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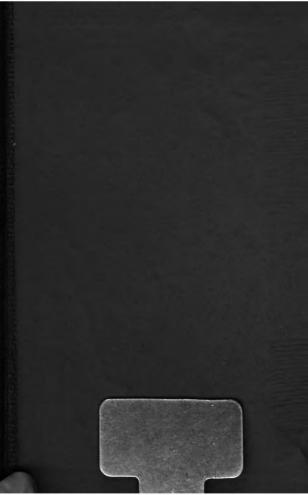
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The CEDAR CHRISTIAN





THE CEDAR CHRISTIAN.



THE

CEDAR CHRISTIAN,

AND

Dther Practical Papers.

BY THE

REV. THEODORE L CUYLER.

EDINBURGH:
WILLIAM P. NIMMO.
1864.

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PREFACE.



HIS is a book for Christian men. It is published with a view to promote personal holiness. It

consists of a series of racy Papers, originally written for the New York Independent. The Author needs not an introduction; he has found his way into all Christian circles, and all love his fellowship. Theodore Cuyler's name, like that of his near neighbour and intimate friend, Henry Ward Beecher, has become a household word. Suffice it, therefore, to say that the present volume is worthy of the good and great name which it bears.

The profits arising from the sale of this work will be devoted to a religious object, as will appear from the letter on the next page.

J. W.

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK.

Yes, my dear brother, you are very welcome to my articles from the "Independent." You can reprint them in any style that you choose. They have been widely republished in America in papers, magazines, and tract-form. I enclose two specimens. In your volume I wish you would reprint "The Model Prayer-Meeting," "The Cedar Christian," "Shew your Colours," "To the Seeker after Christ," "Prayerless Prayers," and such others as you prefer.

The article "To the Seeker," &c., has been blessed to the awakening and guidance of many souls.

Please send me two or three of the "wee" books when they are out.

The articles are written in the intervals of labour as pastor of a vast congregation. I am happy to be able to serve your Church in this method; and, with fraternal regard, I remain yours in Christian fellowship,

THEODORE L. CUYLER,

Pastor of Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church.

CONTENTS.

		PAGE
THE CEDAR CHRISTIAN, .		9
THE FRUIT-BEARER,		16
SHEW YOUR COLOURS, .		23
CROSS-BEARING FOR CHRIST,		31
SPIRITUAL DYSPEPTICS, .		38
GROWTH IN GRACE,		44
OH FOR AN OLIVET!		51
A CHRISTIAN'S RIGHT PLACE,		58
THE BITTER CUP,		65
THE JOY OF THE CROSS, .		69
THE MODEL PRAYER-MEETING,	,	76
FIRST STEPS TOWARD CHRIST,		83
GIVING THE HEART TO CHRIST,		10

CONTENTS.

		PAGE
MORNING-CLOUD RELIGION,		97
HOW A CHILD OF GOD BO	ORE	
TROUBLE,	•	103
THE RICH SOUL,		109
SPIRITUAL WEALTH-GETTING,		
THE INWARD LIFE,		129
PRAYERLESS PRAYERS, .		134
A MODEL MINISTER OF CHRIST,		141
QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT, .		148
JESUS ONLY,		156
HAVE YOU AN ANCHOR? .		163
THE BLESSINGS OF DISAPPOI	NT-	
MANA		1-1

THE CEDAR CHRISTIAN.

TROLLING one bright summer morning over the velvet carpet of "Chatsworth Park," we came suddenly upon a CEDAR OF

LEBANON! It was the first and only one we ever saw; our first impulse was to uncover our head, and make obeisance to this monarch in exile, this lone representative of the most regal family of trees upon the globe. Every bough was laden with glorious association to us. Broad, gnarled, severe, rough old tree as it was, yet it blossomed with poetry, and hung golden with heavenly teachings. As we gazed through our tears at the exiled sovereign, the voice of the psalmist was in our ears —"The righteous shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

With that hardy veteran of Chatsworth in our mind's eye, let us say a word about the style of cedar Christians that we need in our day. Of pliant, willow church-members—of brash and brittle basswood professors—of pretentious, fashion-following, bay-tree Christians, we have quite too many. Give us more cedars for the pulpit, for the deacon's seat, and for the pews.

And the first quality of the cedar is, that it grows. It is a live tree. Where there is hearty life, there must be growth. And it is the lamentable lack of inward godliness that makes the stunted professor. There is not vitalising sap enough in his heart-roots to reach up into the boughs of his outward conduct. There is not vigour enough in the trunk of his character to stand erect. No answering showers brought down by fervent prayer cleanse the dust of worldliness from his yellow, sicklied leaves. There he isjust as he was "set out" in the Church a score of years ago,-no larger, no broader, no brighter in graces than he was then: the caterpillars of lust having spun their unsightly webs all over his branches. He has not grown an ell in any one Bible-trait. He has not yielded one single fruit of the Spirit. He is a cumberer of the ground—in the way of a better man—all the while drinking up God's pure air and water, and yet fulfilling Satan's purpose. Not of such a prayer-neglecting professor, not of such a time-serving, moneyloving, fashion-worshipping professor, could we honestly say, "He grows like a cedar in Lebanon."

II. But the cedar not only grows; it has a peculiar style of growth, which God's people may well imitate. It grows through all weathers. It is a hardy tree, or else it could not live a month in the Arctic climate of Lebanon's sky-piercing summits. Delicate plants might thrive on the warm lap of Southern exposures, but not up among the rifts of whirling snows, or where the steellike air gleams under the silent moon. Sudden hurricanes may twist off the gorgeous magnolias of the vale, or crack the brittle bay-tree; but let the gale rage ever so fiercely on Lebanon's blustering heights, let the snow-squadrons join battle in the hurtled air, the cedar tosses the tempest from its elastic boughs, and stands like the everlasting mountain under it. In God's Church

there are to be found just such lignumvitæ characters-storm-proof, gold-proof, temptation-proof. What a plantation of such cedars were the early apostles! What a coronet of stalwart storm-defiers graced the summit of God's Zion in Reformation days! Zwingle of Switzerland-John Knox, who never feared the face of man-burly Latimer, who marched singing to Smithfield's kindled stake-John Huss, gazing up into the open heavens from the suffocating smoke and flame which are wrapping his tortured limbs-all these were cedars through whose branches the very gales of persecution made glorious music. Here and there is such a cedar Christian discoverable in our century. They never bend. They never break. They never compromise. To such Christians, worldliness cometh, and smooth-tongued expediency cometh, and sensual pleasure cometh, and slavery cometh, but "findeth nothing in them." Popular hurricanes come down amain upon them, smiting a Hopkins, a Pierpont, or a Dudley Tyng in the pulpitsmiting a Wilberforce, a Jay, or an Adams in the legislative hall-smiting a Jonathan Edwards in his quiet study-a missionary

Lyman in his lonely toils—a Neal Dow in his labours for the drunkard, and a Jonas King in his labours for the besotted bigots of Athens. But the cedar of principle proved an overmatch for the blasts of selfishness, spite, or superstition. Persecution only made the roots of resolution strike the deeper, and the trunk of testimony stand the firmer.

III. The greatest peril to such Christians As read these lines will not come in the form of persecution; but rather from those insidious worms that gnaw out the very heart of gospel piety. Secret influences are the most fatal in the everyday life of the everyday unconspicuous professor. There is a whole colony of busy insects that will try the quality of a believer's timber. And when the community is startled by the spiritual defalcation of some prominent man in the Church or in a religious society, it is only the crack of a beam or a pillar that was worm-eaten by secret sin long before. He only is a cedar of Christ's training and polishing who is sound to the very core. For the pride of Lebanon was not more famous for its vigour or its hardiness than for its solidity of wood. It knew no decay. It afforded asylum to no

stealthy insect turning its aromatic wood into dust and ashes. Therefore did Israel's royal temple-builder select it for the most conspicuous and important portions of the edifice on Mount Moriah. With its fine grain, its high polish, and delightful fragrance, every lintel and every door-post was at once a strength and an ornament to the temple of the living God. So stand the faithful, fearless minister of Christ, the incorruptible Christian patriot, the unflinching testimonybearer for the truth as it is in Jesus. They bid defiance to the worm of sin while they live, and to the worm of calumny when they are dead. Centuries hence, their memory will be as sound and as fragrant as the chests of sandal-wood in which the Oriental kings were wont to conceal their treasures.

IV. The last noticeable thing with the cedar is its breadth of limb. The verdant veteran of Chatsworth had a diameter greater than his height. Elliot informs us that he saw cedars on the top of Lebanon that were thirty feet in circumference of trunk! Their limbs were so wide-spreading that the diameter of the branches from the extreme of one side of the tree to the opposite extreme

was one hundred feet! Under that majestic canopy a whole regiment might find shelter. Now, we need not go far to find just such a broad-armed Christian. Broad in his catholic sympathy with all the "faithful in Christ Iesus" of every sect-broad in his love of MAN, irrespective of clime, colour, or condition-broad in his pecuniary benevolence, is our cedar brother. Hundreds of happy beneficiaries lie down under the shadow of his liberality. The poor scholar whom he helps with books-the poor orphan whom he helps to a home—the poor harlot and the inebriate, for whom he builds the asylum—the poor sin-struck heathen man of far-away India, to whom he sends the "good tidings," are each and all the richer for his broad-limbed beneficence. There is room for regiments of sufferers to bivouac under such a man. It will make a sore and sorrowful void when that imperial CEDAR is transplanted to the banks of the Crystal river, in the Paradise of God.

THE FRUIT-BEARER.



FEW weeks since we invited our readers up Mount Lebanon to study the *cedar* as the emblem of Christian steadfastness and

strength. Let them now accompany us to the land of the Bible, and look at the OLIVE as the type of Christian fruitfulness.

We will take the road that leads from Gaza toward the north,—perhaps the very road that Philip was travelling when the Ethiopian eunuch came up and heard the good tidings of Christ from the evangelist. It is a sight-blinding road to travel, with such a blazing sun before us, and such flashing beds of sand beside us. At length we catch a glimpse of a bank of foliage on the red-hot horizon. Pushing on, we plunge into it, and absolutely bathe in verdure. Mile after mile

the grove extends, the largest colony of olivetrees in all Palestine. As the sea wind draws cool and fragrant through the grove, we regale eye, and ear, and smell, and taste, and all at once they feast upon the oliveorchard.

The chief beauty of the olive lies in its look of lusty health and vigour. Gnarled and twisted are trunk and boughs, but in a picturesque and hardy style after all. The foliage is of a most peculiar green; every leaf as glossy as satin; and as the sea-breeze stirs this grove of Gaza, the uppermost leaves turn over, and shew a silver hue. To no great height does the olive grow, and with its broad-spreading, modest, generous branches, the scene before us reminds us more of a home orchard than a forest of Oriental growth.

By and by, if "the labour of the olive" does not fail, you will see a merry sight among these glossy trees, when the browncheeked men and maidens come to the fruitgathering. Some shake the trees with lusty arm; some thresh the outermost boughs with poles right vigorously. Isaiah tells us of the "shaking of the olive tree," when four

or five berries were left on the topmost branches; and in the Mosaic law it was enioined, "When thou beatest thine olivetree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again." When the rich owners of the orchard have filled their presses so that they burst out with oil, then God's poor were permitted The widow to come and glean the trees. was allowed to fill her apron, and the orphan boy to tie up a handful of berries in his tunic. And so while the rich man's tightening-press is gushing out with olive oil for the sanctuary, the poor man's table is cheered by the "oil of gladness" for his fresh dinner of herbs and fruit, and at night the olive lamp sheds its brightness out of every door-way.

O generous old tree! munificent to the lofty and the lowly,—yielding thy grateful fruit to prince and peasant. For two hundred years thou shakest down thy ripe mercies. One generation cometh and another goeth; but still the olive berries fall. Thou bearest fruit with all thy might—never stinting thyself, and never robbing thy owner of his score of brimming jars. Even when thou standest on the most barren, desolate stone-bed, thou canst "bring oil out of the flinty rock," and

pour down fatness on the very spot that is marked with dreariness and desolation.

Here is an emblem of Christian fruitfulness worthy of study in these cold, revival-less, unproductive days. For the most striking feature of the olive was its fixed and fertile habit of yielding fruit. Season after season, on the low alluvials and upon the rocky lea, the same bountiful crop came in, always prompt as the almanac, and always "up to time." Now, a follower of Christ who is habitually laborious in every good work, who is always abounding in alms-deeds, and sweet gentle words, and Bible-giving, and ministrations of mercy at sickbeds and in pauper hovels-who distils piety like holy oil into every day of his blessed life-who drops his benign influences on the hardest, bleakest spot that penury or oppression ever cursed, that loves to do good, and cannot help doing good, and would chafe himself to death if he were not allowed to do good, -such a man cannot better be described than to say of him, "his beauty is as the olive-tree." He has a habit of loving God and of loving his fellow-men. It is his way. We can count on him; and we go to him for a gift, a

prayer, a speech, a good service, just as confidently as we go to our apple-tree in harvest-time, or to our punctual "golden russet" in November. This blessed fruitfulness was the gift of the Holy Spirit, and Christ Jesus has promised to keep it alive to the last.

There is nothing scant or niggard in this man's Christianity. He speaks it out, when speech is a virtue, and when cowards sit dumb. He levies it out con amore. To do an honest deed in tough times of financial trial-to give of his substance for Christ's treasury-to put his shoulder to the wheel of slow-going enterprises of charity-to help a fugitive on to liberty, and to point Satan's fugitives, too, up toward the pole-star of Calvary-all this is as much the spontaneous acting of his godly heart as it is for an olivetree to rattle down a revenue of ripe berries by autumn. And never does he pour down such a shower of "fruits of the Spirit" as when the flail of God's providential discipline is beating every bough.

But there is a counterfeit olive-tree in Palestine. It is called the wild-olive, or the oleaster. It is in all points like unto the genuine tree, except that it yields no fruit.

Alas, how many wild olives are there in the Church! When I see a man taking up large space in Christ's spiritual orchard, and absorbing a vast deal of sunlight and soil, and yielding not one per cent. of good works, I say—There is an oleaster!

When I hear a professor of religion glib in the stock market, and yet silent in the prayer-meeting, ready to speak for his party, but never willing to open his lips for Christ, I say—Ah, what an *oleaster!*

When I hear of a church member going from the communion-table to the political meeting, to buy votes, and sell principle, to cheat at the board of intrigue, I say—Behold an *oleaster!*

When I hear a man pray that he may "provide things honest in the sight of all men," and then I go out of his shop with a rotten piece of broadcloth or a second-hand beaver sold for new, I think to myself—Friend, why not write on your sign, Here lives an oleaster?

When I meet a garrulous "sister" at every anniversary meeting, who is profuse of tears for the foundlings of the Five Points, and ecstatic over the eloquence of returned missionaries, and yet goes home to grind a sixpence out of an overworked seamstress, or turn a sick servant into the streets, I want to whisper to her—Madam, what a pity you are nothing but an oleaster!

Finally, when we encounter a church that is stiff in creed and lax in character, abounding in doctrine and scarce of good deeds, extensively laid out in profession, but sparsely settled with graces, rich in purse and empty of principle, bigoted toward everything but sin, and liberal toward everything but true religion, then we behold a whole plantation of oleasters! The end of such is to be burned, when the Lord will consume them with the breath of His mouth in the terrible day of His coming.

SHEW YOUR COLOURS.



HE name of Captain Hedley Vicars, the Christian hero of the Crimean war, is familiar to most of our readers. On the morning after

his conversion, he bought a large Bible, and placed it open on the table of his room. He was determined that an open Bible, for the future, should be his "colours." "It was to speak for me," he said, "before I was strong enough to speak for myself." His military comrades came in, and laughed at him; nicknamed him the Methodist; hinted to him that he had better not turn "hypocrite;" but in spite of a perpetual guerilla warfare of sneers and scoffs, he nobly stood by his colours. Having "clean hands, he waxed stronger and stronger." In time he became a spiritual power in his regiment, simply by

a steadfast, bold, decided witnessing for Christ.

