

THE Present Truth.

"Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth."—John xvii. 17.

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The Present Truth.

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"TIRED of life." Such is one of the prominent headings in a recent morning paper, under which the "suicidal mania" is discussed. It is a sad comment on modern life, that so many people seem so anxious to get rid of it. It is an unhealthy and unnatural state, for love of life is the natural condition of all who have life.

How differently the Bible speaks of life. Read the promise of God to the one who sets his love upon Him: "With long life will I satisfy him, and show him My salvation." Ps. xci. 16. Here life is represented as something most desirable, and the greatest promise God can make man is that He will bestow life without end.

READ some of the statements of the inducement which God holds out to men: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii. 16. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John x. 10. "I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Rev. xxi. 6. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. vi. 23.

LIFE is the one thing to be desired. How is it then that so many grow

tired of it? The Bible furnishes the answer. "To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Rom. viii. 6. The sinner is represented as carrying about with him a hateful "body of death." Rom. vii. 24. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." 1 John v. 12. Those who commit suicide because, as they say, they are "tired of life," do not really know what life is. They are tired of death, and wish to end consciousness of it.

WITH God is the fountain of life. He is life. Only he who loves God loves life. But in His presence there is fulness of joy. Therefore he who loves the Lord finds life a joy, and not a burden. The "joy of the Lord" is his strength. No Christian ever becomes weary of life. Even though he may suffer tribulation and persecution, that only brings Christ the closer, and in the midst of affliction he rejoices for the very joy of living. "Oh taste and see that the Lord is good," and you will find, not a burden, but a "blessing, even life for evermore."

RECREATION.

THIS is the time of year when everybody who can do so, leaves the city for the country, the mountains, or the seaside, for the purpose of finding recreation. And yet there are far more people who are obliged to keep up their daily round of toil, than there are who are able to take a holiday vacation. It is not the very poor only, who cannot leave their tasks; there are many whose labour demands their constant attention, and who are for this reason obliged to forego the pleasure that they would gladly take. It is for this larger class especially, that we write this.

Recreation is not always obtained by those who go away for their holidays; for be it known that not all pleasure-

seeking is recreation. Recreation means re-creation, reviving, refreshing. It means the receiving of new life. But very many who go away thinking to get recreation, come back jaded and weary, hoping to find rest at home, in their usual employment. We wish therefore to let the weary ones at home into a secret, which may also be profitable to those who go away.

All life comes from God, for with Him is "the fountain of life." Ps. xxxvi. 9. He is the Creator. Therefore He is the only one who can re-create. Whatever blessing of health and life any person enjoys, comes directly from God. "Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James i. 16, 17.

Let us see, now, how the Lord can give to those who are obliged to stay at home and work, all the advantages that they could hope to gain by a trip abroad. How many there are who would choose the fields, and the cool waters. Well, those who know the Lord can say, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul." Ps. xxiii. 1-3. He who knows this may have more real recreation, both for soul and body, than he who is lying in the cool meadows, but is ignorant of it.

If we long for the mountains, or the ocean, we read, "Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; Thy judgments are a great deep; O Lord, Thou preservest man and beast." Ps. xxxvi. 6. And in His righteousness He will be to us "as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Do not the very words bring a sense of refreshment?

On these sultry days memories of

mountain streams of clear, sparkling, life-giving water haunt us and tantalise us until the heat seems almost unendurable. Now let us find something that is more substantial than a memory, and which satisfies. "How excellent is Thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house; and Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures. For with Thee is the fountain of life." Ps. xxxvi. 7-9.

Of course it is refreshing. Recreation, new life, is what we want, and with God is the fountain of life. We may drink it in as we would drink from the mountain spring, and find far more real refreshment. He who is with God, therefore, finds the truest recreation.

This is evident, further, from the fact that the memory of former draughts from the purest spring, just as it gushes cool and sparkling from the earth, serves rather to increase our present discomfort than to allay our heat and thirst. It did not last. Even before we were home from our excursion we were vainly longing for more. Now listen to Jesus as He talks with the woman at the well of Samaria. It was a deep well, and the water was cool and good, but He said, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in Him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." John iv. 13, 14. We can carry it with us continually.

That water is "living water," and that is what we want. But how may we get it? Why, you are taking it in now, if you receive these texts as the living words of the living God, spoken directly to you. Jesus said, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life." John vi. 63. All this refreshment is to be found in the words that tell of it.

Some one will say that this is imaginary. Not a bit of it. It is real. In the chapter just quoted from we have an example of the ability of Christ to give real recreation—the renewal of wasted energy. The day before several thousand people were in the hot and sultry desert, with nothing to eat, and Jesus fed them with bread, so that they were filled and refreshed.

This He did, in order that they and we might know the real life that is in His Word.

Take another instance. A nobleman's beloved son was lying at the point of death. His frame was wasted away, and his life was being burned up with fever. What was needed? Something to stop the fever,—something cooling. The man went to Jesus and asked Him to come and heal his son. Jesus said, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." "And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. They said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth." John iv. 46-53.

Whoever believes that miracle, must know that the word of the Lord has cooling, refreshing, and healing properties. Nothing is so good in fever as cool water, both within and without. Many physicians have testified as to the value of water in fevers, and how the skillful application of it has reduced the temperature and saved the patient's life. But all this was accomplished by the word of Jesus, which is living water. Therefore we know that in His word we may find on the hottest day refreshment for the body.

At another time Simon's wife's mother "was taken with a great fever; and they besought Him for her. And He stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her; and immediately she arose, and ministered unto them." Luke iv. 38, 39. Many other instances might be mentioned, but these are sufficient to show the life-giving power of the word of the Lord. Now what the Lord wants us to do is to take His words for all that they are worth, and use them in our every-day life.

That which we call nature is simply the ordinary working of God. The sunshine, the air, the dew and the rain, the great mountains, the broad ocean, the crystal spring, and the laughing mountain stream, all come from Him. They exist because of His word. When He speaks, they immediately appear, because they are all in His word. Therefore we may find all the benefit of them in His word.

Try it, and you will find that it is true. The words of the Lord are restful. They give peace. Without them,

a person may fret himself into a fever on the coolest day, or in the deepest recesses of the mountains. With them in the heart, he may find the fever of his blood allayed even in the crowded city, on the hottest day. When you have learned that the words of the Lord are righteousness and life, and that we may drink them in as water, you can say with the psalmist:—

"My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips, when I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches. Because Thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice." Ps. lxxiii. 5-7.

TRUE FAITH.

"AND Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God." Mark xi. 22. These are words that apply as well to us as to the disciples, to whom they were first spoken. Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. xi. 6) and "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John v. 4. Yet though faith is so important to the Christian life, few people really have it.

There is a great deal that passes for faith among religious people, that is not faith at all. True faith is simple belief of God's word. True faith does not mystify the word; it does not explain away the miraculous; it does not "account for" this or that statement of Scripture. It feels no need of accounting for anything that the Bible says. It does not bring human suppositions and explanations into the matter at all.

This is why most men will not exercise true faith. It is too simple a thing for them. They want to make some display of their own wisdom; they want to understand Scripture in some way that will reflect credit on themselves,—on their ability to reason, discover, and conjecture. And so we see the word of God twisted and perverted and "explained" until its real meaning is all but lost, and opposers of the truth scoffingly assert that "anything can be proved from the Bible." This all comes from a lack of faith.

Faith never questions; it believes implicitly. It is satisfied with the simple fact that God has said so, and if the statement that He makes is unexplainable to human reason, it makes no difference. Faith simply asks, What has God said? and when it finds what God has said, it says, That is so! God has said it, and that settles it. Here is the

simplicity of true faith. It does not have to bother with human theories and explanations, but simply accepts a thing just because God has declared it. To believe implicitly and unquestioningly whatever God says is very much easier than to try to believe it with some human wisdom worked in. It is so easy that any one, high or low, learned or simple, who wills to believe, can do it.

DENYING SELF.

WHAT is it to deny self? Most people, if not all, have in their minds a certain conception of the meaning of self-denial; but popular conceptions of things are not always true ones, especially in regard to Christian virtues. Self was never known to give a correct definition of self-denial. This can only be obtained from the Word of God.

The second chapter of Philippians tells us very clearly in what true self-denial consists, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Phil. ii. 5-8.

This was the example set by Christ in self-denial. He left all the riches and glory and honour that were His at the right hand of His Father, and came to this earth to live a life of toil and poverty and hardship and sorrow, in order that He might give to fallen man the riches and glory and honour that He had left in heaven. He "pleased not Himself," and of His own self He did nothing, for He said, "My Father, that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." See John v. 19, and xiv. 10.

Self-denial means, to the Christian, to do as Christ did. As Christ did nothing of His own self, so the Christian must do nothing of his own self. He must keep self repressed at every point, so that it will not be seen in anything. He must put it away altogether. But how often it is that self finds occasion to glory in some particular act that it can hold up to public view! This is the definition that self gives of self-denial. It is some particular act of self-denial on the part of an individual, held up and paraded as a virtue.

True self-denial is the total suppression of self, not at one point merely,

but at all points; not for some particular occasion, but always, to the end of life. It is a process which self cannot survive. The true Christian is never conscious of being a hero; he never counts his self-denial a virtue. In his life he sees only imperfections and failures; for he has a view of the life and virtues of Him who was equal with God, but left all and came to earth and suffered and died for His enemies. He has no desire to serve himself in any way, but only to have Christ dwelling in him, working and doing whatever is in accordance with His Divine will.

CHRIST AND THE LAW.

THE whole Bible presents the relation of Jesus Christ to His Father's law. It was Christ who enabled Abraham to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His laws. Gen. xxvi. 5. It was He who gave the law to Israel amid the thunderings of Sinai; for the law was given "by angels in the hand of a mediator" (Gal. iii. 19); and there is but "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. ii. 5.

