty most when the tree is about to be deprived of its foliage. Its variegated clusters of russet, yellow, dark, and pale green leaves were calling forth feelings of delight, when a loud knock came to the front door and a telegram was handed in. Somehow I always feel nervous at the reception of telegrams, knowing that, unless the matter is urgent, one is more likely to receive news by post than in that form. Opening it hastily I found that it came from Bluntdorf, and it ran thus—“Can you please come to-day to aid us; my wife is dangerously ill. Barton.” It was eleven o'clock in the morning when this telegram came, and I knew that if I was to reach Bluntdorf in good time in the evening I must start by the two o'clock train. Rather suffered with the suddenness of

this sad call, I was nevertheless able to make the necessary preparations and happily to reach the station in time. But before starting off I had sent a reply telegram to Mr. Barton, so that on arriving at Bluntdorf, and getting out of the carriage, I found him waiting for me, and saw that he looked very grave.

“Thank you,” he said, “Miss Kent, for coming so promptly; but I should not have put you to all this trouble if my dear wife had not so earnestly desired to see you.”

“And is she very bad,” I enquired.

“As bad almost as she can be, I am sorry to say,” he said, “the doctor gives no hope of her recovery.”

“Oh! I am shocked, Mr. Barton, what is really the matter? Has she met with an accident?”

“No, it is just the old complaint which, through repeated colds, has reached a crisis. You know, Miss Kent, of late years she has always had a tendency to asthma and consequent shortness of breath. She felt it badly when walking up the slightest hill and especially in foggy weather. Well, a couple of weeks ago she suffered much from indigestion and sleeplessness, and our medical man says now it has reached her heart, and the pulse is dangerously intermittent. We have a professional nurse to look after her, a very good, kind

hearted woman, and all is done that can be done, but I fear to little purpose. When a doctor who has a large practice comes to see a patient three times a day you may be pretty certain, Miss Kent, there is little hope for the sufferer."

"True, Mr. Barton," I replied; "but then you know the old proverb, 'while there is life there is hope.'"

"True, Miss Kent, and, alas, in my dear partner's case I am sorry to say that is the only hope I have."

As I entered the sick chamber one glance at my dear friend and companion served to show me that her husband's fears were only too well grounded. Though her breathing was neither heavy nor laboured, there was a darkness under the eyes and a sickly pallor in the countenance that plainly indicated that death was not far off. With a smile upon her sweet face, she tried to lift it up to kiss me, and said in a low voice, "Oh! Miss Kent, I'm so glad you're come."

My presence seemed to rally her and give her a good night; and indeed, she appeared so much improved the next morning that she was able to take more refreshment and to talk to me, though softly, as in past times.

"Do you think, dear, you will get better?" I enquired.

"No, she said, calmly," I do not think I shall. I have an inward sort of persuasion that the Lord is about to call me to his own blessed home; and, best of all, though I feel leaving my husband and children much, as it is the Lord's will I'm ready to go."

"That is a nice feeling, Mrs. Barton, very; and so you have no doubts or fears?"

"No, dear, why should I? Has not Jesus said 'Him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out?' Well I *have* come to Him. I came to Him when a child and have tried in my poor way to stick to Him ever since, and do you think for a moment that He will ever break his word? Never! If he did break it in my case I should be the first, and I have no fear of that. He has been with me in health and in sickness all my journey through, and you may depend upon it that He will never forsake me in my dying hours. Shall I tell you an incident, Miss Kent?"

"Will it hurt you to do so," I asked, with tears in my eyes. "You must feel very weak!"

"Never mind that: I should like you to hear how the Lord has helped me! and 'manifested Himself unto me otherwise than He does unto the world.' It will be to His glory to tell it. One night, as I lay on this very bed, I woke up after an hour or two's refreshing sleep, and all of a sudden these words came to my mind, 'Ye are come . . . to the spirits of just men made perfect.' You know where the passage is in the epistle to the Hebrews, where believers are said to come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and so on. But these were the words that struck me most; and all at once I had such a vision of the heavenly glory. I thought of the hundreds of just men and just women that I had known in various places with whom I had worshipped and had spiritual communion while on earth, and what happiness it was to have had such sweet fellowship with them. Then I thought yet, after all, the best of them were

imperfect. But now I shall soon join them again, and every one of them who has reached heaven will be 'without fault before the throne of God.' What a company to join it must be, Henrietta, must it not? And those words '*just men made perfect.*'—'*Just men made perfect*' kept ringing in my ears and heart, until I longed to take the leap to be with them and be like them. Wasn't it beautiful to have those words thus applied to the heart by the Holy Spirit! I cannot tell you what happy hours the sweet thought gave me. The *just* made perfect, dear, not the *unjust*, mark. What glorious perfection that must be!"