To His early disciples Jesus Christ said, "Whosoever shall confess me before men. him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." Solemn injunction, solemnly heard: heard as with chains already on their wrists, and the loud crack of the scourge echoing through prison corridors. But Christ did not mean this command only for His original apostles. It was intended for all times, and for every man who wishes to be saved. It is intended. especially, for a timid, compromising class.unhappily a large class,-who hang about the debatable ground between Satan's rebel provinces and Christ's loyal realm. They are the people who want to be on Christ's side in eternity, but are not exactly willing to be on His side in this Christ-despising world. Before this vacillating, man-fearing class. Christ lays down sharp, clear lines, He says, "He that is not for me is against me." And no man is for Him who does not confess Him.

Confession is a broad, far-reaching word, as the Saviour employed it. It refers, first,

to the heart, then to the lips, then to the life. Whosoever would be saved must embrace Christ in the heart: this was conversion. Next, he must acknowledge Him with the tongue: this was confession, or what we style a "profession of faith." Chiefest of all, he was to honour Christ by his daily living: and this was vital Christianity.

Iesus did not refer to the first point when He gave the command to confess Him "before men." He presupposed the secret interior work of conversion; He presupposed the root; what He demanded was the leafingout and the fruit-bearing of the tree. He demanded a bold, resolute, out-spoken, loveinspired acknowledgment of Him as their Saviour and their King, from every man who expected to be acknowledged in turn before the Father and the holy angels. This confession was to be open, spontaneous, and Has the reader of this paragraph never made such an acknowledgment of Christ? Then, my friend, you must not be astonished if Christ refuses to recognise you in the last decisive hour of judgment. It will then be too late to take the oath of loyalty. He who does not confess Christ in

this world, will be lost in the world to come.

I. In nearly every congregation there are a few halting, timid, irresolute persons, who have a trembling faith in Christ, but who do not come out decidedly and confess Him. They may be Christians, but the world is not allowed to know it. They carry dark lanterns, "Shining lights" they certainly are not. No one is the better for their secret. clandestine attempts to steal along quietly towards heaven without letting any one overhear their footsteps. Now, this is a miserable --we are almost ready to say contemptible--mode of living, this concealment of the colours when danger threatens, this following along after the Church, with a vague hope of being counted in among God's people when heaven's prizes are distributed to the faithful. We do not say that no one can be saved who does not openly join some Christian church. But we do say that the person who expects Christ to acknowledge him in heaven, and yet refuses to acknowledge Christ "before men," is a self-convicted coward: and while disobeying his Master's orders, has no right to expect his Master's blessing. After fifteen years of pastoral observation, we have come to the conclusion that every day spent by the genuine convert outside of the Church of Christ is almost a day lost; he loses the sense of responsibility that he needs to feel; he loses the opportunities of doing good; he loses in self-respect, in the respect of others; he loses the approbation of Him who has so impressively said, "Whosoever is ashamed of me before men, of him will I be ashamed when I shall come in my own glory." When God gives conversion, He demands confession. To be effective and useful, this must be prompt, open, hearty, and decided.

2. But confession does not end with the public acknowledgment of Christ before the church. It only begins here. This is one decisive step, to be followed by a thousand other steps in the same direction. We do know, however, of many a church member whose single solitary act of loyalty to Christ was their standing up to respond to a church covenant before the pulpit; from that moment onward all that the church had of them was their idle name on the roll. Like too many of the boasted recruits in new regiments,

they enlisted, drew their "bounty," and then "straightway are heard of no more." In the campaign for Christ and the truth, they never answer to the roll-call of duty: it is very certain that their names will not be called when the victorious Emmanuel announces the rewards to His faithful followers, on "the sea of glass like unto pure gold."

A true Christian will rejoice to confess Christ everywhere, and before everybody. He will aim to make his daily life lustrous and legible. He will glorify his Master by everyday acts of loyalty and love. He will live for Christ. And when duty bids him open his lips, he is ready to speak for Christ. At such a time silence would be treason. The Christian who will sit with sealed lips when his Master is assailed, when religion is attacked, when wickedness is broached and defended, when truth is denounced, is a denier of his Lord, as guilty as Simon Peter in Pilate's hall.

It is pitiful to observe what cowardly shifts some professed Christians resort to in order to avoid an acknowledgment of their loyalty. We are all guilty of too much time-serving; too much concealment of truth; of too much compromise with Christ's enemies. The boldest are not bold enough; and the cowards are as much despised by themselves as loathed by their Master in heaven. When will we learn that the *only* course for a Christian is to "stand up for Jesus?" Men expect it of us; they in turn despise us for our shamefacedness, and doubt the sincerity of our professions.

We began this brief article with an incident from military life. We close it with another. "Last night," said a Christian soldier to his chaplain, "in my barrack, before going to bed, I knelt down and prayed, when suddenly my comrades raised a loud laugh, and began to throw boots and clothes at me." "Well," replied the chaplain, "suppose you defer your prayers till after you retire, and then silently lift up your heart to God."

Meeting him soon after, the chaplain said, "You took my advice, I suppose: how did it answer?" "Sir," replied the soldier, "I did take your advice for two or three evenings, but I began to think it looked like denying my Saviour; so I once more knelt down and prayed as at first." "What followed?" "Why, sir, not one of them laughs

now. The whole fifteen now kneel down too, and I pray with them!"

"I felt ashamed of myself for my cowardly advice," said the chaplain, when relating the incident; "that young soldier was bolder and wiser than myself." Yes, and he might have added that the sermon which the godly private preached to his fellow-soldiers by that simple act, was a more impressive one than any discourse they were likely to hear from such a chaplain. Vicar's motto was the true one,—"God's Word shall be my colours."

CROSS-BEARING FOR CHRIST.



HERE are some passages in the Bible that cut like a razor. One of the most incisive is this, "He that taketh not his cross, and followeth

after me, is not worthy of me."

Its keen edge cleaves right through all the excuses of selfishness, all the plausible pretexts by which men would justify their derelictions of duty. Christ offers no compromise. His simple alternative is,—follow me and live, or forsake me and die. Either take up the cross for me, or let it alone. But do not step over it. Do not steal slily around it. Do not lay it quietly to one side. Do not waste life in shivering and trembling at the sight of it, and in conjuring some device

to make it sit easy on the shoulder. Crosses were made to be hard and heavy. He who is not willing to bear one for me shall never wear the crown. This is the substance of the Bible teaching in regard to cross-bearing.

Every man has his cross. Some are called to bear a peculiar burden at one time, and a very different one at another. What is a cross to you, may not be to me any labour or reproach: it may not cause me the slightest inconvenience. It would be very arbitrary to specify any one act or duty, or service, as the adequate measure of devotion to the Saviour. The service must involve some sacrifice of selfishness, and cost some privation, or it is no cross.

In apostolic days the bare recognition of Jesus Christ as a divine object of worship, was visited with odium the most intolerant, and malignity the most furious. Simply to say, "I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," meant confiscation of goods, stripes beyond measure, dungeons like the dungeons of Philippi, and a baptism of blood like that of Paul's night he gates of Rome. But in our day, many a Christian professor whose

orthodoxy is unimpeachable, and who really believes that he would rather go to the stake than abandon his lovalty to the Redeemer, is yet totally unwilling to be found at a prayermeeting. He considers it "not genteel," So would he regard the removal of the wine-bottle from his dinner-table, even though his own sons were sipping a fatal love for the poison. Anything that infringes on gentility is gall and wormwood to him. Religion to be attractive to him must be "genteel;" and he would almost be content to lose a place in heaven if he thought that he would be obliged to recognise there those "vulgar people" whom he now passes every day in the street. Pride is his pet sin. Refinement is his idol. To keep on the sunny side of fashion is his morning and evening anxiety. And a sneer is to him what the scourge of thongs was to Paul and Silas-what the red-hot pincers were to the martyrs of the Inquisition. He is ready to follow his Master, provided that Master will lead him into no associations with "vulgar people," and into no place where foul odours will come between the wind and his gentility.

"What a ridiculous and contemptible

24 CROSS-BEARING FOR CHRIST.

Christian!" exclaims one of our readers; and yet that very reader is just as sore and as sensitive in regard to his own besetting weakness. I need not say what his especial cross is. If you would find out, just hand him a subscription paper for a benevolent object. His idea has always been to get all he can, and to keep what he has got. Giving money is his cross. He will do anything for you, provided you do not touch his purse. And when such a man does give, he deserves especial honour. For he has shouldered up a cross that is excessively galling upon his darling passion—the love of lucre.

To another, money giving is easy. His purse never grows rusty in the clasps. He will at any time give you a bank-cheque, if you will excuse him from personal exertions for the kingdom of Christ. Work is his cross. Therefore he is glad to commute with his conscience, by making liberal donations, on condition that he is not asked to teach in a mission-school, or go out on tract distribution, or embark in any labour that requires time and bodily effort. "You are welcome to my money, but do not ask me to work," is the frank response which he makes to every

recruiting-officer of Christ who endeavours to draft him into actual service. Now, such a man ought never to be excused. He needs to be set to work for his own spiritual good; he wants exercise; his soul's health requires that he should be put to some pretty severe and patience-trying toil. Two hours' teaching every Sabbath afternoon in the ragged-school, would give him a grand appetite for his evening exercise and family worship. To dislike a duty is commonly a good reason why it should be undertaken.

Kindred to this dread of personal labour, is another man's dread of public participation in social worship. That it would be a benefit to himself, and a blessing to others, if he would open his lips in the prayer-meeting, he is ready to admit. But that "cross" he has never yet consented to take up. He says he tried it once and "broke down." So did Dr Tyng, when he first undertook extemporaneous preaching; but he persevered until he stands at the head of fluent, off-hand pulpit orators. But, my good friend, I beg of you, do not hide away behind the post any longer in the prayer-meeting. The leader has long ago given up the idea that you

36 CROSS-BEARING FOR CHRIST.

have any prayer to offer. Suppose that at the next meeting you volunteer. It will send a thrill through the house to hear your unaccustomed voice; and your brethren will go home and say, "Behold, he prayeth!"

But there is still a fifth who is willing to give, to labour, and to pray, provided that no active opposition is to be encountered. He is a capital seaman in smooth weather. The good brother's weakness is timidity; he nurses his popularity like a sick child; and, as he never exposes it to give it strength, he soon has none left to expose. His Christianity is sweet and loveable; but it shuns exciting issues and close encounters with rampant sins. He is an undoubted saint; but he has not a single fibre of Martin Luther or William Wilberforce in him. For his final salvation he meekly trusts to that Saviour who bore the crushing cross up Calvary's mount; but when that persecuted Master calls on him to "take up a cross" of reproach for Him, he straightway begins to make excuse. Alas, for us all! We pity him for his weakness; and yet we go away and practise ourselves the same indignity toward our heavenly Friend, who says to us

CROSS-BEARING FOR CHRIST.

in tones so tender, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me." NO CROSS—NO CROWN.

SPIRITUAL DYSPEPTICS.



HERE is a class of weak-handed, feeble-knee'd professors in Christ's Church who are self-made invalids. Their spiritual debility is the direct

result of their own sins and shortcomings. In their case, as in the physical hygiene, disease is the inevitable punishment of transgression against the laws of health.

Is not the inebriate's bloated and poisoned frame the immediate legacy of his bottle? Is not a shattered nervous system the tormenting bequest which a high pressure career of sensuality leaves to the transgressor? The indolence which never earns its daily bread, cannot earn the appetite to enjoy it; the gluttony which gorges the stomach is but fattening an early banquet for the worms. Dyspepsia is only God's ap-

pointed health-officer stationed at the gateway of excess, to warn off all who approach it, and to punish those who will persist in entering the forbidden ground. In like manner, spiritual disease is the inevitable result of committed sin, or of neglect of religious duty. It requires no profound skill to detect the cause of Mr A.'s dyspepsia, or Deacon B.'s spiritual palsy, or of poor Mr C.'s leprosy. How can a Christian be healthy who never works? How can a man's faith be strong who never enters his closet? How can a man's benevolence be warm who never gives? A want of appetite for giving always brings on a lean visage in the church; but I do like to hear my neighbour M. pray at the monthly concert, for the fluency of his devotion is quickened by his fluency of purse. He dares to ask God's help in the salvation of sinners, for he is doing his own utmost too. And I have known one resolute, sagacious, Christ-loving woman to do in a mission-school what Florence Nightingale did in the hospitals of Scutari-that is, teach the nurses how to cure, as well as the sick how to recover.

If this brief paragraph falls under the eye

of any spiritual dyspeptic, let us offer him two or three familiar counsels. My friend, your disease and debility are your own fault, not your misfortune. It is not a "visitation of God," but a visitation of the devil that has laid you on your back, and made you wellnigh useless in the church, in the Sabbathschool, and in every enterprise of Christian charity. Having brought on your own malady, you must be your own restorer, by the help of the Divine Physician. You are not only useless to your pastor, but uncomfortable to yourself. You must get well. Let us tell you how.

You need a wholesome diet. Instead of the surfeit of daily newspapers and political journals, or the spiced stimulants of fiction, give your hungry soul the bread of life. Your moral powers are weak for want of nourishment. There has been a starvation of Bibletruth, of sound experimental works, or inspiring religious biography, of "books that are books." Nothing will give sinew and bone to your piety like the thorough reading and thorough digestion of the Bible. All the giants in the history of the Church have been large and hungry feeders on the Bible.

You want exercise. God has given you powers and faculties and affections to serve Him with. But for want of use, those limbs of the soul are as powerless as the bodily limbs of a fever patient who has not left his couch for a fortnight. Never will you recover your appetite for the word and the ordinances, never will the flush of spiritual joy mantle your countenance, until you have laid hold of hard, self-denying WORK. Nothing will impart such earnestness to your prayers as to spend an hour before them by the bedside of the sick, or in close conversation with an inquirer for salvation; nothing will excite a better appetite for a Sabbath sermon than a morning spent in business-like devotion to your Sabbath-school class; and a little up-hill work in behalf of some unpopular, discouraging movement of reform will harden your muscle amazingly. Oberlin, Wilberforce, Elizabeth Fry, never knew the meaning of "dyspepsia." You are dying from confinement and indolence. There is but one cure for spiritual laziness, and that is-work; but one cure for selfishness, and that is-sacrifice; but one cure for timidity, and that is-to plunge into a disagreeable

duty before the shiver has time to come on. Some Christians are paralysed for life by the monomania of fear. They remind us of an invalid who was afflicted by the delusion that he was made of pipe-clay, and if violently struck against any object, he would snap into fragments. He was only cured by a friend who drove him into a meadow, and managed to upset the vehicle in the right place. The poor monomaniac shrieked frightfully as the carriage went over; but he rose from the ground sound in *mind* as well as in body.

Would it not be well for those who have trembled for years at the bare thought of a prayer in public, to force themselves into an utterance? They will be amazed to find how one resolute trial, in the strength of God, will break the tyrannous spell for ever. Try, my friend! Lay hold of a dreaded and disagreeable duty, and try. God never leaves His child to fail when he is in the path of obedience; for if the Christian does not succeed in pleasing himself by the method of his performance, he yet pleases God by the sincerity of his good endeavours. And the very attempt to discharge duty will give you

strength. When the duty is fairly achieved. the sense of having done it will send an exquisite thrill of satisfaction through the soul. and will be the source of one of the purest iovs that you can know this side of heaven. I question whether we ever realise a sweeter delight than when we stand beside some heaven-directed undertaking fairly accomplished, or some painful task nobly wrought out-some trying testimony manfully borne. or some bitter persecution fairly weathered out into the repose and sunshine of victory. Such joys the half-hearted, cowardly, dyspeptic Christian never experiences. "weak hand" plucks no such chaplet. The "feeble knees" reach no such goal of triumph. They are awarded only to the vigorous of spiritual sinew, to the Bible-reader. and the Bible-worker, too! Dyspeptic brother! we commend to you the double remedy-Bible-diet and Bible-duty: if these do not restore you, we fear your case is past our medication.

