

THE
YOUNG BELIEVER

HIS PORTION, HIS PATH, AND HIS
PROSPECT.

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the
world; if any man love the world, the love of the
Father is not in him.”—1 *John* ii. 15.

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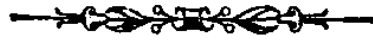
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THE YOUNG BELIEVER.



THE POWER OF THE WORD.



FEW years ago Mr. S., a missionary in Chekiang (one of the Eastern provinces of China) visited the city of Dzing Yüen, where as yet the gospel had never been preached.

One of the first who came to see him was Mr. Nyng, a Chinese gentleman of good birth, a literary graduate, well-read not only in the literature of his own country, but also in many European books of science which had recently been translated into Chinese. The many new facts, which he had learnt from these astronomical and other scientific books, had suggested numerous questions to his mind, and he came to Mr. S. to have his difficulties solved. The latter gave him the desired explanations, and then producing the New Testament, asked whether he had ever read it.

Mr. Nyng replied—"I bought one with various other books in Shanghai; but though I read it several times, I found little in it to interest me. Indeed, I could not understand what was the object of the author of the book, whereas the scientific books

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which I bought were to me intensely interesting." Mr. S., referred him to 1 Cor. ii. 14, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned," and said, "You are unconsciously proving the truth of the book itself. I was once like you: no book possessed so little interest for me as the Bible, until God by His Holy Spirit enlightened me, and then it became to me the most interesting book in the world; if you pray for the enlightenment of God's Spirit you will soon find it become interesting to you."

Mr. Nyng said he did not know whether there was a God or not; if there was one, He was certainly wise enough to enlighten him without being prayed to.

"Well," said Mr. S., "if you will not pray or yourself, I will pray for you."

Mr. Nyng went home saying to himself, "This is a very remarkable thing: here is a foreigner who has never seen me till to-day, and who feels interest enough in me to pray for me, and I will not pray for myself. There can be no harm in trying whether what he says is true." He took out the New Testament, knelt down and said, "O God, if there be a God, give me light on this book." He began reading in the Gospels, and soon became very much interested; the interest grew as he read on, and he could not rest till he had read the whole volume through. The light of the glorious gospel shone into his heart, and the learned Confucian

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sceptic was baptised, and became an earnest and consistent Christian. Not long after his own conversion his wife and two children were also baptised.

He lived fifty or sixty miles from the nearest European missionary, but in spite of the sneers and opposition of his own countrymen, especially those of the literary classes, he constantly preached Christ in the streets of the city where he lived, and God blessed his faithful preaching, as the following instance will show. One day as he was preaching as usual in the streets, he said, "Jesus is such a mighty Saviour that He can save the greatest sinner in the world." Just then a notoriously wicked man was passing by, and was struck by these words. He was the head of a large establishment some miles from the city, where gambling and all sorts of wickedness were carried on in defiance of the magistrates. Stepping up to Mr. Nyng he said, "Do you know me?"

"Of course I do ; everyone within fifty li (seventeen miles) of here knows you."

"Can your Saviour save me?"

"Certainly He can."

"When?"

"Just now."

They had some further conversation. The man went home, and that very night turned all the gamblers and other bad characters out of the house, and at once opened it for preaching the gospel, for which purpose it has been used ever since. From that day to this he has shown the reality of his conversion by a godly consistent life.

PRACTICAL PAPERS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS.

I.—SELFISHNESS.

LAST year we considered month by month various simple doctrinal subjects of great interest and value to the young believer, connected with his standing before God, his place in this world, his future hopes, in short, “his portion, his path, and his prospect.” This year we propose, with God’s help, to take up month by month some special danger or besetting sin, to which young Christians (and old as well) are liable, and respecting which it may be helpful to see what Scripture has to say. “To be forewarned is to be forearmed,” and these papers are written in the earnest hope and prayer that they may be practically used in pointing out and guarding some against those sins and failings which so often ruin a walk otherwise consistent, and bring reproach upon the name of Christ. It is by our actions in small matters that the world judges us; not by the amount of our knowledge of Scriptural principles, but by our application of them in daily life.

SELFISHNESS IS ANTI-CHRISTIAN.

. Let us, then, now briefly consider this emphatically *anti-Christian* sin of selfishness. We call

it anti-Christian, because it is expressly recorded of Christ our Lord, that He “pleased not Himself” (Rom. xv. 3). This strikes at once at the root of the matter, for when we read 1 John ii. 6 that we ought to walk as Christ, and remember these are the words of God, and then turn to the Scripture just quoted, we must at once see that all selfishness is truly *anti-Christian*. If, however, example is not enough, we have precept as well. “*Let no man seek his own, but every man another’s wealth (or good)*” (1 Cor. x. 24). “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others” (Phil. ii. 4). Most touching of all, perhaps, to the heart that has tasted the love of Christ, to whom *He* is precious is 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, “*For the love of Christ constraineth us He died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who for their sakes, died and rose again*” (R. V).

A SIGN OF THE LAST TIMES.

Selfishness is shown in many and various ways:—As one of the signs of the last days, it is said, “Men shall be lovers of their own selves,” or in other words, “selfish” (2 Tim. iii. 2). This is the root from which every variety springs. The selfish man seeks his own things, not the things which are others, still less those that are Jesus Christ’s (Phil. ii. 21), as the Apostle so touchingly writes to the Philippians, complaining that this sin was a great and crying evil in his day.

It is found everywhere even amongst believers although it is a vice so repulsive in its nature, that the man of the world outvies the Christian in despising it when shown in certain grosser ways, the latter only however, can know what it is to be truly unselfish in spirit in all things. How ashamed we feel when we consider how often our best actions are blighted by the foul spot of selfishness.

SELF THE OBJECT.

“Pleasing ourselves,” directly condemned in Rom. xv. 1, is a common form of “seeking our own.” It is seen in great and little things; in our choice of work for the Lord, in our choice of residence, of companions, of dress, of occupations, and in many petty ways in which we daily indulge, instead of denying ourselves. Oh! how ashamed we feel when we just sit awhile and think of our dreadful “self-pleasing” in little things; always looking out for “number one.” So contrary are we in spirit to our beloved Lord.

SEEKING OUR OWN.

Another phase of “seeking our own” (Phil. ii. 21) is in eagerly pursuing some worldly advantage, being unscrupulous in money-making, or keen in money-saving. All this becomes much worse, terribly worse, if in any way hypocrisy comes in to aid our selfishness. Oh! it is fearful to think how the name of Christ is despised by men of the world through those who should be “His epistle,” thus seeking their own, for they instinctively know

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that Christians should be unselfish, though all the time they may be selfish enough themselves. Paul was not like this.—“Not seeking my own profit (1 Cor. x. 33). This line of conduct is powerfully described in Is. lvi. 11, “They all look to their own way, every one for his gain.” Surely it is a sign of the last times when a professing Christian is heard urging another to “raise himself in the world by pushing others down.” It may be there are not many bold enough to give such fearfully unchristian advice, but are there not hundreds who in the main practically follow it? Another form is seeking precedence of others. Such selfishness was displayed in Matt. xx. 20, and gently rebuked by Christ. It is often seen, alas! in spiritual as well as worldly matters, and many have been the bitter parties or factions that have been developed from this form of selfishness. Let us judge ourselves as to this, seeking neither the chief seats in synagogues, nor the greetings in the markets.

NOT CARING FOR OTHERS.

Neglecting the poor (1 John iii. 17) is a flagrant form of selfishness strongly condemned by the Word. Often it is unintentional, and arises simply from a habit of considering ourselves instead of others. In some cases selfishness may give, to get rid of annoyance, but it can never give with true sympathy. That rare and tender plant of Christian growth (see 1 Peter iii. 8; R. V. margin) cannot grow in the same atmosphere as “self.”

In many cases we do not *mean* to be selfish, but

being careless in following Christ and having naturally ourselves instead of Him as our object, this vice shows itself in little ways in almost all we do. We trust that to many of our readers a word will be enough to point out this unchristlike sin which perhaps unknown to themselves has been undermining their Christian life and taking away from the power of their words to others. If we look at one of the characteristics of "love" in 1 Cor. xiii. 5 "Seeketh not her own," and then turn and quietly look at our own lives by the side of it, the light of the Word like a sunbeam in a dusty room throws out into strong relief all the "little foxes" of small petty selfish deeds that have so spoiled our spiritual life.

THE REMEDY.

What, then, is the remedy for selfishness? One might answer, "To think of others," as in the parable of the good Samaritan. This is a good and Christian habit—to find a neighbour in every one whom I can serve and to love him as myself. It is most important to acquire a habit of thinking of the comfort, convenience and wishes of others on all occasions, and seeking to please my neighbour for his good unto edification at all times, but there is a more excellent way yet, and that is *for Christ to become the centre of my thoughts* instead of my self, so that all my actions naturally have reference to Him. In this way I not only become truly unselfish, but I become (not only negatively but) positively like Christ,

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Dear fellow believer, this is the sort of Christianity which is understood amongst men, and brings true glory to God. When a man gives up voluntarily the best place, to which he has an undoubted right, when he foregoes his own advantage, and to his own loss goes out of his way to show kindness to others, when he *becomes poor*, and not merely gives of his abundance, for the sake of Christ's people whose need he provides for, and when he not only spends but is spent for others, then indeed does he become an epistle of Christ known and read of all men. None can pass a man unobserved in whom the brand of selfishness has been obliterated by the fresh brand of Christ (Gal. vi).

Oh, may His love *constrain us* thus to live to His glory !



THE EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT.

By the author of "A Praise Song," A.D. 1300.

To praise Him in the dance ! O blessed day !
 The pilgrim journey done.
 No more press forward on the weary way,
 For all is reached and won.
 His hand at last, the hand once pierced for me,
 For ever holdeth mine.
 O Lord, no songs, no harps of heaven will be
 Sweet as one word of Thine.

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Lord, altogether lovely ! then at last,
 High shall the guerdon be ;
 Thy kiss outweigh the weary ages past
 Of hearts that break for Thee.

* * * * *

Yet *now* I know Thee as the hidden bread,
 The blessed One who died,
 Who sitteth at my table, by my bed,
 Who walketh at my side.
 I know Thee as the fountain of deep bliss,
 Whereof one drop shall make
 The joys of all the world as bitterness,
 My Lord, for Thy sweet sake.
 Lord, Thou hast loved me—and henceforth to me
 Earth's noonday is but gloom ;
 My soul sails forth on the eternal sea
 And leaves the shore of doom.
 I pass within the glory even now,
 Where shapes and words are not :
 For joy that passeth words, O Lord, art Thou,
 A bliss that passeth thought.
 I enter there, for Thou hast borne away
 The burden of my sin,
 With conscience clear as heaven's unclouded day
 Thy courts I enter in.
 Heaven now for me ! for ever Christ and heaven !
 The endless NOW begun—
 No *promise*—but a gift eternal *given*,
 Because the work is done.

(About A. D. 1325.)

BACK YARDS.

A large, ornate, black and white decorative initial letter 'I' with intricate floral and scrollwork patterns. It is positioned at the start of the first paragraph, partially overlapping the word 'IN'.

IN travelling to town I often pass along a line of railway that runs for some distance just on a level with the roofs of the houses. Many and various are the views which are presented to the eye in rapid succession.

At times we run along the back of a long line of houses which face into a street parallel with the line. Every variety of domestic life is revealed to our gaze, and often every variety of dirt and disorder. The most amazing contrasts, however, are seen when we cut across a number of streets running at right angles to the railway. At one moment we are looking down into a quiet deserted street, that looks very neat and tidy. In the windows of the houses white blinds are drawn half-way down, while on the ground floor a basket of wax-work flowers, or a plant in a glass case, fills up the remaining space. The door steps are beautifully white, the brass knockers well polished. Everything looks very orderly to the eye. But in a moment the scene changes. And what a change! No vestige of tidiness or cleanliness seems to be left. Crowds of small back yards, covered with broken bricks and other rubbish, encumbered with unsightly outbuildings, unhealthy looking cisterns, and generally clothes drying.

On every side are heaps of rubbish, broken palings, rotting timber, and other lumber, while here and there matters are made still worse by some trade being carried on in an old tumble down shed or workshop. Surely we have suddenly got into another district. A scene like this cannot have any connection with the street we have just passed with its air of quiet respectability. Such would be our thoughts if our eyes did not assure us that these were but the backs of the very houses which faced the street. What, then, is the reason for such a contrast? Simply that the one is intended to be seen, the latter is not. Those who built them did not know, or if they knew, did not care to think, that a railway would pass over the ground, and, from crowded trains, thousands of eyes would peer behind the scenes and judge of the inhabitants far more by the back yard than the front door.

What a lesson lies here for us? We all have front doors, kept smart and clean. None can be quieter, more upright, and more devout than many of us when man's eye is upon us. The part of our lives that is intended to be seen is very good, and leaves but little to be desired, it may be. But do we really think, have we ever fully grasped the fact, that the All Seeing Eye, which is silently judging our lives far above us all, sees the backs of our lives as clearly as the front, and judges us far more by the state of the back yard than the front door? Once we really grasp the

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fact, "Thou God seest me," how worse than foolish does it seem to have any difference between the two.

Of course if we are content to live for human approval, we may get it. For man can only walk along the street and see the clean door-steps and the wax flowers; but if we are living before God, all such external show is worse than useless. *He must have reality.* Perhaps these lines may be read by some who have been seeking to keep up a fair religious appearance, while all the time they are going on with secret, sinful, or ungodly lives. We have heard of servants who have not been ashamed to listen devoutly to family prayers, and very shortly afterwards appropriate what was not their own, heedless of God's all-seeing eye. We have also heard of young men who were not ashamed to deceive their Christian parents and relatives while indulging in secret and ungodly pleasures; of girls who would return from a meeting with every appearance of interest, only to rush off to the hidden novel, where the real interest lay all the time; of business men, most regular in their various subscriptions, but often very shady and shaky in their business transactions; of Sunday-school teachers, who were anything but examples to their class when they thought themselves off duty; of shop girls and apprentices, most regular in their attendance at the Bible class or prayer meeting, and yet very unsteady after hours when under no restraining eye.

TO BE READ			TO BE LEARNED.	JAN.
1	Su	Matt. i.	Begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. —(What the Lord is to us.)—	
2	M	„ ii.	The Lord is my light and my salvation ; whom shall I fear ?	
3	T	„ iii.	The Lord is thy keeper ; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.	
4	W	„ iv.	The Lord is the strength of my life : of whom shall I be afraid ?	
5	Th	„ v.	My flesh and my heart faileth ; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.	
6	F	Gen. i.	Thou, O Lord, art a shield for me, my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.	
7	Sa	„ ii.	Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most high, thy habitation.	
8	u	„ iii.	Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps. —(Comfort in Trouble.)—	
9	M	„ iv.	The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.	
10	T	Matt. vi.	The God of all comfort who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in trouble.	
11	W	„ vii.	Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.	
12	Th	„ viii.	For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted.	
13	F	„ ix.	When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not over flow thee.	
14	Sa	„ x.	When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned.	
15	S	„ xi.	Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. —(Fruits of Righteousness.)—	

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

JAN.

16	M	Matt. xii.	And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.
17	T	„ xiii.	Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God.
18	W	„ xiv.	No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous.
19	Th	„ xv.	And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.
20	F	Gen. vi.	For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness and truth.
21	Sa	„ vii.	Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
22	Su	„ viii.	And when the hour was come He sat down and the twelve apostles with Him.
— (The Kindness of God.) —			
23	M	„ ix.	Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness.
24	T	Matt. xvi.	How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! therefore, the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wing.
25	W	„ xvii.	Hear me, O Lord, for Thy loving kindness is good.
26	Th	„ xviii.	Blessed be God, for He hath showed me His marvellous kindness in a strong city.
27	F	„ xix.	With everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer.
28	Sa	„ xx.	Because Thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee.
29	Su	„ xxi.	And He said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.
— (Early Rising.) —			
30	M	„ xxii.	And early in the morning, He came again into the temple.
31	T	„ xxiii.	And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place.

These are a few of the forms of "back yards" that are almost as common as the literal ones we have spoken of.

All such living is vain and sinful. Let us make up our mind whom we will serve, for we cannot serve two masters, or God and Mammon. Let us cease to spend all our care in polishing up the front of the house, and quietly review the "back-side" of our lives. Such hypocrisy as we have described, is strangely like the whited sepulchre of old, all fair without, within full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. "*We are,*" says the Apostle, "made manifest to God." He did not wait for the coming judgment seat which will reveal in its true light every hidden transaction of our lives, but he saw that the back view of his life was the same as the front.

Dear reader, it may be, if you are honest, that you will have to take a lower place in the circle of your religious friends, but let it at least be your true place, and seek to raise it, not by attending to the front door, but to that part which is *not* seen by man, thus "perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. vii. 1).



THE LAMB SLAIN.—The Son of God has died by the hands of men! This astounding fact is the moral centre of all things. A by-gone eternity knew no other future (1 Peter i. 20; Rev. xiii. 8); an eternity to come shall know no other past.

BIBLICAL WORDS AND PHRASES.

SEVEN SEALS. These are better understood if we remember that bound books are unknown in Scripture, and that the seven-sealed book in Rev. v. was really a great roll fastened at intervals throughout its length with seals in such a way that only the part from the first to the second seal could be unrolled by the breaking of the first, and so on. The interpretation of the seals hardly belongs to our province. Generally, they represent the successive dealings of God in judgment with this world, after the church is seen complete in heaven in ch. iv.; that is after the Lord's return, according to 1 Thess. iv., and before His coming in 1 Thess. v.