It was Christ who testified through David of His relations to His Father's law, in language which no one who desires to be His follower will misunderstand: "Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O my God; yea, Thy law is within my heart." Ps. xl. 7, 8. And His first-spoken words in His earthly ministry testify to the same unchanging relations to His Father's law, and that the object of His ministry and death was not to alter or destroy the law, but to fulfil in loving obedience, and take upon Himself its righteous curse for man's transgression. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets," He said; "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. v. 17-20.

Here Christ presents His Father's law as the standard of righteousness, and warns every man who breaks one of the least of its precepts, and teaches men to do so, that he shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. Every man's righteousness who enters there must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, who, by teaching the doctrines and commandments of men, confused the minds of the people in reference to the plain and simple utterances of the commands of Jehovah. It was the special work of Jesus to make plain the distinction between the words of man and the commands of God, and to break the hold of tradition upon the human mind, and exalt in its stead the law of God.

When the scribes and Pharisees of Jerusalem came to Him with the question, "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders?" Jesus replied by asking them, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother; and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; and honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free*. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me. But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matt. xv. 3-9.

Suppose we apply this reasoning of Jesus to a commandment that to-day men are taught that they can disobey: "For God commanded, saying, 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work.' But it is said, 'Whosoever shall observe the first day of the week in honour of the resurrection, he is free from the commandment to observe the seventh day, the Sabbath of the Lord.' Thus is the commandment of God made of none effect by your tradition. But in vain do ye worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Is not this the reasoning and teaching of Jesus Christ? and do we not do well to reason and teach and practise, in

harmony with it, even as He taught and walked in harmony with it? Jesus says at the close of His ministry, "I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love." John xv. 10. And "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." 1 John ii. 6.

The death of Christ was the highest tribute of respect and honour which could be paid to His Father's law. The law could not be altered to meet man in his fallen condition without sanctioning and perpetuating sin, and involving the very throne of God, which is established in righteousness. But Jesus, the sinless one, could take upon Himself the curse of the law, release man from its condemnation, and through His own merits give the sinner repentance acceptable to God, and bestow upon him grace to enable him to render perfect obedience to the law. Can it, then, be imagined that the law is made void by faith? "God forbid; yea, we establish the law." Yes, it was for the purpose of establishing the law that Christ died; and His followers so understand it; for they are represented by the Revelator, who saw them in holy vision, as keeping "the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. xiv. 12.

In His closing words of instruction to the churches, Jesus states the relation His followers should sustain to His Father's law. He says, "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. xxii. 14. For without the gates are transgressors of every sort. None who knowingly disobey God enter the pearly gates; for then would the peace of all be jeopardised, and rebellion might rise up the second time,—a thing which we are assured by the prophets will not occur.

Love is the fulfilling, not the violating, of the law. It seeks not to avoid the claims of God, but for grace fully to respond to them. "This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." 1 John v. 3.

James states the relation of the follower of Christ to the law in the following words: "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. . . . If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well; but if ye have respect to persons,

ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." James ii. 1, 8-12. "For that law which said, 'Do not commit adultery,' said also, 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; . . . the seventh day is the Sabbath,' now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou break the Sabbath, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." G. B. STARR.

THE NECESSITY OF A NEW HEART.

WHEN the Lord would cleanse His people,—those who professed to be serving Him,—from all their idols and their filthiness (Eze. xxxvi. 25), he said to them, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them." Eze. xxxvi. 26-28.

This is the only way that any person can be brought into a condition where he can walk in the statutes of God, and keep His judgments. He must experience a change of heart. The same thing is declared in the thirty-first chapter of Jeremiah.

"Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, . . . but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God and they shall be My people." Verses 31-33.

The Israelites had the law of God written upon tables of stone and preserved in the sacred ark. They had heard the law spoken from the summit of Mt. Sinai by the voice of God, and had heard it repeated by Moses; but they did not have it written upon their hearts, and the result was they did not keep it. The record of their lives is a

record of transgression, of worshipping idols, and other iniquitous practices by which they violated the Divine statutes and judgments. They intended to keep them, and professed to be keeping them; perhaps even persuaded themselves that they were keeping them; but they were not. The conditions under which they tried to serve God made the keeping of His law an impossibility to them. Not that these conditions were imposed upon them; they were simply the conditions of every man in his natural state. The law of God was not written in their hearts. They were hardened through unbelief, so that their hearts would not receive the impress of the principles of God's great moral code.

A change of heart is the great requisite felt by the repentant sinner as he turns to God. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Ps. li. 10. Thus David prayed after he had gone in the way of the carnal heart and grievously sinned against God; and his prayer is echoed by every repentant soul. The clean heart for which he prayed is one upon which is written the principles of righteousness.

All who are truly converted have these principles written upon their hearts, the agency by which they are written being the Spirit of God. Thus Paul writes to the church at Corinth: "Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." 2 Cor. iii. 3.

As the heart is, so is the life; for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." It was the apostle's trust that the Corinthian brethren would in their lives be an epistle unto their fellow-men, wherein would be read the virtues of Christ and the power of God unto the salvation of believers. All persons who have the Divine law written in their hearts will be epistles of Christ.

The Jews among whom Christ walked when upon the earth had the law of God everywhere about them, but in the one place where its living principles were most needed it was absent. It was held up before them in their synagogues; they wore it in letters upon their garments; they had it in their minds, so that they could repeat it from memory; but they were constant and flagrant violators of its requirements. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites"! was the stern

denunciation upon them from the lips of Jesus. "Ye make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess." Matt. xxiii. 25.

No one ever made a greater outward show of piety and reverence for God than did the Pharisees, yet all that did not save them from the most terrible condemnation. Neither will it avail any more for the most respectable professor of Christianity to-day, who has not experienced the needed change of heart.

All along from their day to ours, the devil has led men to try to be servants of God without undergoing this change; and it has been one of his most successful devices. He has led men to think that if they kept the law of God often before their eyes and upon their lips, they would be living about as God would have them. So they have surrounded themselves with pictures of the Saviour and the scenes connected with His ministry, and with images of Himself and His mother and the apostles and "saints," wore crucifixes upon their breasts—as the Pharisees wore the law upon their phylacteries—and in every way by their surroundings and outward practices endeavoured to convince themselves and others that they were the true servants of God. But however well they succeeded in deceiving themselves and their fellow-men, they did not in the least deceive God. His eye read their hearts, and He knew who were His and who were mere pious hypocrites, like the scribes and Pharisees. He knew whether they were His subjects at heart, or whether forms and ceremonies and imposing houses of worship and pictures and images served only to hide the secret iniquity of hearts that were still carnal.

Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is within you." It is Christ dwelling in the heart by faith (Eph. iii. 17); it is God dwelling with the spirit that is humble and contrite (Isa. lvii. 15). We may have the precepts of God upon the walls of our churches and our homes, and upon the tablets of our memories, and sounding often in our ears—and all this is proper and well; but if they be not written upon our hearts we are but subjects of the kingdom of darkness. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." John iii. 3.

PLENTY are ready to die for Christ; what is needed now is men who are willing to live for Christ.—*Dr. J. Strong.*

FAITH AND CREDULITY.

It has been remarked that the present is an age of unbelief and also of wonderful credulity. The statement is true, and there is nothing strange about it either. Unbelief is not absence of all belief, but only of a certain kind of belief. It implies a belief opposite in nature to that which is absent. The man who calls himself an agnostic, only seeks to hide under that term a belief which is just as real as anyone's, but which, generally, he has not the courage to avow and maintain.

The apostle Paul, in his letter to Timothy (2 Tim. iv. 4), speaks of this age of unbelief, saying that men "shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." The result could not be otherwise, for when people turn away from the truth there is nothing left for them to believe but error, and they grow credulous as a natural result. There is nothing in the world more credible than the statements of God's Word. They who refuse this and try to construct a material and a spiritual world upon some hypotheses of their own, may consider themselves wise, but in reality they are the most credulous persons in existence.

WAR DECLARED.

WAR is declared against us! not by the French, not by the Germans, not by the Russians, nor by the Chinese, but by enemies more powerful than all these nations together,—by our own fleshly lusts, our natural longings after sinful pleasures.

It is not a war against our poor frail bodies, but what is infinitely worse, it is a war against our souls. It is a war before which men's faces may indeed turn pale and their hearts fail them for fear, if they have not an impenetrable armour, and an all-powerful Captain. If we gain the victory it means life and happiness that will run parallel with the life of God. If we are overcome, it means darkness and death that shall have no awakening. It is then a war the most momentous, the most fraught with grave consequences of any that has ever been declared on earth.

It is a war from which we cannot escape, because it follows us wherever we go.

It is a war which we cannot end, once for all, and then never more be troubled with it. It will continue as long as there is life in us.

But there have been men who by

nature were no better nor stronger than we, who have fought in this battle and been faithful unto death and come off more than conquerors through Him that loved them. And God Himself gives us encouragement to believe that you and I also may do the same. Then let us not sink down in discouragement and say it cannot be done and we are as good as overcome already, but let us go straight to our Father in heaven and ask Him how this may be accomplished.

We turn to 1 Peter ii. 11 and He says, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, *abstain* from fleshly lusts, which war against your souls." In other words, refrain from them, don't give up to them. Perhaps you say, That is just what I've tried to do again and again, but I can't put them away, they are more powerful than I, I cannot do the things that I would. Be patient, perhaps the Lord has more to tell us about it.

In 2 Tim. ii. 22 He says, "*Flee* also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." Here He tells us that we are not only to abstain from these lusts by fleeing from them when we see them coming, but when we turn our backs upon *them* we are to follow after *righteousness, faith, charity, peace*. Perhaps we have tried to flee from the longing after sin without seeking something better in its place. If our hearts become filled and satisfied with good thoughts there is no room or longing for bad thoughts.