GROWTH IN GRACE.



NLY living things grow. A dead tree has no growth; and if you observe a maple before your door, or an elm on your lawn, that does

not answer to the roll-call of May by putting forth its leaves, you may conclude that it is dead as the pro-slavery rebellion.

In the Church of Christ, spiritual life is indispensable to spiritual growth. We mean the life of God in the converted soul—a life united to Christ's infinite being by the vital union that exists between Himself and the believer? Is it surprising that many a church member has made no advance in Bible knowledge, or in personal godliness, when he has no real hunger after either of them? Can a moral mummy grow? Can the man who never prays aright receive the

Spirit? Can a spiritual corpse breathe out heavenly aspirations, or reach out an arm to save the sinner, or open with its skeleton finger a purse to give to God's treasury? Can it do anything but *decay*, with pestilential odours filling the moral atmosphere around? No; and without a genuine work of regeneration in the soul, let no man flatter himself that he is a living Christian, much less a growing one.

If he be a true Christian he will growand "grow in grace." This phrase (as Peter employed it) is comprehensive of all graces. It includes love, and joy, and peace, and patience, and long-suffering, and temperance. and faith, and charity. In a word, it means Christian character-that possession and exhibition of moral excellence that is learned in the school of Christ-that impression received from Christ, which, in turn, makes prodigious impression upon others. the construction of this character enter all the qualities that make a man courteous, brave, magnanimous, delicate, pure-minded, honest, humble, devout, and holy. Into it enter all the gospel ingredients. Into the formation of this Christian character comes

the Divine Spirit with its transforming, beautifying, sanctifying power. Every day's experience leaves its touch on this character. Every failure teaches deficiency, and awakens humility and contrition. Every moral victory inspires courage and grateful exultation. It is not perfection that the most successful Christian reaches—the Luther, the Edwards, the Brainerd, the Frelinghuysen, does not reach perfection; but if not equal to his Master, he becomes like Him, and unlike his own former self. This character which the growing Christian gains is the source of his bower in the community. It is his influence-his moral momentum to carry his point with others-his might to convince gainsayers - his persuasiveness more eloquent than the most captivating words that ever fell from the lips of eloquence itself. It is just what he is by the making of God's grace. And this side of heaven there is nothing that unfolds such beauty, carries with it such influence, and commands such genuine homage, as athletic, consistent Christian character.

2. The more symmetrical this character

is, the better. "The finest specimen of a Christian," says Guthrie, "is he in whom all the graces, like the strings of an angel's harp. are in the most perfect harmony." No one grace outgrows and belittles the rest. The man is not brave at the expense of humility - or zealous at the expense of justice or magnanimity. He does not let study interfere with devotion, or devotion interfere with philanthropy. We may sacrifice the duties of the closet to outdoor labours of Christian charity. On the other hand, "like a lark that goes singing up to heaven while the hawk is rifling her nest below," we may spend our hours in devotional flight and in heavenly communions, when we should be down here, fighting Satan; redressing human wrongs: breaking human fetters: drving tears on sorrow's scalded cheek; reforming the vicious, and rescuing lost souls from the verge of hell. The head should have its share of time and thought; the hand its share; but the lion's share should be given to the heart, for out of it are the issues of life. Thus, by developing the whole man. we shall broadly, and efficiently, and symmetrically grow in grace. We shall reach up every day nearer to "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,"

3. As a third hint, let us remind you. Christian brother, that the true measure of your growth in influence and usefulness will be your interior growth in holiness-in living. loving likeness to the Saviour. All external improvement in character is proportioned by this inward state of heart-holiness. In short, the growth is from within. Just as soon attempt to increase the dimensions of a tree by padding round its trunk with clay or cotton, and splicing out its boughs by stray bits of stolen timber, as to increase the volume of a godly character by mere heapingon of observances, or of intellectual acquirements, or external forms of devotion. These only swell the bulk of a man's religion; they do not add to its vitality or power. tree is dead, it is past all increase; if it is alive, it will pump its own sap in April-time, put out its own foliage, and battle its own way up toward the firmament. The reason why that sturdy oak on the village green grew from the tiny acorn that a schoolboy could carry in his pocket until it has become the "pride of the village" in the summer, and able to wrestle with the wildest hurricanes of winter, is simply that underneath that shaggy bark is a stout inward life. Its growth is from within.

You may heap on whatever of sacred knowledge you will-whatever of rituality-whatever of external forms-whatever of subscriptions to creeds and confessions-whatever of slavish obedience to law, and if there be no life of God in the soul, you have but a stupendous effigy of religion, without one spark of vitality. But if there be in that soul only a germ of true godliness, there is hope of growth. By the quickening aids of God's Spirit, the seed will become the blade-the blade the ear-and at last when prayer has brought down the sunshine and the rain from the celestial throne, then cometh the full corn in the vellow ear. Then there will be increase of character by the expansion of the inward life. The soul will take in and digest truth -good books, good sermons, and good examples. The soul will assimilate these truths and build them into its spiritual texture. It will take up the nourishing qualities out of them, as a robust man takes up the nourishment of a wheaten loaf or a loin of venison. The spiritual character enlarges—beautifies—solidifies. The young convert grows in strength. He becomes athletic. He is at length equal to bearing huge loads of responsibility—equal to grappling with strong temptations. He becomes an overmatch for the devil. The recruit of yesterday is at length the veteran with the dust of a thousand conflicts on his armour, and the light of a thousand victories on his helmet's plume. He has grown in grace.

OH FOR AN OLIVET!

A CHAPTER FOR CITY CHRISTIANS.



VERY mountain in the Bible has some peculiar glory about it. But like the stars, one mountain differeth from another in glory.

Ararat is the father of mountains; it smoked with the incense of the first sacrifice in the new world. Nebo was the majestic deathbed from which the lawgiver caught his earliest glimpses of two Canaans—the one spread out in living green beneath him, the other unveiled above him in celestial glory. Sinai had its peculiar glory, terrible exceedingly; Horeb, too, with "its still small voice,"—Gilead, aromatic with odorous balms—and Lebanon, crowded with its everlasting glaciers, the Alps of the Old Testament.

Each sacred mountain has a history written on its tables of stone. But no one is redolent with sweeter associations—no one utters a more impressive teaching—no one is more identified with our precious Saviour, than "the mount called the Mount of Olives."

It was Christ's favourite resort. He "ofttimes resorted thither with His disciples."
As John was His favourite follower,—the
family of Lazarus His favourite household,—
Galilee His favourite water,—so Olivet was
His favourite mountain. When He grew
weary of the heat and dust, the uproar and
the turmoil of guilty Jerusalem, He bent His
footsteps over the brook Kedron, to the quiet
sabbatic Mount of Olivet. It always gave
Him cool asylum. It always spread its
grateful shelters from noontide heats and
evening dews. Olivet cast no stones at Him,
never reviled Him, never closed its doors in
the face of the gentle Man of sorrows.

And if Jesus sought His Olivet for retirement from the world's Babel of jarring sounds, for meditation and for prayer, shall not every Christian have his own Olivet too? For the sequestered rural Christian we need not speak now; but with the dwellers in great

cities, the painful lack in life is the lack of quiet, secluded thought and undisturbed meditation. The farmer can have it as he follows his plough, and on the hill-side. If a devout man, he is on a perpetual Olivet. The village mechanic has his long still hours. when the sunlight sleeps in the silent street. or when the monotonous rain-drops keep steady time with his thoughts on the roof of his humble shop. The mariner can be alone with God in the night watches. But in the bustling, bewildering, time-taxing, souldevouring metropolis, where, alas! can a man "dwell apart?" Where can he escape the roar and riot of business? Where can he hide away? Where find his Horeb with its awful silences, or an Olivet for prayerful communings with his own spirit? From early morn till the hour of rest he is in a whirl. The world meets him at the breakfasttable in the columns of the morning paper. He is at once assaulted with telegrams and bulletins, with stock reports and political manifestoes. Care collars him as soon as he gets into the street. The first man he encounters has some exciting intelligence, or some perplexing proposal. When he reaches

his counting-room his table is piled with letters demanding a reply before the next mail closes. Then the day's furnace of excitement begins to glow, and keeps at a white heat until the "banks shut," the "Board" adjourns, the stores begin to thin out, and in the crowded omnibus or railway carriage the weary man of business trundles homeward. Then for the late dinner, the evening newspaper, the evening callers, the evening entertainments, and in some happy cases, the evening prayer service in the house of God. Amid all this maelstrom of excitement, where is the quiet introspection?where the solemn meditation?-where the soul's fellowship with Christ? Oh for an Olimet !

Even the Lord's day is too often a day of outside occupation, and taxing strain upon mind and body. Two regular church services—often a third—with intervening labours in the Sabbath-school and the prayermeeting, leave but little time for reflection and heart study. Every good thing has its attendant evils; and the evil attendant on the Sunday arrangements of many philanthropic Christians in our large cities is a

privation of all quiet meditation, and nearly of all closet duties and fireside Bible-reading. With such good people there is more preaching than thinking, more head work than heart work, more swallowing than digestion. They hear one hundredfold more than they heed or remember. There is no let-up from a pressure. The excitements of the week give place to the more sacred excitements of the Sabbath, and through it all the Christian heart is all too seldom alone with itself, and alone with God. Oh for an Olivet!

Can none be found? Is it wholly impossible for our working Christians (and we do not say that in so frightfully wicked a city as ours they ought to work one hour the less)—is it impossible to find time and place for religious meditation, Bible-reading, and inward communion? No, it is not. A devout man can make to himself an Olivet. He can, with a little trouble to himself, rise an hour earlier for a sweet season of prayer and devotional reading. With this blessed closet service, he can hem the whole day so tightly and strongly that it shall not ravel into frivolity, worldliness, and forgetfulness of God. As he rides or walks to his place of

business, he can school himself to sacred thoughts, or can snatch a few words from a pocket volume of savoury truth. At noonday, he can run away for a few moments of silent prayer, even if he cannot reach the "business men's prayer-meeting." This was the usage of the late excellent Garnet Noel Bleecker, a merchant eminent for his piety and philanthropy. He always had his midday season of devotion; if business interfered with his rule, then business had to give way, and not the wise rule itself. Olivets of retirement made his face to shine with radiant godliness when in the busy haunts of men. In secret he fed those fountain graces that flowed out in such beautiful streams of beneficence and holy living. Never did Mammon rob him of God: never did external religious duties thrust aside the private devotions of the altar and the closet; nor did he hear more truth in the sanctuary than he digested in his heart, and wrought out in his life.

Brethren, we cannot afford to dwell in the most sumptuous of earthly mansions if we have no Olivet. If it be not a lone mountain top, or a sequestered grove, it may be a quiet

chamber, a shop, an attic, or a corner of the counting-room. Peter found his Olivet on a house-top in a commercial town. John found his on the cliff of a sea-girt Patmos. Daniel found his in his chamber, while busy Babylon roared and raged on beneath his open window. Elijah found his on Carmel: and holy-hearted Paul had one just as good in the cabin of a storm-tossed ship. Our Olivet will be the spot where the soul communes with God, bends at the mercy-seat, studies its own wants and weaknesses, and gets new strength from fellowship with Christ. It may have a Gethsemane of trial at its foot, but its summit, like the mount nigh unto Jerusalem, will be the point of ascension from which the soul will go up to the heavenly presencechamber of the King of kings.

A CHRISTIAN'S RIGHT PLACE.

N a well-organised army, every man has his place. The mathematical head goes to the engineer corps. The medical skill and steady hand

is assigned to the surgical department. The sharp-eyed man shall handle the Enfield rifle, and the well-taught graduate of West Point, and of a half-dozen hard-fought fields, receives the sword of the brigadier. He who has the most of Napoleon in him, soon fights his way to the supreme command. A Scott or a Halleck would not be more out of place in the ranks than would a Paul or an Apollos be in spending their precious time in teaching the children of a mission-school to read the alphabet. Every man in his place, is as much the motto of the Church as it is of the

camp: the wrong place is well-nigh as fatal as no place at all.

Now, what is a Christian's right place? Manifestly it is the place that his Creator made him for, and trained him for. To mistake it is a misfortune; to desert it is a disgrace and a crime. The Bible answer to our question is given in these words, "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness." The principle here laid down is, that every true Christian, after a candid, honest inspection of his own physical and mental and moral qualifications, should take the post of duty or the line of labour for which his gifts best fit him. But no man -no! not one, is to "neglect the gift that is in" him.

Some men were manifestly created for the pulpit. God gave them clear heads, warm hearts, and strong lungs, a love of Jesus, and

60 A CHRISTIAN'S RIGHT PLACE.

a love of saving souls. To possess these is to have a Divine call for the ministry; for such to stay out of the pulpit, (if strong inclination draw them thitherward,) is as grievous a mistake as it has been for hundreds of others to enter the pulpit.

But because a man is not called to preach Iesus in the sacred desk, must he preach nowhere else? Is all the earnestness, and all the persuasive power, and all the hunger for souls, which a pious lawyer or a pious mechanic may possess, to run to waste? No! Let him tell his neighour of the great salvation wherever he can find him-whether in the public meeting for conference, in the prayer-circle, by the wayside or the fireside, in the sick-room, or in whatever place God brings a soul within his reach. And how successfully this work may be done, let such men as Harlan Page, and Robert Haldane, and Cranfield, and the good Methodist Carvosso, answer. Let the powerful lay exhortations heard in Fulton Street answer. God is opening a wide door for lay exhortation in our time. Brownlow North, in Great Britain, is proving what can be achieved by a practical man throwing himself upon practical

men without any professional technicalities. and pouring gospel truth into their hearts in the everyday language of life. This corps in Christ's army will bear enlargement. are ununiformed sharpshooters, stealing singly or in squads upon the enemy whereever a point is left exposed, or a straggler can be "sighted."

What our churches sorely need is the development of the members. Too much is thrown upon the ministry. The church becomes Dr Tyng's church, or Mr Beecher's church, or Mr Barnes' church, instead of being the people's church, with those gifted men as its ministers. A pastor is expected to make three studied expositions of Bible truth every week-to conduct the public devotions of his flock-to labour at the fireside. in the sick-room, and the house of death. During our early ministry we were called to do all these, and to superintend a Sundayschool and teach a Bible-class besides. Now, we love to work better than anything elseunless it be to see other people work. And no member of our church has any more right to turn over his spiritual labours on me than he has to hand me his market-basket.

62 A CHRISTIAN'S RIGHT PLACE.

or to ask me to eat and digest his dinner for him. He needs to do his own work, as much as the cause of Christ needs to have it done. And when, in seasons of revival, the latent lay power of the Church is brought out, we see how much may be done by the Priscillas and Aquilas, by Onesiphorus and by Lydia, and by the "faithful Persis" who labours in the Lord. The Church, then, is a hive without a drone, and the air is musical with returning bees bringing in their blessed spoil.

A Christian who is keen for work will soon find his right place. If he is "apt to teach;" if he has the knack of breaking the truth up into small morsels for children's mouths. then he will soon scent his way into the Sabbath-school. Another one has leisure and love of souls: to such an one tract-distribution is a welcome work. It requires only health enough to walk, and Christian courtesy enough to talk acceptably to the family visited with the Bible or the tract. It is not too much to say that Harlan Page with his gospel under his arm is equal to many a learned divine, with his ponderous columbiads aimed forty degrees above the hearts of the people.

Here, again, is another whose "gift" is a melodious voice—that "most excellent thing in woman," and hardly less so in a man. A homely woman becomes beautiful while she is singing; and a melodious voice will outlive a plump form or a rosy complexion. Whoever can sing belongs to God's great multitudinous choir. Whoever can sing, and will not sing, does not deserve a seat in church, or the feast of a good sermon. They will be ashamed to sing in heaven if they were too indolent or too fastidious to sing in the earthly temples of God's praise.