Seeing that she began to be exhausted, the nurse urged her now to try and take a nap. As she felt inclined to do so I aided the nurse in smoothing her pillows, and then quietly left the room as she closed her eyes with a happy look, as if the precious thought of soon mixing with such glorified ones gave her joy unspeakable. But I had not been gone long when a message was sent to me, hurriedly requesting me to go upstairs. I went immediately, and saw her husband and children standing round her bed, weeping. Her eyes were wide open, and she seemed to recognise us all. It might be my fancy, but as I bent over her she appeared to give me a long, loving, lingering look, and then grasped her husband by the hand. The eyes then gradually closed, the mouth gave an involuntary movement, there was just a slight shiver, and in a moment the spirit had left the body to soar to its heavenly home. She had, as she desired, gone to mingle with her Saviour, and "the spirits of the just made perfect." According to her ex-

pressed wish her body, with her thinly worn wedding ring on her finger, was conveyed to the family grave in Colcheston. But the shock Mr. Barton received through the unexpected departure of his beloved wife was so great that he never thoroughly got over it. It is said that "time heals all wounds, but it never healed his. Though surrounded by many earthly comforts, the loss of his dear partner in life, after having lived with her in such happiness for so many years, was almost more than he could bear. To me he once said, a few months after her death:

"Miss Kent, the loss of Mary was to me 'the loss of all losses.' I know what it is to suffer from the interment of dearly-beloved children, and that is hard enough to bear, God knows! but when it comes to the loss of such a wife as mine, so true, so good, so ready to help wherever help was required, and so affectionate withal, I feel as if I have put the best part of myself in the grave. And then at times one feels oneself to be so dreadfully lonely; in fact the loneliness becomes almost unbearable. The only thing that consoles me is that she is better off, and, loving her happiness as I really did, more than my own, I cannot wish her back again. My loss—my heavy loss—I know is her gain; so I say from my heart, as our Saviour in His agony did, 'Father, nevertheless, not my will but Thine be done.'"

Twelve months afterwards Mr. Barton himself succumbed to a very severe attack of pleurisy, but months before he entered into his eternal rest people noticed how much he had aged. It was evident to all that he was never after his

beloved wife's death the same man that he was before. Every task seemed to be a burden, and, when the final stroke came, it found him in such a weak state of body as to be unable to withstand it. But, like his wife, his departure was a happy one. He died rejoicing in the Lord, expressing to the last his thankfulness to Him for having made use of such an unworthy instrument in His blessed service. In the same grave, in Colcheston, both husband and wife now lie together, and according to his

desire, under both their names on the tombstone the following epitaph was inscribed :

THEY COUNTED IT TO BE THEIR
HIGHEST HONOUR TO BE SERVANTS
OF CHRIST.

Such was Mr. Barton, such was his wife, and such may the writer and the reader prove to be ! No greater honour can indeed be affirmed of any man, or of any woman than this, be they kings, queens, subjects, peers, peeresses, or commoners.—“ But ye serve the Lord Christ.”

John Wesley and the Papist Butcher.

DURING Mr. Wesley's last visit to Doncaster, a wicked butcher, a man of athletic form, and well known as a terrible pugilist, went to hear him preach. By profession he was a papist ; but, however devoted to his creed, to vital godliness he was an entire stranger. The solemn, yet bland appearance of the apostolic Wesley arrested his notice ; and the persuasive eloquence of his voice fixed his attention. To illustrate and give effect to his sentiments, the preacher, with that ease and aptitude which none could excel, introduced the language of a female Romanist, who, having lost her crucifix, which had been suspended from her person as an object of her adoration, in her distress exclaimed, “ I have lost my cross ; I have nothing now to trust to but my Christ.” “ What a mercy,” observed the aged minister, “ that she had Christ left her !” Then with his usual fervency and fluency, he expatiated on the sufficiency of Christ alone to be the Saviour of the soul, and affectionately recommended him as such to all present. This was a new doctrine to the deluded Romanist, who had been taught to trust in many things besides Christ ; but it was the doctrine of truth, and the spirit of truth applied it with power to his awakened mind. Immediately he saw the folly of his former creed and felt himself an undone sinner. He also became a sincere seeker of salvation, and soon, by personal experience, found Christ to be a sufficient Saviour. Separating himself from the corrupt church of Rome, he united himself with the Wesleyan Methodists. For several years he adorned the doctrines of the gospel by a blameless conduct and holy conversation, and ultimately departed this life in the full triumph of faith, proving in death that “ Christ is all and in all ” in the work of saving sinners.