But we read again in Titus ii. 11, 12: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Here we learn again that the grace of God teaches us to *deny* worldly lusts when they come begging for our favour. But notice further, the grace that teaches us that we must deny worldly lusts does not then leave us alone to fight it out the best we can, but the same grace that warns us of our danger, provides the remedy,—"*The grace of God that bringeth salvation*" teaches us, etc. Then the same grace that teaches us to deny the lusts will give us salvation from them if we will allow it to.

But let us listen again to His gracious words. Rom. viii. 13. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye *through the Spirit* do mortify the deeds

of the body, ye shall live." Ah, have we not now arrived at the secret of our failures? We have been trying to mortify and put down our sinful desires in our own strength, and as they have been stronger than we, we have been defeated every time. But here we learn of a Spirit that is stronger than the spirit of evil, and the promise is if we will allow this Spirit of God to dwell in us it will mortify every evil desire that shows itself, and we shall live; we shall not be overcome.

But how are we to get this Spirit? He tells us in the thirteenth chapter and fourteenth verse; "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." We get the Spirit of Christ by putting on Christ, and when we do this we are to make no more provision or calculation to give up to the lusts of our flesh, "for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other." Where one is the other cannot remain. When we put on Christ we therefore bid good-bye to our lusts for ever, and instead of our ways and our desires, we choose Christ's ways and His desires. And since He furnishes the power by which we can keep these lusts from coming and making their home in our heart again, we are stronger than they as long as we hold to Jesus.

But can we know how to put on Jesus? Yes, He tells us in Gal. iii. 27, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

But how can we get into Christ and Christ in us? We read again in Eph. iii. 17, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith."

How can we get faith? "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. x. 17.

Then if we hear God's word and receive it "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God," it will effectually work in us that believe, because it brings Jesus with His holy Spirit of power into our hearts. Thus, "though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. x. 3, 4.

Then do we not need the Word, the bread of life, more than we need our

necessary food? Can we hope to grow in the spiritual life and have strength to overcome and keep out these deadly foes without daily partaking of this heavenly bread? We are apt to think than when we once put on Christ we have nothing more to do, when we once take a full meal of this heavenly bread and a full draught of this living water, we shall for ever be satisfied and never more be weak or faint. But we cannot eat enough of this in one day to last us all the rest of our lives, any more than we can eat enough physical food to last us the remainder of our lives. We must continually, daily, feast upon His words of life, and then the promise is that we shall grow thereby, grow stronger and stronger. We need not worry about how it is done, or how we are going to meet these foes when they assail us. But if we lay hold of fresh supplies of strength every day, the victory will finally be ours, not because of our strength, but because of Christ the Mighty One who has lived in us. He is the "captain of our salvation," and he is our "armour of light" that is able to quench all the fiery darts of the enemy. With such a Captain and such an armour can we not with courage engage in this great war?

"Go forward, Christian soldier,
Beneath His banner true:
The Lord Himself, thy Leader,
Shall all thy foes subdue,
His love foretells thy trials,
He knows thy hourly need;
He can, with bread of heaven,
Thy fainting spirit feed.

"Go forward, Christian soldier,
Nor dream of peaceful rest,
Till Satan's host is vanquished,
And heaven at last possessed;
Till Christ Himself shall call thee
To lay thine armour by,
And wear in endless glory,
The crown of victory."

SUPPLYING OUR NEED.

"BUT my God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory." Mark it well; "all your need." Consider as well, also, that God does not promise to supply everything that we may crave. "But," says one, "in that case we can never be satisfied; we shall always be longing for something." Not so; for the promise is, "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house." Ps. xxxvi. 8. He who has every need supplied ought to be satisfied. The reason why more people do not experience this satisfaction is that they do not realise that God knows what will supply their need better than they themselves do. Some men think that they must have whisky to satisfy their

thirst, whereas it will only increase it. Now if while they are craving the alcoholic drink, someone supplies them with a good, cooling draught, which satisfies their thirst, are they not much better off than they would have been if they had been given the object of their desire? So God often supplies our need by withholding the really hurtful thing that we have set our hearts upon, and giving us that which he knows is best. Our part, then, is to refrain from getting our desires fixed on any certain thing, as though that alone could satisfy us, and to trust His superior wisdom, to give us the thing that we really need. When we pray from the heart, "not my will but Thine, be done," we shall always have the desires of our hearts, and shall always be satisfied.

BEGIN TO-DAY.

"AND after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." Acts xxiv. 25.

The Roman governor Felix had sent for the apostle, that he might hear and pronounce judgment upon his cause; but suddenly he found himself at the bar of judgment instead of the apostle; and as Paul "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled." He saw a change demanded in his own life if he would be prepared for the issues of the future; but he said to himself, Not to-day. "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." But though Paul remained a prisoner in his charge two years, there is no record of his having found that "convenient time," when he sent for the apostle and heard further "concerning the faith in Christ."

To the unrenewed heart, the future is always a more convenient time for attending to the interests of the soul, than the present. This is always a suggestion of the devil. He keeps before the mind's eye the *ignis fatuus* of a future convenient day, when the heart will feel like attending to spiritual things, and the individual can prepare for the judgment to come, without the effort that would be necessary at the present hour; and meanwhile he makes it more and more difficult and incon-

venient each day for the individual to take a step towards God.

It is as true in spiritual as in temporal matters that success demands the vigorous improvement of to-day. To wait for a more convenient season is only to court defeat and eternal loss. When the destiny of the soul is at stake, convenience is not to be consulted. While the sentence of death hangs over it because of transgressions, the opportunity to escape and gain the life eternal must be improved at whatever cost. If the saying that "delay is dangerous" is good as a worldly maxim, how much more should it be regarded when it concerns the danger of the loss not of earthly possessions, but of eternal life in the world to come.

In words of solemn import the Word of God appeals to the careless, world-loving soul to delay not the work of repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ. "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found; call ye upon Him while He is near." "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." Ps. xcvi. 7, 8; Isa. lv. 6. "Exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Heb. iii. 13. Delay hardens the heart. To reject the light that you have now will never prepare the way for its future reception. To turn from the still small voice that speaks to you to-day will never lead you to heed the invitation that may come to you to-morrow.

Life must be lived in the present, and the present means to-day. To try to live in to-morrow or in yesterday, is but to dream away to-day. The devil doesn't care how much you dream; he is not troubled over your pleasant anticipations and good intentions. There is no difficulty to him in storming castles that are built in the air. He doesn't care a farthing about what you are *going to do*, but only about what you are *doing*. He has no anxiety about where you intend to be to-morrow, so long as he can keep you where he wants you to be to-day.

God knows that man must live his life one day at a time, and He has accordingly made His relation to him that of an ever-present Help. He does not give strength and grace for to-morrow, but for to-day. He "is our

refuge and strength, a very *present* help in trouble." Ps. xli. 1. Any other arrangement would be useless, because—

"Strength for to-day is all that we need;
There never will be a to-morrow;
For to-morrow will be but another to-day,
With its measure of joy or sorrow."

To-day is yours,—yours to make the choice for good or evil, life or death. "Choose ye *this day* whom ye will serve." Joshua xxiv. 15. "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; a blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day; and a curse, if ye obey not the commandments of the Lord your God." Deut. xi. 26-28. It is the hour of God's judgment (Rev. xiv. 7), and you have a case pending at the great tribunal. No life record will escape the searching investigation. You cannot put off the solemn issue. Prepare for it early. *Begin to-day.*

CHRIST THE BEARER OF BURDENS.

"COME unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matt. xi. 28, 29.

This is the invitation of Christ, the world's Redeemer, to all those "that labour and are heavy laden" in the journey of life. It is the invitation of Him who "hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows" (Isa. liii. 4); of Him who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities" (Heb. iv. 15); who has been "in all points tempted like as we are." He knows fully the nature of the responsibility He is assuming; and He is fully able to assume it, for He has said, "All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth." Matt. xxviii. 18.

It is a very easy thing to cast our cares and our sorrows upon Him who has thus made Himself the great Burden Bearer of the race, yet how few seem inclined to avail themselves of the privilege. He does not force us to give Him our burdens; we can carry them ourselves if we choose to. But He stands ready to take freely every load that is laid at His feet. Yet it is almost always the case that we take our burdens to our earthly friends, instead of to the Lord. We go to them for their sympathy—which perhaps they are not slow to give—and we talk over our troubles with them, and get such satisfaction from it as we can; but ah, who ever knew their burden of cares and grief to get any

lighter by this process? Who ever found that it did not, on the contrary, make it even heavier than before? And besides this, it has added to the load of others who already have burdens enough of their own.

But when we come to Jesus with our load, what a difference! When we have told Him all our sorrows, how much lighter the burden all at once becomes! and we experience the rest that He has promised to the weary and heavy-laden.

But let no one burden themselves with borrowed troubles, for all these they will have to carry alone. Jesus has not offered to take upon Himself our imaginary troubles, but only those which are real. He has said, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." To borrow trouble is to distrust God. Our blessings are not sent to us weekly or monthly, but "daily"; as He has taught us to say, "Give us this day our daily bread." Thus there is no occasion to burden ourselves with imaginary troubles, which are usually the hardest to bear.

NOT ALONE.

A GOOD minister was once sent to a wild and dangerous part of Australia, on an errand of duty and mercy. When he went he was too poor to be in any great danger from bush-rangers or robbers, but as he came back he had to bring in his saddle-bags a large sum of money, not his own, but belonging to the dying man he had been sent to comfort. He knew that a dangerous robber was aware that he was riding along this lonely track through the bush with all this money about him, and when he got to one part of the road he felt so frightened that he thought he was not trusting God as a Christian should. He wanted a little quiet, so he got off his horse and stood by it, with his eyes shaded against it, praying for faith and courage not to be afraid of bush-ranger robbers, and to be guarded against them. He prayed till he felt calm enough to ride on, and then he mounted his horse, and reached the town in safety with the money which he had in charge.