Nor are these the only gifts. We can now recall a member of our first flock who possessed no qualifications to exhort, or to teach in the Sabbath-school; he had no gold to give, and no musical skill to sing the praise of his Redeemer. But he did possess a rare earnestness and Bible-richness and soul-fervour in prayer. That good old man's single prayer saved more than one evening meeting from drouth and dreariness. A blessed gift was that veteran's power of pleading at the mercy-seat; and a fountain of blessings did it prove to the church for which he besought the heavenly baptism!

64 A CHRISTIAN'S RIGHT PLACE.

Reader! have you found your place? Then stick to it. Work there, even though it be in the humblest corner of the most out-of-the-way vineyard. An idle man in the Church is a monster. And you cannot give a cup of gospel-water to a beggar's child without receiving Christ's smile in return for it. Wherefore "neglect not the gift that is in thee;" and whatever thou doest for the Lord, "do it heartily."

THE BITTER CUP.



N eminent divine tells us that soon after the death of his wife, his two children were taken from him within a few hours of each other.

"My cup of sorrow," he says, "was filled to the brim. I stood a few moments, and viewed the remains of my two darlings, who had gone to their long home, never to return. I felt, at first, as if I could not submit to such a complicated affliction. My heart rose in all its strength against the government of God, and then suddenly sank under its distress, which alarmed me. I sprang up, and said to myself, 'I am going into immediate distraction; I must submit, or I am undone for ever.' In a few moments, I was entirely calm, and resigned to the will of God. I never enjoyed greater happiness than during

that day and the next. My mind was full of God. And I used to look towards the burying-ground, and wish for the time when I might be laid by the side of my departed wife and little ones."

There is great beauty in such religion as this; for the grace of submission to a bereaving Father is the hardest and rarest of Christian attainments. There is such a disposition to push away every bitter cup; such a temptation to angry rebellion when the blow cuts deep. A wife is suddenly taken; a crib is left empty; or a cradle deepens into a grave. A noble, gifted son is cut off in his sinewy prime—a son who was all the world to her who leaned upon him. A lovely daughter withers and droops; her beauty falls off like the rose leaves, and presently she goeth down to darkness and the worm.

Beside such new-made graves unbelief mutters its reproaches, "not loud but deep." But submission whispers with faltering lips and choking utterance, "The cup that my Father hath given me, shall I not drink of it?" The will of the Lord be done.

What a heaven this world might be made

if this spirit of sweet unquestioning submission to Infinite wisdom and love reigned in every bosom! The very essence of heaven is obedience to God. Let the will of Jehovah be once perfectly done on earth, and earth becomes a Paradise. Every murmur is hushed. Every sin is subdued. Every complaint is silenced. Every tear is dried. Every heart would become subject to the full sway of love. He who sees such a consummation as that will stand in the auroral daybreak of the millennial morning. He shall catch a glimpse of "the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

The excellence of this spirit of submission is, that it quietly permits God to reign, and it accepts even a bitter cup as containing a kind Father's needed medicine. It prefers to have no will of its own; but simply to find out God's will and do it. "If it were left to you, whether you would get well or not, what would you do?" said a pious man once to a sick brother. "I would leave it to God," said the patient sufferer. "But suppose He should refer it to you?" "Why, then," he replied, "I should refer it back

again." Such faith as this sinks the mountain to a plain. Such a faith makes the midnight lustrous with galaxies of starry promises. It transforms the child of sin and sorrow into a marvellous likeness to HIM who, when He tasted the bitterest of all cups, cried out, "Nevertheless, O Father, not as I will, but as Thou wilt!"

THE JOY OF THE CROSS.



E have just been witnessing that scene—old yet ever new, common yet ever wonderful—of the sufferings and love of Jesus as set

forth by the sacramental table. The simple scene took us back to Jerusalem. We were in the "upper chamber," and heard the melting words, "This is my body broken for you." We followed through the midnight silences over the brook Kedron to the olive garden, and listened to the broken utterance, strange, awful, and full of agony, that comes forth out of the deep darkness: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Then we saw the march of mockery through the streets of Jerusalem—the howling mob led on by infuriated Pharisee and scribe—the heavy toil up the mount—the piercing of nails

through tender flesh, too sacred for an angel's touch—the slow swooning away of the tortured sufferer on a cross dripping warm with the blood that cleanseth from all sin. To our eye there hangs the bruised flower of Divine perfection drooping on the cross, while a rabble is foaming with execration before Him, while the sun wraps His face in a noonday night, and the affrighted earth shudders with pain at the tragedy of horror.

All this we see, and see no more than this. But to the Divine Sufferer there appear infinitely other and brighter objects. For through this appalling spectacle, His all-seeing eye looks onward to the glorious RESULTS of this bitter agony. And for this joy set before Him, He endures the cross and despises all its shame.

To His eye there is a child of sin resting under the wrath of God. He hears its first cry of penitence. He sees that penitent approaching the cross. Sin is confessed there, forsaken there, cleansed away, and the pardoned penitent retires healed and happy. Faith has saved him. He is thenceforth a new man; leads a new life—a life assimilated to the life of Christ. He triumphs over

temptation, does valiant battle for truth and righteousness, and crowns his career of beauty and beneficence by a serene death-bed that translates him into glory. And this spectacle is a Joy before Christ's dying eyes, for which He endures the cross and despises the shame.

But this is a unit only in the calculation. We must multiply this one redeemed soul by tens of thousands, and these again by thousands of thousands. We must add to the saved of one land the saved of all lands. We must add to the saved of the first century the saved of the nineteenth century, with all the countless multitudes interlying the two, and then to these the redeemed of all centuries unborn-clear on to the winding up of earth's . drama by the archangel's trump. We must place, in the procession of rejoicing trophies, the cultured philosopher with the rescued boor from barbarism, the polished Caucasian with the swart Mongolian, the imbruted Hottentot and the painted savage of the Australasian isles. The Old World is to be added to the New. Converted Rome is to take her place beside converted Mecca; the Jew is to link with the Turk, the Turk with the Brahmin; the worshipper of the Grand Lama of the Himalayas is to stand side by side with the worshipper of the "Great Spirit" from Rocky Mountain wilds. The calculation will not be complete until it embraces all the exquisite and priceless blessings which flow from all the sanctified lives of all the regenerated peoples in all the lands of Christendom through all the ages of our world's duration. Then multiply this stupendous product by eternity! And then we have reached an element, but only one single element, in the Joy which the dying Saviour "set before Him."

Let us take another element of that promised joy. The one we have just glanced at ultimated on man as a saved and glorified being. Let us now look at the result of Christ's humiliation on the Saviour himself. He was then in the deepest, darkest valley of the death-shade. But as one who is in the bottom of a gloomy, terrific gorge, toiling up the precipitous mountain side, over jagged rocks, and through tangled thickets, catches, ever and anon, through the overhanging forests, a glimpse of the mountain top flashing in the crystal sunlight; so did our suffering Saviour, from the depths of Gethsemane's

gloom, and from under Calvary's vail of horror, behold far above Him the joy of His final exaltation. Then He was hearing but the howls of His persecutors. Soon should He hear the "harping symphonies" of the redeemed in glory. Now His temples are torn with the crown of thorns. Soon should that bleeding brow be encircled with the diadem of universal sovereignty. Now He is the Lamb slain. Soon should He be the "Lamb in the midst of the throne: and His servants shall serve Him, and have His name written on their foreheads. On His vesture and on His thigh will a name be written. KING OF KINGS and Lord of lords." With the lustre of all this looked-for glory falling upon His dying eye, the Redeemer, "for the JOY set before Him, endured the cross, and despised the shame."

In one brief paragraph we cannot enumerate all the innumerable sources of satisfaction which Jesus Christ found in His atoning work—in honouring the Divine law, in establishing the Divine government, in satisfying the violated justice of God, in humbling the power of the devil, in bringing a multitude of souls from hell to the raptures of Paradise.

THE JOY OF THE CROSS.

74

As the young mother bears up under the anguish of the birth-hour—hushing her sobs and wailings with the "joy that a man-child is born" into her bosom and her house—so did the Divine Patience bear the anguish unutterable of the spiritual birth of a "peculiar people" born anew unto God. With that bitter price bought He the ransom of His Church. He paid their ransom in the groans and stripes and blood of Golgotha; He shall be repaid in the homage of the white-robed armies of light on the sea of gold like unto pure glass.

How many an earthly cross is endured under the inspiration of the joys that cross shall bring! How many a patriot-soldier has beheld through the tears of parting with wife and children—as through a crystal lens—the triumph from afar of liberty and right! How often, amid the half-waking visions of his midnight bivouac, he catches glimpses of victorious standards borne homeward, garlanded with the broken fetters of the ransomed, and hailed with the benedictions of a liberated people. Such are the joys of the Christian reformer, when his every blow against the Bastiles of oppression and

wickedness arouses the howls of the envenomed Cerberus within. Such is the sweet solace of the philanthropist, who, over thorny paths, goes about doing good. These are the inspirations which have sent every true missionary to the lonely toils of heathen shores; every martyr to his solitary cell, or to the bloody crown of martyrdom. It was for the *joy* set before them—the joy of pleasing God, and of receiving the final "well done, faithful servant"—that the cross was taken up and cheerfully borne unto the end.

As we withdrew from that sacramental table this day, methought I heard a voice, sweet and sad exceedingly, that said unto us, "For the joy set before me, I am enduring this cross, despising its shame. Whosoever of you will be my disciple, let him, too, take up the cross and follow me. For whoso will not take up a cross and come after me, is not worthy of me."

THE MODEL PRAYER-MEETING.



T began punctually at the moment. As the clock struck eight, the leader rose and sounded the *reveillé*, by giving out the inspiring lines:—

"Come, my soul, thy suit prepare; Jesus loves to answer prayer."

A sweet symphony was touched on a piano in one of the crowded rooms, and then the words of the hymn were sent heavenward on a full tide of united and enthusiastic song. Every voice chimed in. Each verse was sung with more spirit than its predecessor, marking the outcome of the rising devotion; and, like a strong "off-shore" breeze, the opening chant of praise carried the whole meeting out of harbour into the larger liberty

and deep waters of the open sea. Then the leader invoked the descent of the Holv Ghost, the gift of utterance, and the Pentecostal baptism. It was a very short prayer, but very full. He prayed for the gift of prayer upon all, for honesty of speech, for deliverance from dead formalities, for sincerity in confession, for child-like familiarity of approach to God, for filial faith; and then closed by inviting Christ to "come in, as through the closed doors of the disciples' upper room at Jerusalem, and speak, Peace be unto vou."

As soon as a fitting passage of the Word had been read, each one present seemed ready to bear his part in giving life and interest to the occasion. Each one felt, "This is not the leader's meeting, nor the pastor's, but my meeting with my own spiritual family at the feet of my own Saviour. Here I have a right to speak. Here I have a right to weep, and sing, and melt in spirit, and flow out in social communings with the brotherhood around me. If I am silent, then the meeting may prove dumb; and if I freeze up, then my neighbour may chill through, until the place becomes an ice-

house." So there was no entreaty required on the part of the leader to "draw out" those present. He was obliged to use no turnkey. What is more pitiful than to see a poor embarrassed elder or deacon sit before a petrified company, and after a long, awful pause, in which you can count the clock ticks, beseechingly implore "some brother present to improve the time?" As if the dreary dribble of dulness that was forced out by such a process was not a downright mis-improvement and murder of the sweet, sacred hour of devotion. It is no wonder that so many of us grew up with a loathing for the very name, and, next to a taste of the birch that grew behind the school-house, we dreaded a sentence to "go to prayer-meeting." Our only solace was a sound nap, until some one shook our eyes open, and with an admonitory thump informed us that "meetin's out; it is time to go home."

But even a child of eight years old would have been interested in the enlivening service we are now etching. Not a moment was lost; not a syllable of persuasion was needed. One man rose and gave a touching account of the scene a few evenings before, when he had

first set up a family altar in his once prayerless house. That was his first audible prayer, and this was his first speech. While he is speaking the tears stream down the cheek of his astonished and overjoyed wife. Then comes a fervid prayer of thanksgiving to God from some one present, and a petition that the family altar thus reared may never be desecrated, or thrown down. After this a vouth arose, with a blue jacket, and an anchor embroidered on his broad collar. He had been brought there by a tract visitor. The burden of his short, artless speech was, Come to Jesus. "Whosoever will, let him come," said the sunburnt youth; "that means that every body on board may come from the captain to the cabin-boy. We are bound for heaven. Christ is our pilot. The anchor is sure and steadfast. Come aboard. friends, before eight bells strike, and your time is up." No one felt like criticising this earnest lad, or objecting to his simple vernacular of the sea. He spake as the Spirit gave him utterance. So did they all. One young man asked counsel in regard to the rightfulness of his discharging some prescribed duties in a Government office on the

80 THE MODEL PRAYER-MEETING.

Sabbath mornings. The leader answered his question briefly, and a brother offered prayer that God would guide aright His perplexed child, would enable him to "do right, even if it cost him his daily bread," and would deliver the land from Sabbath desecration in high places.

When his prayer was ended, a tremulous, stammering voice was heard in the further room for a moment, and then it stopped. There was a breathless pause. Every one felt for the young beginner. Every one wanted to help him out. He began again, hesitated, stammered out a few words brokenly; at last he said, "O Lord, Thou knowest I cannot tell what I want to say; but Thou hearest even what I do not sav. Have mercy on my poor soul, for Christ's sake. Amen." An audible sob broke out throughout the whole apartment. Then out spoke a gray-headed veteran, in tones like old Andrew Peden's among the Covenanters of the Highlands. The old man went into his prayer like Gideon into the battle with Midian. The sword of faith gleamed in his right hand; the light shot forth as from the shivered pitchers, and the whole host of doubts, and sins, and fears were scattered like chaff at the breath of the gale. How he took us all on eagle's wings heavenward! How he enthroned the glorified Lamb! And the close of his rapturous outbreak was in a "sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs, and harping symphonies."

When the old man's prayer was ended, (it was the seventh prayer offered during that one busy, blessed hour,) the time had arrived for closing the service. The leader touched his bell, and read the doxology. We were all in the very frame for that most celestial of strains-the glorious Old Hundred-that magnificent battle-hymn to which Luther marched against principalities, and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places. Immortal is that strain, like him who gave it birth. There is not a Christian's tomb in all our land where repose not the silent lips that once sang that matchless tune. If any of earth's music shall be heard amid the "new songs" of Paradise, be assured that the one surviving piece that shall outlive the judgment will be that "king of sacred airs," Old Hundred. With this ancient song upon our lips, we closed our service, spent a few

82 THE MODEL PRAYER-MEETING.

moments in hand-shakings, in introducing strangers, in cordial heart-greetings; and so ended a model prayer-meeting.

The spirit that pervaded the meeting was too intensely earnest for phraseology as sapless and dry as last year's corn husks, and at the same time too reverential for affectations and flippancy. We lingered about the hallowed spot, loth to go away. But for the rigid rule that restricted the service to a single hour, we might have tarried until midnight, praying and singing praises to God. And as we turned reluctantly homeward, more than one gratefully said, "Truly the LORD was in this place." Why may not every church of Christ have one or more just such model prayer-meetings?

FIRST STEPS TOWARD CHRIST

MONG the readers of this volume there must be some anxious penitent seeking the Saviour. Perhaps two or three plain hints may be of

some service to them in their search. They have been told that they must "come to Jesus," and that they must "repent and do their first works." What are the first steps of a soul in coming to Christ?

I. The initiatory step we would commend to you, my good friend, is—sincere prayer. Do this at once; do it irrespective of the amount of feeling or of the degree of your conviction of sin. You may be but slightly convicted of your guilt. If you have a sufficient sense of the evil of your heart to desire a better heart and a purer life, that is suffi-

84 FIRST STEPS TOWARD CHRIST.

cient feeling to commence with. If you have confidence enough in Jesus Christ to go and ask Him for a new heart, (instead of undertaking a self-salvation,) that is a sufficient faith to start upon. Remembering that heaven's mightiest saint before the throne was once a lisping, groping, feeble babe in grace, do not despise the day of small things. If you are convinced by the Holy Spirit that you ought to give yourself to Christ, THEN TO PRAYER!