—*Christian Miscellany.*

A Plea for the Spiritual in Church-work.

By REV. F. THOMPSON, OF LUTON.

MANY faithful workers in the church are discouraged because they witness so little resulting from their endeavours, and it seems high time that we looked well to our condition, especially after the utterances in certain quarters concerning the future of our work. An article recently published stated of the leaders of Nonconformity that, "They are not in the old sense the pontiffs of their congregations. Rather are they leaders and lecturers—and, of course, organisers of the common effort for good," and then the writer adds, "The future of Nonconformity is full of problems. That it is and will long be one of the main forces of English life is very plain. But it will hardly be in the next generation the same kind of force that it was in the middle of this century The new work will be on new lines; it is certain to be on vigorous lines, for the salt is not out of Dissent, which to-day possesses more public spirit, a keener spirit of citizenship, than any other community of English men and women." To very many this is a gross misrepresentation of the new development in the Free Churches, and reveals a strange lack of knowledge of the true forces dominating the Church of Christ. If there be anything in our work likely to produce such results, the sooner we come to recognise it the better, and guard with a sacred jealousy the trust committed to us. Christ declared, "My Kingdom is not of this world: If My Kingdom were of this world then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is My kingdom not from hence."

Our pastors must be a great deal more than leaders and lecturers, and, thank God, they are. We know them to be men of a strong faith, possessors of a power not of this world, and loyal to Him who is their King,—men who believe in God and in prayer, and who trust God for all blessing in Christian work. The minister of Jesus Christ knows the value of heart fellowship, and because he has the consciousness of Divine nearness is strong to do his work. The force of the next generation will be the same force. The Spirit of the past will be the Spirit of the future. That which quickened the Church into life must maintain the life of the Church in all ages, and to depart from this is to deprive the Church of the only vital power she possesses—our work is spiritual, our force must be spiritual.

We are not unconscious that there is a very strong feeling against Ritualism and Sacerdotalism in all sections of the Nonconformist church, and in this we rejoice. The Christian Church recognises only one Priest—Jesus, and all who claim for themselves any priestly power

violate the essential principles of the Divine Priesthood; but we have yet to learn that this denotes any lack of spiritual power on the part of those who are fighting against a system so contrary to the teaching of the Word of God, and holding as it does, its followers in a cruel intolerant bondage. Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, and because this spirit has been so graciously given to us, we reject all priestly arrogance and rejoice in the freedom of the Spirit. Hence the fact that all the churches are coming closer together for definite aggressive work on the lines indicated, cannot be taken as a sign of spiritual degeneracy. Are there any other signs? We can best answer this by asking: What are the conditions of service? What means are we using in our attempts to reach the masses and win them for God? It is here, if anywhere, the weakness is to be discovered. These are days of marvellous activity. The Church is busily engaged in various directions. There is movement everywhere and all this is indicative of life. Of organization there is no lack, our army of earnest workers is great, and the funds at our disposal were never larger. Every section of the Church is awake to the responsibility of stewardship, and is becoming all things to all men that by all means some might be saved.

The Church is to the front in all social struggles and philanthropic work. Nonconformity never has been, never can be indifferent to the great problems affecting the well-being of the people. We should be disloyal to God and traitors to our fellows were no voice raised in defence of the poor and the oppressed; if no service were rendered in the common cause of suffering humanity. The Church must oppose tyranny, redress wrongs, and seek in every way to raise the weak and fallen. But the mission of the Church is the evangelization of the world, and unless this is accomplished whatever else may be done, failure must be written on her doors. Are we satisfied with the results in this direction? Has the purely spiritual been neglected for the social? Is there a proportionate return for all this vast expenditure of time, talent and wealth? Are the means used of such a nature as to bring about a more satisfactory condition? If not, then we ought not to be content in continuing, conscious of the sad fact that there must be a serious leakage somewhere, rather let us face the grave difficulty, discover and repair the leakage. While making allowance for the changed condition of things and the attitude of men towards the Gospel of Christ there is still much to be said concerning the lack of old fashioned conversions in the Church, and is it not possible to trace the lack of the one to the lack of the old fashioned power by which such grand results were gained?