Some time later he was once more called to visit a man on a sick bed, and he recognised him as the robber of whom he had been so afraid in his ride. This man told him he had felt that he could not die without confessing that on that day he had followed him, intending to rob and murder him, but could get no opportunity.

"Why did you not do it when I got off my horse?" asked the minister, in surprise. "I could not then," said the bush-ranger; "there were too many of you."

"What do you mean?" said the minister; "I was quite alone in the bush—standing with my head resting against my horse's side for a long time. You could have killed me then."

"You were not alone," said the bush-ranger. "I saw you standing as you describe, but there was a man standing on each side of you."

Certainly there had been no other men with the minister in that hour of terror when he prayed, but God opened the robber's eyes, and showed him His angels guarding His servant as he went on his dangerous duty, as Elisha's servant's eyes were opened to see celestial guardians round his master.—*Selected.*

LOSING HEART IN WORK FOR CHRIST.

It is a sad hour when, for any reason, a Christian loses heart-interest in service for the Master. Idle hands, and waiting fields of opportunity! What excuse can you give when you stand in the presence of your Lord? Time for business, time for pleasure, but none for work in the vineyard. If this is the only excuse, be honest and admit that the real difficulty is lack of devotion and interest in the cause of Christ. Bring your life into close and vital relation with your Saviour. Drink in of His mind and Spirit, until it shall be your delight to do His will. "Follow Me," He says, "and I will make you fishers of men." Some either drop out of the ranks of active service, or continue to make but feeble effort, because of a feeling of disappointment at their lack of success. Let them remember that the test of faithfulness is in toiling while the seed is hidden from sight. Anyone can labour in harvest, but it is quite another thing to go forth and meet duty when there are no visible signs of good. But the promise holds true: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." The furrows wet with tears, yield an abundant harvest.—*Christian Weekly.*

THE GOSPEL FOUNTAIN.

DURING a revival a man who had been very worldly-minded, was awakened, but for some time concealed his feelings even from his wife, who was a praying woman. She left him, one evening, in charge of his little girl of three years of age. After her departure, his anxiety of mind became so great that he walked the floor in his agony. The little girl noticed his agitation, and inquired, "What ails you father?" He replied, "Nothing," and endeavoured to quiet his feelings, but all in vain.

The child looked up sympathisingly in his face, and inquired with all the artlessness and simplicity of childhood,

"Father, if you were thirsty, wouldn't you go and get a drink of water?"

The father started as if a voice from heaven had fallen on his ear. He thought of his thirsty soul famishing for the waters of life; he thought of that living fountain opened in the Gospel; he believed, and straightway fell at the Saviour's feet. From that hour he dates the beginning of a new life.—*Selected.*

LOVE IS THROUGH JESUS.

THERE is, of course, a broad sense in which the love of God reaches all men; but even this is only possible, because of the death and intercession of the Lord Jesus. Unless He had become the propitiation for the sins of the world, the love of God would have had no channel through which, consistently with righteousness, it could have poured forth its tides. Had it not been for Jesus, the flowers of heaven falling into the pit of sin would have been turned to flakes of fire.

But, in a deeper sense, the love of God has been stored in the manhood of Jesus. The Divine essence expresses itself in terms of human affection. And it is when we know Jesus and are united to Him by faith, and through Him are united to God, that we begin to experience the full tide of Divine love as it comes from God the Father, through the Son, to become in us a well of living water, springing up unto everlasting life. Then we begin to experience what Paul meant when he cried, "The love of Christ constraineth us."

It has been much debated whether this means Christ's love to us or ours to Him. But it comes to much the same thing. Christ's love to me becomes, as I open my heart to it, His love in me; and I need no more argue which is His to me or mine to Him than I need determine whether a shower is the product of the cloud that sheds it or of the ocean from which its particles were first derived. It is enough to know that all love is of the Father through the Son; that he who is nearest the Son is nearest the Sire; that to abide in Him is to abide in love; that by faith the love of Jesus may be drawn off into holy hearts; that we have to deal not simply with love, but with the King of Love; and that when He becomes an inmate of the obedient heart, He not only reveals his secret love, but loves through it, and pours forth by its every channel a tender, gracious affection, which sensibly raises the temperature of this arctic world.

Open your heart to Jesus, cultivate His friendship, live in His fellowship, familiarise yourself with constant consideration of what He has done for you. Love begets love; think, then, how much He loved you, when He gave Himself for you. Talk of Him to others till your soul begins to glow.

The love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Rom. v. 5. As the grapes of Eschol were a pledge that God would give the land from which they came, and He did; so the Divine Spirit takes of the love of Christ, and communicates it to us, as an assurance of a hope that can never be ashamed. We argue from the bliss which is to that which is to be. We are sure of eternity because it is already begun in us. Already we hunger no more, neither thirst any more, and are therefore assured of the land where the Lamb leads His flock to fountains of life.

Let us lay this well to heart, that the fruit of the Spirit is love. Like fruit, it swells gradually on the bough, reddens in the cluster, and ripens, man hardly knows how. Yield to the Holy Spirit; never rest till you have claimed, reverently and humbly, your share in Pentecost; be filled with the Spirit; thus you, too, will receive a baptism of love. When we are strengthened by the Holy Spirit in the inner man, we begin to know the heights and depths, and lengths and breadths of the love of of Christ.—*F. B. Meyer, in Christian.*

THE SECRET OF JOY.

SUPPOSE that a person should invite you to his house, and on your arrival you should find the window shutters closed, and the house looking as if prepared for a funeral. You would hardly regard yourself as a welcome guest, or that your coming gave your host any pleasure. If, on the other hand, you were greeted with open doors and lighted apartments, a hospitable feast and smiling faces, you would feel yourself instantly at home. Now in every sincere, healthy, Christian Jesus Christ lives. "Not I," said the sunny-hearted Paul, "but Christ liveth in me." That was the secret of his happiness. Outwardly, the homeless, persecuted apostle had a hard lot; but a more joyous man did not tread the globe. Never a whimper, never a whine of complaint, escapes his lips. "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice." Such was the jubilant message which he sent from Nero's guard-house, with a chain clanking from his wrist.

Ought every Christian to be happy? Yes; and may be so always, provided that he seeks in the right quarter for his joys. Paul was too wise to command us to rejoice in money, for wealth is a shifting sand-bank; or in health, for it is a variable possession; or in the society of household and children who may be snatched away at any time. Our joy, to be solid, must rest on something immovable. There is but one such permanent, unchangeable possession, and that is a loving Saviour dwelling perpetually in our souls,—a Saviour served every day.

"Do you expect me to rejoice when either a reverse or a rogue sweeps away my property?" Yes; because poverty, though it may strip us of a thousand comforts, does not strip away Christ. "Am I to rejoice when the coffin is borne away from my door with some darling of my heart in it?" Yes; the all-wise Holy Spirit considered even such severe throes of anguish when He commands us to "rejoice always." And simply because death does not carry Christ away. Nay; we may have a more full and soul-filling sweetness of His presence when we are threading the valleys of the "death-shade." "Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing,"—that was the apostle's experience. It was when the fig tree had no blossoms, and the vines no fruit, and the stalls no herds, that the olden prophet exclaimed, "I will rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation."

Good friends, you may be sure of this, that God never sent a trial so bitter that a genuine, Christ-filled Christian could not suck some honey out of it. God does not expect us to be callous under trial, or ask us to make merry at a funeral. But away down deep under the tempest of trial, He offers to implant in us a calm, sober satisfaction,—a serene sense that whatever He does is right; a sweet sense also of Christ's presence, and a delight in the smile of His countenance. This joy underlies the griefs of life and the disappointments, just as there is a profound peace in the depths of the Atlantic, while hurricanes are tossing its surface into foam.

Our happiness arises from what we are, not where we are. If we take Christ at His word when He says "I am with you always," then we can rejoice in Him always. That kind of joy is more than a privilege; it is a duty. Our Master commands us to rejoice evermore; to be wretched, therefore, is a sin. It dishonours our Lord, as every act of disobedience does. Spiritual joy is a sign of heart-health. Spiritual depression is an evidence of disease. When a baby moans and frets and cries, the mother says, "Something is wrong; this child is not well." Must not our loving Master, who is wiser and gentler than all mothers, regard us as disordered and out of harmony with Him, when we become sulky or morose, complaining or wretched? We all expect to be happy when we reach heaven. Why not now? Why parse heaven in the future tense so perversely? The possession of Christ is the beginning of heaven, and the more we have of Him here, the more shall we have of Him up yonder. Those who open every door and window of the heart to Him, will find the same light and joy streaming in which shall constitute the bliss of the New Jerusalem. Wherefore, "again I say rejoice!"—*T. L. Cuyler.*

GOD IS LOVE.

We love not one unless we see him lovely,
Unless we see that he is worthy love;
O Revelation of the high and holy,
Come, and unveil to us the God above.

For this command is given, to worship Him
In spirit and in truth, with no feigned loving.
The test is fine that tries our hearts, His love
Like fire goes through our souls with infinite
proving.

As one who loves detects the spirit's coldness
In one beloved, and grieves in utter pain,
So God, in subtlest chemistry of feeling,
Knows when He woos the heart of man in
vain.

O Spirit, come, reveal our heavenly Father,
In His unfathomed nature deep, unknown.
O let us see the matchless, glorious mercy,
That longs to make the unloving heart his own.

We read Him in the skies of golden splendour,
We read Him in the dew that soft distills,
We read Him in the star's eternal splendour,
We read Him in the everlasting hills.

O Word, that holds the universe in order,
O Love, that bends above the frailest thing,
What art Thou? Give us hearts to comprehend
Thee,

That we may know and love Thee, glorious
King.