You do not need to be told for what to pray. An honest inquirer can be trusted to frame his own petition, and will make his own liturgy. The less stereotyped the better. Pre-eminently let your requests be honest. Then let them be importunate. Let them be mainly directed to Jesus Christ for the pardon of your sins, for the regeneration of your soul, and for Divine aid to help you to do your duty. For these three things "pray without ceasing."

2. The second vital step is the prompt abandonment of known sin. Let us imagine an individual awakened to his need of Christ, and setting about the work of securing his salvation. He opens his Bible and reads,

"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Further on he reads, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." From his Bible he goes to his knees. After his morning prayer, he sallies out to his place of business. The first acquaintance that meets him politely presents to him a claim for an honest debt that ought to have been paid many months ago. It is a debt; that is enough. The Divine command, "Owe no man anything," is the original of John Randolph's apothegm, Pay as you go. It means what it says. Our anxious troubled friend admits that his creditor ought to be paid, and secretly admits to himself that he could pay him if he would put himself to some inconvenience. But instead of shouldering up the sacrifice and doing his duty as an honest man, he sends away the creditor with another silver promise, (in lieu of a silver payment,) and with a new furrow in his brow, goes into his counting-room. Presently his partner comes in to tell him that a rival house in the same trade is carrying all before them, and that they must take prompt measures to undersell the said rivals, and break them

86 FIRST STEPS TOWARD CHRIST.

down if possible. Here is a new perplexity. Conscience murmurs against being made an accomplice in such tortuous, contemptible "tricks of trade." Self-respect revolts against such degradation of the noble calling of a merchant. But the partner is imperative. The rival house, too, are suspected of being rather "ultra" and fanatical. So our friend's scruples are overruled; or rather, his own cupidity overrules his conscience, and he consents.

When evening brings him again to the quiet of his own home, and the meditations of his own closet, do you wonder that he is in spiritual despair? His fretted soul confesses that no progress has been made toward a new heart and a new life. He tries to pray; but his prayer is a mere whiff of empty breath. He opens his Bible, and from its pages looks out the sweet sorrowful countenance of his Saviour, saying unto him, "If any man take not up his cross and follow after me, he cannot be my disciple."

What is that man's cross? Is it to stand up before a Roman tyrant, and acknowledge Christ at the peril of being torn limb from limb in Nero's lion-amphitheatre? No;

that was once a true believer's cross, and nobly did the early martyrs bear it. Is it to forsake father and mother, and houses and lands, for Christ's sake and the gospel's? No: that is the foreign missionary's crossit rests heavily to-day on aged shoulders in many a far-away pestilential clime. Our friend had no such heavy cross to bear. His real trial was to subject himself to a temporary inconvenience, and perhaps to some pecuniary loss, in order to pay a just debt, and in order to do unto a rival neighbour as he would wish that rival to do unto himself. That was his "cross;" and in that special case he was called on to prove the sincerity of his desire to become a Christian by his undertaking to do a Christian act on the spot. He was called on to make a beginning-to try a first step toward fulfilling the law of Christ from Christian princible. What is true religion, but following Christ according to the Bible rule?

In his "first works" our friend failed, and then strangely wondered how it was that his soul was making no headway, and his prayers were receiving no answer. We admit, indeed, that an obedience to the law of Christ that day would not have purchased for him an acceptance with God. But it would have made him a very different man as he presented himself before his Saviour at the mercy-seat. It would have strengthened his as yet weak and irresolute purpose to live to God. It would have been a sincere attempt at obeying Christ by renouncing sin and crucifying selfishness. It would have been a first step toward a practical following after

Christ

3. To the anxious inquirers whose eye may rest on this paragraph, we would say, Each one of you has some first steps of actual duty to perform. Salvation is a free gift on the part of God: but on your part it is a work. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." God graciously gives the inestimable boon of pardon and a new heart through the mediation of Christ Jesus; but He gives it to those who prove their desire for it by repentance and practical obedience. It is not for us to specify to you all the thousand methods in which you are to do your "first works." In the general we would say, refuse the first temptation to sin. Secondly, obey God at the first call of duty. Begin to serve

Him. Crystallise inward emotions into external acts—deeds of benevolence—sacrifices for conscience' sake. Make your repentance real by making it fruitful.

One of you, for example, goes right away from that closet in which he has been praying for a new heart, and hunting up a person whom he has wronged, he makes reparation on the spot. Another one seeks out an ancient enemy against whom his heart has been simmering a slow hatred for years, and offering his hand, says, "Come, sir! you and I have quarrelled about long enough; let us forgive and forget." [How differently that man will pray the next time he comes before an all-forgiving Saviour! Another who has bolted out a poor erring daughter, sends for her to come home again-remembering, as he does so, how Jesus once drew a weeping outcast, through a baptism of tears, to His own loving heart. Still a fourth seeker after Christ finds that his appetites are his snare. So he says to himself, "I must give up my glass, or give up my soul." His first step toward Christ is to shatter that satanic antichrist, his decanter, into a thousand fragments. For the Holy Spirit, and the spirit

90 FIRST STEPS TOWARD CHRIST.

of the wine-cup, cannot tabernacle in the same soul. An audible prayer before his family has been a first step with more than one awakened man. It was hard work to get through it, between the suppressed smiles of his children and the scarce-suppressed tears of his astonished, overjoyed wife. But never in his life—though he were to outlive Methuselah—will he offer a prayer that will tell so prodigiously on his spiritual history as that first, broken, stammering, disjointed, but agonising prayer before his household.

When he offered it, he took his first decisive step toward Christ. My friend! have you taken yours?

GIVING THE HEART TO CHRIST.



AVE you given Christ your heart? This phrase you understand perfectly well in its every-day applications. You know well what is

meant when the trustful maiden in the auroral morn of her love gives her heart to him who pledges his strong arm to support and guide her through the life-journey. From that moment his interests are hers. She gives up many a pleasure for him, or finds a higher pleasure in putting herself out of the way in order to make him happy. In his fame she glories; in his success she rejoices. And if the tempest of adversity darken wildly on his path, she hangs like an ever-beaming star, far beyond the reach of howling storm

or engulfing wave. Sever every other tie strip away every other possession—bereave her of other friends, she is still rich, and her joy dieth not as long as she can live for him and love him to whom she hath given her faithful heart.

Now, just what this ingenuous girl does for her lover, what the miser does for his rusting gold, the hungry student for his books, and the thirsty sensualist for his cupwhat the enthusiast of science does for his telescope, his blow-pipe, or his herbarium, you are to do for your Lord and Saviour. You are to give Him the foremost place in your heart. When we speak of the "heart" spiritually, we refer to the very seat and source of all the purposes, all the determinations, all the affections, the likings and the dislikings, in the man. Thence flow the issues of life. Thence come the longings for holiness, or the ungodly hate of everything lovely and of good report. Thence come the noble resolves-the lofty aspirations; thence the evil thoughts, the pride, the malice, the unbelief. The heart right, all is right. But while the heart remains away from Christ, it is impossible to please God-impossible to

make any headway toward a religious life or toward heaven. Then, as the first step, give Iesus Christ vour heart.

"How am I to do it?" "My heart is stubborn." So it is: more than you think for. But Christ can subdue its strong-necked waywardness. "I cannot change my heart. It is beyond my power." We admit that: Jesus Christ does not ask you to convert yourself. He simply asks you to give Him your heart. He can change it. And He will, too, most assuredly, just as soon as you, in entire sincerity and penitence, commit your soul unreservedly into His hands. This you are to do solemnly, with a fervent appeal to the Holy Spirit for His aid. You had better do it alone in the solitude of your closet. Do it on your knees. Commit yourself to Jesus with such language as-

> "Just as I am-and waiting not To rid my soul of one dark blot, To Thee whose blood can cleanse each spot. O Lamb of God, I come."

We beg you not to wait until you have tried to better your heart. Bring it as it is. And bring it all. Christ demands the whole heart. "Ye shall seek me, and ye shall find

94 GIVING THE HEART TO CHRIST.

me, when ve shall search for me-with all your heart." You cannot hope to remain an out-and-out man of the world, or a thoroughgoing woman of fashion, and yet be a Christian. The Divine Master will hold no divided rule, or be thrust off with a fragment of your heart. Perhaps the very reason why your former anxieties and serious impressions did not end in your becoming a Christian was that you kept back your soul's inmost affections from the Saviour. Or having in name given yourself to Him, you went on and lived like a follower of the world just as before. Lest you should be overtaken by death without having secured your salvation. we entreat you to seize the first spare hour for quiet thought, and make it the hour of your surrender to Jesus Christ.

For your encouragement, let us remind you that conversion is the work of a moment when the soul is willing to submit to the Redeemer. A certain pastor found in one of his inquiry meetings an old man of seventy who had for more than forty years been trying to save himself. He was a constant attendant of religious meetings—a constant practiser of strict morality. His pastor, who

had laboured faithfully with him for fourteen years, told him plainly that he had known his duty from a child, and had refused to perform it—that his heart was growing harder. and that now he intended to give him up as a deliberate rejecter of the Saviour. The old man was struck with alarm. He entreated that he should not be given up. The pastor said to him solemnly, "Prayer will do you no good, without you repent and give your heart to Christ; and I will pray with you once more if you will now submit yourself unconditionally into the hands of the Saviour." After a short, sharp conflict with his self-righteousness, he answered, with many tears, "By the help of God, I will." His minister knelt by his side, and united with him in fervent prayer. When he arose he was full of iov and peace. That same evening he got up at a neighbourhood prayer-meeting. and exhorted sinners to repent and give their hearts at once to Christ. "Do not put it off as I have done; it is only a moment's work." This was the burden of his exhortation for the ten remaining years of his pious life. "It is only a moment's work when you are in earnest."

96 GIVING THE HEART TO CHRIST.

From several quarters we learn that God's Spirit is moving the popular heart. Through many churches and communities Jesus of Nazareth is passing by. It can hardly be possible that among the tens of thousands whom these lines shall meet there will not be some who are just waiting for the affectionate invitation, Give Jesus Christ thy heart. As we close this hurried paragraph, a letter lies before us from which we quote one passage:—

"Tuesday last I felt quite determined to give myself to Him, and prayed as I had never prayed before. I went to bed at night, resting myself on my Saviour, feeling I had given myself to Him, never doubting. I awoke in the morning, singing those sweet lines—

'Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it; Seal it for thy courts above.'

I said to my husband, 'I am so happy; I feel the Lord has pardoned all my sins: the burden is removed.' We wept together for joy. I can now say—

'Happy, happy day,
When Jesus wash'd my sins away.'*

MORNING-CLOUD RELIGION.



HAVE stood in a Swiss valley at the time of sunrise, and seen the mountain-peak above me crowned with a beautiful white coronal. As

the first sunlight strikes it, the cloud of morning incense is tipped with rosy fire. One moment it is fleecy white. Then it is glowing pink—then burnished gold, like the robe of the seraphim. Then—gone for ever! Before we could call out our companions to behold the beautiful spectacle, the glory-cloud was dissolved into empty air; and the icy mountain-top stood out sharp and bare against the eastern sky.

Turning from the rocky peaks of jasper toward the valley about us, lo! the grass is a floor of diamonds. The dew-drops are all jewels. On the hedges hang the necklaces of pearl—over the fields are sown the living sapphires. We go in reluctantly to our morning meal; we come out again, and where is the jewelry? Gone for ever in the hot rays of the conquering sun. The mountain-top is bare; the earth is dry. The "morning-cloud and the early dew" are both among the things that were. Opening our Bible and turning to the Book of Hosea, we find these very words employed to describe a certain sort of showy but short-lived religion.

As nearly every church may contain more or less members whose religion is no more real and abiding than the vapour on the mountain-top, it is worth while to inquire the causes, and the cure, of transient piety. May we not find in one or all of the three following reasons the answer to this inquiry?

I. The convicted soul in its first awakening was not brought to a genuine loathing and abandonment of known sin. In other words, there was no *Bible-repentance*. The impressions of many awakened persons are merely terror. They feel the danger of sin, but not its abominable filthiness. They quake at the sight of God as a punisher, but do not quake at their own guiltiness. They see

that there is a hell that follows after their sins, but do not see that there is a hell too in their sins. Of course, such persons do not abandon sin thoroughly or seek after a radical change of heart. And without "grief and hatred of sin" there can be no Bible-repentance. A religion that began in mere spasmodic terror is likely to end as it began. For a man who has not abandoned his favourite sins, his petted and his profitable sins, cannot claim to be a genuine, enduring Christian.

- 2. The awakened soul when troubled by legal terrors did not betake itself to Christ. Sensibly diseased, it compounded quack remedies for itself. Christ was not sought after—believed on—and heartily embraced. There was no love of Jesus awakened as a master-passion with the man. Had the soul reached Christ, it were safe. Believers hold to the cross, because the cross holds them.
 - 3. A third cause of morning-cloud religion is the attempt to live on promises instead of performances. The man trusts in resolutions, and never reaches actual downright doing of duty. He means to be—hopes to be—promises to be actively obedient to

100 MORNING-CLOUD RELIGION.

Christ,—but never does one deed or makes one sacrifice for Him. On the day when the covenant of church-membership is made, the young novice is fluent in promises for his future life. He will serve God to-morrow. The morrow comes and goes, and sees not one stroke of thorough service done, not one sin crucified, not a single labour of charity undertaken. Before a week has rolled by, the man's religion has begun to evaporate, and in a year there is nothing left of him but a name on the church-register.

How many a brilliant beginning have we seen that so soon ended in nothingness! For a brief time the "cloud" was beautiful. As it hung in prominence before our eyes, the rays of hope painted it with a ruddy glow. Christian friends hailed it as a cloud of promise. Praying souls—who had longed for just such appearances of piety in the man—grew thankful that their prayers were receiving a fulfilment.

But presently it grew thinner. It began to scatter into looseness; then into emptiness. It was not a shower-cloud of spiritual blessings, like the life of an Oberlin, a Raikes, a Haldane, a Whitefield, or a Harlan Page. But only vapour! Beautiful vapour for a little time, and then vanishing away!

In every church there may be just such professors. They are not backsliders, for they never had any genuine grace to lapse from. Are they hypocrites? Perhaps not: for that is a harsh word, and implies coldblooded deception and falsehood. These unhappy persons never intended to deceive others; they were simply deceived in themselves. They entered the church from an entirely mistaken view of their own condition. Perhaps they were the subjects-or rather the victims-of a spurious religious excitement; or, under the foolish persuasion of injudicious friends, were hurried into church engagements. Their vows are no longer regarded. Their professions no longer deceive. A galling voke of bondage is their church-membership now, when it ought to be the symbol and the seal of a happy wedded union to Jesus Christ.

What is the duty of such persons? To leave the church at once? I do not think so. Shall they abandon the table of the Lord? I think not. Let them rather seek anew the Lord of the table. Let them come

102 MORNING-CLOUD RELIGION.

back to Christ with genuine contrition for their sin, and honest acknowledgment of their sad mistake. Wiser from the bitter experience of their own failures, let them begin afresh and begin aright. We never knew a false professor saved by leaving the church. But we have known of scores who were saved in it by timely repentance and faith in Christ. Candid reader! if you have a false hope, throw it away and seek a better. So shall your "goodness" be not merely a morning vapour, but a cloud of blessings through life's long useful day, and at sunset it shall burn with the golden glories reflected from the better world.

HOW A CHILD OF GOD BORE TROUBLE.



O with me, good reader, for a moment to the dungeon in which a hero of Christ is passing the last night before his expected execution.

It will do you good. It will make you bear rather more quietly some of life's lesser trials, over which you so often grumble. And when Christ is in prison, in the person of one of His faithful followers, it is a duty to go unto Him.