We have read a legend to this effect: "Once Christian faith heard of the threatened incursion of her foes, so she determined to muster her forces to review their weapons previous to the conflict, and found all beyond her expectations. She saw a vast host of armed men, weapons exercised admirably, brightly flashing from afar, but on coming nearer she almost sank into a swoon; what she had thought iron and steel were toys. Swords were made of the mere lead of words; breastplates, the soft linen of pleasure; helmets, of wax of plumed vanity shields, papyrus, scrolled over with human opinions;

the colours were spiders' webs of philosophical systems; spears, the thin reeds of weak conjecture; the cannon was Indian reed; powder was poppy seed, and the balls were made of glass." Little use to attempt a battle against evil with such armour as this, and are not we doing something like this now? We have our lectures, concerts, pleasant evenings, and a host of other things which never touch the heart nor bring home to our conscience the fearfulness of sin, and our need of a Saviour. The weapons for this warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. As we rely upon and honour the Holy Spirit, God will honour us. Neglect this, and blessing cannot be ours. It is imperative that we recognise this fully. "The Lord is with you while ye be with Him, and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you." Let the Holy Ghost power be felt, and blessing is sure. True, there are many things we may use, but the all important force in our service is to be found in the words, "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." The healing of the world is in its nameless Saints, and the only power to regenerate the world is the power of the Spirit of the Lord. Lose the spiritual we lose all. If we use only the powers God has given to us, much in present Church work will have to be for ever banished. We can only recognise that which God uses, and depend on that which is divine. "God living in the hearts of His people is the great factor in all force-subduing, right exalting movements in the world, the most pressing need is the stirring of men's hearts to faith in Him, we need a mighty resurrection of faith in the unseen. This alone can and will save the world."

Dr. Matheson has beautifully said: "The Spirit of the Lord is love. The world has been made great through the gentlest of all its forces. The Jew proposed the terror of the law, the philosopher the crucifixion of feeling. Neither succeeded. Love conquered the old passions by a new passion. It simply flashed on me a new presence and the old died, no mutilation of heart, no destruction of the heart's ancient possessions. There was just a transcendent glory which made the ancient possessions valueless." It is this spirit we need. The forces that make for Godlessness abound. Evil is everywhere. Worldliness is sapping the life of the Church. Multitudes are indifferent to the claims of God. Reverence is departing. Can any power save the Church. What can stay this maddening rush, this hissing torrent of iniquity. Help Lord, Help is the cry of Thy Church. Our hope is in Him. We trust in the living God. The Church, by returning to her first love, by a reversal of many customs, by a cleaving to all that which is good, and by a full and frank recognition of the Holy Ghost will conquer, for when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him" (Isaiah lix. 19).

We need power to reach and hold men for God; to conquer passions, to overcome the world—and all effort will be futile unless the Spirit of God possess us and our methods. Let us lose ourselves in

Him, having every power controlled by the forces of the Spirit, to be used of God according as He pleases.

The wind harp chooses not the tones
That through its trembling threads are blown,
The patient organ cannot guess
What hand its passive keys shall press.
Through wish, resolve, and act our will
Is moved by undreamed forces still.
And no man measures in advance
His strength with untried circumstance.

Reviews.

The Christian Pictorial. A Religious Illustrated Weekly. Vol. IX., February—August, 1897. Alexander and Shephard, 21, Farnival Street, Holborn.

This volume contains pictures and matters of interest to every one. Talks with Children, Boys and Girls, Men and Women. Pictures and Descriptions of places of popular resort in England and Wales. Denominational work of all Christian sections of the Lord's One Church; also 156 portraits of Christian ministers of the present and the past. A book for the drawing-room and the cottage. Very handsomely bound, and of the whole we think the editor a workman that need not be ashamed.

Lessons from Life, Animal and Human.

A new book of illustration from fresh sources, with an Introduction by Rev. Hugh MacMillan, LL.D. Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

The work is crowded with a collection of curious and interesting Facts and Phenomena concerning the Nature, Functions, Relations and Ministries of Men and Animals, arranged as Illustrations of *Social,*

Moral and Religious Truths and Principles. It is an Encyclopædia of very serviceable materials for the Preacher and the Teacher unusually met with in modern assistant works. Every page will fix the Preacher's attention on some new or overlooked fact which will be valuable for illustration and application to Social, Moral, or Religious Truth. It is furnished with a triple set of Indexes: Index of Moral Truths and Lessons, Illustrated; Index of subjects; and Index of Scripture Passages alluded to. We think it worthy a place in every library, and in every minister's studio.