SHEEP. The name given to believers as composing the flock of God, Christ being the Shepherd. Younger believers are called lambs; the place of the latter is said to be in Christ's bosom, that of the former on His shoulder, the seat of love and strength. The sheep in Matt. xxv. are those nations on earth (from among the heathens) who will have accepted the everlasting gospel preached to them (Rev. xiv. 7), by the Jewish messengers (Matt. xxv.), acceptance of whom constitutes them sheep, inasmuch as in receiving Christ's Jewish brethren they received Christ.

SHEPHERD. This is one of the titles of the Lord who is called the *good* Shepherd in connection with His death (John x.); the *great* Shepherd in connection with resurrection (Heb. xiii.), and the *chief* Shepherd in connection with His return (1 Pet. v.), and with the undershepherds whom He has left to take the oversight of *His* flock, not to divide it up and call it *theirs* (1 Pet. v.) False shepherds are spoken of in terrible terms in Ezek. xxxiv.; Is. lvi.; Jer. l.; Zech. xi., &c.

SHOULDER. The seat of strength where the names of the children of Israel were borne by the High Priest, the part of the sacrifices the priest was to eat, and the place where the Good Shepherd carries His once lost sheep.

SILVER is typical of redemption, being the redemption money of the Israelites. The words of the Lord, the tongue of the just, saints in affliction, are all compared to silver (Ps. xii. 6 ; Prov. x. 20 ; Is. i. 22 ; Ps. lxvi. 10).

SINAI. The mountain from which the law was given. In Galatians it is contrasted with Mount Zion the one being typical of law and the other of grace. (See Heb. xii.)

SIN. The evil principle (called also the flesh, the old man), which was acquired at the fall. It is defined as lawlessness (1 John iii. 4, R.V.); in fact, the two words are interchangeable. The essential principle of sin consists in a dependent being like man casting off his allegiance to God, and acting in independence, according to his own will apart from Divine rule. The death of Christ was to put away sin from before God (Heb. ix. 26) ; eventually when Christ reigns, the principle will cease to be active anywhere on earth although it will exist in the hearts of unregenerate men, as will be seen at the close (Rev. xx. 8). In the new heaven and earth there will be no sin. This principle ever remains in the believer (1 John i. 8), although he is responsible to keep it inactive. Those that think the root is gone deceive themselves.

SINS. The fruit of sin, the root. These are all forgiven for Christ's sake to those that believe in Him (1 John ii. 12). All have sinned, and it is because of *this*, and not because they have *sin* that they are judged. I cannot change what I *am*, but I am responsible not to let my evil self act. No believer *need* sin. He cannot eradicate the root, but he may and ought to keep it in death that it may produce no fruit (sins), and never yield any of his members to sin (Rom. vi.). For I ordinarily commit sin through the medium of my body.

SINGING. This is first mentioned in Scripture in connection with redemption. None but those who are redeemed can truly sing. It is characteristic of the joy of heaven, and the praises of God's people on earth. The early Christian Church were wonderful singers: the joy of resurrection, of a new life was so fresh in their hearts

BIBLICAL WORDS AND PHRASES.

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that even now we can read their songs in the catacombs of Rome. Singing, as at present known, really came in with Christianity. It was the joy of the early Christians that so amazed the heathens around them. This new burst of song amazed alike the Greek philosopher and the savage barbarian.

SIX. One short of perfection, and characteristic of everything in this world ; 666 is the number of "the beast" in the Revelation.

SKIN. One of the three parts that was the priest's portion of the sacrifices (see Lev. vii.), the other two being the breast and the shoulder. The meaning of the two latter is quite clear, the skin probably represents the beauty of the animal. Christians, therefore, typified by the priest, enjoy the strength, the love, and the beauty of Christ as their portion.

SLEEP. The term used for death (John xi.) in the case of believers ; death having been abolished for them by Christ : even the fact of sleeping being uncertain ("We shall not all sleep," 1 Cor. xv. 51.), owing to the Lord's return.

SODOM. Chiefly remarkable as having been the place where Lot lived after leaving Abraham, falling in spiritual power as he rose in earthly, till when he was a magistrate (Gen. xix. 1) his warnings of judgments were treated as mockery (xix. 14), and angels preferred the wicked streets of the city to the shelter of his roof (xix. 2). Jerusalem is compared to Sodom in Rev. xi. 8. Wicked, though *the place was, it will be better off in the day of judgment* than where there has been the refusal of greater light, as at Capernaum (Matt. xii), and certain places at the present time.

SOJOURNING. This word is used as a contrast to dwelling. A sojourner is one who stays *en route* for a night or so, but is not a native of the place. So the Christian, a native of heaven not of earth, but sojourns here, his dwelling place being in heaven.

MONTHLY BIBLE READINGS. I.

The First Epistle of Peter i. 1, 2.

WE are going to read through the First Epistle of Peter together, and we thought that you, perhaps, dear reader, would like to make one of our circle. We only intend to meet once a month, and each reading is limited to half-an-hour, so that I am sure you will not be tired. You will be allowed to ask questions as we go on, and I trust that before we meet each month you will ask God to help you to understand the portion we shall consider together. We are only four altogether, including yourself. One is my friend G., who has been a Christian some years, another is M., a young lady only recently converted, a third is yourself, whom we will call R., and the fourth is the one who addresses you, whom we will call E. So now, without further preface, let us consider a few verses in 1 Peter i.

This book that we are considering is an epistle written by Peter. An epistle is a letter. We have 28 letters in the New Testament.

G.—"I thought there were only 22."

E.—"You will find there are 28 in all. Revelation, which you have included, is not one strictly speaking, but it contains seven epistles of Christ,

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thus making 28 in all. We may arrange the letters of the New Testament thus:—

LETTER.	WRITER.	LETTER.	WRITER.
1 to the Romans,	Paul.	1 to Gaius,	John.
2 to the Corinthians,	Paul.	1 to Smyrna,	Christ.
1 to the Galatians,	Paul.	1 to Pergamos,	Christ.
2 to the Ephesians,	Christ.	1 to Thyatira,	Christ.
	Paul.	1 to Sardis,	Christ.
1 to the Philippians,	Paul.	1 to Philadelphia,	Christ.
1 to the Colossians,	Paul.	1 to Laodicea,	Christ.
2 to Thessalonians,	Paul.	2 to Saints generally	Jude.
4 to the Hebrews,	Paul.		John.
	Peter	1 to Titus,	Paul.
	James.	1 to a lady,	John.
1 to Philemon,	Paul.	2 to Timothy,	Paul.

But there is another letter different in character from all these, being a letter from Christ to this world generally, not written with pen and ink, but a living letter, written with the finger of God. Can you tell me what this letter is, *M?* ”

M.—“ I think I can. It is spoken of in 2 Cor. iii. 3, and means all Christians.”

E.—“ Yes. Just think for a moment what a position that gives us. *We* are a letter from Christ’s own heart of love, to this poor dark world, and in us they are to read CHRIST—Christ a Saviour, Christ a never failing Friend. In short, what Christ is they are to read in our ways. We have no epistles in the Bible to tell us what Christ is. We have Gospels to tell us what He did and what He said, but the best epistle of all that tells us what He is is the believer himself. Oh ! to show more and more of Christ each day, and less and

less of self. Surely you, dear *R.*, will join us in this prayer."

G.—"Why does the epistle begin '*Peter*,' not '*Simon Peter*,' like the second?"

E.—"I do not know. One thing, however, we see: Peter was fond of his new name, and in this letter where he is going to speak about living stones (ii. 5), he takes care to claim his place as one by his name. This name was given by Christ, and must, therefore, be very precious to the one who, though he denied Him, was still loved with a changeless love. Are we fond of that worthy name by which we are called (Jas. ii. 7)? Are we proud of belonging to Christ, and being called Christians, of being saints, or sanctified ones, of being children of God?"

M.—"What is the exact meaning of *Apostle*" (i. 1.)

G.—"Does it not mean 'sent from,' just as epistle means 'sent to?'"

E.—"Certainly, only we must observe that every one is not an Apostle who is sent from Christ, the title being limited to the founders of the Church (Eph. ii. 20), specially chosen by Christ on earth (as the twelve), or from heaven (as Paul). But we must hasten on a little. Will you, *R.*, read the first verse through from the Revised Version?"

R.—"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect (who are sojourners of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia), according to the foreknowledge of God the Father."

E.—"That will do for the present. You see in

printing it I have taken the liberty of introducing brackets, in order to show the connection of "*elect*" with "*according*," the words between being in a parenthesis. These words tell to whom the epistle was addressed, namely, to those referred to in John vii. 35, a class who had lost and forfeited all the earthly privileges and position of God's chosen people, and to whom now, Peter unfolds by way of contrast the far more glorious position they had in Christ. They were already "sojourners" by compulsion for their "national" sins, but Peter, in this epistle, would teach them to be sojourners voluntarily on earth for Christ's sake (ii. 11).

M.—"I don't quite understand you."

E.—"I mean that we, as Christians, are called to be strangers in this world, and pilgrims to a better, because Christ has named His name upon us, and He who is preparing us a home above, and is still rejected here."

G.—"Why is "election" brought in here?"

E.—"To show the contrast between the national election of the Jews by Jehovah as a people, and the more blessed truth of personal election of those who believe by their heavenly Father." (Eph. i. 4.)

G.—"Some people I meet seem to have a great dread of election."

E.—"We ought to have no dread of any truth in God's word, least of all of one so precious to us as this, which tells us that ere the world was created we were subjects of the Father's counsels. What you say, however, is quite true, and it is because election is put in its wrong place; it is a

blessed truth for God's children, but forms no part of the gospel. As has been well said, '*Believe and live*' is written outside the gate of life. When once it is entered, and not before, the soul can read on the inner side, "*Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world.*" Why does "*sanctification*" come before "*the blood*" here, G.?"

G.—"I don't know. I thought justification by blood always came first."

E.—"And so it does in our experience, but the Apostle, speaking from God's side, shows that the electing grace of God is made effectual by the setting apart of the Spirit to obey as Christ, cleansed by the sprinkling of His blood from all sin. You will find a similar order in Eph. i. As a matter of fact, too, the Spirit of God begins His work in my soul before I have peace by resting in the blood. This sanctification does not mean practical holiness *that* is the result of "*obedience.*" We are said to be sanctified (in purpose) by God the Father (2 Thess. ii.) by the offering of the body Christ (the work) (1 Cor. i.), and by the Spirit (the power) here. Notice also that the sprinkling of the blood is the *death* of Christ, the obedience is the *life*. The former sets us free to follow the latter. And now, just three thoughts before we leave these two verses. First, we are set apart to the "*obedience*" of Christ, a willing, hearty, entire obedience to the will of God. Let this thought be ever present with us through the coming month. Secondly, we find the whole *Trinity* engaged here with these poor outcast "*sojourners.*"

OUR NOTE-BOOK.

"*Not many rich, not many mighty*" (1 Cor. i.) Wonderful, indeed, it is to dwell upon the love and care lavished upon us; and, thirdly, observe the last word of verse 2. It is never, thus, used by Paul. Both wish "grace and peace" to those to whom they write, but Peter adds "*be multiplied.*" What a portion for the poor scattered ones! And what a portion for us to enjoy! Thus we have the *path* and *portion* here, the *prospect* we will consider when we meet again (the Lord willing) on the first of next month. I hope you, dear R., will be sure and join us.



OUR NOTE-BOOK.

A. D. J. writes as follows:—

"I should like to know if I am right in selecting a few questions which one thinks are suitable, from those in the 'Y. B.' of the 1879 and 1880 for my Sunday-School scholars. I write out, every week, a question for each scholar, and on the back of the question is the answer to the last week's question, which are not given round until they have been seen. One week from the Old Testament, and the next week from the New Testament."

We have inserted our correspondent's letter, because we think the idea a capital one, and trust that it may suggest to many others, who labour among Sunday-Schools, similar plans. We must never feel weary of trying to ingrain the Scripture in the minds, at any rate, of the young, earnestly looking for blessing to the soul at the same time. For it is certain, that even if we do not see the latter, yet, if we have done the former, we have accomplished a solid work that will yet bear fruit in after years. Did not the know-

ledge of the interior of his Father's house first cause the prodigal's steps to bend homewards? and in how many cases the early taught knowledge of the love of God and the work of Christ comes back in saving power to the poor lost prodigal God only knows.

A friend takes exception to the statement in Oct., last year, p. 273, that the Red Sea served "as a grave for Pharaoh and his host," and concludes that it must be an error on the writer's part. Our friend also finds, looking at the event typically, instruction in the fact that Pharaoh's name is not mentioned. Now, looked at typically, we find the antitype in Heb. ii, where Christ not only delivered those who, all their life-time, were in bondage, but "destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil," in the type Pharaoh. We grant that in reality Satan has not come to an end yet, but his power, and that of death, has. In the type, however, we believe, from Ps cxxxvi. 15, that Pharaoh actually perished. "Overthrow, Pharaoh and his host, in the Red Sea." We cannot, therefore, acknowledge an error in the passage referred to.

We would again remind our readers of the companion magazine, the "Bible Student," the first number of which, in its enlarged form, is now out, and invite each one not only to take it in for themselves or others, but to help by sending to the Editor any Bible notes of general value that may be in their possession. Having now more space, all such notes (that are approved), will be published, the initials of the sender being attached, for future reference. We should also be glad of some good practical papers on the details of the management of Sunday-School classes, for *this* magazine.

We may just mention, for the information of new subscribers that all Bible Queries asked are answered in the Bible Student, not in this magazine. Those answered in the Young Believers are queries bearing on some practical point of Christian life. It may not be known to all our readers, that a class of Bible students is established in connection with our other magazine, for the purpose of united monthly Scripture research on a subject announced

PRACTICAL QUERIES.

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each month. Any Christian can join by just sending a paper in on any part of the monthly subject before the 25th, together with his name and address. His reference numbers will then be given in the magazine next month, and their names enrolled. None are invited to join but those who intend to send papers regularly each month.



PRACTICAL QUERIES.

Q. 17. In Y.B. p. 251 you say "a woman is not to receive any into her house who *hold* not the doctrine of Christ." Scripture says, "*bring*" (2 John 10). Your interpretation would involve our knowing the doctrine of everyone who comes to our house, *before* we could receive them, whereas God's word says, "if any come to us (as teachers), and *bring*, &c., Because they bring, they wish to teach, is the plain inference. W. V. P.

A. The passage does no doubt primarily refer to teachers, and is to guard against the reception of those who were false or heretical, and the word "hold" does not go far enough, as on the other hand "teach" goes too far. Spiritual language is always the best, and it says "bring." Of course if we do not know what a person brings we cannot be responsible; but if we *do*, and he should seek to shelter himself under the plea of not actively teaching it, he would still have "brought" it. Compare the growing evil in the churches in Rev. In ii. 14, they allow those that *hold* evil doctrines, and in verse 20 those that *teach* it. The one who knowingly countenances and supports those who "hold" what is wrong, would soon bid "Godspeed" to the teacher.

Q. 18. (1) Shall we all be satisfied and happy with our places in the glory? and if so, what does

it matter if we have a high or low place? (2) Will the examination be between the person and the Lord alone, or before all? M. E. L.


A. (1) All will be happy, and the joy of being with the Lord so great, that in a sense one is content to be even a "door-keeper" in that happy place; but just as around the Queen are all sorts of offices, for which people are selected according to their capacity and faithfulness, so in heaven. The higher the office too, the more intimate the relations are with the Queen. The private Secretary would hardly like to exchange with the footman, though both are equally content with their places. What we should seek, therefore, is to have our capacity so enlarged for spiritual things here, and to be so consistent and faithful in our walk that we may be fitted to enjoy a higher place near to Christ in heaven. (2) Probably all will come out before others, in order that we may occupy our true place. Does not the scene in John xxi. teach us this?

Q. 19. I often speak to my friends about Christ, but am often told that I should not speak, and that I am making "enemies;" besides which I so often speak hasty and unkind words that I cannot help wondering whether I ought not to give up speaking or writing letters about Christ. * * *

A. Do you not think Christ would rather have you give up the hasty and unkind words? Your query just presents one of the many ways in which Satan tries to stop the attack of Christ's soldiers on his slaves. He points out some flaw, or else he tries to frighten them. Yield to neither. As the flaws are pointed out, be thankful and tell God all about them, looking to Him for grace to remedy them, but do *not lower your colours*. At the same time there is propriety in speaking, and a "word in season" how good it is! Perhaps the paper for next month on "Speaking for Christ," may help you.

PRACTICAL PAPERS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS.

II. PRIDE.

 HE sin of selfishness, of which we spoke last month, may be specially characterized as the sin most unlike Christ, but the sin of pride is directly of the Devil; if the one is anti-Christian the other is Satanic. Such indeed is the calm language of Scripture. In 1 Tim. iii. 6 we read that being lifted up with pride was the cause "of the condemnation of the devil," and in Ezek. xxviii we read the detailed account of how the heart of one who was once full of wisdom and perfect in beauty "was lifted up because of his beauty," whose "reason was corrupted by reason of his brightness," and who therefore fell from heaven to hell.

PRIDE SPRINGS FROM THE HEART.