A horrible hole is this into which they have thrust the fisherman-preacher of Galilee. Worse than the continental dungeons were before John Howard let the daylight of Christianity into them was a Jewish prison in the days of Cæsar. But let us go in and take a glimpse of Peter, on the last night that he is to wear through in that habitation of cruelty. To-morrow the Roman wolf will put his fang into him, and Peter must follow his friend James, in a martyr's bloody suit, out through the gateway of death. This is Peter's last night in trouble. To-morrow the executioner's axe will send him where trouble never comes.

The jailer, with a lamp at his waist, conducts us to the apostle's cell. A quaternion of soldiers watch him as a fire-eyed panther watches his sleeping prey. Twelve other soldiers relieve each other in guarding the unconscious slumberer; for if he escapes, their lives must pay the forfeit. This is stern Roman law. So they are all wide awake. The "keepers at the prison door" are awake too. The artful leaders of the persecution are broad awake, in full preparation for the infernal auto-da-fe of the morrow.

But there are others, too, who cannot sleep through that eventful night. Away over in a retired chamber of a by-street there is a band of brother-hearts, tried and true, who are wrestling and pleading together at the mercy-seat. Mary, the mother of John Mark,

the missionary, has opened her house to-night for a gathering of prayer; perhaps a regular service-more likely, one summoned for this special emergency. It is a genuine prayermeeting-a model prayer-meeting-for they "pray without ceasing." Literally, they strain in supplication; the Greek phrase marking the most intense stretch of anxious importunity. How wistfully they gaze heavenward! how leaps the petition up from pleading lips, that God would deliver their imprisoned brother from to-morrow's bloody doom! Good mother Mary entreats as if her own son lay in that dungeon deep, and gentle Rhoda breathes her maiden prayer in behalf of the valiant Great-Heart who is fast in the grasp of Giant Grim. They are all praying for Peter. It is their last and best resort

But where is Peter himself? Hold hither the lamp. Lo! he is asleep! "Between two soldiers," with a fetter on each wrist, he sleeps on the cold prison floor as sweetly as a tired child on dear mother's breast. Oh, what a picture! The children of heaven awake to pray for him. The children of hell awake to destroy him. But the heart, for

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which others are throbbing, dismisses its own anxieties, and falls asleep in the arms of infinite love. Was there nothing to keep him awake through that dreary night? Had he not a far-away wife, for whom his noble, impatient spirit might have chafed itself, as a caged eagle chases itself on its prison bars? Perhaps, too, there were dark-haired Jewish lads and unsandalled girls, who had played with their father's fishing-boat that day on the beach of Galilee. For them he might have wrung his soul in agony. Like John Bunyan in Bedford jail, he might possibly have said, "This parting from my wife and children hath often been to me, in this prison, as the pulling of my flesh from my bones." "Especially," writes Bunyan, "from my poor blind child, who lay nearer my heart than all I had besides. Poor child! thought I, thou must beg, thou must suffer hunger, and cold, and nakedness, and a thousand other calamities, although I cannot now endure that the wind shall blow upon thee. But I must venture you all with God, though it goeth to the very quick to leave you."

So the brave apostle ventured all with God. Family, home, life, labours for Jesus Christ,

the welfare of his infant churches hanging upon him—all, all were handed over into God's keeping, and he, the trustful child, sinks down to rest in his Father's arms. So God giveth His beloved sleep.

Now, what lesson, my friend, shall you and I learn from this prison scene? It is a very simple one, and yet one exceeding hard to learn—the lesson of composure in the time of trouble. That is the truth I gather from the sublime spectacle of the sleeping hero in Jerusalem's dungeon. Sublimer is the child-like repose of that hero of faith than of many another man in the full strain of intensest activity.

How did the apostle attain that placid serenity of soul? Simply by keeping his conscience void of offence, and by anchoring his soul fast to God. An uneasy conscience would never have allowed Peter to cover himself thus under the sweet refreshment of slumber. The great secret of composure of soul is to be at peace with conscience; and that can only be had through peace with God. Peter had both. It was not through his fault, but through his faithfulness, that he had reached that prison cell. It lay right across

108 HOW A CHILD OF GOD, ETC.

his path of duty, and he kept that path unflinchingly. How he should escape from that dungeon, or whether he would or not, he left entirely with his heavenly Father. Faith was the pillow 'neath that persecuted head, or that dungeon would never have witnessed such a sublime sight of calm, tranquil sleep, while the executioner's axe was sharpening for the blow.

Troubled child of God, go look at that prison spectacle. Look at it until your eyes melt into tears. Look at it until you are thoroughly ashamed of your own peevish complainings, and your own cowardly distrust. Learn how to trust God. Study the glorious and suggestive scene, until the prayers of Christ's people in the house of Mary begin to come back from heaven in the form of white robed angels who touched the chained captive, and in an instant the fetters fall off from his hands, and he walks forth through iron gates that open to him "of their own accord." The hour may not be afar off when God shall surprise you with a like deliverance.

THE RICH SOUL

"Rich toward God."-LUKE xii. 21.



HAT is he worth?" Used in its full significance, this would be the most pregnant, the most just, and the most comprehen-

sive question that could be propounded in regard to any immortal being. When asked in the ordinary way, it simply means, How large are his estates? how much gold has he in his bank vaults? And the ordinary answer would be, "The man is worth twenty thousand, or a hundred thousand pounds." Then we can only say that he will have twenty thousand or a hundred thousand pounds to account for at the bar of God. Then will he be either the happy reaper of immortal joys, when every well-employed

coin shall nod like a golden ear in the full sheaf of his heavenly harvest; or else he must meet thousands of scorpions to torment his soul through his dreary eternity of despair. Is a man worth uncounted thousands in bullion or bank stock, in real estate or rare commodities? Then he ought to be worth a vast deal to the community in which he lives, and to the Church of Jesus Christ. He ought to be worth—bread to the hungry, schooling to the ignorant, Bibles to the unevangelised, and mission schools to the heathen children at our doors. He ought to be rich towards God in the large and liberal employment of his high stewardship.

For not every rich man is "rich toward God," else our Saviour would not have uttered the parable from which our text is taken. He probably had in His mind just such a person as I could easily find in a ten minutes' walk through this commercial city—a self-complacent Croesus, shrivelled in soul, but corpulent in purse; a man in whom avarice has devoured all 'he other appetites of the heart, as voracious sharks gulp down whole shoals of smaller fish; one who could call up his immortal part, and address it in

the same spirit in which he would talk to a silken-haired pet spaniel, "Now, my little soul, thou hast much goods laid up for thy-Not for others, observe. God. But for thyself. "Now eat, drink. and be merry. Satiate thyself. Feast thy eyes on full barns, full boards, full bags, full bank vaults. Gloat over them. They are all thine. Never will I be so weak-headed as to be cheated out of them-never so weakhearted as to squander them on foolish charities." "Thou fool!" thunders the voice of God above him-"thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"

This terrible satire of Divine indignation it not expended upon the subject of this parable because he was rich in earthly goods. The Bible has no controversy with men of wealth. It never discourages the acquisition of gold, as long as the heart owns the gold, and the gold does not own the heart. The anathema of the parable is not against riches, but against selfishness, the mammon-worship which dethrones Jehovah. And by as much as this selfishness is the selfishness of wealth,

by just so much is it the more abominable and hateful. For when God makes an individual worth tens of thousands, and he makes himself worth less than nothing to his Creator and his fellow-men, God will curse such selfishness with the most crushing condemnation. Even at the bar of final judgment, one test-question will be, in regard to you and to me, and to every man, "How much is he worth-worth to his Saviour, and the Saviour's cause? How much has he been worth to his fellow-men?" In that great day of decision I should like to stand up as the pastor of a rich church-exceeding rich in faith and good works. If so, you must begin now, with a holy covetousness, to lay up spiritual and eternal treasures. Let me point out to you, in this familiar discourse, a few simple rules for becoming "rich towards God."

I. And first, let me remind you that every soul on earth is born poor. There is no exemption from this hard lot. Whether in royal nurseries, where the heir to the throne is well-nigh smothered in down, or in the pauper's thatched hovel, every immortal

soul begins its existence poor. Sin spares not a solitary child of Adam. Sin writes its moral poverty on every occupant of every cradle. As the emptiness of the purse makes one poor financially, so the entire emptiness of the heart as to all holy emotions, holy desires, and purposes, constitutes our native moral poverty. Who would go to the ragged urchin in the industrial school for a loan? Yet it would be quite as wise to expect a depraved heart to give forth what it has never yet possessed—one pure, holy emotion.

How then can any soul become rich towards God? He does not inherit spiritual wealth, but rather the entire and most pitiable want of it. He inherits guilt. He inherits evil passions. Noble faculties and capacities are his inheritance, but not one particle of native grace comes with them. The more gifted in intellect, the more dangerous will he become, if those mental powers are wholly uncontrolled by the law of God. Without grace he is a guilty creature on earth, and a lost creature through eternity.

He must begin, then, on that grace—on God's free gift to him through Christ. Just

as a liberal father establishes his son in commercial business by furnishing him a certain sum as his capital, so (if we may thus speak) our heavenly Father gives the new heart as the Christian capital. This is the startingpoint. As soon as converting grace enters the soul its condition changes. At that moment, by that act, the seeking sinner becomes the forgiven, the accepted, the adopted heir of God. And the religious principle then implanted by the Holy Ghost is the spiritual capital with which the newmade heir begins his stewardship. Sometimes this capital is furnished in childhood or in early youth, and then a long "threescore and ten" witnesses the growth of that soul into vast possessions. Sometimes a person begins late in life, and then, like those who mistake their secular callings, and only get hold of the right occupation at forty, he seldom becomes a spiritual millionnaire. In fact, he does not get far beyond his original capital. It is hard work to make a "first-class" Christian out of an aged sinner. Old habits of sin have become inveterate. The best soil of the heart has been worn out in growing enormous crops of tares. There is a want of spring and pliability in an old man's temperament; he does not readily adapt himself to new positions and new duties. As the merchants who have accumulated the most gigantic fortunes are commonly those who began to be rich before thirty, so the richest Christians are usually to be found among the converts of the Bible-class room and the Sabbathschool. Begin young, my friends, if you would attain to great riches. Those who are no longer young may still be saved if they will come heartily to Jesus; but I doubt if they often do much towards saving others. God reserves the highest reward to those who enlist the earliest, and serve the hardest and the longest.

II. In the second place, let me remind you that he who would amass large wealth must not sit down content with his original capital. He makes investments. He plants his gold in a well-tilled farm, or sends it seaward in strong-bottomed ships, or sets it to spinning new fortunes in the factory. He must venture what he has, if he would gain more.

that day would not have purchased for him an acceptance with God. But it would have made him a very different man as he presented himself before his Saviour at the mercy-seat. It would have strengthened his as yet weak and irresolute purpose to live to God. It would have been a sincere attempt at obeying Christ by renouncing sin and crucifying selfishness. It would have been a first step toward a practical following after Christ.

3. To the anxious inquirers whose eye may rest on this paragraph, we would say, Each one of you has some first steps of actual duty to perform. Salvation is a free gift on the part of God; but on your part it is a work. " Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." God graciously gives the inestimable boon of pardon and a new heart through the mediation of Christ Iesus: but He gives it to those who prove their desire for it by repentance and practical obedience. is not for us to specify to you all the thousar methods in which you are to do your "fit works." In the general we would say, refe the first temptation to sin. Secondly, ob God at the first call of duty. Begin to see

God shall lead it, laughing evermore, and leaping to its own silvery music. For long we lose sight of it. Then we meet it again, no longer a wayside brook, but a deep-voiced river, beating against its banks, swelling up to kiss the marge of green meadows, winding around the highland's base, rolling on its majestic march until it spreads out into a hospitable bay, on whose placid bosom fleets ride at anchor, and in whose azure depths the banners of all nations are mirrored. Such is the onflow of a rich soul-every day widening in influence, every day deepening in experience, every day running purer and purer. To human eyes such believers may move more slowly as old age draws on. But it is because the volume of their graces is increasing, and they are nearing the ocean of eternity. How these lives gladden the regions through which they pass! How they mirror back the glory of Christ's gracious handiwork! How they bear up human hopes, and spread themselves out like broad, patient rivers, to carry all burdens that are launched on their bosoms!

Yet such a glorious Christian career, so beautiful in its daily flow, and so beneficent

in its results, is only the original grace of conversion employed at compound interest. This mighty river of holy influence is only the original fountain magnified. Behold the virtue of accumulation ! To this the apostle exhorted when he urged his brethren to "grow in grace." To accumulate soulwealth for God is the purport of that apostolic injunction—" Add to your faith, virtue: and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly-kindness; and to brotherlykindness, charity." Brethren, I repeat and re-enforce the exhortation: Grow in grace. Expand. Absorb every down-pouring of heavenly influence. Catch every descending drop of spiritual blessing. Open your hearts to every stream of Bible knowledge. Be filled with the fulness of Christ. So shall ve be neither empty nor unfruitful, but "always abounding in the work of the Lord."

SPIRITUAL WEALTH-GETTING.



OW shall a believer become "rich toward God?" We answer that the rules for securing success in secular affairs will apply to the

advancement of the soul in grace. The real currency in commerce is metallic, the broad earth over. And the gold and silver which make up the basis of personal wealth are the product of the mines; each glittering coin the result of the miner's hard toil with sieve or with mattock. Now, the currency of God's kingdom is truth; and the Bible is the ore-bed. To every one of you this mine is open. He must be a blind or a careless miner who does not come out of this inexhaustible ore-bed with some new and mas-

120 SPIRITUAL WEALTH-GETTING.

sive "nugget" as the result of every hour's research. Do you consider every bank solvent whose vaults are the hiding-place of solid bullion, amply sufficient to meet its liabilities? So is he a solvent Christian whose secret soul is stored with gospel principles, all coined and stamped for daily use. Nor should any Christian ask credit any further than he can fully redeem his promises and professions by the "ready money" of consistent godly conduct.

To make a rich believer, something more than faith is needed. More, too, than scriptural knowledge. There must be also—experience. Ah, this is a costly possession! Nothing is bought so dear; and yet it is worth all it costs us. This is a part of the soul's wealth that no one can purchase for us; no dearest friend can make it over to us as a gift. We must "go and buy for ourselves," and exorbitant is the price we often pay for it.

There are sometimes rare and beautiful wares brought into the market that are invoiced at almost fabulous rates. Ignorant people wonder why they are priced so high. The simple reason is that they cost so much

to procure. That luxurious article labelled £200 was procured by the adventurous hunter, who, at the hazard of his neck, brought down the wild mountain goat, out of whose glossy hair the fabric was wrought. Yonder pearl that flashes on the brow of the bride. is precious, because it was rescued from the great deep at the risk of the pearl-fisher's life, as he was lifted into the boat half dead, with the blood rushing from his nostrils. Yonder ermine, flung so carelessly over the proud beauty's shoulder, cost terrible battle's with Polar ice and hurricane. All choicest things are reckoned the dearest. So is it, too, in heaven's inventories. The universe of God has never witnessed aught to be reckoned in comparison with the redemption of a guilty world. That mighty ransom no such contemptible things as silver and gold could procure. Only by one price could the Church of God be redeemed from hell, and that the precious blood of the Lamb-the Lamb without blemish or spot-the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

And so is it that the best part of a Christian character is that which was procured at the sorest cost. Patience is a beautiful trait,

122 SPIRITUAL WEALTH-GETTING.

but it is not worn oftenest by those who walk on life's sunny side in silver slippers. It is the product of dark nights of tempest, and of those days of adversity whose high noon is but a midnight. For "the trial of your faith worketh patience." Purity of soul is like purity in gold, where the hottest fires turn out the most refined and precious metals from the crucible. Joseph found his crucible in an Egyptian prison; but he came out thence with the soul of a virgin. Purity of character is often bought in this wicked city by the bitter price of a crust of bread eaten with a good conscience in an attic; when a guilty connivance would have been rewarded with French satins and a harlot's sumptuous couch.