Just published. New volume by Rev. F. B. Meyer, B.A. A companion volume to David, and seven other Scripture Biographies. *Paul, a Servant of Jesus Christ*, with nine original full page Illustrations. Morgan and Scott, 12, Paternoster Buildings.

We are always delighted to receive a new work by Mr. Meyer, and always find profit in reading; his style is so unique and belongs to himself, and his graphic descriptions and devout mind has the effect of making the character of whom he

writes live before you. This result is achieved again in this work before us, but we cannot wonder. The writer is absorbed in his hero. These are his words: For days and weeks together I have lived in the company of this glorious man, but only to feel that he transcended all our loftiest conceptions like some great mountain range. The more his character is traversed the more it grows on the imagination.

The Gospel in the Fields By R. C. Fillingham, Vicar of Hexton, London Hodder and Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.

It was our privilege to work for the Master in a large town in close proximity to the village of Hexton and have frequent opportunities of hearing the Vicar of Hexton expound publicly his views on Politics, Religion and Disestablishment. We always considered his out-spoken honest utterances on most important public matters, in his circumstances as commanding the attention of all. But here we have a work commending itself to all on other grounds. The Christian minister teaching his rural flock from God's Book of Nature, teaching them to look on the lillies and flowers, and from nature up to nature's God. It contains fifty-three beautiful allusions and lessons from nature, and we have found it a charming book.

The Three Rylands. A hundred years of various Christian Services. By James Culross, M.A., D.D., with Introduction by W. Ryland Bent Adkins, B.A. Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

We are thankful to our Heavenly Father that in the past history of the Church our section has been so signally honoured by men of *Consecration and Power and toil* in the Lord's vineyards. Dr Culross is doing good service in putting the history of these three grand men before us in a form and at a price that puts it within the reach of all. We pray for it a very large circulation.

The Case for Disestablishment. A handbook of facts and arguments in support of the claim for religious equality. New editions, revised and enlarged. Society for the liberation of religion from State patronage and control. 2, Serjeants Inn, Fleet Street.

We should like to hear of a copy being in all our Sunday-schools and Young People's Libraries, and if wise friends would call the attention of our young men and women to the work, they will be doing good service.

The Autobiography of the Rev. Josiah Henson (Uncle Tom), from 1789 to 1883, with a preface by Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe. Edited by John Lobb, F.R.G.S. One hundred and twentieth thousand. New edition, revised and enlarged. Christian Age Offices, St. Bride Street, Ludgate Circus.

Some of us will never forget the effect, when first reading Mrs. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and the day of the final struggle against slavery in America; and also the deep interest felt when Mrs. Stowe's *Uncle Tom* appeared among us. It is well that our young men and women should be kept familiar with the events of those days, and hate slavery in every age and every country—for the curse still exists—and Christians should pray that slavery may hide its face in endless night, and every man in every face behold a brother and a friend.

Pioneering in Tibet. By Annie R. Taylor. Morgan & Scott.

The origin and progress of the Tibetan Pioneer Mission, together with my experiences in Tibet, and some facts about the country, how little was known and how little is being done for the people on the vast country between the frontier of India and China. Perhaps the most generally received fact is the custom of these people to grind out their prayers from a mill. Let all interested read this touching story of Annie R. Taylor:

Memories of a Mistaken Life. An autobiography. By an Octogenarian Actor Elliot Stock.

An illustration of How the Lord brings the Blind by a way that they know not. A testimony to the Grace of God. Read it.

Does God care? Elliot Stock, Paternoster Row.

This shilling book answers the question from different standpoints, all showing that we can say with the Psalmist, "I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me."

Jerry and Joe. A Tale of the Two Jubilees. By Bella Sidney Woolf, with illustrations by H. C. Preston Maegoun. Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 21, Paternoster Square, London.

One of a shilling series of books containing stories for the young, which the young will read. They are healthy and instructive.