Pride is in every human heart, it runs in man's blood, all are afflicted with this disease, though by too many alas, it is regarded rather as an ornament than a blemish. The word of God says simply of "a high look and a proud heart" so much thought of in the world, that they are *sin* (Prov. xxi-4). They are hateful to God, (Prov. vi. 16, 17; xvi-5). and to Christ (typified by wisdom) Prov. viii. 13).

The root of all pride is in the heart, "out of the heart proceed pride, foolishness, (Mark vii-22).

How can a young believer get rid of a proud heart? There is indeed but one way, that is by sitting at the feet of Him who is meek and lowly *in heart* until we are ashamed any longer to cherish a quality so unlike Christ, so like Satan.

SPIRITUAL PRIDE.

Let us consider one or two varieties of pride spoken of in the Word. We find the type of one variety "spiritual or religious pride" in the Pharisees of old, who were not ashamed to come before God with words like these "God I thank thee, I am not as other men are." Surely no vestige of such an expression finds a place in the prayers of our readers.

We must remember that pride is one of the characteristics of the last days (2 Tim. iii. 2), and therefore we have need to be greatly on our watch against it. Spiritual pride is perhaps the worst variety, because it is not ashamed to show itself in connection with Christ's name, a terrible thing when we think that such profess to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. Let this sin at least then be kept far from us and let none who read these lines sin so fearfully against God, as to use His truth to help them to commit the very sin of the Devil—spiritual pride. When we *really* get into presence this can never be the case, "then went King David in, *and sat before the Lord*, and he said, 'who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house that thou hast brought me hither?'" (2 Sam. vii. 18). But when we are out of God's presence then boasting begins" (2 Cor. xii. 7).

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PRIDE OF POSITION.

Another sort of pride arises from riches and position. We may see an instance of this in Hezekiah (2. Kings xx. 13), in Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. iv. 30), in Belshazzar (Dan. v. 22), in Herod (Acts xii. 21), and in many others. The question is, Is it seen in us? Do we in any of our acts betray this mean, this debasing, this unChristlike spirit to any who are poorer and humbler than ourselves? Surely not; for if spiritual pride is terrible, this is contemptible, and clearly shows that we have never really understood the place where God's sovereign grace has set us. It is alluded to in Jas. iii.

THE REMEDY.

But it does not need riches to produce pride, this fatal seed is seen alas everywhere, and often those who are poorest are most proud, and this is especially the case amongst the Lord's people. Many having become Christians and mixing freely on equal terms as Christians with those they never could have met on any other, instead of increasing in humility, have lost what little they possessed, and developed a proud heart.

When we talk of having very sensitive feelings, and being hurt by remarks of others, it is often only pride, and shows how miserably we are taken up with ourselves. Another variety of pride is shown in outward adornment, dressing after the fashion of the world, and in a manner unsuited to Christian position. Another vanity is being puffed up by any gifts God may have bestowed upon me.

But I am sure that we have spoken enough of the evil ; for the remedy let us look for a moment at the Lord Jesus Christ.

We find in the first place that He Himself expressly declares " that He is meek and lowly in heart " (Matt. xi. 29). We find Him shewing this in various ways ; by taking our nature (Phil. ii. 7 ; Heb. ii. 16), in His choice of station in life (John ix. 29). How many of us who profess to show His spirit, if left to ourselves to choose our place in this world, would have made such a selection ? We are called to be conformed to the image of our Lord. Which among us is so ? We may well ask this question when we see Christians trying to be more than their fathers were, and pushing their children still higher than themselves. We strictly obey the first half of Jas. i. 9, 10, but how many rich rejoice when they are made low ? There

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is a line visible from heaven, whether we on earth can distinguish it or no. On one side of it are those who, be they what they may, would still be something more, or seem to be something they are not ; who cannot enjoy what they have, because they desire more, and cannot be gratified because they are not satisfied. There are those who are ashamed of the position their Master chose, and who are proud of one He refused to occupy. Christ and those that bear His image are not on this side of the line. It is not that we are called to change our station, but we are called to change our mind. But we must pass on.

PRACTICAL PAPERS.

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Not content with being a carpenter Christ became the servant of all (Matt. xx. 28., Luke xxii. 27.) even washing His disciples feet John xiii-5.) On account of all this He was despised (Mark vi. 3., John ix. 29.) and those who follow Him will be despised too. They will be called mean spirited, and will be pushed aside and trodden down by the proud and ambitious. It matters not. If they have but drunk at the pure spring of humility in Phil. ii., their souls will be so refreshed that they will be full of joy at bearing ever so little of the beauty of their Lord.

WHAT GOD THINKS OF THE HUMBLE.

Hear what God has to say of them. He hears them (Ps. ix. 17), they enjoy His presence (Is. lvii. 15) He delivers them (Job. xxii. 29), exalts them (Luke xiv. 11 ; xviii. 14), give them more grace (Jas. iv. 6,) while He *resists* the proud. Saints are exhorted to put on humility and be clothed with it (1 Pet. v. 5), a beautiful word, meaning that on whatever side we are approached humility is seen, to walk in humility (Eph. iv. 1, 2.) but to beware of false humility (Col. ii. 18, 23), which is only pride in disguise.

Nothing perhaps shows more the transforming power of the grace of Christ than when a man naturally proud and haughty becomes really meek and lowly in spirit; and nothing tells more strongly of the way in which the letter of truth held apart from Christ corrupts, than when we see a humble quiet person after coming among Christians become vain and puffed up, a sight alas ! which is not rarer than the former.

We plead then, in closing, that our dear readers will seek to cultivate the two graces of which we have already spoken, unselfishness and humility, and thus get a long way on in becoming like Christ, putting away from them, as hateful things, the anti-Christian sin of selfishness and the Satanic sin of pride.

But who is sufficient for these things? Thank God, the answer is not far to seek, "*Our sufficiency is of God,*" the meek *will* He teach His way. May we look to Him there in all meekness to put upon us more of the grace of Christ, and fit no better to become humble followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Oh may that mind in us be found,
That shone so bright in thee,
The humble, meek, and lowly mind
From pride and envy free."



MONTHLY BIBLE READINGS.

II.—1 Peter i. 3-7.

G.—NOW that we are all together once again, we may proceed to look at the third verse of our chapter, and notice that the R.V. gives "*living hope,*" which is more intelligible. Peter is very fond of the word "living."

M.—Yes, I have just been looking through the epistle, and I find that Peter also

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speaks of the "*living word*" (i. 23.) of Christ as a "*living stone*," (ii. 14.); and of saints as *living stones* (ii. 5).

G.—Yes, and you remember how he confessed Christ in Matt. xvi. as the "*Son of the living God*."

E.—This living hope in resurrection giving them their portion in heaven is in direct contrast with the Jewish hope (which they had forfeited) of living in Canaan. In everything Peter would show them they were great gainers by having Christ in place of Judaism. Paul shows this in Hebrews in connection with their *worship*, Peter in connection with their *life* and *prospects*.

G.—In what way is this hope "*through the resurrection of Jesus Christ*," (R.V.).

E.—Because His resurrection and entrance into heaven is a pledge of ours. I remember some time ago when in Switzerland, I passed through a beautiful valley, and stopped to enjoy its beauty. "We must not halt here," said the guide, "our home for the night is the other side of those mountains," pointing to a snowy ridge before us. "But how are we to get over there," said I, "Wait a little, and I'll show you the way" said our guide. So when we had got nearly to the top, I saw a gap in the snow line, through which, when we got a little higher, I could see far below me the pretty chalets of the little town where our journey ended. "That is the pass," said the guide, "it is the only entrance to the valley." The resurrection of Christ, who has trodden the way before us, is like this pass, opening up the way so that the eye of faith can

gaze on its home beyond. Were it not for this the mountain chain of death would close in our prospects to the world in which we live.

R.—Why does it say, “*God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ?*”

E.—To show that Christ is the Son of God and Son of Man. As man he can say “My God,” as the only begotten Son “My Father.” The words that follow “*hath begotten us,*” show that God is our Father, too, so that if Christ is “the Son,” we are “sons” too. It is important to notice here that Peter does not look at us as in Ephesians (Eph. ii.), as risen with Christ, but as journeying along down here, animated by a sure hope *through* His resurrection.

G.—Is not the inheritance, too, in contrast with Jewish hopes. The promised land at the very time Peter wrote was corrupted and defiled.

E.—Surely, and observe, too, that beautiful word “*amarynth*” (fadeth not away) used also by Peter in chapter v. 4., of the crown of glory, to mark the contrast from the perishable crowns of laurel or bay leaves so well known by those to whom he wrote. Amarynths are called everlasting flowers, or, as the French call them, “*immortelles*,” because they never fade. Do not let us forget that all this glorious prospect is ours, but let us read this letter as addressed directly to us, from that we may get all the comfort it contains.

M.—I long to feel more of the power of these things in my heart. Sometimes I feel so cold that I’m afraid I shall lose them altogether.

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E.—That is impossible for the feeblest believer in Christ, just look at the next verse. In verse 3 we have had the mercy and love of God wonderfully brought out, and here we have His power. In verse 4 the inheritance is *reserved* for us. (You know what “reserved seats” are, and how sure you are of getting your own, however late you may be, if it is reserved), and in verse 5 we are kept on earth by the same power that keeps the inheritance for us in heaven. We read of other things that are kept in Is. xxvi. 3 and 2 Pet. iii. 7. The word “kept,” is translated “guarded,” R.V., and means garrisoned with soldiers. It is translated in 2 Cor. xi. 32, “*kept with a garrison*,” and is also used in Phil. iv. 7, “*the peace of God shall garrison your hearts*.” Just think of our position, journeying on to a “reserved” inheritance, ourselves guarded by God’s power, our hearts garrisoned with His peace. What do *you* think of such a position, dear R.

R.—It is, indeed, wonderful, and seems so clear. I do not, however, understand *what* salvation Peter is speaking of in this verse.

E.—It is the salvation of the body, the final result of the work of Christ; the salvation of the soul you will find is spoken of as a present reality in verse 9.

M.—I have just discovered my three favourite words in this chapter.

G.—What are they?

M.—Faith, hope, and love. We get hope in verse 3, faith in verse 5, and love in verse 8.

E.—And where should these three be found, *M.*?

M.—In our hearts, of course. Why do you ask?

E.—Because I see many wearing them outside, in the form of a little heart, cross, and anchor. Now when I see these, I always think that this is a mistake. I don't mean the wearing them outside. *That* we all know is the wrong place, but I mean there ought to be a heart and two anchors.

M.—Two anchors! Why?

E.—Well, if a ship is anchored near the rocks with only one anchor it is pretty sure to swing round and be dashed to pieces on them. To be safe she ought to have two anchors, one at the bows, and one at the stern. Now if you look at verse 20, you will find that faith and hope are these two anchors; faith, the anchor at the stern, holding us firm when our sins rise up and our conscience roars—fixed on what Christ *has done* for us; hope, the anchor from our bows, holding us firm when storms of trial and sorrow beat upon us—fixed on all that Christ is going to bring us into. These two anchors resting on God, are always safe. And now being quite secure “fore and aft” our hearts are free to love—

M.—Christ in verse 8, and “one another” in verse 22.

E.—Very good. I see that we thus get faith, hope, and love, twice over in this chapter, and first, love is in connection with Christ, and then with our brethren. That is one very good lesson we have learned to-day.

G.—Does not verse 10 refer to verse 5?

E.—Yes, and the intervening verses are a

parenthesis. Reading the passage thus makes the meaning much clearer. Observe in passing that in i. 5, salvation is ready, in iv. 5, judgment is also ready, a very solemn thought for all of us, when we think that one of the two must be the portion of all. Now dear *R.*, let me ask you a question, which is the greater joy, that of going to heaven, or seeing Christ?

R.—The latter, for it is “*unspeakable*,” whereas the former is only “*great*.”

E.—Just so. It is a great joy to have a “reserved” inheritance in the midst of trouble, but oh! how far greater to have Christ Himself. As a poor man dying in agony in a Dublin hospital once said, “I like verse 3 of John xiv., but this verse 2, “*receive you unto myself*,” is more than even the “*many mansions*.” Observe if in i. 6, the trials art manifold; in iv. 10, the grace is “manifold” too.

G.—Does not the “proving” or “trial” in verse 7, refer to the proving of silver?

E.—Yes, and you know that this is continued by the refiner till he sees by the reflection of his own image, that all the dross is gone; a beautiful simile of God’s dealings. Do not let us, however, miss the beauty of the words “*if need be*.” There is no trial without a “*need be*,” and it is our blessing to seek to find it out. When discovered, the result of the trial is that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts (Rom. v.). But I think we must stop now; for I’m sure dear *R.* will agree with me, that we have enough to think over for this time.

CHRIST IS ALL



MORE and more I am made to feel that Christ does not have His proper place among the children of God. He is not *the* object. It is either a doctrine, a dogma, a party—my experience, something besides Christ. We often seem possessed with very much the same spirit that actuated Peter on the Mount, when he said: "Let us make here *three* tabernacles." The Father would remedy this. "While he yet spake, behold a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold a voice out of the cloud which said: 'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.' And when the disciples heard it they fell on their face and were sore afraid; and Jesus came and touched them, and said, 'Arise and be not afraid;' and when they had lifted up their eyes they saw no man save *Jesus only*." (Matt. xvii. 1-8.)

Have *you* ever been in the "cloud"? Have *you* ever heard the "voice"? Have *you* been on your face? Have *you* felt the "touch"? Then have *you* heard another voice, "Arise"? Do *your* eyes see "no man save *Jesus only*?" Many, perhaps, have reached the top of the mount; but few, very few, have been in the "cloud," have heard the "voice," have been on their "faces," have raised to see "Jesus only."

CHRIST IS ALL.

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"*Christ is all.*" (Col. iii. 11). Do we make Him this?" Is it a question of my salvation? As many as received *Him* to them gave He power to become the Sons of God. John i. 12. Is it a question of experience? "For to me to live is *Christ.*" Phil. i. 21. Is it a question of service? I can do all things *through Christ*, which strengtheneth me. Phil. iv. 13. Is it a question of my path? *I am the way.* John xiv. 6. Is it a question of heaven the place to which my path leads? He would define it as where *I am.* John xiv. 3. O let us know more of that rich blessedness which comes of making "*Christ all,*" of seeing "*Jesus only.*" Our cry should be—"O, to know him." Phil. iii. 10. In our selfishness we cry and beg for blessings. It is the Blessor we need, HIMSELF. He is the joy of our Father's heart. Let us taste with Him the delight He takes in His Son. Christ is infinitely higher than doctrine or experience. Experience we will have, but only with *Him* can our hearts be ravished and raptured.

Why is it we are not changed more from "glory to glory?" The vail has been rent; the blood has been sprinkled; the spirit is given. The reason is we are occupied with ourselves and the work of the Spirit in us, rather than with Christ *alone*. This is the weakness in the wide-spread holiness work so much of which is superficial. Let us look more into that unveiled face from which streams the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. (2 Cor. 3rd and 4th chap.) All else will pale, and fade if we will but linger here,

TO BE READ

TO BE LEARNED.

FEB.

1	W	Matt. xxiv.	And all the people came EARLY IN THE MORNING to them in the temple, for to hear Him.
2	Th	„ xxv.	My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee.
3	F	Gen. xi.	But unto Thee have I cried, O Lord, and IN THE MORNING shall my prayer prevent thee.
4	Sa	„ xii.	And Abraham rose up EARLY IN THE MORNING . . and went into the place of which God had told him.
5	Su	„ xiii.	God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering.
—(The Christian and the World.)—			
6	M	„ xiv.	I have manifested Thy name unto the men, which thou gavest me OUT OF WORLD.
7	T	Mat.xxvi.	And now I am no more in the world, but these are IN THE WORLD and I come to Thee.
8	W	„ xxvii.	I have given them Thy word and the world hath hated them.
9	Th	„ xxviii.	They are NOT OF THE WORLD even as I am not of the world.
10	F	Mark i.	I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.
11	Sa	„ ii.	As Thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.
12	Su	„ iii.	Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but ROAST WITH FIRE.
—(Rest.)—			
13	M	„ iv.	And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made, and HE RESTED on the seventh day from all His work.
14	T	„ v.	Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you REST.

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

FEB.

15	W	Mark vi.	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.
16	Th	„ vii.	Arise ye, and depart; for THIS is not your REST, because it is polluted.
17	F	Gen.xv.xvi	REST in the Lord, wait patiently for Him.
18	Sa	„ xvii.	And He said unto them, come ye yourselves apart into a dessert place, and REST AWHILE.
19	Su	„ xvii.	Your lamb shall be WITHOUT BLEMISH, a male of the first year.
— (What Believers are.) —			
20	M	„ xix.	If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant then ye shall be a PECULIAR TREASURE unto me above all people.
21	T	Mark viii.	But the Lord hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt to be unto Him a PEOPLE of INHERITANCE.
22	W	„ ix.	For thou art an HOLY PEOPLE unto the Lord thy God.
23	Th	„ x.	The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a SPECIAL PEOPLE unto Himself above all people that are upon the earth.
24	F	„ xi.	The Lord hath chosen thee to be a PECULIAR PEOPLE unto Himself, above all nations that are upon the earth.
25	Sa	„ xii.	For the LORD'S PORTION is His people.
26	Su	„ xiii.	They shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and WITH BITTER HERBS they shall eat it.
— (Without Carefulness.) —			
27	M	„ xiv.	When they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye NO THOUGHT how or what thing ye shall answer.
28	T	„ xv.	Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord. . (he) shall NOT BE CAREFUL in the year of drought.