We read Thee in all wondrous things of power,
In every tenderness to bud and leaf,
In watching the lone sparrow, and in bending
In infinite tenderness to share our grief.

We read thee in the footsteps of the Master,
Who from the manger unto Calvary trod.
O Holy Spirit, open to our vision
The wonders of the unfathomed love of God.

From faith to faith His righteousness unfolding,
In infinite glory, power, far above
All principalities, dominions, angels,
What is't that makes the Matchless crave our
love?

O God is love, entreating with compassion,
That cannot bear the sighing of the lone.
He is the Heavenly One who longs to gather
Beneath His sheltering wings His very own.

"Come," He is calling, "Come," with tenderest
pleading
He draws us with His great heart's infinite
love.

It pours an ocean, till the very heavens
Cannot contain the glories of the Dove.

He broods above us with desire unfeeling
To lift us up from the low carnal thing,
And crown us with Divineness; O high angels
And hearts of men, come, and adore and sing!

FANNIE BOLTON.

THE PLAN OF SALVATION.

THE law of love is the foundation of God's government, and the service of love the only service acceptable to Heaven. God has granted freedom of will to all, endowed men with capacity to appreciate His character, and therefore with ability to love Him, and to choose His service. So long as all created beings worshipped God, there was harmony throughout the universe. While love to God was supreme, love to others abounded. There was no transgression of the law, which is the transcript of God's character, and no note of discord jarred the celestial harmonies.

But known unto God are all His works, and from eternal ages the covenant of grace (unmerited favour) existed in the mind of God. It is called the everlasting covenant; for the plan of salvation was not conceived after

the fall of man, but it was that which was "kept in silence through times eternal, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known unto all the nations unto obedience of faith." Rom. xvi. 25, 26, R. V.

The purpose and plan of grace existed from all eternity. Before the foundation of the world, it was according to the determinate counsel of God that man should be created and endowed with power to do the Divine will. The defection of man, with all its consequences, was not hidden from the Omnipotent. Redemption was not an after-thought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam, but an eternal purpose, suffered to be wrought out for the blessing, not only of this atom of a world, but for the good of all the worlds that God had created.

Before Him who ruleth in the heavens the mysteries of the past and future are alike out-spread, and God sees, beyond the woe and darkness and ruin that sin has wrought, the out-working of His purpose of love and blessing. Though clouds and darkness are round about Him, righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne.

Through creation and redemption, through nature and through Christ, the glories of the Divine character are revealed. By the marvellous display of His love in giving "His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," the character of God is revealed to the intelligences of the universe. Through Christ, our Heavenly Father is made known as the God of love.

When man sinned, all Heaven was filled with sorrow; for through yielding to temptation, man became the enemy of God, a partaker of the Satanic nature. The image of God in which he had been created was marred and distorted. The character of man was out of harmony with the character of God; for through sin man became carnal, and "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." To the angels there seemed to be no way of escape for the transgressor. They ceased their songs of praise, and throughout the heavenly courts there was mourning for the ruin that sin had wrought. Out of harmony with the nature of God, unyielding to the claims of His law, naught but destruction was before the human race. Since the Divine law is as changeless as the character of God, there could be no hope for man unless some way could be devised whereby his transgression might be pardoned, his nature renewed, and his spirit restored to reflect the image of God. Divine love had conceived such a plan. It was through Satan's misrepresentation of God's character that man was led to doubt the reality of His

love, and came to look upon God as his enemy. As Satan had done in heaven, so he did on earth; he declared God's government unjust, the restrictions of His law unnecessary, and bade men, as he had angels, to throw aside the yoke and let the dictates of their own nature be their only guide and law. He promised liberty; but as he himself is the servant of corruption, he brought the race into bondage to sin, misery, and death. He represented God as claiming all, and giving nothing; as requiring men's service for His own glory, but denying Himself nothing for man's good.

In the work of creation, Christ was with God. He was one with God, equal with Him,—the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person, the representative of the Father. He alone, the Creator of man, could be his Saviour. No angel of heaven could reveal the Father to the sinner, and win him back to allegiance to God. But Christ could manifest the Father's love; for God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. Christ could be the "day's man" between a holy God and lost humanity,—one who could "lay His hand upon us both." None but Christ could redeem man from the curse of the law. He proposed to take upon Himself the guilt and shame of sin,—sin, so offensive in the sight of God that it would necessitate separation from His Father. Christ proposed to reach to the depths of man's degradation and woe, and restore the repenting, believing soul to harmony with God. Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, offered Himself as a sacrifice and substitute for the fallen sons of Adam, though in this offering all Heaven was involved in infinite sacrifice. But the Father so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that through His smitten heart a channel might be found for the outflowing of Infinite love for fallen man. Man had become so degraded by sin, his nature so perverted by evil, that it was impossible for him of himself to come into harmony with Him whose nature is purity and love. But Christ redeemed the sinner from the condemnation of the law, and imparted Divine power, that, through man's co-operation, the transgressor could be restored to his lost estate.

The grace of Christ alone could change the heart of stone to a heart of flesh, make it alive unto God, and transform the character, so that a degraded child of sin might become a child of God, an heir of heaven. Man had no power to justify the soul, to sanctify the heart. Moral disease could be healed only through the power of the great Physician. The highest gift of Heaven, even the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, was able to redeem the lost.

The only hope for the fallen race

was found in becoming reconciled to God. Satan had so misrepresented God that man had no true conception of the Divine character. Christ came to the world, and, in carrying out the plan of salvation, revealed to man that "God is love."

MRS. E. G. WHITE.

NOTHING BETTER.

A GENTLEMAN, who it was vainly hoped might be influenced by the reading of some sceptical publications, was offered by post a package of them. In reply to the offer he wrote: "If you have anything better than the 'Sermon on the Mount,' the parable of the 'Prodigal Son,' and that of the 'Good Samaritan'; or if you have any better code of morals than the Ten Commandments, or anything more consoling and beautiful than the twenty-third Psalm or, on the whole, anything that will make this dark world more bright than the Bible, anything that will throw more light on the future, and reveal to me a Father more merciful and kind than the New Testament, please send it.—From *Matches that Strike*, by Rev. Charles Bullock.

CHRIST'S COMPANIONSHIP.

If you and Jesus never become acquainted, it will not be because He holds Himself apart in lonely dignity. No; He has loved you better than He loved His dignity, and made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant. Do you despise Him for His humiliation? There is no occasion, for this same Jesus is now exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, and is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him. Are you afraid that He will despise you because you are so sinful? Be of good cheer; the Jesus who "must needs go through Samaria" to meet the woman at the well, who said to Zacchæus, "Make haste, and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house," is the same yesterday and to-day, and for ever, and is standing at your door, knocking, waiting for you to hear His voice and open the door, that He may come in and sup with you and you with Him, still ready to be the sinner's guest, still ready to feed the sinner with the bread and water of life.—*Christian Advocate*.

GRASPING TOO MUCH.

"DANIEL QUORM" tells us this story. "When I was a little boy, helpin' mother to store away the apples, I put my arm round ever so many o' them, an' tried to bring them all. I managed for a step or two. Then out fell one, an' another, an' two or three more, till they was all rollin' over the floor. Mother laughed. 'Now, Dan'el,' says she, 'I'm goin' to teach

you a lesson.' So she put my little hands quite tight round one. 'There,' said she, 'bring that, an' then fetch another.' I've often thought about it when I've seen folks who might be doin' ever so much good, if they didn't try to do too much all to once. Don't go tryin' to put your arms round a year; an' don't go troublin' about next week. Wake up in the mornin', an' think like this: 'Here's another day come. Whatever I do, an' whatever I don't do, Lord help me to do this—help me to live it to Thee.'"

One day at a time, one hour, one minute,—yes, one second is all the time we get at once. So our best course is to "Do the next thing next."

It is said that "lifeless imitation is decay." Right in the presence of the masterpieces of the Greek sculptors, medieval art produced nothing more than caricatures of the human form. They aimed to imitate, but their soul was not in the work. So with men who by their own strength seek to imitate Christ; so with the minister who seeks in his own wisdom to build after Christ. He will form but wretched caricatures of the Divine. The only way to imitate Christ is to have Christ's life within. The only way to build after Christ is to have Christ building through us.—*Signs of the Times*.

It is the little things which cause the Christian to stumble. It is the yielding to the momentary impatience, which results in a hasty word that one would give years to recall. It is yielding to the first temptation to drink, which makes the drunkard. It is cherishing the lustful, illegitimate thought, which leads to adultery. It is coveting which leads to theft. It is envying our neighbour some good thing, which leads to hatred and perhaps murder. Watch the moments. We pass this way but once. We can never recall to-day.—*Selected*.

THE Gospel is meant not only for the wise and talented, for those of quick and keen mental powers, but just as truly for those of imperfect culture, for the dull and heavy-minded, for the children in development, as well as the children in years. All that God asks of us is that each use aright such opportunities and powers as have been given him. Simplicity characterises both the essential nature of the Gospel and the divinely chosen manner of applying it to human needs. "The wayfaring man though a fool, shall not err therein."—*Congregationalist*.

"HE that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor." Prov. xxviii. 8.



AT THE HOME.

A MOTHER'S MISTAKE.

It was the time between the lights, the gloaming, and the firelight flickered and danced, and shed a ruddy glow on the various pretty nick-nacks scattered about a luxuriously-furnished drawing-room in one of the suburbs of a large city. The sole occupant of the room was a lady, apparently not more than thirty-four or five years of age.

A struggle was going on in that richly-furnished room in that woman's heart. A struggle between self-indulgence and self-denial, between right and wrong; no eye witnessed it, no one in the household knew it; but He, who knows and sees all efforts to overcome, looked down with anxious love on the contest taking place.