Our Magazines, &c.—*The Treasury of David.* By the late C. H. Spurgeon. Part 25, completing Volume IV., and containing the Title and Index for Volume V. Covers for the four volumes now ready at 1/4; post free, 1/6. Part 510. *Metropolitan Pulpit Sermons.* By C. H. Spurgeon. Containing five sermons. *The Standard Life of C. H. Spurgeon.* By his Wife and his Private Secretary. Will be published in volumes four, the first volume during the coming season. Passmore & Alabaster.

The Bible Translation Society, 57th Annual Report. We wish some cheap and ready methods could be adopted to inform the young and other members of our churches of the necessity for this Society, and that the circumstances of 57 years ago have not altered in the least that necessity.

The Baptist Magazine—The Sword and Trowel—The Irish Baptist Magazine are to hand, and full of good, sound, gospel teaching. *The Quiver*, for November, is the first part of a new volume. It presents its readers with a beautiful copy engraving of

the Good Shepherd, and is of special value in containing My Life Work, the Rescue of the Waif by Dr. Barnardo—fully illustrated. *Great Thoughts.* Full to the brim of good things. It is a work for everybody, containing cuttings from everywhere, and has something to say about every valuable matter. The editor shows great skill and research in making his extracts. *The Prize Reciter, Great Thoughts Office.* A good Monthly for Band of Hope young people. *The Treasury of Religious Thought (American).* Gay and Bird, Bedford Street, Strand. Full of worthy sermons and outlines, also an illustrated article, How Henry IV. became a Roman Catholic. *The Bible Societies' Reporter and Gleanings for the Young.* The latter should be read by our Young Christians. *The New Orthodoxy.* The article on Few Conversions Nowadays, should be read carefully. *The Papal Evangelical;* the Secret History of the Oxford Movement; also the Monthly of the Protestant Evangelical Mission are to hand. We also advise the perusal of an Indian famine romance, *A Lesson of the Famine.* Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. Also No 1, Vol. II., *National Righteousness.* Our Opium Trade during the 60 years of the Queen's reign.

The Religious Tract Society's Monthlies. Amongst a mass of good writing we note for the Children, in *Sunday at Home*, a good story, Grandmother's Boy, by Lena Tyak, illustrated. *The Leisure Hour.* Splendid plates in tint, Sir Galahad, The Happy Warrior—after G. F. Watts, R.A. *Sunday Hours.* How the Huguenots came to Spitalfields. Illustrated from photographs by G. H. Pike. *The Boys' Own*, the first part of a new volume, with two coloured plates. *The Boys' Sunday Monthly* is a wonderful pennyworth, and *The Cottager, Light in the Home, Friendly Greetings, The Little Dots, The Child's Companion, &c.*, all these are something to be thankful for in these days of so much printed trash.

Denominational Intelligence.

CHANGES IN THE PASTORATE.

Rev. R. M. Julian, from Calcutta, to Ebenezer Church, Burnley.

Rev. E. G. Lovell, from Blockley, to Chipping Norton.

Rev. R. H. Jones, from St. Clears, to Martletwy, Narbeth.

Rev. E. Haggis, from Park-road, Ryde, to Forton Church.

Rev. G. M. Rice, from Todmorden, to Gildersome, Leeds.

Rev. D. Jones, from Farnworth, to Twickenham-green

RECOGNITIONS.

At a meeting held at Bloomsbury Chapel, formally to welcome Rev. B. J. Gibbon to the pastorate, there was a good muster of friends, Mr. John Chown presiding. Mr. E. Nodes, on behalf of the deacons, and Mr. W. Webb as representing the elders, bade Mr. Gibbon God-speed in his new work, Mr. Nodes making allusion to the helpful and friendly attitude of the friends at East-street Church, Southampton (Mr. Gibbon's only previous charge). Professor F. G. Marchant congratulated the church on becoming possessed of an old pupil of his. He referred to the sound life and judgment of their new pastor, and to the way in which, while at college, he had slowly won and permanently retained the respect of professors and students. Mr. W. A. Gamblen, secretary of East-street Church, and Mr. Canfield, a deacon from the same church, gave the late

pastor the highest credentials, and Revs. T. Nicholson, an old neighbour from Southampton, J. Baillie, the former pastor, now of Cardiff, and Alexander Connell, a Presbyterian neighbour of Mr. Gibbon in London, also spoke encouraging words.

CHATSWORTH ROAD CHURCH, WEST NORWOOD — Rev. Archibald G. Brown (late of the East London Tabernacle) commenced his ministry on Sunday, November 7th. On Monday a reception and tea was followed by a public meeting. Chas. E. Tritton, Esq., M.P., presided. The Revs. Thomas Spurgeon, William Cuff, W. Fuller Gooch, and other well-known ministers took part.