A word here. The Spirit never occupies me with His work in me. And if I am thus occupied I am out of the Spirit. The word is, "He shall not speak of Himself." "He shall glorify Me." (See John xvi. 5-15.) To go further. The work of Christ wonderfully blessed as it is, was never intended to be the object of my heart. It gives my conscience peace, sweet peace, but only His *person* can satisfy the heart.

The Father would direct us to Him, Matt. xvii. 5. The Holy Ghost would occupy us with Him, Acts. vii. 55-56. The word of God would speak of Him, John, v. 39. He is the object of *faith*; He is the object of *love*; He is the object of *hope*; and the faith, or love, or hope, that does not make Him the object is spurious and unreal. He is all for my path; He is all for my service; He is all for my worship; blessed, blessed be His Name. He is not on the Cross; He is not in the grave; He is on the throne. Wondrous fact, a *man* in the glory of God, and that man my Saviour; my Bridegroom; my Priest; my Advocate; the One who died for me; the One who lives for me; the One who is coming for me. It is not surprising that Peter should say, "Unto you therefore which believe *He is precious*." Both the worldly world and the religious world seem bent upon shutting Him out. The former is "reserved unto fire," the latter He will vomit out of His mouth. See 2nd Peter 3; Rev. 3. Keep clear from them both, dear friend. If not clear, "Go forth *unto Him*." Heb. 13. He is enough—glory to the Lamb—and it pleases His heart for us to make *all* of Him,

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May it be with us, Christ, Christ, Christ. You will not get a greater portion or place, than He got. Your portion here will be "food and raiment" your place "*outside.*" *There* your portion is "all spiritual blessings," your place *In* "*Him.*"

(*Extracted.*)

 WORK FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS.—IV.

SPEAKING FOR CHRIST.

NOTHING, perhaps, is more difficult than to know when and how to speak for Christ. There is a well-known rule for Christian conduct, "Never go into any company where you are not free to speak for Christ." The rule is a valuable one, but it must be rightly understood. The "speaking for Christ" here must manifestly include the voice of the life, that conversation of which Peter so frequently speaks (1 Pet. ii. 12). In this sense it always holds good.

But in writing about work for young believers, by speaking for Christ we refer solely to literal speaking with the lips. Not but that the life-voice is often much to the glory of Christ, but it cannot properly be considered as active work

for Him. How, when, and where, then, ought the young believer to speak for Christ?

Before seeking to answer this question, we may just point out some of the circumstances in which, as a rule, speaking with our lips might be out of place, although a very few words on this will suffice, as, for every one that is too forward, there are hundreds that are too backward, and we should be much grieved if any words we might use were taken as an excuse for being ashamed to confess Christ.

As a rule, in transacting all manner of business it is far better to manifest Christ in the way in which you transact it than by any words you may utter. It is comparatively easy, though it savours greatly of hypocrisy, to utter a few religious phrases, while all the time keenly seeking to get the best of the bargain; whereas, to forego an advantage, to point out an oversight to your own injury, really brings glory to God.

In speaking for Christ, there is such a thing as propriety, hence it is certainly unseemly for young women to address men in railway carriages, or other public places; although, when questioned, it is their place to "give a reason of the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear." Many similar cases suggest themselves, but these scarcely need pointing out.

We come now to our subject—"How, when, and where to speak for Christ?" One of the most obvious spheres for this is the circle in which we constantly move. In the first place, we must find out by some means or other the real spiritual

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condition of our daily companions. We must do so gently, quietly, patiently ; but we must not rest till we know who are on the Lord's side and who are not. In this we should not be guided by actions only, but should get the confession of Christ with the lips *as well, wherever possible.*

Sometimes this is very difficult, especially when we do not plainly declare our Christian character ourselves. This is a great error. It makes speaking for Christ much harder, and takes away half the weight of our words. Very often, indeed, it silences us altogether, for it is only the believer that is really seeking to glorify Christ in his life, who can speak for Him. I shall never forget the rebuke a lady received who had invited a Christian friend to meet a distinguished acquaintance, who was in great anxiety about her soul.

After dinner, the gentleman turned to the hostess, and by way of beginning the conversation, said to her—

“What a blessed thing it is, Mrs. T., to be a child of God.”

“Yes, indeed,” responded the lady, “it is a source of great happiness to me.”

“How can you say such a thing,” broke in her guest, “surely *you* are not a child of God?”

“Oh, yes, I am,” said the lady.

“Then why did you never tell me so?” was the stinging reply. Ah! why, indeed! No doubt the life would not bear out the words.

(To be continued.)

BIBLICAL WORDS AND PHRASES.

SOLOMON is a type in his early history of the splendours of the reign of Christ in the millennium.

SONSHIP.—A distinctive Christian privilege. All believers in all times are children of God, but it is reserved for Christians to become “sons” by adoption (see Gal. iii., &c.), and to be able and entitled to cry “Abba, Father.” In an Oriental household this is more readily understood than in England; there there might be fifty children, most in the position of domestic servants, one alone being chosen as “son” and heir, so Isaac, &c. See CHILDREN.

SON OF MAN is the title by which the Lord almost always spoke of Himself, except in the Gospel of John, where characteristically enough He calls Himself more frequently simply “the Son.” He will reign in the millennium as Son of Man, thus restoring in the person of the second man more than all that was lost by the first.

SOUL generally means the natural life of man. Beasts have souls (Gen. i. 21, 24, 30; Heb.) (that is) animal life. Man’s soul differs from theirs in being directly imparted, together with His *spirit* by God, and hence is immortal (Ps. xvi. 10; Gen. ii.). The immortality of the soul we find mentioned by such a writer as Job, who was one of the earliest, and not a Jew (Job xxxiii. 28). We find him distinguishing between soul and spirit (Job vii. 11, also xii. 10). He speaks of all these, spirit, soul, and body (Job x. 1, 11, 12, and says in xix. 26), that in his flesh *he* (that is the complete man, spirit, soul, and body) would see God. He points out that the body is mortal, but not the other two. The *soul* in Scripture departs from the body at death (Gen. xxxv. 18), it can love (Gen. xxxiv. 3), has appetites (Lev. vii. 18), lusts (Deut. xiv. 26), hates (2 Sam. v. 8), is troubled (Ps. lxxxviii. 3), is relieved (Lam. i. 11), &c., &c. The soul thus is not the same, nor so high a part of man, as the spirit. See SPIRIT.

SOVEREIGNTY.—This belongs to God, and is the correlative of responsibility (see RESPONSIBILITY). God

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must be sovereign, or He would not and could not be God. Man must be responsible, or he would not and could not be man, but would be on the level of a beast. These two, however, being opposing truths, either unduly pushed clashes with the other, and neither can both be satisfactorily reconciled by the human intellect, and hence have occasioned endless schools and parties. To earnest, simple souls, however, these truths present no difficulty, but to *cavillers they afford a very specious ground for not* accepting the gospel against which their hearts are closed, on the score of not being one of the elect, &c. (See ELECTION).

SPIRIT.—This is the highest part of man. It was directly imparted by the breath of God (Gen. ii.). Like the soul, it is immortal. In Scripture it is said to be sorrowful (1 Sam. i. 15), contrite (Ps. xxxiv. 18), broken (Ps. li. 17), patient (Ecless. vii. 8), haughty (Prov. xvi. 18), &c., &c. It is the same word that is used for the spirit of God (see SOUL).

SPIRIT, The.—With the definite article prefixed, this word always refers to the Holy Ghost, the third person of the Trinity. He is God (Acts v. 3, 4), is eternal (Heb. ix. 14), omnipresent (Ps. cxxxix. 7-13), omniscient (1 Cor. ii. 10), omnipotent (Luke i. 35), is equal to, and one with the Father (Matt. xxviii. 19; 2 Cor. xiii. 14), He quickens sinners so that they are born again (John iii. 5, 6; v. 21; vi. 63), He seals believers (Eph. i. 13), He is the comforter (John xiv. 16), and abides with the saints on earth for ever (John xiv. 16), since He descended at Pentecost (Acts ii. and John viii. 39), to teach them (John xiv. 26), to comfort them (Acts ix. 31), also to reprove the world (John xvi.), He appoints and sends ministers (Acts xiii. 2, 4), directs in preaching (Acts xvi. 6, 7, 10), is the source of wisdom (John xvi. 13; 1 Cor. xii. 8). He is a person, not an influence, for He can be grieved (Eph. iv. 3), vexed (Is. lxiii. 10), resisted (Acts vii. 31), tempted (Acts v. 9), He searches all things (1 Cor. ii. 10).

He is now on earth, in each individual saint, and

with gathered saints, leading, directing, instructing. We cannot pray to Him as if He were in heaven, and ask for Him to be sent down. *He is here*, and what we have to do is not to grieve, tempt, resist, or quench Him in His actions and ministry of Christ to our souls.

SPIRIT OF CHRIST is an expression found in 1 Pet. i. 11, which means more than the Holy Ghost. It is Christ speaking, in spirit as in Psalm xxii. Of course all is recorded by the Spirit. 1 Pet. iii. 18, 19, is a little different, here Christ is looked at (Jehovah of old) as pleading with men (whose spirits are now in prison) before the flood according to His words in Gen. vi. 3.

STANDING.—This is a technical word commonly used to mean the believer's position in Christ before God as opposed to STATE (see STATE). Naturally, my *standing* is in the flesh (Rom. viii.), and in Adam (Rom. v.), but now I am in Christ (Rom. viii. 1). As to my standing I am justified, sanctified, perfect, and complete in Christ, brought into the holiest (Heb. x.), on the ground of redemption.

STATE.—This is the practical side of the believer's position. It is what he is in himself, not what he is before God, and the great aim of every true soul is to make his state correspond to his standing. My standing is perfect in every way, and all I have to do is to make my state correspond as far as possible. It will be noticed in every epistle that the standing of the believer is given first, before his state is touched on. Our state is based on standing, not standing on state. I cannot make myself the son of any one by acting like one; but *being one* (as to standing) I am to behave like one (state).

STRANGERS.—The position of the Christian in this world in relation to what is *around* him just as "pilgrim" refers to what is *before* him, 1 Pet. ii. 11. It is the fact of being a pilgrim that makes him a stranger. Christ was "a stranger here" because he was not of this world, and such should His people be also (John xvii.).

STONES.—Believers are called living stones 1 Pet. ii., being builded together as a spiritual house for the habitation of God (Eph. ii., 1 Pet. ii.).

SUFFERING for CHRIST.—This is spoken of in 1 Pet. iv. and elsewhere, and is the sure result of faithfully following Christ in this world. All suffering is by no means of this high order, though often counted so, being frequently on account of our own sin and folly or for some other reason. It is only suffering that is brought on directly from faithfulness to Christ that can be rightly so called. Such suffering is great joy.

SUFFERING for righteousness' sake.—This is distinct from the former, and is spoken of in 1 Pet. iii., and comes not so much directly from following Christ as from bringing in the light of God to bear on all daily transactions, and acting and living in strictest practical righteousness. Such suffering is very honouring to God, though hardly, perhaps, of such a high order as the former. Still, would we had more of it amongst believers!

SUFFERINGS, CHRIST'S.—These continued all through the life of our Lord from the hands of man urged on by Satan, but never from the hand of God, save on the cross, where He was made sin for us. To be a partaker of Christ's sufferings (Phil. iii.) is a high privilege. No sufferings from God by way of chastisement can answer to this. We cannot share Christ's sufferings from the hand of God, because He bore them that we never might. In this He was our substitute, but in His sufferings from the hand of man and Satan He was our example, in this "we should follow His steps" (1 Pet. i.).

SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.—The aspect of Christ on His public return to the Mount of Olives (Matt. iv.). To believers He is the bright and morning star (Rev. xxii.) which always precedes and ushers in the sun. The use of these two Scriptural figures greatly help in distinguishing the two comings.

SUPERSTITION is the belief of what is supposed to be supernatural, but which is untrue and unreal. It is thus contrasted with *Faith* which is the belief in what is supernatural, but is real and is true. To be this of course it must be found in the word of God, which is the sole authority in matters supernatural.

SURETY.—This means one who is taking the responsibility due to another, as in endorsing a bill of exchange, &c. Christ is thus the sinner's surety, taking upon Himself all the responsibility of his sins, and answering to God for them all. Humanly speaking suretyship is condemned (see Prov. xi. 15), but without a Divine surety we all were lost.

THE NOTE-BOOK,

THE following letter from abroad is interesting and may serve to introduce other letters we have received on Sunday School work, which we hope to print in March :—

"I would gladly have written sooner, but the Lord was leading me through trial, and it was more blessed for me to keep quiet, waiting for His deliverance. Truly, endurance must still have its perfect work, as the Lord still tries the faith He Himself has given; but, on looking back on the past months, my heart is full of praise. The Lord has led on, granting so richly every request which was presented through Him to God, my Father, strengthening and cheering in the darkest hours, and ever giving an issue, though I could see no apparent one. The *regular* and *punctual* reading of the Word has proved the mightiest weapon against the foe. Satan used several instruments more than once; bodily weakness would have prevailed had not Christ stepped in, and again strengthened and refreshed for the conflict. The Psalms proved a great blessing, and in my reading every morning, the Lord sent always the needed answers and granted me new strength and light. The Lord never sends trials without preparing us for them, and it is sweet indeed when the trial weighs on the soul, to think that He does all things well, and that He is never wrong. We do indeed spare ourselves much trouble if we simply keep on looking steadfastly to Jesus, letting Him go before us. Some time ago, I was especially intent on finding Christ more in His Word, I told Him about it, and shortly after, He answered the request by allowing some

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difficulties in my path ; which made the Word most sweet and precious to my soul. And when the heart is made willing through grace, He who has given the want never "tarries."

The article about novel reading has been of great use to me. For several years I have not read such books, but have been much exercised about reading as forming a part of our testimony before the unconverted, and also before other believers. Friends, pupils, and teachers often ask me about books, and it requires great wisdom and much love for souls to be led aright. Yet, since the Lord has given me more light and firmness simply to put aside any useless reading *because of the worth of time*, several doors for the testimony have been opened. At first, I feared to be misunderstood, but failures taught me that simple reliance on God's Word was ever blessed at last. Of course I was often asked to look over books to give my opinion about them, and the Lord used this also to give me more boldness, especially when I found one sentence slighting the Word. I firmly believe we need much watchfulness in our days of much reading, where so little is valued, and the Word of God so little known. I was very thankful for the hint about history and geography. Certainly learning and teaching facts is always useful."

"The wish expressed by a friend for some papers on the management and teaching in the Sunday School, lies on my heart. I trust the Lord will send the right answer at the right time. The work ever proves greatly blessed, when the heart is empty of self. Truly a gift for teaching and much love for children's souls' is required ; but before all Christ must be shown in His Word, and lived out in the life of a Sunday School Teacher. *Nothing else* will do in our days of formal head knowledge. But where the teacher ever receives more than he gives, no child, even the most wayward, can resist the Spirit's influence. Some time ago, a teacher, though quite punctual, found her children rather noisily waiting for her. As she saw them laughing and talking and moving about, she felt at first angry, and quite ready to scold them, when, suddenly, the

thought of the Lord's presence flashed on her mind, so she just looked up to Him, and when some of the children came up to greet her without shaking hands, she quietly said: "Children, have you forgotten that the Lord Jesus sees and hears you?" None replied, but all quietly took their places, and the teacher had never to complain again. We need to give ourselves up to the work, and this is always, and only possible, when the Lord Himself sends us. This is the great point, and here also He alone can guide. The whole Bible is also to be used—not only the New Testament. I find from experience, that children have gained much interest in being allowed to read a verse in turn of the given chapter, to be taught to find answers to questions in the Bible, always stating the chapter and verse, and to be allowed as a reward to choose a verse out of a chapter, to copy it out neatly, and to repeat it on the next Sunday. These text-books afford much pleasure and interest, and are generally well-kept up. Every mistake is pointed out, and the child being obliged to correct it, he gains more respect for the Word of God. These are but few practical thoughts, my whole heart is still for the work."

PRACTICAL QUERIES.

Q. 20. In "Biblical Words," for last September you say ransom is the amount paid to effect the deliverance of a slave, and also that redemption is the act of ransoming; but would it not be error to conclude that because in 1 Tim. ii. 6 it says Christ gave Himself a ransom for all, that therefore all will be redeemed.

A. Surely, because it is only "for" all, thereby meaning that provision has been made whereby any soul may be freed from Satan's power. Redemption is provided for all, but all are, alas, not redeemed because they will not come.

PRACTICAL QUERIES.

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Q. 21. Is it right for a Christian to ask God for a sign (such as some circumstance) to know if a certain course is right? Please give a verse of Scripture if you can.

A. The only verse we can give is Acts i. 26, where God did guide a trivial circumstance (the turning of a lot) to show His will. In the very next chapter, however, the Holy Ghost came down from heaven to guide us in the knowledge of God's will. We must not, therefore, be guided only by circumstances. God's word and prayer should bring us sufficient light as to His mind *if we wait for it*. Still we could not say that He never helps our blindness and dulness by circumstances, for we believe that He does; only such guidance is not that of the eye, but rather that of bit and bridle.

Q. 22 What does inability in any Christian to speak for Christ show. Is it coldness of heart? or is it cowardice? or may natural temperament be taken into account? S. B.