The knowledge of our own besetting sins is a knowledge we all crave. We imagine that we would be willing to pay liberally for the insight into our own hearts which shall reveal all our weak points, not knowing how soon some unexpected emergency might develope some foible or some vice of character hitherto unsuspected. But men have paid dearly for such discoveries. David paid for his self-knowledge with the life of a darling

child and a broken heart; Hezekiah paid for his by the wearisome sufferings of a sickchamber: Peter for his by the bitter agonies in Pilate's garden. But the discoveries were worth all they cost. Among God's jewels, there is no brilliant which flashes with such lustre as the tear of true penitence. Yet God only knoweth what heart-pressure, as in a vice-what wringings and rendings of soulwhat crushings of pride, and wrestlings of agony, may have been needful in order to press out that jewel-drop upon the cheek of the stubborn sufferer! We have sometimes met with a person in social circles, who possessed a peculiar gentleness and docility of character. As we came to know her better we were amazed and charmed by her calm self-poise, and her heroic submissiveness to God under sudden shocks of calamity. We admired so beautiful a character. We envied its possessor. We coveted such a spirit for ourselves. Ah, we little knew at what fearful price of severe chastisements and bitter disappointments-of hopes desolated and expectations crossed-of faith put to the rack, and patience burned bright in seventimes heated furnaces-all that meek loveli-

124 SPIRITUAL WEALTH-GETTING.

ness of character had been gained! So true is it, dear brethren, that he is the most rich toward God who is ready to toil the hardest, and to bear the most to gain His acquisition.

To be truly rich, all the graces of patience, and purity, and meekness, and long-suffering are indispensable. Cost what they will, they must be attained. By prayer and by practice they must be sought after, and so sought as to secure them. He is a meagre, crude. unfinished, unripe, and unimpressive Christian who does not possess those peculiar graces which are only to be won by suffering and trial. Do not draw back from the possession of any spiritual treasure, I beseech you, from the dread of paying dearly for it. The worldling withholds no toil, no sacrifices that are needful to secure his coveted gains or honours. The merchant begrudges not the evenings spent away from his own fireside, if those extra hours over his ledgers will give but an extra dividend of profits. The sculptor counts not the long months wasted which see him with hammer and chisel pursuing the imprisoned figure which his keen eye detects within the block of Parian marble. And the children of light must carry into

their service of Christ the same untiring ardour, the same zeal, and the same selfdenial by which the children of the world win wealth, and honour, and emoluments. Oh for a holy enthusiasm! a holy covetousness to become rich toward God!

Whoever would become rich in spiritual treasure must give away bountifully. is the truest paradox in Christian economy. He that saves for self only loses; he that loses for Christ's sake is sure to save. Would you grow rich toward God? Then learn to give. God loveth a cheerful giver. Nor do I limit this rule to the donation of the purse. The mere gift of gold is but a part of Christian benevolence, though by no means an unimportant part. I often wish that I were the possessor of the wealth of Henry Thornton, or Amos Lawrence, provided that I had always, too, the wealth of heart-love to do good that those princely men had. rich soul can be always giving; as the noonday sun overflows his golden urn of ceaseless radiance, and is yet none the poorer in warmth and glory when a whole universe has been lighted.

We must freely give of everything that we

126 SPIRITUAL WEALTH-GETTING.

have freely received from the Lord. If we have the heart to pray, let us give of our prayers. No legacy that a rich father could have left me would compare in value with my widowed mother's prayers for me at the mercy-seat. You that have acquired the wisdom which age and experience confer, can give those counsels which are apples of gold in baskets of silver to the young, the inexperienced, and the unfortunate. Give your personal labours, too, for Christ. Many a rich man seeks to compound with his conscience by bestowing bank cheques in lieu of his own presence in the mission school, the prayer-meetings, or the abodes of suffering. O man of wealth! God gave thee that very leisure thou enjoyest in order to do the very work of charity which thy poorer, hardtoiling neighbour has no time to perform. Those that have not money, or counsel, or charitable deeds to bestow can at least afford a godly example. And so a godly life may be, from first to last, all expenditure; just as the temple lamps consumed themselves away in giving light. But the life and the heart grow the fuller, the brighter, the stronger, the more they expend. What were richsouled Christians given to the world for but to be reservoirs of blessings?

Happy is the man who can bring the very atmosphere of heaven with him whenever he approaches us! who acts upon our spirits as the May breezes act upon the first shoots of the tulip and the violet! He is a bountiful giver. He confers on us light; he beams goodness into our souls; he teaches us patience; he showers on us brotherly kindness; he illustrates for us faith; he exhibits the true beauty of meekness; he sheds hope by his very presence, and his unflinching bravery has often been an inspiration of valour to our failing hearts. Next to Christ himself, there is no blessing to the community like a Christ-like Christian.

My dear people, I covet for you the best gifts. Ask of God who giveth liberally that ye all be rich—rich in faith, rich in good works, rich in revenues of joy, rich in heartholiness and the love of Jesus. And then, although your frame be wrapped in coarse raiment, your soul shall be enfolded in the shining garniture of Christ's righteousness. Though your dwelling-place be so lowly, yet your heaven-seeking affection may be at

144 A MODEL MINISTER OF CHRIST.

ward march,—these formed the varied but yet unchanging employment of his fervid spirit.

Love of Jesus was his master-passion. His Saviour's work was his work; he was continually about it. "This one thing" he did. He never wearied and never rested. Every day he gave to Christ. Dr Hamilton told us that he used to seal his letters with a sun going down behind the mountains, and the motto over it, The night cometh. For souls, he watched as the fisherman's wife trims her lamp in the window and watches for the storm-tossed and belated ones in the offing. He hoisted the light of Calvary; and, like our own Harlan Page, it was his life's joy to welcome the returning wanderers into the "covert from the tempest."

In prayer he must have been a mighty and prevailing wrestler. Instead of a penance, it was a delight. He gave himself to prayer; and the secret of that blooming, vigorous piety whose leaf never withered, is to be found in the perpetual baptisms which his soul received at the mercy-seat. He prayed before he sat down to his studies—before he went out to visit the sick—before he entered

his pulpit. He rose from his bed to plead for his people. He had a "scheme of prayer" -and marked the names of missionaries on the map, that he might pray for them in course and by name! His Bible he read with the eager avidity of one who is delving in a gold-mine with the shining ore laid bare at every stroke of the mattock. "When you write," said he to a friend, "tell me the meaning of scriptures. One gem from that ocean is worth all the pebbles of earthly streams." Would that his life might go into every young pastor's study and heart! for the lack of more than one popular pulpit is the lamentable lack of Bible.

When talking with some of his parishioners, we were not surprised to learn that the striking peculiarity of his preaching was persuasive tenderness. His sermons were artless "spillings of the heart." He overflowed into his discourses. Once, when a brother minister told him that he had been preaching from that fearful passage, "The wicked shall be turned into hell," he inquired with some emotion, "Were you able to preach it with tenderness?" His few printed sermons are models of affectionate entreaty. To those

146 A MODEL MINISTER OF CHRIST.

young students who fry the unction out of their first sermons by long labour over the lamp, we can recommend no happier specimens of simple, winning, earnest preaching.

It is now nineteen years since M'Chevne fell asleep in Iesus. His fatal sickness was brought on by visiting the victims of a prevailing epidemic. He lingered for many days, and the closing hours of his life were overshadowed by the delirium of the fever. In his rational moments he listened to the reading of the Word; and even the wanderings of his mind were broken by occasional ejaculations of prayer for his flock-"O God! my people! my people! this whole On the morning of the 25th of March 1843, he sank gently into a sleep which deepened and deepened until his spirit passed without a groan to the presence of his Saviour.

The tidings of his death fell cold on many a heart, and nearly every eye in his parish was red with weeping. The road was thronged by the thousands who gathered to his burial. They laid him in his narrow bed amid sobs and gushing tears, and even to this day his smitten flock often speak his

A MODEL MINISTER OF CHRIST. 147

name with moistened eye, and lips trembling with emotion. Although he died a few weeks before her exodus from the Old Establishment, the Free Church of Scotland numbers him among her dearest sons, and writes his fame on the same lofty scroll of her founders with the names of Chalmers, and Cunningham, and Hugh Miller.

"() star untimely set!
Why should we weep for thee?
Thy bright and dewy coronet
Is rising o'er the sea."

QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT.



F a party of Arctic explorers—after a long, perilous march through driving snow-storms—were to find themselves under the lee of a rock

or an ice-hummock for the night, how carefully would they draw forth the single match or bit of tinder that was to keep them from perishing! All depends on that one match. How they hover round it to protect the first faint flicker from the gale! "Be careful, be c-a-r-e-f-u-l," says the anxious leader, with suspended breath, as he watches the spark light into a little blaze, and the blaze slowly creep up until it takes hold of a dry faggot, and begins to ignite the heap of drift-wood. To put out that flame is suicide. To fan it is the first instinct of self-preservation. And when the seed of fire has grown into a crack-

ling flame—illuminating rock and ice and fur-clad men with a ruddy glow—they all thank God that no careless hand was permitted to *quench the fire* on which their lives depended.

This scene illustrates the graphic simile of Paul, "Quench not the Spirit." It is equivalent to his saying to the sinner, put not out the fire which God's Spirit is kindling in thy heart. The figure will bear study. In whatever way we look at it we find it full of suggestion and most solemn admonition. Why are inquiring souls to take heed not to "quench the Spirit?"

I. Because the Holy Spirit is the soul's enlightener. Put not out the light, is the apostle's tender caution. A sinner's heart is by nature enveloped in darkness. As absence of light makes darkness, so absence of spiritual knowledge makes ignorance, and absence of godliness makes depravity. This midnight of the heart can only be illuminated by the incoming of the Spirit. It is one of the blessed offices of Him whom "the Father sends to teach you all things," and to "guide you into all truth." It is His work to reveal the iniquity of the heart. It is His

to shew the sinner his besetting sin, and to make known its exceeding heinousness. It is His, too, to reveal the way of salvation. As the Alpine traveller at night needs the lantern at his waist to find his way to the hospice, so does the inquirer for salvation need the Divine Enlightener to guide his trembling footsteps to Calvary. Put not out the light.

2. The Spirit resembles fire, in the second place, because it melts the flinty heart. A "heart of stone" is the Bible's description of the stubborn sinner. There is no contrition, no tenderness, no godly love in it. It needs melting. Go into a vast iron-foundry. and witness the extraordinary processes by which fire conquers the solid metal until it consents to be cast or stamped or rolled into the form which the artificer desires. This is a type of God's moral foundry, (as seen in a revival of religion,) where an obdurate heart is first so softened as to feel the truth; then to weep over sin; then to be ductile and malleable: then so flexible as to be "formed anew" into a shape that pleases the Lord Jesus Christ. This melting process is wrought by the Holy Ghost. Just what the

fire accomplishes in the foundry, the infinite Spirit of love accomplishes in a convicted soul. As the Holy Spirit alone can melt you into penitence, alone can subdue your stubbornness, and mould you into obedience to God, as He alone can transform your hard, ungrateful deformity into the "beauty of holiness," we entreat you, awakened friend, quench not the fire.

- 3. The third office of the Spirit is that of a purifier. Have you ever witnessed the smelting process by which the dross is burnt away, and the pure metal is made to flow into the clay receptacle? Then you have witnessed a vivid illustration of the Spirit's work in sanctification. How the corruption runs away under the blessed action of Divine love! How the dross goes off! How the graces burnish into brightness! How the pure gold is eliminated! O ye who yearn for a better life, for conquests over indwelling sin, for the incoming of holiness, as ye love your souls, quench not the Spirit.
- 4. One other agency of God's Spirit we glance at; it is the heating, soul-propelling power. Every heart is more or less frozen by selfishness, more or less torpid to the

claims of heavenly benevolence. Now, what is accomplished in the engine-room of an ocean-steamer when a flame is kindled under the dead mass of coal in the furnace, is accomplished in the cold, selfish heart of man when the Divine Spirit brings in the new inspiration of love to Christ. The mass kindles. The soul moves. The powers begin their play. The whole man gets in motion-and as long as the fire of holy love burns, on in the depths of the soul, so long do men see the steady, triumphant march of a life of radiant zeal and Christ-like philanthropy. This was the fire from heaven that descended at Pentecost. It was the young Church's inspiration that propelled it to the spiritual conquest of the globe. Here is the one greatest, sorest, saddest want of our modern churches. Pulpit and pew need alike the blessed propulsion which God's Spirit alone can kindle.

Do you not see by this time, my unconverted friend, how much your very life depends on the Spirit's influence? Already have you felt His power. In all your compunctions for past wasted hours of selfishness

and sin-in all your aspirings for a better life, you felt that power. He it was who thrilled vou under that solemn discourse in God's house, until your conscience smote as the reed is smitten under a mighty wind. He startled you on that bed of sickness. when eternity came near and looked you in the face. He melted your heart under the pleading appeal and the touching prayer of that faithful friend, who yearned for your salvation. He came with that affectionate pastor to your fireside, and warned you to flee from the wrath to come. He spake to you out of that hollow tomb that opened for your departed, and bade you prepare to meet your God. A Monitor has He been to you: He waits to be a Comforter, a Purifier, a Teacher, a Sanctifier of your soul. Dare you grieve Him away? Oh! as you value vour present peace, and your hope of future salvation; as you desire life, and joy, and glory everlasting; as you would shun the agonies of hell and secure the blessedness of heaven, we entreat you-quench not the Spirit.

Said an old man once to his pastor:-

154 OUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT.

"When I was seventeen, I began to feel deeply at times, and this continued for two or three years: but I determined to put it off till I should be settled in life. After I was married. I reflected that the time had come when I had promised to attend to religion: but I had bought this farm, and I thought it would not suit me to become religious till it was paid for, as some time would have to be devoted to attend church, and also some expense. I then resolved to put it off ten years: but when the ten years came round, I thought no more about it. I often try to think, but I cannot keep my mind on the subject one moment." I urged him by all the terrors of dying an enemy of God to set about the work of repentance. "It is too late," said he; "I believe my doom is sealed; and it is just that it should be so, for the Spirit strove long with me, but I refused." I then turned to his children, young men and young women, who were around him, and entreated them not to put off the subject of religion, or grieve the Spirit of God in their youthful days. The old man added, "Mind that. If I had attended to it

then, it would have been well with me today; but now it is too late."

Alas for him! He had quenched the Spirit. The last ray of light was extinguished, and through the darkness of a spiritual midnight he groped his way down to his hopeless grave.

JESUS ONLY.



T is very probable that Christ's transfiguration took place upon Mount Hermon. The outlook from that summit carried the eye from

Lebanon, with its diadem of glittering ice, southward to the silvery mirror of Gennesaret; but it was not that vision of natural beauty that the disciples looked at chiefly—they saw "Jesus only." Two illustrious prophets, Moses and Elijah, had just made their miraculous appearance on the top of the mount; but neither of these mighty men appeared any longer to the disciples' view—they "saw no man, save Yesus only."

In this expression we find the clue to the power of apostolic preaching. That solitary figure on the mount became the central figure to the eyes and hearts of the apostles. One

Person occupied their thoughts; one Person filled all their most effective discourses. It was no such benevolent charlatan as poor Renan has lately attempted to portray; it was the omnipotent and holy Son of God. They saw in Him "God manifest in the flesh:" they saw in Him an infinite Redeemer. a divine model, an ever-living Intercessor and Friend. And they saw no man, save Fesus only. Paul gave utterance to the heart of the whole apostolic brotherhood when he said, "I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." Has not this been the key-note to the best sermons of the best ministers ever since? Is not that the most powerful sermon that is the most luminous with Christ? Depend upon it that the Pulpit, the Sabbath-school, and the Volume which God honours with the richest success are those which present "no man, save Jesus only."

Here, too, is a clue to the best method of dealing with awakened and inquiring hearts. We are too prone to send the unconverted to a prayer-meeting, or to reading good books, or to listen to some popular Boanerges. The experiences of many a troubled inquirer have been somewhat like those of the woman to whom a faithful minister once said :---

"Have you been in the habit of attending church?"