Rev. John Bozier has been recognised as pastor at St. Clement's Church, Norwich, Alderman White, J.P., presided.

Rev. John Ney has been recognised as pastor of Earl Shilton Church. Revs. W. Y. Fullerton, J. Cornish, P. Williams, D. Stephens, G. E. O. Payne and E. Bush took part.

Rev. P. G. Scorey has been welcomed to the pastorate at Sandhurst, Berks. Revs. J. Cave and J. M. Bergin took part.

Rev. A. J. Payne, late of Peterhead, has been recognised as pastor of the church at Earlsfield. Sermons were preached by Revs. S. H. Wilkinson, C. B. Sawday and F. B. Meyer; Rev. E. Henderson gave the charge to the pastor; Rev. J. Felmingham addressed the church.

PRESENTATIONS.

Rev. W. Bampton Taylor, a purse of gold and walnut side-board from Broadway Church, Chesham, and a writing-desk and illuminated address from the Bible-class and school, on removing to Cambridge.

Mr. P. Bunting, a clock, barometer and illuminated address from Seven-oaks Church.

Mr. J. Poole, a purse of sovereigns from Poole Church, in recognition of services as organist.

Mr. G. P. Whorlaw, a *baton* from the church at Sudbury, in recognition of services as choir-master.

Rev. S. C. Allderidget, a photographic group from the choir of Morton-road Church, Middlesbrough.

Rev. C. B. Shepherd, an illuminated address and a purse of gold, on completing the twenty-first year of his ministry at Newark.

Rev. T. R. Lewis, a purse of gold and an address from Scapegoat-hill Church, Huddersfield, on resigning the pastorate.

Rev. A. D. Brown, a purse with £20 and a framed address from Herne Bay Church, on resigning the pastorate through ill-health.

NEW CHAPELS.

Gresham Chapel, Barrington road, Brixton, which was destroyed by fire in December, 1895, having been rebuilt, has been reopened for Divine Service. Rev. D. Davies, of Brighton, preached.

A new place of worship for the congregation at Fleckney, a branch of Friar-lane Church, Leicester (Rev. J. Evans), has been erected at a cost of £700. At the opening service Rev. James Thew preached; Revs. J. Evans, J. C. Forth, E. B. Woods, W. B. Branch and C. A. Slack took part. The services were continued on Sunday, when Rev. John Evans preached. The collections amounted to £63, which brings the building fund to £417.

MISCELLANEOUS.

LONDON: GUNNERSBURY, W.—The members of this church are greatly encouraged by, amongst other things, the rapid reduction of a heavy and dangerous debt. In April, 1896, this stood at £1,350; but during the last eighteen months nearly £700 has been given or promised. Since then more than £70 (nett) were realised by a sale of work held October 28 and 29, and the debt now stands at less than £600. Further, the Baptist Building Fund have voted the church a free loan of £500, to be granted as soon as the debt is reduced to that sum; and an old friend of the church has promised £20 a year toward the £50 needed for annual repayment. So, less than £100 are now required to put the finances on a sound footing; but, as some of the money is promised on condition that this is done by December 31st next, this remaining sum must be raised immediately.

The first Baptismal service in connection with the New Chapel at Slough, was held on Thursday evening, October 21. The pastor (Rev. Theo. Cousens) conducted the service, and took his text from Acts, viii, 36-38. At the close of sermon three candidates were baptized.

This is the first service of the kind ever held at Slough.

BAPTISMS.

Aldershot.—October 17, One, by F. G. Kemp
Buckley, Flintshire.—October 17, Two, by W. Jenkins
Bardwell, Suffolk.—October 28, Two, by G. F. Wain
Birmingham: Church of the Redeemer, Hagley-road.—October 27, Five, by J. M. Gwynne Owen
Bishops Stortford.—October 27, Two, by W. Walker
Barrow-in-Furness.—October 31, Two, by W. Walker