A. Perhaps this month's paper will help you. Speaking for Christ is a matter in which He must guide. We may fail from any of the causes that you have suggested. But temperament especially makes quite easy *naturally* to one, what the other is only enabled to do by *grace*. It need hardly be said that the overcoming of a natural hindrance shows more spiritual power than using natural ability. To compare ourselves with ourselves therefore is not wise. The great thing is to have *Christ Himself* for my soul's food, to be not only satisfied, but filled with joy unspeakable with knowing Him, and then, as opportunities offer, obstacles will be overcome, and Christ will flow out not only of our lives, but also of our lips.

Q. 23 Do you think that to be saved I must be much exercised about my sins (as some tell me), or is my dwelling on this, only Satan's work to torment my soul after being saved? G. D.

A. Your dwelling on yourself instead of your Saviour is a sure evidence of Satan's work. It is true you should deeply feel not only what sins are, but what sin is; but this is not got by looking at either, but at Christ, and considering the wonder of His cross when He *died* for you. Your sins nailed your Saviour there. Look up at Him, whom by faith, you know and believe your heart loves, and let your heart open to *His* love, and you will learn, as you know more of Him, to hate sin increasingly. At the same time, we cannot go on in our sins, there must be the true repentance, the turning from myself and sins to Christ and His cross. Only remember, you will never set things right by looking at *them*, all power comes from Christ.

Q. 24 In reference to Q. 377, "B.S.," In what sense is a child "holy by birth?" Does it mean the same as "born holy?" If I have the training of other little children besides my own, am I not to train them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? If so, what are the privileges attached to the child of Christian parents on account of its being holy?"

* *

A. It does not mean born without sin. All are alike as to this. But a special privilege attaches to Christian parents beyond their own conversion, and that is, that in faith they can come to God for their family, and train them up as those who may be actually, or who will be, in answer to faith and God's principle of "thou and thy house"—God's children. This blessed privilege holds good when only one parent is converted, and in a special way she can look on her children as set apart to God. Ephes. vi. 4, is undoubtedly written to *Christian* parents. As to other children, and the teaching of the Scriptures, it is right and blessed to do so—for the Word is for all, and the gospel is free as the air we breathe, and it is of the utmost importance to instruct all, especially the young, in its fundamental principles. We think, however, that the passage in 1 Cor. vii. plainly shows that a child of Christian parents enjoys special privileges which ought to be highly prized. Of course, it is all a question of faith to grasp it and claim it. We shall be glad to hear from you

PRACTICAL PAPERS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS.

III.—ENVY.



ET us this month consider briefly the examples of this dangerous sin, that have been written for our instruction (1 Cor. x.). I say dangerous because we shall see that such is its character.

THE FIRST EXAMPLE

is that of Cain. He, seeing that his brother's offering was accepted (being with blood), while his was rejected became *envious* of his brother, this led to anger, this to hatred, and this to MURDER, and in 1 John iii. 12 this case is given as an express warning to us as Christians.

The next illustration we may take is in Gen. xxvi. 14. The Philistines envied Isaac's *earthly* prosperity, just as Cain envied Abel's *spiritual* prosperity. (See Eccl. iv. 4). Their envy was shown by MALICIOUSNESS (ver. 15).

We next pass on to Laban's sons (Gen. xxxi. 1), who became envious of Jacob; Laban also became full of ANGER against him, though God did not permit him to show it (Gen. xxxi. 2, 24). It is worthy of note that, though Isaac and Jacob were both envied for their riches, we do not find that Abraham (although equally rich) ever was, a fact that says a great deal for his character.

The next example is that of Joseph's brethren in Gen. xxxvii. 11, and the result is, first they stripped him and threw him into a pit to perish, and next sold him into slavery for twenty pieces of silver, acts which we can only characterise as INTENSE CRUELTY, springing solely from envy.

We now pass on to Numb. xi. 28, 29, where we find the first instance of

ENVY IN A CHILD OF GOD.

Joshua is one of the last we should have expected to find this evil in, but the seed is alas! in all our hearts; and we actually find Joshua here trying to HINDER GOD'S WORK, led on by this fearful and dangerous spirit. It is, however, only just to add that it is possible that the envy was not for his own sake but for Moses', whose servant he was. We have only, however, to go on to the very next chapter to find an undoubted instance of envy no less an one than Aaron, the high priest, and in Miriam also. They did not like the growing nearness of Moses to God, and the difference of the way in which the Lord spoke to him and them; and envy led them to DESPISE GOD'S SERVANT. The Lord, however, did not leave Moses to fight his own battles, for Miriam became leprous, white as snow. The sin of Korah which follows closely in chap. xvi. was also entirely prompted by envy (Ps. cvi. 16), and led to still more awful consequences. Envy in this case led Korah, Dathan, and Abiram into fearful LYING against and REVILING of Moses and Aaron (Numb.

xvi. 13, 14) and brought upon them a most appalling death (ver. 32), so swift was God to visit their sin upon them.

ENVY LEADS TO MURDER.

Let us now pass on to Saul in 1 Sam. xviii. 8. Envy here seems to possess Saul so fearfully that it obtains a complete mastery over him, leading him three times to ATTEMPT TO MURDER David. To one who does not know how rapidly and fatally the poison of envy works, it seems almost incredible that for such a trivial reason (ver. 8) Saul could have sought to kill the very one who had just delivered Israel. Yet I am sure there is not one of us who knows anything of his own heart, but can trace the seeds of great crimes in the feelings prompted by envy.

In Ezek. xxxv. 11 we find in the case of Edom that envy leads to HATRED. In the case of Daniel (vi. 3, 4) it is, I think, clear that envy prompted the presidents and princes to their cruel course; which cannot be called anything but WICKED and UNSCRUPULOUS. We now pass on to the most fearful thing envy ever accomplished, in Mark xv. 10. Jesus, the Son of God, was delivered up to Pilate, from the wretched miserable feeling of envy, that had eaten away all that was even human in the hearts of God's professed servants, the chief priests. Here envy led them to CRUCIFY CHRIST.

In Acts xiii. 45, we find the same horrible sin, leading the Jews through hatred of the success of the gospel to LYING and BLASPHEMING; and in

xvii. 5, a similar company led away by the same feelings were guilty of RIOTING and VIOLENCE !

THE SINS THAT ENVY LEADS TO.

Let us now just sum up from the few examples that we have selected, the crimes which are actually recorded in the Word as having been committed through the sin of envy. We have seen that THROUGH ENVY Christ was crucified—Abel was murdered—Joseph and David almost murdered; that it led at different times to hatred—wicked and unscrupulous conduct—lying and blasphemy—rioting and violence—hindering God's work—despising God's servant—lying and reviling—maliciousness—anger—and intense cruelty.

Surely, now that we have laid some part of the horrible form of this vice bare from Scripture, our readers must shudder to think that the root of all these crimes lurks in their hearts. James does not hesitate to say that envy is a root of every evil work (iii. 16). It is worse than wrath or anger, none can stand before envy (Prov. xxvii. 4). It hinders growth in grace (1 Pet. ii. 1, 2), is a proof of carnal mindedness (1 Cor. iii. 1, 2), it is one of the works of the flesh (Gal. v. 21), and one to which our spirits are especially liable (Jas. iv. 5), being produced by the prosperity and good deeds of others (Eccl. iv. 4) and also by arguments and disputes (1 Tim. vi. 4). Now to be forewarned is to be forearmed. Never let us give place to the devil, in allowing envy to sprout and germinate in our hearts; but let us ever check the first risings of an envious

PRACTICAL PAPERS.

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A CURE FOR ENVY.

Seek to rejoice in the prosperity of others, seek to be unselfish ; for, after all, envy is only a form of selfishness. Seek the good of others, not your own. Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession—Christ Jesus—who was not envious like Adam (Phil. ii.), but emptied Himself (*lit.*), and ended a life of self-abnegation on the cross.

Ask yourself the question, Shall I allow for a moment in my heart the feeling of envy, a feeling which prompted the crucifixion of my Lord ?

There is no saying to what length even a child of God may not be led, who once willingly allows this feeling. It grows so very rapidly that from only beginning to be envious of the success, prosperity, and position of another, we may soon begin to hate him, and then to plot against him.

As with pride so it is with envy : its most horrible and deadly form is when it conceals itself under a cover of zeal for the Lord, and under this or some other religious subterfuge, seeks the evil of another. Oh ! what unmaskings of all such actions will take place at the judgment seat of Christ.

Seek, beloved reader, to be pure from this vice at least, after the fearful warnings the Word of God has given us (remembering especially that it is one of the five sins that hinder our love of the Word of God itself 1 Pet. ii.). Real occupation with Christ's glory and interests instead of our own, effectually though unconsciously, checks not only this but many other sins. It is only the self-seeker who is envious. The servant who can truly say, like his

Master, "I seek not my own glory," is surely delivered from a spirit of envy.

May the Lord preserve us from this sin, which is alas! by no means uncommon amongst young, as well as old believers.

MONTHLY BIBLE READINGS.—III.

1 Peter i. 8-17.



—I think we broke off last time at ver. 7. Before leaving it, I should like to ask whether the "appearing" refers to the Lord's secret coming for His people (1 Thess. iv.), or His public return to the earth.

E.—"Appearing" always refers to the latter, and you will always find rewards and honour connected with it, because it is connected with government and the judgment-seat of Christ; whereas the "rapture" is an act of pure grace, and does *not* usher in the reign of Christ; verse 9 is connected with "*believing*" in verse 8. It is by faith our souls are saved. With this verse the parenthesis, inserted expressly to comfort saints in trial as these were, closes, and we now return to verse 5. "Salvation ready to be revealed in the last time . . . of which salvation," &c. Before going on, I find I have a remark in the margin of my Bible

MONTHLY BIBLE READINGS.

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made by a deeply-taught Christian some time ago. It is on the difference between "giving up" and "enduring." He remarks in effect that the Jews received the heavenly country instead of the earthly, which, by becoming Christians, they had finally *given up*, but that in verse 7 they *endure*, and the reward for this is not a country but Christ Himself.

M.—What does "*the Spirit of Christ*" mean?

E.—It means the voice of Christ speaking through the prophet or the psalmist, as in Ps. xxii. It does not mean exactly the same as the Holy Spirit. We find *Him* in verse 12. Observe the close connection here of the sufferings with the glory. We get the two together three times in this epistle. Here they are predicted; in iv. 13, 14 they are shared by those who faithfully follow in Christ's steps; in v. 1 (see also 2 Pet. i. 16), they are witnessed by the apostle. Think for a moment of this sublime subject, into which angels desire to look, and yet to which we are often so indifferent; far more absorbed with our own sorrows than with Christ's, with this world's show than with the coming glory! We may just notice here the three steps of God's dealings in ver. 10-13: first, the prediction of the coming events by the prophets; next, the report of these by the Holy Ghost, and lastly, the fulfilment of all at the revelation of Jesus Christ. With this verse the first division of the chapter ends.

G.—Why do you divide the chapter here?

E.—Because we now leave the question of *standing*, and turn to *state*. You will find it is a

general rule that all epistles begin with recounting the believer's privileges, before turning round to rebuke or exhort. So here the first twelve verses tell these believers what they *are* (in Christ), the next thirteen what they *ought to be*. So in chap. ii., verses 1-10, give our position in Christ, what we *are*; the rest of the epistle what we *ought to be* for Him in this world. Let us now turn to verse 13. Perhaps *M.* can tell us what it means.

M.—I suppose it alludes to tucking up one's dress.

E.—Yes, and that is always done out of doors in the muddy streets, never indoors. In the East men, too, wore long dresses, which they would tuck up in their girdles. So Christians must keep their minds from being contaminated with the filth of this world. In heaven this will be no longer necessary, for there we shall be at home. The rest of the verse is better rendered in the Revised Version: "*Be sober, and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*" Peter twice speaks of being sober, here and in iv. 7. The revelation of Christ is the same as the appearing. What do we get in the next verse that we have not had before?

M.—We have had "obedience" in the second verse, but I don't think we have had "children."

E.—No, and this is the only place where we get the word in this epistle. It is therefore important to notice what word is put in connection with it. "*Obedience*" is *the* quality of a child of God. It is better than service or sacrifice, and without it

MONTHLY BIBLE READINGS.

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all else is of but little value. When we obey we follow Christ, just as in verses 15, 16. When we are "*holy*" we are like God. Those who are "obedient" and "holy" (separate from evil) thus bear the likeness of the Divine family to which they belong. You know how proud ancient families are of family likenesses, and nothing gives parents more pleasure than to know that their children resemble them. The royal family of Austria, for instance, have long been distinguished by a certain peculiarity of face of which they are proud, because any one seeing them can tell at once that they belong to the royal race. How is it, dear *M.*, that we show so little of the family likeness?

M.—I know that I have been doing my own will so long, that it seems quite strange for me to think of being obedient in my daily life to God.

E.—That is quite true, and the only way any of us can become obedient as Christ was (ver. 2), is by Christ so really possessing our hearts, that we do not care to do anything but His wishes. If you loved a person very much, who had risked his life to save yours, would it not give you greater pleasure to carry out his wishes, than your own?

M.—Of course it would, I only wish I loved Christ like that.

G.—The way to love Him is to have our hearts occupied with His love to us. *We love Him* because *He first* loved us.

E.—Yes, and that is the very reason why Peter has been filling our hearts with thoughts of

Christ and our heavenly home, because he knew it would be no use saying, "Be obedient," unless we really wished to.

R.—What does "conversation" mean here?

E.—Our whole manner of life in 1 Tim. iv. 12 we get it distinguished from speaking, so that it cannot mean merely what we understand by the word. Peter is very fond of this word. Can you tell us, *G.*, the various places where it occurs in this epistle?

G.—This is the first; the next is in the 18th verse, speaking of our "*vain conversation*" before conversion. I think the next is in ii. 12, "*honest conversation*;" the next is "*chaste conversation*" in iii. 1, 2; and lastly we get "*good conversation*" in verse 16.

E.—From these, then, we gather that before our conversion our "conversation" or "manner of life" (R. V.) was vain; now it is to be holy towards God, and honest, chaste, and good to our fellow men. We are to be holy, too, in "*all manner of conversation.*" Now we can enumerate four varieties at once—in word and deed, among believers and unbelievers.

M.—I think two of these are hard and two easy. It is easy to be good before Christians, both in word and deed, but very hard to be either amongst worldly people.

E.—It is, indeed, and yet this verse says "*all manner*," that is to show by our words that we are separated to God, and to let our acts say the same.

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R.—I see the Revised Version gives the next verse, “*And if ye call on him as Father.*”


E.—Yes, this is an improvement. The verse refers to the peculiar privilege, that we, as Christians enjoy in saying, “*Abba Father*” (Gal. iv. ; Rom. viii.). We are entitled to do this, because God has put this cry into our hearts by His Spirit. Now, though Jesus is not ashamed to call us brethren, we are nowhere told we can call Him “*brother.*” A great man may call a poor man by his Christian name, but it does not follow that the poor man may do the same. God has, however, brought us so near to Himself that He gives us the great privilege of calling Him Father. Indeed, He delights to hear it from the lips of His children.

G.—Why is judgment brought in here? I thought the believer would never come unto judgment.

E.—That is true. This is not future judgment, but present judgment; a proof indeed, according to Heb. xii. that we are sons. Christians are judged (1 Cor. xi.) in this world now, unbelievers hereafter and eternally. We must, none of us, think that our Father is so careless of our true interests as to allow us to pursue an ungodly or worldly course unchecked. No, He judges His children now, *because* we shall not be condemned with the world hereafter. But I think our time is gone, so we must stop here for to-day.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

1 Peter ii. 2.

T is the order of the natural world for the child to grow. It is the order of the spiritual world for the saint to progress. An infant not growing, but wasting away, is an unnatural and melancholy object; still more unnatural and still more melancholy, is it for one who seems to be a believer, to be seen becoming no wiser, no better—or even becoming worse. There is want of nourishment, or disease, in both cases, where there is not growth. Truth, it has been said, does not lie in the heart as a stone on the earth, but as seed in the ground, which naturally germinates.

Growth is gradual, very gradual, and so is Christian development. No infant becomes a man at once, but every day sees him nearer manhood; and so is it in spiritual things. The saint becomes gradually wiser and better. Like the child, he makes more progress at some time than others; yet in all cases the progress is gentle, not sudden. As, when in health, the child is always growing, so, when the Christian is not labouring under spiritual disease, he is always making progress.

When the child grows, the whole of its mind

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and body grows. And so it is with the spiritual new-born babe; he grows in knowledge, faith, holiness, and love at the same time. The growth in both cases, when things are as they ought to be, is proportional. It also deserves notice, that though there be general growth, if any part of the system be preternaturally active, if any member of the body is preternaturally enlarged, any faculty of the mind preternaturally developed, then is disease and disorder. And so it is in spiritual things. If the understanding be enlightened, while the affections are not proportionately affected, or if the affections are strongly drawn out, while the understanding is not proportionately enlightened, there is no healthy growth, no satisfactory progress. Healthy nourishment in a healthy constitution, whether bodily or mental, produces both universal and simultaneous growth.