All at once she roused herself and exclaimed, audibly:—

"I cannot do this thing; it is an impossibility in my position. And just as the boy is growing up, too, and will want to entertain. Besides, what would all my friends think? Aunt Anne really must not bring her old-fashioned notions here; they may do very well for the quiet country set in which she moves, but—"

Here the door was gently opened, and Mrs. Howard's meditations were interrupted.

"Oh, is it you Anne?" she said as a sweet-faced old lady of sixty, wearing the garb of the Friends, entered the room. "I did not know you had come in. Did you find the family you went to look after?"

"Yes; but in a more pitiable condition even than I anticipated."

"Dear, how sad! I hope you said they were to send here for some beef tea and jelly."

"Yes, I told them so; but if the mother will drink, I see no hope for that sick father and those poor children."

"Really, I have no patience with a woman drinking, and especially a mother; it's too dreadful. It almost makes me shudder to think of it."

Aunt Anne looked into the beautiful face, with a yearning face, as she said:

"I always think, Alice, of what I, or any of us, might have been had we been exposed to the same temptation."

"Well, Anne, you need not insinuate that there's a likelihood of either

you or me becoming a drunkard; for if there's one thing I have a horror of it's a woman who drinks. But you do carry your crazes so far!" said Mrs. Howard, somewhat sharply.

Mrs. Howard was a young widow, her husband had died nine years before, leaving her with an only child, a boy, on whom she lavished a double portion of love and care. He had been a partner in a large engineering firm, and his widow was left in very comfortable circumstances. She moved in very good society. Her boy was now fifteen, a tall, well-made athletic figure, with a bright open countenance, full of life and fun—a son of whom any mother might be proud. He was at one of the large public schools, and was to go on to Oxford in another year; he was a universal favourite with both masters and boys.

Aunt Anne was Mr. Howard's eldest sister. Like most "Friends," she was a total abstainer, and when she looked at her bright, handsome nephew, and noticed how he was invited here and there, and how at his mother's table, young though he was, he had his glass of wine regularly at dessert, her heart misgave her; and she knew and felt, if she could only get him to become an abstainer, that he might be saved from much temptation, and probably from many a heartache. His father had died young, but even at the age of thirty-three he had learned to love his wine; and although it was never hinted amongst his most intimate friends that "Herbert Howard liked a glass of wine uncommon well," there were many who knew it to be a fact.

When the medical man, and an old friend of the family who attended him, during his last illness, said to his sister Anne, who had helped to nurse him, "that he might have had a better chance when pneumonia set in if he had been a total abstainer," she knew what this meant, and she determined to do all in her power to make it easy for her nephew to become one. She begged her sister-in-law to banish wine from the house then, and bring up her son on teetotal principles. She had spoken of the hidden danger lurking in hereditary tendencies, and lovingly entreated her to deny herself this one luxury for the sake of the boy. And Mrs. Howard, moved by her real anxiety, had promised to think over the question seriously; and, after thinking it over, she had come to the conclusion that her health would suffer if she gave up her wine, and therefore she must continue it. So the wine remained on the table, and Herbert—or Bert, as he was more usually called—had a "taste out of mother's glass" now and again. Time passed on, and when he went to a public school, in common with many of the other boys, he took the table beer which was given them.

Aunt Anne had not seen her nephew for three years, and she was wonderfully taken with both his mental capabilities and personal attractions. She had come to make a long stay, and to keep house for her sister-in-law, whilst she and her son went for a tour on the Continent. Before tea was over Herbert himself came into the room, shouting and tossing his cap into the air as he did so.

"Hurrah, mater; hurrah aunty. I've won the scholarship," he exclaimed.

"O Bert, have you really? My noble boy!" said his mother, and happy tears came to her eyes, and Aunt Anne looked radiant. How abundantly Herbert felt rewarded for the hard work and incessant study when he saw the joy of those dear to him!

On the morrow he and his mother set forth for a two months' sojourn in Switzerland and Germany. To both of them the days that followed were ideal ones; and in the years that succeeded each looked back on them as a time of perfect contentment and happiness.

The evening before Herbert started for Oxford, Aunt Anne was sitting alone in the summer house, her fingers busily engaged knitting; but her thoughts were with her nephew and his future. And as she was thinking of him he came in sight, sauntering leisurely along, with a cigarette in his mouth.

"Hallo, Aunty!" he exclaimed, throwing aside his cigarette; "I did not know you were here."

"Did you not? I am very glad you caught sight of me, for I have been turning over in my mind how I could manage to get a few minutes with you before you left to-morrow; and I feared it was impossible, and here you are."

"Now I guess you just want to lecture me a bit; is not that it?" he laughingly replied.

"No, not lecture you, Bert; but, my boy, I am very anxious you should give up your glass of wine."

"That's asking too much of a fellow now."

"Why is it?"

"Well, I don't want to make myself conspicuous when at college; and most, if not all, the fellows take wine."

The very reason you should not, Bert. I want my nephew to be conspicuous—yes, I do, dear boy—conspicuous for a high moral tone, and to have the character of being perfectly independent of others' criticisms so long as he is doing the right thing."

"You are a dear old thing, Aunty, and I would do a lot to please you; and I really do mean to keep straight,—but never to take a glass of wine is going too far."

"Well, you know all I wish for you, Bert; much more than I can express in words; and I shall say no more,

except God bless you, and keep you safe from temptation," and as Aunt Anne uttered these words her voice trembled, and a suspicious moisture dimmed her eyes.

Six years came and went, and Herbert's college career had closed. He had been at home some months, and as yet had taken up no profession. He had said on his return that, after a six or seven weeks' holiday, he should article himself to a solicitor, and work in earnest; but the weeks had passed into months, and he was still idle. A growing feeling of uneasiness was creeping into the mother's heart, though she would hardly acknowledge it even to herself; but the oftentimes late nights, and ever ready excuses, were a greater cause for uneasiness than even she dreamed.

It was late autumn. Inside Mrs. Howard's house the warmth and cheeriness were a great contrast to the dreariness outside, and she herself was seated in her little boudoir, surrounded by every luxury. Somehow, as she sat there, thoughts of a similar evening seven years ago, would come into her mind. Then, as now, she sat with her book and work lying idly on her lap; then, as now, she sat waiting the home-coming of her boy. But now there was this great difference. Then great possibilities of influencing her boy for all that was right and true lay before her; now these opportunities all lay behind her, and she had lost them for ever, for the past can never be recalled. Slowly and painfully she traced back the steps that had led to the present state of things, but she knew the fatal mistake had been in her own self-indulgence. If only she had listened to her sister-in-law's entreaties twelve years ago, how different things might have been! As Mrs. Howard sat and thought, her own self-indulgence seemed to stand out very prominently, and she was tortured by the knowledge that she had loved her own pleasure and comfort more than her boy's welfare. The scales had fallen from her eyes, and she saw herself before God as a selfish, grovelling, worldly creature, caring only for this world's approbation, and what was the result?

His ruin, perhaps body and soul.

"Oh! my God, not that!" she almost shrieked aloud; "not that. Oh, save him," she murmured, "from his mother's selfishness." And the beautiful woman wrung her hands and prayed as she had never prayed in her life before for her child's salvation.

She sat thus for nearly half an hour, until the maid came to take away the tea things and bring the lights. After a while dinner was announced, and still her boy came not.

That night Herbert returned home long after all the household, except his mother, had gone to rest, and her eyes alone witnessed her son's disgrace, and

God only saw the misery of her heart and the depths of her repentance and sorrow.

Again the years came and went, bringing in their train changes to all. It was spring, and the garden at Langford House, Mrs. Howard's home, had never looked more lovely, but she had scarcely noticed it, and had never once walked down its glades, or admired the bright spring foliage. Her place for weeks had been by the bedside of her boy who was dying—dying in the first blush of manhood, amidst all that makes life beautiful. Broken in health, with a constitution shattered by excesses; and, like the prodigal of old, at the end of all his resources he had come home to die. Oh, the infinite sadness of it all! "Consumption," the doctor said. But both his mother and he knew it was consumption hastened and brought on by the life he had led. Ellen, the faithful maid, was still with Mrs. Howard, and helped in the nursing and attendance as much as possible. But it was the mother who sat up during the long night vigils, and heard the laboured breathing and hacking cough, and who was distressed by the thought that she had helped towards it all by her own self-indulgence.

Herbert's career had been that of thousands of other young men. The old story, alas! so often repeated, of a fatal hereditary tendency towards alcohol, temptation yielded to, the will weakened, and consequently less and less resistance made against the craving for this fatal drug, until resistance became almost an impossibility. One lovely evening early in June, when Mrs. Howard was sitting alone with Herbert, he said—

"Mother, do you remember one evening when you pleaded with me to give up wine, and told me you had done so for my sake, hoping thus to win me?"

"Yes, dear, I recollect perfectly well."

"I have wanted to tell you how what you said then used to haunt me even when I was taking alcohol; and many a time I used to resolve that the glass I held in my hand should be my last. But it never was, and I never looked to the right source for strength. Oh, how different my life would have been had I yielded to your entreaties!"

"It would, dear. But, oh, how different both our lives might have been had I years ago, when you were but a boy, yielded to Aunt Anne's entreaties and banished wine from my table; instead of which I selfishly kept it there, and said I should suffer in my health if I gave it up. How wilfully blind I was," and she clasped her hands as if in pain.

"O mother, don't distress yourself. My own sinful folly has brought me to this," and as he said these words he lay back exhausted and closed his eyes.

Presently he opened them and said in a low tone—

"Mother, I know I am dying; but before I leave you I want you to promise me one thing."

"Yes, dear; what is it?"

"The money that would have been mine, had I lived, I want you to spend in trying to forward the principles of total abstinence amongst young lads, and I have been thinking I should like to found a scholarship at the Grammar School for the best essay every year on the subject—treated from a moral, scientific, and medical point of view."