- Battle*.—October 31, Two, by G. B. Richardson
- Birmingham*: Christ Church, Aston.—November 3, Six, by G. West (pastor of Heneage-street).
- Blackmoor*, Mon: Mount Pleasant.—November 4, Three, by H. J. Harris
- Brearley*.—November 6, Three, by R. H. Rigby
- Birmingham*, Newhall-street.—October 10, Six, by Mr. Honeybund
- Buckley*, Flintshire.—October 10, Five, by W. Jenkins
- Belfast*, Antriu-road.—October 24, Seven, by C. S. Donald
- Clayton-le-Moors*, Lancs.—October 24, Eight, by S. Caldwell
- Church*, Lancashire.—November 8, Six, by F. M. Durbin
- Caxton*.—October 5, Nine, by W. Kelseo
- Castelev*: Ebenezer.—October 10, Seven, by Pastor W. Burnett
- Derby*: Junction-street.—October 10, Two, by Philip A. Hudgell
- Dundee*, Ward-road.—November 7, Three, by D. Clark
- Dunfermline*, Viewfield-place.—October 30, Five, by J. T. Hagan
- Edenbridge*.—October 26, Three, by R. H. Powell.
- Glasgow*, Cambridge-street.—October 31, Three, by E. Last
- Glasgow*, Kelvinside-avenue.—October 26, Five, by A. W. Bean
- Guernsey*, All Saints (English).—October 28, Five, by J. Gard
- Glasgow*, Cambridge-street.—October 10, by E. Last
- Glasgow*, Springburn.—November 7, One, by J. Horne
- Huddersfield*: Pole Moor.—November 7, Six, by T. Iles
- Huddersfield*: Slaithwaite, Zion.—November 7, One, by E. Evans.
- Huil*, George-street.—October 10, Four, by J. E. Shephard
- Kelso*, N.E.—October 24, One, by W. Kemp
- Landore*, Swansea.—October 24, Two, by C. Joshua
- Leamington Spa*, Warwick-street, October 24, Four, by A. Phillips
- Llandylaoen*, Soar.—November 7, Two, by M. Jones
- Leeds*, Hunslet Tabernacle.—October 31, Three, by A. E. Greening
- Leeds*, Burley-road.—October 31, Nine, by W. Walter
- Longton*, Staills.—October 31, Three, by M. H. Whetnall
- Llantarnam*, Mon.—Ebenezer.—October 10, Three, by W. E. Robinson
- Modbury*, S. Devon.—October 17, Three, by A. Harris
- Newport*, Mon., Duckpool-road.—September 29, by A. T. Jones
- Novich*, Orford Hill.—October 31, Two, by W. Gill
- Newbald*, Yorks.—October 24, Two, by U. G. Watkins
- Northampton*, Grafton-street.—September 29, Three, by S. Needham
- Pontypridd*, Glam., Carmel Chapel.—October 8, Four, by E. E. Probert
- Pyntycymmer*, Zion.—October 24, Three, by W. Reynolds
- Ryde*, George-street.—October 24, Two, by E. B. Pearson
- Sheffield*, Cemetery-road.—October 31, One, by E. Carrington
- Swansea*, York-place.—October 1, Five, by B. D. Davies
- Sway*.—October 17, Three, by H. New
- Shelfanger*, Diss.—November 7, Two, by A. J. Jarrett
- Tubermore*, co. Londonderry.—October 17, One, by G. Marshall
- Tondu*, Carey Chapel.—October 17, Three, by J. M. Jones.

LONDON DISTRICT.

- Barnet Tabernacle*.—October 24, Three, by P. J. Smart
- Barking Tabernacle*, E.—October 27, Eight, by H. Trueman
- Camberwell*, Cottage Green.—October 31, by J. Smith
- Bernmondsey*, Abbey-street, S.E.—October 4, Five, by A. V. G. Chandler
- Chiswick*, Annandale Road.—October 31, Four, by A. G. Egerton
- Lewisham-road*, S.E.—October 14, Six, by W. Wearham.
- East Greenwich*.—October 31, Four, by W. E. Wells
- Hiderton-road*, South Bernmondsey, October 27, Four, by E. Howe
- Stratford Grove*.—October 31, Three, by W. H. Stevens
- Vernon Chapel*, King's Cross-road, W.C.—October 31, Nine, by D. H. Moore
- Woolwich-road*, S.E.—October 3, Three, by W. E. Wells

Programme for 1898. Read Rev. J. E. Atkinson, Sandhurst, in place of J. D. Jennings.

A LETTER may be written which is not sealed. A child may be heir to a great estate, and yet not have the full enjoyment of it, nor know the greatness of his possessions. A weak, palsied hand may receive a strong Christ. All plants do not bear flowers. Weak faith saves. Strong faith assures.