When there is real growth it will be perceptible; not perceptible in its *progress*, but perceptible in its *effects*. In the case of a healthy child, he who sees it when new-born, and when it is a twelve-month old, distinctly perceives that there has been growth. In the same way, a person who sees a young convert, if he meets with him months or years after, will perceive progress both in knowledge and in holiness. The child is seldom sensible of growth, nor does it help it to grow to be thinking of itself. True growth is a wholly unconscious process, and can only continue as long as we are feeding on Christ Himself. So far from being conscious of any advance, not unfrequently,

TO BE READ		TO BE LEARNED.	MARCH.
1	W	Mark xvi.	Seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, live not in careful suspense.
2	Th	Luke i.	Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and troubled about many things.
3	F	Gen. xx.	Take no thought for the morrow.
4	Sa	„ xxi.	Seek ye the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.
5	Su	„ xxii.	Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.
(Hold Fast.)			
6	M	„ xxiii.	Whose house are we if we HOLD FAST the confidence and the rejoicing of THE HOPE firm unto the end.
7	T	Luke ii.	Seeing, then, that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God let us hold fast OUR PROFESSION.
8	W	„ iii.	Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.
9	Th	„ iv.	Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.
10	F	„ v.	But that which ye HAVE ALREADY, hold fast till I come.
11	Sa	„ vi.	Behold I come quickly; hold that fast which THOU HAST, that no man take thy crown.
12	Su	„ vii.	And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures.
(Stand Still.)			
13	M	„ viii.	Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.
14	T	„ ix.	Stand still, and I will hear what the Lord will command concerning you.
15	W	„ x.	Stand thou still awhile, that I may shew thee the word of God,

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

MARCH

16	Th	Luke xi.	Now, therefore, stand still, that I may reason with you before the Lord of all the righteous acts of the Lord.
17	F	Gen. xxiv.	Ye shall not need to fight in this battle, set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord.
18	Sa	„ xxv.	Hearken unto this, O Job ; stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.
19	Su	„ xxvi.	And that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve.
20	M	„ xxvii.	(Unto the End.)
21	T	Luke xii.	Lo I am WITH YOU ALWAYS, even unto the end of the world.
22	W	„ xiii.	Having loved His own which were in the world He LOVED THEM, unto the end.
23	Th	„ xiv.	Who shall also CONFIRM YOU unto the end that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.
24	F	„ xv.	We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of OUR CONFIDENCE steadfast unto the end.
25	Sa	„ xvi.	We desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope unto the end.
26	Su	„ xvii.	He that overcometh and keepeth my words until the end, to him will I give power over the nation.
27	M	„ xviii.	Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.
28	T	„ xix.	(The Flesh.)
29	W	„ xx.	They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.
30	Th	„ xxi.	For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die. For ye see your calling brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called.
			Henceforth, know we no man after the flesh.

from the increase both of spiritual sensibility and spiritual intelligence, we feel as if, instead of becoming better, we were becoming worse. We are in our own feelings, less conformed to the divine law as we now see it, than we were, it may be years ago, as we then saw it. And yet this may be, indeed is, one of the best proofs that there is progress in knowledge, both of God and of ourselves. The sight that Christians have of their defects in grace, and their thirst after greater measures of grace, makes them think that they do not grow when they do.

We have already seen that a healthy child grows without thinking much about its growth. It takes its food and its exercise, and finds that it is growing in the increase of its strength, and its capacity for exertion. And an analagous state is considered to be the healthiest state of the spiritual new-born babe. While self-examination, rightly conducted, is very useful, a morbid desire of the satisfaction of knowing that we are improving, is in danger of drawing the mind away from the source of improvement and the means of spiritual nourishment and health.

(EXTRACTED.)

THE BASKET.

OUR RIGHTS.—The thought that Christians are to have their rights in this world is to forget the cross and Christ. We cannot have our rights till Christ has, for we have none but His.

THE BASKET.

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GOD IS ABOVE ALL.—God's ways are behind the scenes ; but he moves all the scenes which he is behind. We have to learn this, and let Him work, and not think much of man's busy movements. they will accomplish God's. The rest of them all perish and disappear. We have only peacefully to do His will.

A SURE FOUNDATION.—God has saved us according to His own purpose and His grace, given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. This is the sure and immovable foundation, a rock for our souls, against which the waves of difficulties break in vain, showing us strength which we could not resist for a moment, but showing also, their total prevolence against the purpose and work of God. The efforts of the enemy only prove that he is without strength in the presence of that which God is, and of that which he has done for us.

THE JOURNEY'S END.—I have often been surprised at seeing the patience with which my fellow-travellers on a long and tedious journey have put up with many annoyances and inconveniences. I suppose it is because it is but a journey, and the mind occupied with arriving at the journey's end think but little of the troubles by the way. This reminded me of David in 1 Sam. xxv., whose mind set by Abigail on the journey's end, 29-31, was able to overlook the insults by the way, as one has so well said, "The heart must be on the end of the journey, not on the incidents by the way, to know how to be abased and how to abound." Would that the journey's end were

more to us, and then the ups and downs would not upset us as they do.

A NONCONFORMIST.—So did not I because of the fear of God. Neh. v. 15.

NEW STEPS.—Taking new steps in life are very serious dangers, especially if in our motives there be any mixture of ambition.



WORK FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS.—IV.

SPEAKING FOR CHRIST—(*concluded.*)

WE will suppose, however, that the young believer who reads these pages, is really seeking to live to the glory of Christ, and anxious for a little help in seeking to speak for Him; and to such we would say, Speak to the unsaved so as to win, not so as to repel; to the Christian speak so as to draw out what there is of Christ in them, not so as to raise the flesh. Avoid controversy and speak of Christ. Do not begin, as a rule, with an unbeliever, by asking him if he is saved, when in all probability you already know he is not. But keep saying something about Christ, until at last his curiosity is roused to ask about Him. Never be led off into religious discussions with one who is unsaved, and, still less, with an infidel. If such attack

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you with any questions, speak straight to their consciences, as to their state before God without fear. Do not lecture or catechize those older than yourself. Always seek to lead rather than drive, and speak to the heart rather than to the head. So much for *how to speak*.

Some time ago, while travelling, in Italy, two priests got into the carriage where I was, and soon were busily engaged with their Prayer Books. My companion wished to see one of these books, so I asked the priest, who sat next me, to lend it me, and I found he was reading a simple prayer to the Lord. "Oh," said I, "then you believe in praying to the Lord Jesus Christ." "Of course, I do." "And that, when you ask, you receive the answer?" "Certainly." "Then your sins are forgiven?" "Oh no, I dare not say that." "But you have prayed this prayer, asking for the forgiveness of your sins, many times." "Oh yes, but we dare not be sure that our sins are pardoned." A general conversation arose, and a gentleman attempted to raise an argument, in which others joined, about the true Church, but remembering the words, "They only consult to cast him down from his excellency," I turned to the company and said, "Now we are all travelling together, but which of us can be sure of reaching the end of our journey?" All were silent, and I continued, "Through God's grace, I can say that, as a sinner, I have found the pardon of my sins through the precious work of the Lord Jesus Christ, which has been accepted by God on my behalf, and if I should die before

reaching my journey's end, I shall be immediately and for ever with the Lord." The priest by my side said, most solemnly, "Well, a religion that can give such certainty is worth having." There was a hush all through the carriage, and no one spoke a word till we arrived at the station; but I felt that the good seed had not been sown in vain.

As to the time; whenever you have an opportunity, generally, if possible, without the presence of a third person. Such an opportunity often occurs when bestowing a small gift, and a word for Christ at such a time is often well received. When any one you know is passing through sorrow always use the occasion, for God is dealing with the soul, and thus preparing the way for a suited word. The thought of this often helps one in speaking. Often on the Lord's Day we get opportunities not to be had at other times. A very good rule is not to let a day pass without speaking to one soul about Christ.

As to the place; all are alike. Souls are converted on the decks of steamers, in railway carriages, in the street, by the sea shore, at the fire-side, as well as in the church or chapel, or meeting house.

Always begin with those you know best, and first with those of your own house. "He first findeth his own brother, Simon." Next with your immediate circle of friends, and so on; ever accompanying your words with silent prayer, for it is God alone who can direct the arrow thus "shot at a venture."

BIBLICAL WORDS AND PHRASES.

TABERNACLE. A Tent. The first tabernacle was Moses' own tent (Ex. xxxiii. 7), for the tabernacle proper was not yet made. The tabernacle itself was the one place of worship for the Jews, and was a pattern of things in the heavens (Heb. ix.), every part of it spoke of Christ in His varied glories. Its foundations, boards, coverings, curtains, all tell us of Himself or His work. Its inner veil, between the Holy and most Holy, is Christ's flesh (Heb. x.). The various contents are deeply instructive. The brazen altar where God and the sinner could meet in virtue of the atoning sacrifice, the laver where defilement was washed away, the Holy place, typical of heaven, containing the seven-branched candlestick—the church in testimony (Matt. v. and Rev. ii. and iii.), the golden table bearing up the twelve loaves—Israel's twelve tribes, and the golden altar of incense,—Christ through whom all our prayers and praises ascend, and lastly the most Holy now separated by no veil (it being rent from top to bottom when Christ's flesh, which it typified, was also rent on the cross), typifying the very presence of God, containing the ark, Christ in all His perfection and the atoning blood, and into which all believers now have access (Heb. x.). The body is a tabernacle (2 Cor. v.).

TALENT, of gold, is said to be worth £5,475, hence this fitly represents in the parable in Matt. xviii. 23 the difference between sins against God and against my fellow man, the former being represented by the sum of £54,750,000, the other by £3 2s. 6d.

TEMPLE.—This was first built by Solomon on Mount Moriah on the site of the threshing floor of Ornan (1 Chr. xxi. 28-30). It was divided like the tabernacle into Holy and most Holy. The wood, however, was generally cedar instead of shittim wood. It was seven years in building and after a varied career was finally burnt and pillaged by the Babylonians (2 Kings xxv. 9, 13-17). Another temple was built by Ezra and Nehemiah under

Cyrus, &c. (Ezra). This was repaired and greatly enlarged by Herod the Great, thus forming the third and last temple. Another will occupy the same site in the millennium, and will be constructed from the plan and descriptions given in Ezekiel, which are so exact that several models have been made by the Jews from the description, some in solid gold, there being a tradition that whoever has the most perfect model will be selected by the Messiah as the architect of the building. Spiritually our bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost; believers corporately are builded together as an holy temple (Eph. ii.). There will be no temple in the heavenly Jerusalem, which will be one distinguishing feature between it and the earthly, where we have seen there will be a glorious temple built.

TEMPTATIONS. — These, in Christ's case, were always from without; in the believer's they are from without and within. Temptations, properly so called, are distinct from trials, the latter being for our own good, and often sent by God, the former, being evil, never are (James i. 13). Temptations are resisted and overcome by the word of God. We can never be exposed to them beyond our power to resist (1 Cor. x. 13). The histories of Eve, of Joseph, of Balaam, Achan, David, Jeroboam, Peter, all afford illustrations of true temptations.

TENT. — Another word for tabernacle. The body is compared to a tent (2 Cor. v.) in contrast to the building we have from God, the immortal body.

TESTAMENT, OLD. — The history of *the first man* and God's dealings with him generally, and particularly in the actions of the [Jews, who were taken as a sample of the whole, and after all God's training and care (Is. v.) crucified His Son. Man is here tried in innocence, in sin apart from law, under law, under law and grace, and everywhere fails. The Old Testament contains also the lives of the saints of old, and is full of illustrations of Christian truths, being in this aspect a series of companion pictures to the New. It contains, too, a large body of prophecies, all relating to the Jews, very many yet unful-

BIBLICAL WORDS AND PHRASES.

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filled, but which will be of intense interest, when the time comes, to the people for whom they were written.

TESTAMENT, NEW.—The history of *the second man*, His birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, His people, His instructions and teachings, His coming again. We get first the life and work of Christ, then the results of that work, practically in the Acts, doctrinally in the epistles, and lastly the future unfolded, with the Lord's return. Thus, in brief, the Old Testament is man's ruin, the New, God's remedy; the Old—condemnation, the New—salvation; the Old—"as in Adam all die;" the New—"even so in Christ shall all be made alive." It has been well said, "In the Old Testament the New lies hidden; in the New Testament the Old lies open."

TESTIMONY is the same as witness. "The testimony" is often used in a very technical way to mean the special truth given by God specially at any given time, and which is to be witnessed for by His people. Thus "the present testimony" may be said to be the fact of Christ being raised and glorified, the Holy Ghost given, the one body formed, and the Lord's return.

THANKSGIVING forms one part of praise, and consists in gratefully acknowledging all God has done for me. Worship rises higher than this, though both may be called praise (See WORSHIP, PRAISE).

TITHES.—The tenth of all they possessed given by the Jews to God by Divine command. The reason why Christians are no longer commanded to give a tenth is because all they have belongs to God. It is well, however, to hold this truth practically, for it is to be feared that many Christians fall short even of the Jewish standard of one-tenth. If we are not under law, but under grace, it is not that we should render less to God under the latter than the former, but more.

TONGUE.—See James iii. Peter sinned with his tongue: it is therefore remarkable that when he points out the life of the Lord as a pattern for us, he confines his illustrations by the way the Lord used His tongue (1 Pet. ii.). The tongue is so deceitful that it is actually put in contrast with truth (1 John iii. 18).

OUR NOTE-BOOK.

We give one or two extracts from some recent letters which may awaken an echo in some heart that reads them, or point out the secret of long mourned deadness and coldness.

"Your kind letter again reminds me that another year is drawing fast to its close, another year fraught with countless blessings, unnumbered mercies, and love with which there can be no compare. Painful experiences, and perplexities, with not a small share of heartfelt sorrow have shadowed my earthly path; but the precious sympathy of a loving changeless Saviour has been with me through all, making me prove more and more, the depth of that love which passeth knowledge, and making me enter a little more into the hidden meaning of those words, 'In all points tempted as we are, yet without sin,' and 'Touched with the feeling of our infirmities.' I say hidden, because it is surely only learnt by those who have been taught in God's school. Gladly would I take in the Bible Student, and join with those who are seeking to find out more of the precious truths contained in God's word; but my time is too much occupied to admit of my so doing, for many things would have to remain undone, which God has given me to do. Surely each of our paths is marked out by Him, and He knows full well the right quantity of every day work to give."

"I have some good news to give you—news of the Lord's goodness, for which I can truly thank Him. After I heard from you, for some time I got more and more wretched, until I almost began to doubt whether I could really be a Christian—so full of sin, and so careless and hard. One day, I wrote out all the passages I could find which speak of believers as "*in Christ*," and though I saw them in God's Word, and knew they must include me, still they gave me no comfort. *The next day*—yesterday fortnight—after coming in from the preaching, I was thinking about the words, "complete in Him," when suddenly the load was gone, and I felt I must just go and

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thank God for His wonderful love. I thanked Him then, and I have been able to thank Him ever since. I never knew before in the same *real* way what it was to have to do with Him. Now your words are coming true, and I have found as I never did before what I have to thank Him for in having a room where I can just go and be alone with Him. Sometimes it seems as if even heaven could not be happier. *Everything* seems changed now that I can 'rejoice in the Lord;' and He is able to keep me from falling, I know."

The following letter on Sunday-school teaching may be the means of suggesting useful thoughts to some as to fresh means of engraving the Scriptures on the minds (at least) of their scholars. We cannot afford to despise the simplest ways of accomplishing this, nor is there any reason why we should do so, when we consider that even in the inspired Word one whole book (Lamentations) is written in acrostics, also several Psalms. We have more papers for next month.

"Dear Mr. Editor,—It affords me much pleasure to send you a little matter from my note-book (with your permission), for the perusal of any friends who 'would like some papers on management and teaching in a Sunday-school.'

"Question, Should we not know our scholars, as well as our subject? Answer, Yes, our message should touch the heart, and their interest should be roused, we should so deliver our message that we are entrusted with as to reach the conscience; or we have only half done our work. One might as well expect a camel to enter the eye of a needle as an abstract proposition to enter the mind of a child. A teacher who means to get a hearing from his scholars must endeavour to kindle the imagination by some simple and easily-remembered simile. No teacher who has told the story of David and Goliath to children, and watched their eager attentive faces will deny the wonderful power of allegory and parable.

"Illustrations are constantly required not only to make a subject attractive, but also to make it clearly understood, for we sometimes credit our scholars with an intelli-

gence which they do not possess ; and it is well to note all through the Scriptures, how constantly God has employed illustrative teaching. In the New Testament we find the truth so embodied in facts and imagery that it was understood by the most simple-minded, and the common people heard Christ gladly. He made frequent use of Old Testament stories with which His hearers were familiar, and drew illustrations from nature, in which are so many voices of God, and not one of them without signification.

“ By way of illustrating these notes, let me point out how I teach in my class. Having read the sixth of Matthew, I invited the scholars’ attention to the middle clause of the 28th verse, “ Consider the lilies,” having certain points I wished to fasten on their minds, I take the word FLOWERS, as an acrostic, and bring out the points in the lesson thus—

F AITH,
L OVE,
O BEDIENCE,
W ISDOM,
E ARNESTNESS,
R EST,
S WEETNESS.

“ I deal with one word at a time, and apply the great truth of the lesson to each. For instance, I take up the first word and show that it is impossible to please God without *faith*, pointing out where it is described (Heb. xi. 1, &c.), that it is the gift of God (Rom. xii. 3), it leads to salvation (1 Pet. i. 9), it works by love (1 Cor. xiii. ; Gal. v. 6), it produces peace, joy, hope (Rom. v. i. ; xv. 13), excludes boasting, &c. (Rom. iii. 27). For examples of it, see Heb. xi. ; Num. xiii. 30 ; Matt. xvi. 16 ; John i. 49 ; Acts vi. 5, &c. For the *love* of the Lord Jesus, see Luke xix. 10 ; xxiii. 34. For *obedience*, see Acts v. 29 ;—it is better than sacrifice, 1 Sam. xv. 22 ; Micah vi. 6 ;—it is due to parents, masters, Eph. vi. 1-5 ;—and to magistrates, &c. Tit. iii. 1 ; and so on with each word.