"I, too, should like that, Herbert, very much. And I will, God helping me, devote my life to the cause which I now believe to be a sacred one."

Nothing more was said for a long time, and Mrs. Howard thought Herbert had fallen into a doze, but, as she was rising to leave the room, he said—

"Mother, it's all right if I am taken suddenly; the past is forgiven, for Christ's sake, and His alone," he added reverently. "Himself bare their iniquities."

"He shall save His people from their sins; and in His infinite mercy He has saved you, my boy."

That night Herbert was taken much worse, and when the doctor arrived he said it was only a question of a few hours—and before another day had closed he had passed away.

The night before the funeral the mother went alone to take a last look at him who had been to her the dearest thing upon earth, so soon to be for ever removed from her sight. She uncovered the face reverently and gently smoothed back the hair from the white forehead, and kissed the lips tenderly.

"My boy! my boy!" she murmured. "Dead! and through drink; and my selfishness helped to kill him. My God, pardon me, and help me to devote my life—the best of all I have to fight this evil of intemperance."

Years passed away, and during those years Mrs. Howard's name became known as one of the most self-denying and earnest temperance workers. "She speaks and pleads as though it were for her very life's blood," said people who heard her. Yes, she had given her very best to the cause as she had vowed to God she would. But no sacrifice, however great, could undo the past, or bring back her only child, whose early death she knew was due in part to her own selfishness.—*Isabel Maude Hamill, in The Alliance News.*

LOST MINUTES.—Time table (days in a year, 313; working hours in a day, 8). Five minutes lost each day is, in a year, 3 days 2 hours 5 minutes; 10 minutes is 6 days 4 hours 10 minutes; 20 minutes is 13 days and 20 minutes; 30 minutes is 19 days 4 hours 30 minutes; 60 minutes is 39 days 1 hour.



HEAVENLY LIGHT.

Lord! we sit and cry to Thee
Like the blind beside the way;
Make our darken'd souls to see
The glory of Thy perfect day!
Lord, rebuke our sullen night,
And give Thyself unto our sight!

Lord! we do not ask to gaze
On our dim and earthly sun;
But the light that still shall blaze
When every star its course hath run,
The light that gilds Thy blest abode,
The glory of the Son of God.

—Milman.

DAY AND NIGHT.

“And God said, Let there be light; and there was light” Gen. i. 3.

THIS earth was not always so bright and pleasant as it is now. We learned last week that when God created the earth it was covered only with water and darkness. But God, in his goodness, did not leave it so. The first thing that He did was to make it light. And do you know how He did it? God commanded the *light* to shine right out of *darkness*; and it did! (2 Cor. iv. 6.) He just said, “Let there be light;” and there *was* light. How wonderful! “Surely the Lord is a great God.” “Who is so great a God as our God?”

And God gave names to the light and the dark. “He called the light Day; and the darkness He called Night.” But it takes *both* the light and the dark to make a *whole* day, for the rest of the verse says that “The evening *and* the morning were the first day.” Say it over slowly and see which came first, the evening, or the morning. Yes, the evening, or darkness came first, for you know the earth was all dark until God made the light. So the first part of the first day was all dark, but after God said “Let there be light,” the *rest* of the day was light.

You see the dark part was first, and then the light part; first the evening, and then the morning. The Bible says that *every* day begins in the evening, just as the first day did. The evening, or dark part of the day, always comes first. But we shall learn more about this in another lesson.

Can you count? If so, count these straight marks: | | | | | |. Now you can tell how many days there are

in every week, for there are just as many days in a week as there are straight marks here on our paper.

Do you remember what was done on the first day of the first week? If you will read again in the first chapter in your Bible, you will see that there were three wonderful things made (Put three little marks through the first straight mark so that you may remember how many things were made on the first day): God created the *heavens*, and the *earth*, and the *light*. And that means, you remember, that He just spake and they were; He commanded and they were created! Name them over and over again, for you should never forget that on the first day God, by His word, created the heavens, the earth, and the light. “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” “And God said, Let there be light; and there was light,” “And the evening and the morning were the first day.”



1. Why can you see things so much more easily in the morning than you can in the night?
2. Who made the beautiful light?
3. When did God create the light?
4. What other things had He created before that?
5. Then what three things did He create on the first day?
6. How did God create the light?
7. What name did God give to the light?
8. What name did God give to the darkness?
9. And yet what did it take to make the whole day?—Both the darkness and the light.
10. Which part of that first day came first,—the dark part or the light part? Gen. i. 5, last part.
11. Then according to the Bible, when must *every* day begin? In the evening.
12. What is the colour of light? Matt. xvii. 2.
13. Name some white things.
14. What is the colour of darkness? Prov. vii. 9.
15. Name some black things.
16. Which part do you like best, the light or the darkness?
17. Why?

18. Do you know how many days there are in every week?

19. What do we call the first day of every week?—Sunday.

20. What did God do on the first day of the first week?

THE whole world was lost in the darkness of sin;
The light of the world is Jesus.
Like sunshine at noonday His glory shone in,
The light of the world is Jesus.

No darkness have we who in Jesus abide,
The light of the world is Jesus,
We walk in the light when we follow our Guide,
The light of the world is Jesus.
—P. P. Bliss.

“LET THERE BE LIGHT.”

NAUGHTY thoughts and feelings and actions are called sins. When a person's heart is full of sin he cannot see what he ought to do, and he stumbles and makes even more foolish mistakes than though he were blind, or were walking in the blackest darkness. So God calls sin blindness and darkness.

Every man, woman, and child in the world has sinned. Therefore the hearts of even little children are full of the dangerous darkness of sin.

It is more dangerous than common darkness, because it will cause us to miss the way to heaven, and will cause us to fall into the snares and pitfalls of Satan and be destroyed for ever. We cannot go to our *heavenly* home without light a bit better than we can on a dark stormy night go over a dangerous road to our *earthly* home without light.

Lamp-light or fire-light or electric light, or even sunlight is not powerful enough to drive the darkness of sin out of our hearts. Nothing but the mighty light of God's word can do it, the word which in the beginning said, “Let there be light, and there was light.” We cannot fill ourselves with light any more than the earth could.

God is longing to say to your naughty heart, “Let there be light.” Just as sure as He does, your heart will be filled with the marvellous light of His own purity and goodness, instead of with the darkness of your impurity and sin.

But God will not speak light into your heart unless you want Him to. If you *want* to do wrong, and disobey your parents, and be selfish and unlovely, He will allow you to do so; but if you are tired of sin, tired of your own way, and really want to give it all up and do God's way, just tell Him so, and let Him send His word, “Let there be light,” into your heart. Then Jesus the light and righteousness of the world will fill your heart; for Jesus is the Word of God.

Then as long as you daily study and obey His word you may walk in His light. But if you choose your own will, and grieve Him away, your heart will again be as dark and full of sin as ever. Jesus alone is the light of life, and you must walk with Him every day, if you would "walk in the light."

LET THE LIGHT SHINE.

AN earnest minister of the Gospel at Boulogne, France, Spencer Compton, relates the following incident in his own experience:—

"During a voyage to India I sat one dark evening in my cabin feeling thoroughly unwell, as the sea was rising fast, and I was but a poor sailor. Suddenly, the cry of 'Man overboard!' made me spring to my feet. I heard a trampling overhead, but resolved not to go on deck, lest I should interfere with the crew in their efforts to save the poor man. 'What can I do?' I asked myself, and instantly unhooking my lamp I held it near the top of my cabin and close to my bull's eye window, that its light might shine on the sea, and as near the ship as possible. In a half minute's time I heard the joyful cry, 'It's all right; he's safe,' upon which I put my lamp in its place.

"The next day, however, I was told that my little lamp was the sole means of saving the man's life. It was only by the timely light which shone upon him that the knotted rope could be thrown so as to reach him."

The Christian can never know when his light will be most required. He cannot tell the critical moment when a lost soul, struggling in the waves, must look to that light as a means of his rescue; and hence being in ignorance of these things, it is for him to let his light shine every day, to have his lamp trimmed and burning, and to be always ready to hold forth the word of life, and send a gleam of brightness across the wave, to help the shipwrecked and the ruined, and to save the souls for whom the Saviour died.—*The Christian*.

"NOTHING TO DO."

It was a beautiful summer afternoon. The view Amy had from her window, of grass and trees and river, all glorious in the sunshine, was enough, one would think, to make her look bright and happy, too. But she only looked discontented and restless as she stood fidgeting by the window, standing first on one foot, then on another, then on both, by way of variety, as though she had nothing in life more important to do."

Brother Tom looked up from his paper. "What is the matter, Amy?"
"Oh, nothing, only I've nothing to do."

"Do something for somebody, then," he said, and went on reading.

He was in earnest. Amy saw that. And he had said all he was going to, that was certain. She turned over his little sentence in her mind, wondering what she could do. Soon a bright look came over her face, which brother Tom was not too busy reading to see, and off she ran to carry out her thought.

"Why didn't I think of it before?" she said, as she hurried off to the woods a few minutes later. "There is poor Miss Fielding, shut up in that hot room, suffering, with nothing to think of but the horrid time she is having. She loves the woods so, but I don't suppose she will ever be strong enough to go there again; and how pleased she will be to have some ferns and mosses to watch!" On the wings of this delightful thought, Amy flew on her errand.

What treasures she found in those dim old woods! Tiny ferns and cup mosses in the rich black leaf-mould, delicate wild flowers with fragrant breath—how beautiful they were! The look that came into the invalid eyes when Amy laid the basket by her bed, was ample reward. "Why, I never knew you loved them so," Amy said, almost regretfully, as she saw the colour come and go on the pale face, and the delight which shone in her eyes. "I might have brought them long ago."