"Yes, I have been to every church in the town; but the little comfort I get soon goes away again, and leaves me as bad as before."

"Do you read the Bible at home?"

"Sir, I am always reading the Bible; sometimes I get a little comfort, but it soon leaves me as wretched as ever."

"Have you ever prayed for peace?"

"O sir! I am praying all the day long; sometimes I get a little peace after praying, but I soon lose it. I am a miserable woman."

"Now, madam, when you went to church, or prayed, or read your Bible, did you rely on these means to give you comfort?"

" I think I did."

"To whom did you pray?"

"To God, sir; to whom else should I pray?"

"Now, read this verse: 'Come unto me, and I will give you rest.' Jesus said this. Have you gone to Jesus for rest?"

The lady looked amazed, and tears welled

up into her eyes. Light burst in upon her heart, like unto the light that flooded Mount Hermon on the transfiguration. Everything else that she had been looking at—church, Bible, mercy-seat, and minister—all disappeared, and to her wondering, believing eyes there remained no man, save Yesus only. She was liberated from years of bondage on the spot. The scales fell from her eyes, and the spiritual fetters from her soul. Jesus only could do that work of deliverance; but He did not do it until she looked to Him alone.

This incident reached us during the first years of our ministry. With this "open secret" in our hand, we approached the first Roman Catholic that ever attended our preaching. He had turned his troubled eye for a long time to the Holy Virgin and to sainted martyrs in the Calendar. He had been often to a priest; never to a Saviour. We set before him Jesus only. He looked up, and saw the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. "My Romanish mother," said he to us, "would burn up my Bible if she knew I had one in my house." But she could not burn out the blessed

Jesus from his emancipated and happy heart.

Next, we took this simple revelation to a poor invalid of threescore-and-ten. His sight was failing, and the vision of his mind was as blurred and dim as the vision of his body. We set before him in our poor way, Yesus only. The old man could hardly see the little grandchild who read aloud to him. But he could see Jesus with the eye of faith. The patriarch who had hardened under seventy years of sin became a little child. The scepticism of a lifetime vanished when the Holy Spirit revealed to his searching, yearning look, the Divine form of a Saviour crucified.

We never forgot these lessons learned in our ministerial boyhood. From that time to this, we have found that the only sure way of bringing light and peace to an anxious inquirer is to direct them away from themselves—away from ritualities and stereotyped forms—away from agencies of every kind—away from everything, save Jesus only. John the Baptist held the essence of the gospel on his tongue when he cried out, "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world."

My anxious friend, be assured that you never will find pardon for the past, and hope for the future—you never will know how to live, or be prepared to die—until you look to Yesus only.

Here is a hint, too, for desponding Christians. You are harassed with doubts. Without are fightings, and within are fears. Why? Because you have tried to live on frames and feelings, and they ebb and flow like the seatide. You have rested on past experiences, and not on a present Saviour. You have looked at yourself too much, and not to Him who is made to you righteousness and full redemption. Do you long for light, peace, strength, assurance, and joy? Then do your duty, and look to Jesus only.

When the godly-minded Oliphant was on his dying bed, they read to him that beautiful passage in the seventh chapter of Revelation, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." (It is the passage which poor Burns could never read with a dry eye.) The old man exclaimed, "Perhaps that is so. The Bible tells me that there is no weeping in heaven; but I know I shall cry the first time I see my Saviour!" He was right. The

first object that would enchain his view on entering the gates of glory would not be the jewelled walls, or the shining ranks of the seraphim. It would not be the parent who bore him, or the pastor who taught him the way of life. But amid the myriad glories, the thousand wonders of that wonderful world of light and joy, the believer's eye, in its first enrapturing vision, shall "see no man, save IESUS ONLY."

HAVE YOU AN ANCHOR?

OOKING out from our upper window this morning toward the bay, we can see a home-bound ship riding gallantly up past the quar-

antine station and the leafy shores of Staten Island. She looks weary from a long voyage; and on her bow, as a field-marshal wears a star upon his breast, she bears her anchor. It has done good service, and deserves its place of honour on her front. It has been her salvation on many a night of tempest. Though it hangs idle now beneath her bowsprit, yet more than once, when the gale struck her in the open roadstead, or, when off a wild lee shore, the hurricane made hideous music through her cordage, like one immense harp strung to the gales, that anchor was unloosed, and, running out with

HAVE YOU AN ANCHOR?

164

merry rattle of the chains, it dived straight downward to its resting-place. Upon the bottom of the deep its flukes took brave hold; and while the ship strained on the cable above, the patient flukes stoutly held on below. As soon might she attempt a voyage without a compass to guide her, or without canvas to impel her, as without an anchor to keep her from the devouring rocks or the yawning lee shore. So, when she returns in triumph from a campaign with the elements, scarred with collisions of the angry deep, it is fitting that she bear on her bosom, as a trust and a trophy, the good anchor that held her safely.

Voyager to eternity, have you the "anchor of the soul sure and steadfast?" It is the Christian's hope, Paul tells us. It is the hope in Christ which holds the soul of man as an anchor holds a ship. You cannot have it without knowing it; and if you have it, you will be none the better if you do not use it in the hour of need.

I. You will need it to keep you from drifting away into scepticism and unbelief. There is no such safeguard against practical infidelity as the possession of a living faith in Jesus. And the secret of so many a lapse into error—of so much veering about with "every wind of doctrine"—is found in the lack of a well-grounded hope in the inner heart. As soon as the soul begins to swing away into painful doubts—doubts of God, of the truth of His Word, of the mercy of His dealings, of the triumph of His cause, or of the reality of heaven—then let go the anchor to the bottom. Nothing else will hold against that devil of doubt but a practical faith in the Lord Jesus.

II. But if you are not assailed with doubts, you are certain to be assailed with troubles. No hurricane can arise more suddenly upon a full-rigged ship, when moving gracefully before an evening breeze, than will the storms of adversity burst upon you; they will come, too, at the most unexpected moment. God lets loose His tempests on the soul, as He lets loose His tempests on the sea, without an hour's warning. As a vessel is often stripped of her mainsail or loses her spars before the seamen can man the yards to take in canvas, so may it be with you. You may be struck "all aback"—may be obliged to heave overboard many of your cherished

possessions-you may be stripped of many a topsail which ambition had hoisted, or many a spar of prosperity; but if Christ is in the soul you cannot suffer wreck. Christ in the depths of the soul will anchor you. You do not see what holds a vessel when the storm is smiting her. The anchor is all invisible, as it lies in the untroubled quiets "full many a fathom deep." So when we see a man beaten upon with adversity, or lying under a perfect Euroclydon of trials, and yet preserving a calm, cheerful spirit, we do not see always what is the secret of his serenity. We wonder why he is "not moved as other men are." But God sees a hope sure and steadfast, lying down deep beneath the surface. Trouble strips the man of much of his external gear and cordage, but never touches the interior source and strength of his piety. When Martin Luther was struck with sudden tempests, he used to sing the forty-sixth Psalm above the roar of the winds: his anchor never dragged. The devil let loose the utmost of his fury upon Paul; but the brave apostle had an "I know whom I have believed," that struck its flukes under the Rock of Ages. O God, Thou wilt keep in

perfect peace the soul that is stayed on Thee.

III. There is a danger to the Christian greater than adversity or the persecution of enemies. It is from the stealthy under-currents of temptation. An unanchored ship may be lying on waters as smooth as glass. and vet, before the master is aware, his keel is on a rock. The invisible tide bore him away so softly and so silently that he did not observe the motion. Had the wind risen. he would have taken the alarm: he did not suspect that an under-current was stealthily carrying him away. So are thousands of Christian professors carried on the rocks every day, not with shocks of adversity, but by invisible under-currents. One man insensibly drifts into neglect of prayer, and into laxity of Sabbath observance. Another one feels the hand of sensual temptation on the keel, but takes no alarm until he strikes the rock with a hideous rent of his Christian character. Another gets in an under-current of worldliness: it swings him along slowly. but surely, until he has lost sight of the lighthouse on the headland; he is aroused by no sudden shock, but when we look for him where he used to be, and where he ought to be, he is not there. The world got hold of his keel, and his anchor had no hold on Christ. Is not this the secret of by far the larger part of all the backsliding in the Church?

It is not strength of intellect that saves a man, or the surroundings of society, or alliance with a church, or orthodoxy of belief. All these have proved but ropes of sand attached to anchors of straw. They never hold a man when the tide of temptation sets in. He must have Christian principle, or he is lost. No man is safe in business, or safe in public life, or safe in private morals, when his conscience is unloosed from Christ. When his godly principle gives way, he may float smoothly for a while; but it is a mere question of time how soon he shall strike and go to the bottom. Remember, God never insures a man, even in the church, who has no anchor of true religion. And if you ever reach heaven, my friend, you will come in, like yonder vessel, with your anchor at the prow. You will give all the glory, then, not to your own skill or your own seamanship, but to the blessed "anchor, sure and steadfast, which entereth into that within the vail."

"There are ships," says the eloquent Melville, "that never will founder in life's battles, or go down in life's tempests. There are ships which shall be in no peril when the last hurricane shall sweep earth, and sea, and sky; and which, when the fury is overpast, and the light that knows no night breaks gloriously forth, shall be found on tranquil and crystal waters, resting beautifully on their shadows. These are they who have trusted in Jesus; these are they who have been anchored upon Christ."

[&]quot;Saviour! happy would I be
If I could but trust in Thee;
Trust Thy wisdom me to guide;
Trust Thy goodness to provide;
Trust Thy saving love and power;
Trust Thee every day and hour;—

[&]quot;Trust Thee as the only light In the darkest hour of night; Trust in sickness, trust in health; Trust in poverty and wealth; Trust in joy, and trust in grief; Trust Thy promise for relief;—

HAVE YOU AN ANCHOR!

170

"Trust Thy blood to cleanse my soul; Trust Thy grace to make me whole; Trust Thee living—dying, too; Trust Thee all my journey through; Trust Thee till my feet shall be Planted on the crystal sea."

THE BLESSINGS OF DIS-APPOINTMENT.

LESSED be disappointment!" said we to ourselves one evening as we sat at the table of a distinguished civilian. He was one of

the honoured of the land. A goodly group of "olive branches" were gathered around him. The sweet-voiced wife at the head of the table had in her early days been affianced to an aristocratic youth of great wealth and promise, but on the appointed day of their marriage he had eloped under circumstances of peculiar baseness. What a disappointment to expectant friends and ambitious kinsfolk! But the true-hearted girl swallowed her tears of mortification, and in fitting time gave her hand to a sturdy youth, who has since carried

her as his wife to the American Capitol. She has lived to see her renegade lover reel into the grave of the profligate. How little did she know what an escape God had opened to her through the dark door of disappointment!

We might multiply instances of a like character from daily observation. A man hurries breathless to the wharf in order to reach a departing steamer. He is one moment too The plank is drawn; and as he watches the stately vessel plough her way off through the blue waters, she seems to be ploughing through his very heart. "How provoking!" he exclaims to the half-smiling, half-pitying bystanders. He goes home sulky: he retires sulky to his bed, and wakes up to read in the morning paper that "a few hours after leaving port, that steamer took fire, and when last seen was floating on the water a flaming wreck!" He fancies himself clinging in despair to a sinking billet of wood. and his very blood runs cold when he thinks how near he came to being on board that death-freighted vessel. And yet the very next time that man is thrown out by Providence from some favourite plan, he is slow to apply the lesson of the past, and to

thank his heavenly Father for a disappointment!

We do not pretend to be a very apt learner, but many of our best lessons through life have been taught us by that same stern old schoolmaster, disappointment. And one lesson we learned was, that this world was not made only for us. If it had been, the sun would have shone just when our hay needed curing, and the rain would have fallen only when our gardens needed to be watered. But we found that God went right on and ordered things as pleased Him best, without consulting us. And when our schemes were thwarted, the stern schoolmaster said, "The world was not made for you alone. Do not be selfish. Your loss perhaps is another's gain. The rain that spoils your newmown hay makes the blade of corn to grow faster in your neighbour's field. The fall in grain that cuts down your profits will help the poor widow in yonder cotttage to buy bread cheaper for her orphan babes. So do not be selfish."

On a grand scale we sometimes see this lesson taught. When a certain greedy self-seeker once clutched at the empire of the civil-

ised world, stern disappointment met him in his ambitious path, flung a Russian snow-storm in his face, and out of the tiny snow-flakes wove a white shroud to wrap the flower of French chivalry! "Go back! go back!" he cried, "all Europe was not made for you." The lesson the proud usurper would not learn at Aspern was taught him in blood and agony at Borodino, and on the frozen banks of the Dnieper. So, too, have we been taught in the defeat of our humbler schemes and in the failure of our humbler plans—"Do not be selfish; God did not make this world all for you." This lesson is worth all it costs us.

A second lesson which disappointment has taught us is, that our losses are not only gains to others, but very often the richest gain to ourselves. In our short-sighted ignorance we had "devised a way," and set our hearts upon it. Had we been allowed to pursue it, we must have been led by it to ruin. God could not have sent a greater judgment on us than simply to have let us have our own way. In a thousand instances we have seen this made true, both in things temporal and in things spiritual. A merchant is thwarted in some enterprise in such a manner as to

excite his bitterest mortification. But the far-seeing God knows full well that he has been saved from a much sorer sorrow. The pecuniary failures of 1857 made many a man of business rich in the priceless treasure of a Christian's hope. It was a dark door which disappointment opened during that calamitous year, but it led tens of thousands into the pathway of heaven.

Mayhap these lines may reach some one who can recall the remembrance of some earthly idol which once held too high a place in the temple of her affections. Her life was bound up in the life of the boy. She worshipped him more than she worshipped her Saviour. At length the trial came. In terror and dismay she saw the colour fading ou from that cheek of roses. Fainter and fainter fell each sweet "good-night" from his faltering tongue. In her agony she oft cried out, "O God, let me not see the death of the child!" And when the chestnut curl at last lay motionless on the silent lip, her grief out in David's passionate wail, "Would God I had died for thee, my son, my son!"

At length the first agony has wept itself

out. She has come to herself. Above all, she has come to her Saviour; and as she beholds how ungrateful was her idolatryhow her best affections had been stolen from Christ-and how frail a reed she was leaning on, her trembling soul looks back with wonder to see from what a posture of guilt and peril she has been delivered. It is not, therefore, only the melancholy pleasure of knowing that her fair hope—plucked away by the angel-reapers-is now blooming in the fields of light which alone sustain her, but the sense of rescue from a state of fearful forgetfulness of Christ and of duty. She is done with idols. She never again will let any earthly object have that central place in her heart which a crucified Saviour earned for Himself, and Himself alone.

The record-book of every Christian life has some such pages as these. Tears have blurred and blotted the page at the time. But as you turn over to that page now, and read it in the light of experience, you can write across it, Thank God for these losses—they were my eternal gain; thank God for bereavements—they have saved my soul from

being bereaved of a hope of heaven! "There," said a young man once, as he pointed to a diseased limb that was destroying his life; "there it is, and a precious treasure it has been to me. It saved me from the follies of youth: it brought me to this room, and made me cleave to God; I think it has brought me now almost to my Father's house on high."

Good reader, if you and I ever reach that Father's house, we will look back and see that the sharp-tongued, rough-visaged teacher. Disappointment, was one of our best guides to bring us thither. He often took us by thorny paths. He often stripped us of our over-load of worldly goods; but that was only to make us travel the freer and the faster on our heavenward way. He often led us into the valley of the death-shadow; but never did the promises read so sweetly to us as when read by the light of faith in that very valley. The cross of Christ was the point toward which he oftenest made us look, and the favourite passage he gave us for our encouragement was, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to

them who are the called according to his purpose." Dear old, rough, harsh-handed teacher; we will build a monument to him yet, and hang it with garlands. And so on it we will write,—Blessed be the memory of Disappointment.

THE END.

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