“ We, as teachers, should avoid using any word but such as our scholars understand. I would remark, in selecting material for a picture from the Word, the teacher should observe, such objects as are the most important, striking

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and familiar; it should not be unnecessarily crowded, or it will bewilder rather than impress; seeing we have to deal with a book whose truths are of infinite importance, and none of whose statements can be regarded as of slight value. We should seek by due study of the Word to gain for ourselves such an acquaintance with the wide field of Biblical illustrations, as to enable us to realise with clearness and accuracy the scenes which we as teachers desire to impress upon the minds of our scholars."

"I fear taking up too much of your space, and pass over many points, with a closing hint to give the scholars an occupation for the week night evenings. Before I let my class leave the room, I ask them to note down a word picture, with a view to their bringing it on the next Lord's day, neatly written out. Here is the sketch of a word picture: an old man is seated by the wayside as if watching for something; suddenly a man is seen running into the city, with rent clothes, and dust on his head, who evidently tells the people sorrowful news, as they begin to cry out directly he has done speaking. The old man asks the reason of their crying. The messenger answers him, and when he hears the last part of the news the messenger is telling him, he falls back and dies."

"WHAT WAS THIS OLD MAN'S NAME?"

"The answer should be given from 1 Sam. iv. 12-18. The scholars are told it is from the Old Testament Scriptures. My class motto is John v. 39. One word and I close: do not forget secret prayer, and go on expecting success, looking unto the Good Shepherd to lead you into rich pastures, that by so doing we, as Sunday School teachers, may be well able to instruct children in the Word of God, and to lead them in the right path."

"P.S.—I enclose some of my scholars' class notes. I should have told you that each scholar has a paper and pencil and takes notes during the lesson. The lads are from 13 to 15 years of age, and some are at work in the week from 8 a.m. till 9 and 10 p.m."

PRACTICAL QUERIES.

Q. 25. Is there any reason why a Christian should not hold a situation as brewer's clerk? L.W.R.

A. We do not know of any; at the same time, we must remember that in all situations we have to consider two things, God's interests and our master's. We must serve faithfully and willingly, giving good measure of our time, attention and interest, while at the same time we must not forget in this serving faithfully that we are never to overstep the boundaries of *truth* and of fair and upright dealing. Some situations are of course much more trying for a Christian to hold than others, but remember if it is a serious thing to enter a new profession, it is also a serious thing to leave an old one. God's guidance must not only be sought, but obtained in both cases.

Q. 26. Is it right for a Christian to join the "Blue Ribbon Army" or any other Temperance Union? L.W.R.

A. As far as we understand the organisation it is a miscellaneous one, of believers and unbelievers, who unite on the common platform of temperance. We cannot believe (however advantageous from a philanthropic point of view) that such associations are anywhere countenanced in Scripture. On the contrary, 2 Cor. vi. seems to bar all voluntary sinking of such radical differences as "light and darkness" for a common cause. Surely for himself the Christian has in Christ's power a more effectual barrier against drink than in a blue ribbon. At the same time we have not a word to say against the practical good such organisations doubtless do in saving many from the curse of drunkenness.

PRACTICAL PAPERS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS.

IV.—ANGER.



UNLIKE the three subjects we have already considered, “selfishness, pride, and envy,” this is spoken of in two ways in Scripture, the one pointing out when it is right to be angry, the other when to be so is a grievous sin. Perhaps the most interesting as well as the most profitable way of looking at the subject will be to consider first a few examples of each.

We will begin with anger as a sin, and observe from the instances selected what are its results when indulged in.

THE FIRST INSTANCE OF ANGER

is in the case of Cain. He was “very wroth, and his countenance fell,” the result being the MURDER of Abel.

In Genesis xxvii. 41, in the case of Esau, we find another instance of how anger is akin to murder, as the Lord pointed out in Matt. v. 21, 22. When anger is sinful it is always the result of some previous sin. When it is righteous it is the result of a righteous and holy feeling. Bearing this in mind in going through these examples, it will be interesting to observe

not only the results, but the causes of anger. In Cain's case the cause was ENVY, in Esau's JEALOUSY. In Numbers xx. 10, 11, we find the meekest man in all the earth betrayed into anger by his IMPATIENCE, the result of his anger being DISOBEDIENCE; the punishment he received being exclusion from the promised land. Many might justify Moses on this occasion, but God does not. It is true that he was provoked, but followers of Christ here see that

PROVOCATION IS NO EXCUSE FOR ANGER.

It must be remembered that God as supreme can be angry when man cannot. Hence we frequently have the expression, "provoked Him to anger" applied to God, rightly; but man who is dependent, should not give way to anger, but leave the matter with God as supreme. Jesus when on earth took the place of man, hence He bore all with perfect patience and meekness, committing His cause to Him who judgeth righteously. The punishment in Moses' case may seem severe, but we must remember that Moses was a great saint, "Moses, the man of God;" and that a little sin in a great saint is worse than a great sin in a sinner. God cannot lightly overlook outbreaks of natural passion in His people, even when provoked; for He has given them power to restrain it.

In 1 Sam. xx. 30 we find Saul angry with Jonathan and seeking to kill him, his anger being caused by HATRED of David. In Ahab's cruelty to Naboth (1 Kings xxi.) we again find that

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ANGER LEADS TO MURDER,

being caused by COVETOUSNESS. In 2 Kings v. 11, we find the anger of Naaman stirred up by his PRIDE, and leading him to despise God's message to him.

We might easily multiply these examples, for the seeds of them are in every human heart (of the actions of which the Old Testament is such a wonderful mirror), but we will only select one or two more. In 2 Chron. xvi 10 we find Asa very angry with Hanani, because the latter had rebuked him for his DISOBEDIENCE. This leads Asa to put Hanani in prison, an act of gross INJUSTICE. In the case of Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 19), his wrath was caused by his being rebuked for committing SACRILEGE, for which sin he was immediately punished by God with leprosy. These last two instances show us how often anger is a result in our hearts of being rebuked or faithfully reproofed for some sin that we have committed. Let us be on our guard against this. It is enough to have committed the sin, but it is far worse, when reproofed for it by some servant of God, to add to it by a second, and possibly a third, as Asa did. We feel sure that if our readers will but carefully weigh these instances of anger, and compare them in cause and effect with their own history, they will find what a wonderfully accurate mirror of the human heart the Word of God is. In Esther iii. 5 we find

ANGER CAUSED BY PRIDE,

in the person of the wicked Haman, and leading to the attempted destruction of an entire people.

The same cause, PRIDE, in Nebuchadnezzar's case, filled him with rage and fury, so that the form of his visage was changed (like Cain's), and led to INTENSE CRUELTY on his part against his victims, which, however, God miraculously overruled. In Jonah's case we find great anger caused by IMPATIENCE, which led him to speak against God. He appears to have so completely given way to it, that in ch. iv. 9, he actually justifies his unrighteous anger to God. In the New Testament we find the anger of Herod leading him to murder all the children in Bethlehem. We further see, in Luke iv. 28, that the Jews stung with JEALOUSY of God's favours to the Gentiles (ver. 24-27), sought to MURDER Christ on the very spot, and in Acts vii. 54 we find the Jews again filled with HATRED AGAINST CHRIST, actually gnashing on Stephen with rage and stoning him to death.

CAUSES AND RESULTS OF ANGER.

From these illustrations we find that anger is *caused by* envy, jealousy, impatience, hatred, pride, covetousness, and by the just rebukes of God's people; that, if unchecked, it *tends to* cruelty and murder, also to disobedience, injustice, and despising God's Word.

Turning for a moment to what is said about it in Scripture, we find that it is expressly forbidden (Matt. v. 22; Rom. xii. 19), it is a work of the flesh (Gal. v. 20), it is characteristic of fools (Prov. xii. 16; xiv. 29; xxvii. 3; &c.), it brings its own punishment (Job v. 2; Prov. xix. 19), it is often stirred up by bad words (2 Sam. xix. 43; &c.),

but pacified by meekness (Prov. xv. 1), that we should not provoke others to it (Eph. vi. 4; Col. iii. 21).

We will now briefly consider some instances of

RIGHTEOUS ANGER.

In Mark iii. 5 we find the Lord angry, "being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." How instinctively we feel in this case, the unselfishness of the anger. It is all for their sakes and for God's glory. Righteous anger never has self in any shape or form for its cause. Moses was angry in Exodus xi. 8; but it was for the indignities offered by Pharaoh to the Lord and His people, unlike his anger in Numbers xx., for which he was punished. We also find Moses angry in a similar way in Exodus xxxii. 19, and Lev. x. 16. In Neh. v. 6 we find Nehemiah very angry against gross injustice done by others, and to others, not against himself; hence he "did well" to be angry. In Eph. iv. 26, we get the exhortation "to be angry and sin not," *i.e.*, not to treasure up anger and malice in our hearts.

We have now before us the two sorts of anger, the one generally the fruit of some other sin, always having "self" for its ultimate cause; the other springing from zeal or indignation for the Lord, and having Him or His people for its cause. We thus find that the first anger like other sins we have considered, is a *selfish* sin, and the surest way of being saved from it is to be free from oneself. It is a great moment for a Christian when *he* practically ceases to be the

centre of his interests and objects. This *should* be at conversion, but does not practically take place till Christ reveals *Himself* in sufficient power to the heart to replace the wretched idol of "self." A Christian can only be happy in proportion as this is the case, for a selfish Christian is a most miserable object, and indeed a contradiction in terms. The surest way, therefore, to overcome the sin of anger is not by cultivating a placid disposition, which is only dealing with externals, but by striking at the root, which is self, and replacing it with Christ. The true Christian is zealous for His Master's interests, not his own, and may be righteously angry when *His* glory is concerned, but not for his own sake. May the Lord make us all more zealous for Him, and deliver us from serving and pleasing ourselves.



THE NEW TENANT.



OW you know that you are saved, and in Christ for all eternity, and He in you, I trust it is unmistakeable to all around that it is no longer the old self that lives, but that to you "to live is Christ." Perhaps you are not able to say much, but even "without the word" it ought to be plain to all that you are now a changed person. Why was it, in the ninth of John, that "the neighbours and they which before had

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seen him" began to discuss the man who had been born blind? Of course they were the first people in the world to see any difference in him, having known him all his life; and so we find them talking it over together before they said a word to him on the subject. There was this fact that they could not get over, the blind eyes were open. They might well ask, "Is not this he that sat and begged?" The one who had sat in touching helplessness, craving an alms from the passing crowd, now walked amongst them, ready to testify of Christ to neighbours and to Pharisees, and to take his place as a worshipper at the feet of Jesus. It was no marvel that some, doubting his identity, said, "He is like him;" and yet he simply declares to them all, "I am he." Surely, with Paul, he could say, "I, yet not I" (Gal. ii. 20). The opened eyes had spoken before the lips, and raised the questions which he now boldly met, giving a reason of the hope that was in him with meekness and fear.

Perhaps you will wonder how it was that an old cottage in our village made me think of this blind man. Let me tell you about it, and the parable I drew from it: it may have a voice to your soul, as it had to mine.

A very wretched looking place it was, up a small court, entered by a narrow passage. The sun never seemed to shine generously and warmly on that poor old house, but looked at it suspiciously through the chimney tops of the cottages that turned their backs on it across the yard.

Indeed, the dirty window, and yet dirtier curtain inside, did not look as if they could have welcomed any rays of bright sunlight to reveal the discomfort that reigned within. The woman, who lived there, said it was not possible to keep a place nice where there were little children; and she seemed to have given up trying. The plaster floor she declared could not be kept clean; it worked into holes that raised a dust over everything; and though she and her husband had saved up a little money to buy some "bits of furniture," it was no use, she said, getting anything decent while they lived in such a tumble-down old house, and she hoped they might soon move.

Shall I add that she knew nothing of the love of God? You will have guessed that this was the case. She was, indeed, "blind," like the man we were talking of awhile ago, and everything about the poor dirty cottage told it out plainly.

I went from home for a time in the summer, and on my return made my way once more up the narrow passage into the little court. When I got to the old cottage, I stood for a moment in perplexity, questioning whether possibly I had made a mistake. Before me I saw a clean step, whitened and sanded, a fresh painted door, now lengthened by a board, so that it met the doorstep, which in former days it had appeared carefully to avoid, a brightly polished window that smiled pleasantly back at the sunshine, inviting it to come freely in through the well cleaned glass, and to fall cheerily on the spotless curtain within.

I entered. The old floor, no longer an eye-sore, was well covered with divers cleverly made coloured rugs, neat furniture stood about the now pretty room, and in a comfortable arm-chair by the fire sat a quiet, gentle, elderly woman, a contrast in every respect to the one I had last seen there. It was all clear to me now, "So you have moved here, Mrs. W—!" I exclaimed.

"Yes, I have, and very quiet and nice it is, up this court. I have Jesus with me all the day, and I don't need any other company." The house had changed tenants.

Dear reader, the same old house, with its new occupant, gave so different an aspect to everything about it, that even the neighbours, who before had known it, might almost question whether indeed it were the same house still. Do not think that there is never anything of disorder or dirt about the old house now. No, such is not the case; you may, on a rare occasion, go there and find things looking almost as if the old tenant were back again. But I will tell you wherein the difference lies: the former was at home in the dirt and discomfort; Mrs. W— hates it, and condemns it; she cannot rest while it is there, nor be happy until order and cleanliness are restored.

Surely this little parable needs no explanation. God be thanked that you and I know the joy of having welcomed the "new tenant" into the old house, that "Christ in you" is to us a blessed reality. I trust the change in us may be as apparent as that in the old cottage when it had changed

hands ; and that our conversion may be as true a fact to all around, as that the man, who was born blind, had received his sight. The most determined opposers of the truth could not deny that he now saw ; may such, too, be obliged to own that whereas *we* were blind now *we* see, and that *we really are* new creatures in Christ Jesus. To the once blind man " old things had passed away," the former attitude had become unsuitable ; no longer now with outstretched hand does he ask an alms from the wealthy worldling, but takes his place " without the camp," with Jesus, the rejected One. A heart that Christ has filled and satisfied asks nothing more of this poor world.

Dear reader, may we learn from this, that we have nothing more to do with the former position of the blind man ; and may the old tenant's ways have no place in the house that Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, has deigned to enter. May we feel the full force of the word of exhortation in Romans vi. 13, " Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin ; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

Having " received Him joyfully," we must above all things desire now to have all in the house to the taste of our guest, that the ungrieved Spirit may give us unhindered fellowship together. Jesus said, " If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John xiv. 23).

MONTHLY BIBLE READINGS.—IV.

1 Peter i. 18-25.



—I suppose that "*fear*" in ver. 17 is connected with our being redeemed with the precious blood of Christ.

E.—Yes, it is a fear of sinning against such love. Notice how Peter speaks of "*silver and gold*," of which this world thinks so highly, as "*corruptible things!*" and how he contrasts with this the "*precious blood*."

R.—The Revised Version reads, "*With precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ.*"

G.—Peter uses the word "*precious*," in verse 7, applied to faith, and in ii. 4, 6, applied to Christ.

M.—Yes, and twice in the second Epistle "*precious faith*" (i. 1), and "*precious promise*" (i. 4). What a pity we cannot make seven.

E.—But we *can*, if it will please you, though I do not like to encourage a morbid love of the number seven. You will find in 1 Peter ii. 7 another Greek word used, also translated "*precious*," or "*preciousness*," and applied to Christ. We thus get this word thrice applied to Christ, once to His blood, twice to faith, and once to God's promises. Observe, now, the difference between the counsels

of God which were before the world was, and their carrying out "*in these last times.*"

G.—I think the only things said to be thought of by God before the foundation of the world are Christ and ourselves! (Eph. i.)

E.—Yes, that is a very beautiful thought; to know that even then we were united in God's thoughts with Christ. It is remarkable, too, how directly we are "brought to God" in this chapter. We *believe in God*, and our two anchors, "*faith and hope,*" are in God.

M.—Do not let us forget my three favourite words, "faith, hope and love," which are here.

E.—I am glad you mentioned them, because it is important to notice here that holiness ("*purifying your souls in obeying the truth*") produces love. In Thessalonians love produces holiness (1 Thess. iii. 12, 13); in God, love and light (of which holiness is one of the qualities) are inseparable. I would like to remark in passing that the "*last times*" (ver. 20), began at Pentecost (Acts ii.).

G.—In verse 22 it is obedience that purifies the soul.

E.—Yes, and in this verse we not only have a pure soul or spirit, but a pure heart or affections.

G.—We get in the two epistles pure souls, pure hearts, pure (chaste) conversation (iii. 2), pure minds (2 Peter iii. 1), and pure (purged) from our old sins (2 Peter i. 9). I am afraid we cannot manage seven this time, *M.*

M.—I dare say we shall come across some more before we have done, though. Could you tell me,

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E., please, how I am to carry out this last verse? I often feel that I positively dislike some Christians, they seem so cold and stiff.

E.—No doubt they are so, but the way to make them warm and flexible is not by becoming cold and stiff yourself. The right way to learn to love others, is by loving Christ, and then those that are dear to Him must be dear to us, and if we cannot love them for their own sakes, we do what is far better, we love them fervently for Christ's sake. Would that there were more of this fervent love amongst us!