"It is a breath from the woods," the sick lady replied. "How good my Father is! This very afternoon I was longing for a sight of them—just to breathe their delicious air and fragrance. And He has sent you to give me this pleasure!"

"Oh, Tom," Amy said, when she had told him the story, "I shall never say I have nothing to do again! It is so easy to do something for somebody."
—*Parish Visitor*.

Interesting Items.

—By a fire at the Senate Hotel, Chicago, eight persons lost their lives.

—Professor Carl Miller, the eminent German artist, has died at Neuenahr.

—Seven people lost their lives in a railway disaster near Milton, Virginia, U.S.A., August 16.

—Fire has destroyed 200 houses in Minneapolis, Minn., U.S.A., rendering 1,500 people homeless.

—The British Indian Government is about to undertake a punitive expedition against the Kachins.

—A very severe drought, accompanied by intense heat, prevails throughout Spain, and cattle are suffering severely.

—The New Zealand Parliament has passed a Bill conferring the franchise on women both of the European and Maori race.

—Serious floods have occurred in Galicia and Hungary, involving great loss of life and considerable destruction of property.

—Crime in Russia is distinctly increasing. During the last year there were perpetrated no fewer than 2,401 murders, of which 763 were cases of infanticide. During the same period there were 1,736 suicides.

—A boat load of seventeen excursionists were drowned in the river Shannon, on the evening of August 15, by the capsizing of their boat.

—A Frenchman, M. Boutan, has devised an apparatus by which an instantaneous photograph of the sea bed can be obtained in deep water.

—Trouble is anticipated between the United States and Japan through a collision of their respective interests in the Hawaiian Islands.

—No other country in the world produces as many eggs as France. Her trade in this department last year reached the gigantic sum of £40,000,000.

—It is reported at Eagle Pass, Texas, from Monterey, that President Dias has called out the Mexican troops to put down a revolt at Cardenas.

—Serious labour riots between French and Italian workmen are reported from Aignes Mortes. Ten Italians are said to have been killed and forty wounded.

—The entire stock of the DeBeers Company's diamonds, (South Africa) were recently sold to a syndicate for £1,000,000, being the largest transaction in diamonds ever made.

—Destitution is lamentably prevalent in Johannesburg, South Africa. During the last fifteen months starving men have been supplied with 22,000 meals, and 8,489 applicants were given beds.

—The cholera is still spreading rapidly throughout Russia, and has obtained a good foothold in Central Europe, particularly in Naples, Berlin, and the Austrian province of Galicia.

—The coal strike still continues to extend, with no prospect of a speedy settlement of the difficulty. Meanwhile a scarcity is beginning to be felt by ship owners and those who run furnaces.

—The canal across the Isthmus of Corinth has just been opened by the King of Greece. The modern Greeks have thus completed what Alexander the Great projected, Julius Caesar decided upon, and Nero actually commenced.

—Petitions signed by 1,078,609 persons have now been presented to the House of Commons against Home Rule, by 1,239,019 against Church Disestablishment in Wales, and by 1,161,900 against Local Veto in regard to the liquor traffic.

At the Tuberculosis Congress in Paris, the cremation of consumptive patients was advocated, it being contended that earth-worms bring to the surface the bacilli which infest the dead, and in dry weather they may be inhaled in the form of dust.

—Religious riots have broken out in Bombay between the Mohammedans and Hindus, which have resulted in considerable loss of life and property. Two mosques and four Hindu temples have been sacrificed, and order is with difficulty maintained by the police and military forces.

—A terrible railway accident occurred near Pontypridd, in South Wales, on the evening of August 12. A train filled with passengers was rounding a curve at a high rate of speed, when several of the coaches left the rails and plunged down an embankment, resulting in death to twelve persons and severe injuries to many others.

—Telegrams from Buenos Ayres again point to a disturbed state of affairs in Argentina. Fighting has taken place at La Plata between Radical and Federal troops, in which the former appear to have been worsted. The Federal Congress at Buenos Ayres has decided in favour of the establishment of a state of siege throughout Argentina, and Federal intervention in Santa Fé and San Luis.

—The international Behring Sea controversy appears to have finally reached a settlement, the Court of Arbitration having rendered their decision in the matter, which seems to be satisfactory to both governments concerned. The decision declares that Behring Sea is not a closed sea, and adjudges damages to be paid to Canadian sealers by the United States to the amount of 1,500,000 dols., but places restrictions upon sealing which will operate in favour of the United States.

—A horrible discovery has been made near Warsadin in Croatia. A band of men have been detected in making a regular business of the mutilation of children, their crippled victims being afterwards disposed of to persons who send them out to beg in the streets of large towns, where their deformities excite the pity of the charitable. Three men have been arrested, and in the house occupied by them a number of implements were found for the forcible production of deformities.

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The Present Truth.

"I am the way, the truth and the life." "And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

LONDON, AUGUST 24, 1893.

FOR TERMS, SEE FIRST PAGE.

THE Lord said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark xvi. 16. Throughout the Bible belief is made the one condition of salvation. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts xvi. 31. The Gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. i. 16. "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established." Isa. vii. 9. Without belief there can be no salvation; with it, salvation is sure.

SOME people imagine that this is arbitrary and unjust. They say that it does not seem reasonable that one person should be saved because he believes a certain thing, while another, equally good, should be lost, because he does not believe that thing. The trouble is that they do not realise what Bible belief is, nor what we are to believe. Now man has no business to question the justice and reasonableness of God's requirements, and for the reason that God has given us overwhelming evidence of His justice; and His justice is not simply coupled with love, but it is love.

It is not by the belief of arbitrary and independent statements that men are saved. God does not make a statement of fact, and say, "Believe this or I will destroy you." The belief that saves is belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only manifestation of Divine power and goodness and wisdom to man. Belief means appropriation, identification with. Belief on Christ is the acceptance of Christ as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. He alone has life. Our lives have been forfeited, and through Jesus alone can we get life. If a man who cannot swim is in deep water, it can be said of him that if he will seize the rope that is flung to him, he will be saved, but that if he will not, he must be drowned. No one would say that we were condemning him to death as a punishment for not grasping a rope. So he who will not believe is lost, not as a punishment for unbelief, but because belief is the

laying hold upon Christ; and he who rejects Christ rejects life.

HERE is the one thing to be kept in mind: The belief which saves a man, is the belief that effects a change in his character, and not merely the passive assent of the mind. If the belief of any given thing cannot effect one's character, there can be no salvation in it. But this does not exclude anything that is written in the Scriptures, for the Spirit of Christ was in the men who wrote the Bible, and therefore belief in Christ means belief in His word. "As for God, His way is perfect; the word of the Lord is tried; He is a buckler to all those that trust in Him." Ps. xviii. 30.

WHEN the friends of J. G. Paton knew that he was about to enter the missionary field, they tried hard to deter him. One old gentleman thought to keep him back by repeating again and again, "You will be eaten by cannibals." Finally Paton said to him:—

"Mr. Dickson, you are advanced in years now, and your own prospect is soon to be laid in the grave, there to be eaten by worms. I confess to you that if I can but live and die serving and honouring the Lord Jesus, it will make no difference to me whether I am eaten by cannibals or by worms; and in the great resurrection day, my resurrection body will arise fair as yours in the likeness of our risen Redeemer."

That was not only philosophical, but it indicated some of the spirit that led Paul to say, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God." Acts xx. 24.

IN some things men make much finer distinctions than the Lord does. Thus the different systems of religion are all labelled, so that there are, according to men, many grades between Christians and heathen. The common idea is thus stated in an article written for children:—

"Some people call everybody who is not a Christian 'a Heathen,' but this is not quite fair. We should not call anyone who professes to worship God 'a Heathen.' The Mohammedans, for instance, are not 'Heathen,' for they worship God. But then they do not worship God's Son, Jesus Christ, and their sacred book, the Koran, is not to be compared with our Holy Bible."

All agree that a heathen is one who worships some other god than the one true God. Now Jesus has said: "I and My Father are one." John x. 30. And again: "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." John xiv. 6. Therefore those who do not acknowl-

edge and worship Jesus Christ do not worship God; and they who profess to worship God, but who reject Christ, are worshipping a god of their own devising, and not the God of the Bible. And so we find that the Bible recognises only two classes of men, Christian and heathen. This should not cause those who profess to be Christians to look with contempt upon others, but to consider themselves, lest, while professing to be Christian, they may be by the Lord classed among the heathen.

A Contrast.—"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And God said, Let there be light, and there was light." Gen. i. 1-3. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." "For He spake, and it was; He commanded, and it stood fast." Ps. xxxiii. 6, 9. This is plain and definite; a child can understand it. Now listen to the opening words of a recent book entitled, "Reveries of World History, from Earth's Nebulous Origin to its Final Ruin," and note the contrast:—

"In the beginning, obedient to the word of Eternal Law, the chaos of Earth circled in the vastness. Formless and void in the profundity, out of formlessness, a form evolved.

Diffused in vapour, condensing by the force of gravity, and absorbing gaseous matter from its nebulous surroundings, the World wandered through limitless space, ordered by the natural but mysterious government of inexorable Law, etc., etc."

That is truly a "nebulous" description. After reading the two accounts, who can doubt that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men"? Surely all who have not become so "vain in their imaginations" that their foolish minds are utterly darkened, must agree with the *Chronicle*, that "the old is better."

WE are not very much in favour of the plan of writing biographies while the subjects are still living, and we are convinced that the Bible supplies incentives to missionary labour far exceeding anything that has been written since; but a little book entitled "John G. Paton, His Life Work," strikes us as being one of the best missionary biographies. It tells briefly, yet clearly, the story of the life of the one who was instrumental in converting the natives of the New Hebrides islands from cannibalism to Christianity. The book is a pamphlet of 66 pages, with the low price of one penny. Published by Alfred Holness, 14, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.