G.—Now we come to the new birth (ver. 23), and I think that this verse, and Eph. v. proves that "water" in John iii. means the Word.

R.—How do you make that out?

G.—John iii. says we are born of water and the Spirit. This verse tells us it is by the word. Then it would appear there might be three things, if we did not find from Eph. v. 26 that water is a type of the word, thus proving that born of water means the same as this verse.

E.—Very good, *G.*, you would almost do for a theologian. Perhaps you will tell us why it is the "*word of God*" in ver. 23, and the "*word of the Lord*" in ver. 25.

G.—I think I can do that, too. Verses 24 and 25 are quoted from Isaiah xl. 6-8. The word there is "our God," which being in a Jewish prophecy means Lord or Jehovah, and refers to His promises to His people. Hence Peter in quoting it calls it the word of the Lord, whereas verse 23 is not a

TO BE READ		TO BE LEARNED.	APRIL.
1	Sa	Gen. xxix.	For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh.
2	Su	„ xxx.	This man has done nothing amiss. — (Perfect.) —
3	M	„ xxxi.	If any man offend not in word, the same is a PERFECT man, and able also to bridle the whole body.
4	T	Luke xxii.	But let patience have her perfect work that YE MAY BE PERFECT and entire, wanting nothing.
5	W	„ xxiii.	The God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus after He have suffered awhile MAKE YOU PERFECT, stablish, strengthen, better you.
6	Th	„ xxiv.	That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.
7	F	John i.	BE PERFECT, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you.
8	Sa	„ ii.	Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.
9	Su	„ iii.	And it came to pass, as He sat at meet with them, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake and gave to them. — (Power of God.) —
10	M	„ iv.	For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us who are saved it is THE POWER OF GOD.
11	T	„ v.	For though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by THE POWER OF GOD.
12	W	„ vi.	For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you.
13	Th	„ vii.	Hereafter ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power.
14	F	Gen. xxxii.	Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power, for Thou has created all things.

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

APRIL.

15	Sa	Gen. xxxiii	Alleluia, salvation and glory and honor and power unto the Lord our God.
16	Su	„ xxxv.	The Son of Man MUST be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. — (The Lamb of God.) —
17	M	„ xxxvi.	And looking upon Jesus as He walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God.
18	T	John viii.	As a SHEEP before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth.
19	W	„ ix.	And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a lamb as it had been slain.
20	Th	„ x.	Let us be glad and give honour to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come.
21	F	„ xi.	Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.
22	Sa	„ xii.	Blessing, and honour and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.
23	Su	„ xiii.	Then . . . came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. — (God our Father.) —
24	M	„ xiv.	One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.
25	T	„ xv.	I will be to Him a Father and He shall be to me a Son.
26	W	„ xvi.	I ascend to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God.
27	Th	„ xvii.	Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, MY FATHER, Thou art the guide of my youth.
28	F	Gen. xxxvii	A son knoweth his father and a servant his master.
29	Sa	„ xxxviii.	Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.
30	Su	„ xxxix.	Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.

quotation referring to the promises of Jehovah to His people, but means the word of God generally.

E.—I am greatly obliged to you, *G.*, for seriously I did not know the reason myself when I asked. I should like just to notice the difference between “*grass*” and that which “*abideth for ever.*” It reminds me of what I saw when walking down Cheapside some years ago. The lower end was being widened, and on one side I noticed a number of shops with cracked windows and battered doors, apparently quite empty. I stepped across the road to get a better look at them, and there, behind, rising out of the very middle of them, was a splendid pile of carved stones and polished granite. The empty shops, I could see, were soon coming down, and then every one would see the firm, enduring, and splendid building behind. Verse 24 is the tumble-down shops, and verse 25 the splendid building. The one will soon fall and be taken away, the other will endure. If we are born again of this enduring word, we have a building of God eternal in the heavens, and we need not therefore be decking and adorning the exterior, the poor body, which will soon perish like grass. I noticed that the other shops made a very fine and attractive display in their windows, and people stopped and looked at them, but they had no fine buildings rising behind *them*. The bare looking empty shops, had that within and behind them, which far surpassed the others. Let not our thoughts then be taken up with the poor exterior, but with that which is of God within, en-

during, eternal as His word. Before leaving this chapter, let us now sum up the blessings and exhortations it contains. Perhaps *G.* will give us the former, *R.* the latter, and *M.* tell us what we are to do with them.

G.—The following is a list of our blessings in 1 Peter i.:—*We are* elect—sanctified—sprinkled with blood—begotten again—guarded by the power of God—saved—children—redeemed—purified—born again. *We have* a living hope—an incorruptible inheritance—Christ—the salvation of our souls—a Father—faith in God—the Spirit—the Word of God. Our faith will be found unto praise, and honour, and glory. We shall receive grace at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

E.—I think that list is fairly complete. Now, *R.*, what are we told to do?

R.—*We are to* obey—gird up the loins of our minds—be sober—hope—be holy in all manner of conversation—pass the time of our sojourning here in fear—love one another with a pure heart fervently. I think this is all.

E.—And it is surely enough. Now, *M.*, what are we to do with these two lists, till we meet again.

M.—Realise, and enjoy the first in our hearts, and pray to God for power to carry out the second.

E.—That is, indeed, the right way, and I do trust that some points of our study of this chapter may be seen in each of our lives before we meet again.

COME TO JESUS.

O YE who in the darkness stray
With fainting heart and weary feet,
Yet longing for a safe retreat,
O come to Jesus, for ye may.

O ye who in the twilight grope,
If haply ye may find a way,
Come unto Him without delay,
Exchange your doubts for faith's sure hope.

O ye who sorrow—Jesus died,
O list to His divine behest,
“Ye weary, come to Me, and rest,
My arms of love are opened wide.”


Such were the words of Godhead veiled
'Neath sorrowing manhood's lowly guise,
Whom sinners saw but to despise,
And last to Calvary's cross they nailed.

For three and thirty years He trod
This sin-stained earth, and then He gave
His spotless life unto the grave,
And paid the heavy debt we owed.

Then, sinner, turn thine eye to Him,
Who shed His blood for such as thou,
With life and death He'll thee endow,
And will thy soul from death redeem.

So thou eternal life shall gain,
So shall thy toil and travail cease,
So shalt thou win eternal peace,
And God's own rest in heaven attain.

A SOLDIER'S STORY.



At the early age of fourteen, I enlisted into a line regiment, and was at once surrounded by influences for evil; the Sunday-school once loved, and the worship of God, now became a thing of the past. But, happening one Sunday evening to go into a church, the curate at once noticed a stranger, and one in the Queen's uniform, and therefore sent word he wished to speak to me. He invited me to attend the Bible class, &c., but I was ordered to join my headquarters in the Island of Malta, and thence proceeded to Natal; from Natal I went through the Transvaal, and thence to take part against the rising of the natives in Sekukuni's country. These proceedings took some years, and all this time I went from bad to worse, and on one occasion was just rescued from death by drink. Soon after this, I was brought face to face with almost certain death while fighting, but while others were cut down, I escaped.

Time passed on, and again I was ordered to take part in the Zulu war, in most of the battles I fought and escaped unhurt, and after the final battle of Ulundi, we were ordered back to England; and with a firm resolve (God sparing me to reach my native land) I said I

would seek the instruction of those who could point me on the right road ; for though very blind as regards spiritual things, I still thirsted for a holy life. We had all been separated for a long time from any spiritual instruction, and were therefore, as blind to the knowledge of salvation in Christ Jesus, as the majority of the heathen which inhabited the country in which we were. Indeed while travelling there, we came in contact with converted black men (who were our allies), and they were a credit to their Master, and we a discredit, in having been brought up in a country like England, and yet living without God ; so I yearned and longed to get home again ; and at last, God having set us on England's shore once more, I sought immediately a Christian worker amongst soldiers, and was thus pointed to the Lamb of God. Now came fierce battles without and within, and I was tempted to infidelity very strongly. No, I said, I remember when brought as it were to see the black future, and face almost certain death, without the slightest hope but of being lost, what I would then have given to have accepted Christ, and have led a holy life, and been able to say, "to me to die is gain." I would have given worlds, if I had them, for such a hope, and so I will not give Christ up now. I can now see His hand in all my past life, though He let me go as far as possible, so that the pains of hell were upon me, yet He lovingly shielded me, and protected my life, and covered my head in the day of battle and

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danger. I often shuddered to know that my comrades who fell around me had no hope, and that I too, having forsaken the teachings of our Sunday-school, was also without hope, being unfit to die, and still more unfit to stand before my God whom I had offended. Before I became a soldier, though very young, I had always had a desire and longing to become a missionary and work for the Lord amongst the heathen, but means and circumstances would not allow me, even had I been a child of God; and therefore I resolved now to become a missionary amongst those with whom my lot would be cast as a soldier. May God, by His almighty power, make me indeed a true worker for Him through Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and Saviour.



BIBLICAL WORDS AND PHRASES.

TONGUES.—One of the temporary signs or gifts in the early church (1 Cor. xiv.) testifying by its evidently miraculous power to its Divine origin. This gift consisted in speaking fluently in a foreign tongue (not in no language at all, as is sometimes thought). Prophecy, or speaking by the Power of God to the conscience is put as a higher gift.

TRADITION.—This was very plentiful among the Jews, the written law being supplemented by the oral (or spoken) law, which consisted in the tradition of the elders handed down from generation to generation. It often made the word of God void by limiting it or adding to it. This the Lord pointed out again and again (Matt. xv., Mark vii.). It is to be feared that even now

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tradition and the law of precedent has not wholly ceased to govern and guide the church of God, instead of the word alone.

TRANSGRESSION.—The breaking of law; where there is no law, there is no transgression (Rom. vi., and 1 John iii.). Sin, therefore, is not “the transgression of the law” (1 John iii. 4), but “lawlessness” (R.V.). Sin existed long before the law was given, but transgression came in with law.

TREE OF LIFE.—This was seen in Eden, but was not touched or eaten. In the millennium it will reappear (a type of the fruitfulness of Christ), its fruit figuratively being for the inhabitants of the heavenly Jerusalem, its leaves for the healing of the nations on earth (Rev. xxii.). Knowledge is said to be a tree of life.

TRIBES, The Twelve.—Easy though it may appear to enumerate these, the way the number twelve is preserved constantly varies, from the fact that Joseph is divided into two—Ephraim and Manasseh, thus making thirteen. To counterbalance this, Levi was given to the Lord, and had no territorial possessions except forty-eight cities. Still it is sometimes enumerated and some other left out. The remnant of two of the tribes only were left in the land at the time of the Lord, ten having been carried away entirely; and probably exist as some obscure people somewhere in small numbers, which will rapidly increase before they return to their own land at the beginning of the millennium. These ten tribes, having had no share in crucifying Christ, will not suffer under the reign of Antichrist. It is remarkable to see the faith of James in writing to the whole twelve tribes at a time when even the two were almost gone. So Elijah also builds his altar on Mount Carmel with twelve stones.

TRUTH may be defined as light brought in contrast with error. Christ, who was ever Light, became the truth in connection with this world. Truth, or the truth, is, however, technically used to mean Christian doctrine. In 2 John, &c., we find it thus used.

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TRINITY.—Short for tri-unity, or three in one, and refers to the revelation of God peculiar to Christianity, (being never clearly revealed till Christ came), of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Looked at generally, it may be said that it is God the Father who wills, the Son who carries out the will by the agency of the Spirit; but all are one God, though thus known not only in three characters, but in three persons. The Son alone has a body, God the Father, and the Holy Ghost are spirit.

TRIBULATION, The.—Tribulation generally means simply trial, but *the* tribulation refers to the tremendous persecution under Antichrist, through which the Jewish remnant will have to pass after the church is gone. So fearful will it be, that the days of it will be shortened. Full directions are given to the Jews how to act during that time by the Lord in Matt. xxiv., &c.

TWO OR THREE. An expression taken from Matt. xxiii. 18, where the Lord's presence is promised to two or three gathered to His name. The small number doubtless refers to times when no more than this can be found thus to assemble together; to such this promise is very precious, giving as it does to those thus assembled all the power of the assembly (1 Cor. v.). The *name* spoken of doubtless refers to Matt. xvi., when Jesus expressly takes the name of Christ no longer as the Jewish Messiah, but as the foundation of the church He was about to build, and which is referred to in chap. xviii.

TWELVE.—This number is thought to mean earthly perfection. Ingenious people have thought it is therefore a combination of seven (Divine perfection), and five (human weakness?).

TYPES.—These are Old Testament figures of New Testament realities. Generally they are of Christ and His work. They need great care in interpretation. One rule is of especial value, and that is, "*never to found a doctrine on a type.*"

OUR NOTE-BOOK.

SOME answers that we have received to the question, "Give seven different ways in which selfishness may be shown," may afford useful hints to some of our more self-indulgent readers.

"Forgetting to pray for others."

"Keeping all for ourselves, and not helping the poor."

"Choosing the best seat and the warmest place."

"Neglecting others from laziness."

"Reading for our own pleasure, when we know of some poor old, or blind, person who would be glad to be read to."

"In being annoyed if anything is done or said that offends me, or my reputation, and not caring for what is dishonouring to *Him*."

"In expecting things to be done for me, instead of doing things for others."

"In going to meetings because I enjoy them, instead of staying in to let others go."

"In spending more money on myself than is *really* necessary."

"In not telling others something of the rich and precious truths I enjoy myself."

"In over occupation with our own ills."

"In indulging our tastes and fancies to the discomfort of our companions."

"In protecting ourselves from draughts to the exposure of those sitting by us."

"In refusing to read to or amuse children, when we would rather go to a meeting, or do something for ourselves."

"*In selecting the largest piece of cake for myself.*"

The following letter was omitted last month for want of space:—

"You will be pleased to hear that I have been going on for about one year with some of His people here—and though I knew the *theory* of being *delivered*, yet I had not known it in reality, I knew that there was such a thing as, 'From sin, the world, and Satan, I am ransomed by Thy blood,'

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but did not know it in its reality or joy. About a month ago, the Lord through a servant of His gave me, with others, a lecture in the power of the Spirit on deliverance and then my eyes were opened to see the simple way of God's salvation. It is through the Lord Jesus Christ's death, He having made peace with God for me, and so He has cleared *everything* that was against me. Then that verse in Ephesians was read, which seemed to fill my heart with joy, and showed me in a simple way how a believer is sealed, '*After ye have believed, ye were sealed by the Holy Ghost,*' and then a week after, I learnt through God's grace, in reality, what it was to be a child of God; that is owning Him as Father, knowing He loved me before the world began, and showed it at the cross, and how He loves me and cares for me every moment of the day. It is blessed to be able to go on with the Lord, in reality, not as those who want to stop down here, but as those who wait for their Lord to come at any moment. May we indeed be thanking Him more for His love and care to us; for when we think we '*belong to Christ,*' how it ought to affect our walk and make us do everything for Him!"

G. E. S. writes as follows: "It often troubles me to think how little I do for the Lord Jesus, and though I am sure I have given myself entirely to Him, and do wish more than anything to live a consecrated life, I am sometimes very unhappy, and have doubts as to whether I am really a Christian after all. It seems so easy sometimes to trust Him, and then all is bright and happy; but I suppose it is unbelief that comes and makes everything dark."

We are sure from the above that our dear friend is still looking to find peace in some way in her feelings, her consecration, or her spiritual state, and not in Christ alone. Such is the common cause for all doubts and fears. The believer who once sees that Christ undertook to stand in his place—that God laid on Him all *his* iniquities, must see that, if God has expressed His satisfaction with what Christ has done by raising Him from the dead, not only are all his debts

paid, but God has got the receipt (so to speak) in His own presence, where Christ's blood ever answers every charge against him. This, however, is by no means enough for all; they must add *something* to Christ's finished work (though they dare not *say* so), which is either their state of mind or heart, or fruits or something else. These are all good in their place, but as long as I rest on them *in any way*, so long I shall never have settled peace. The work of the Spirit in me, however it may prove I am a child of God to others, is *never* the ground of my peace; the work of Christ for me is. Look up, dear friend, whenever you have doubts and fears, to your great Substitute at God's right hand, and open your Bible and read Isaiah liii. 6 which is a sheet anchor to the doubting soul. "Giving yourself to Him," remark is in Rom. xii., and you must pass Rom. v. 1 to get there. Proceed in God's order, and rest in God's salvation. As long as you look within *you will never have peace.*

A friend takes exception to the answer to Q. 18 (Practical Queries), and says that no Scripture proof is given of rewards in heaven, adding, "If the Scriptures teach that we are to receive rewards, by all means let us have chapter and verse, but if all such a theory(?) only rests on a simile drawn from Queen Victoria's household, and the scene in John xxi. I maintain that it is without Scripture warrant, and should not be taught. I have long since rejected the idea, having found that those with whom I have discussed the question have been obliged to shelter themselves under the very vague expression 'general tenor of Scripture.' "

Although our friend does not write for publication, we trust he will pardon the above extract, as the subject is so important as to be of interest to all. We have purposely omitted all initials to secure the desired privacy.

In reply we would first of all point out that the question raised in Q. 18 is *not* "whether we are to have rewards or not," hence this question is not answered here. But our correspondent is greatly in error if he supposes because a reply is not here given to a question not asked, that therefore there is no Scriptural answer to it. Let our friend

PRACTICAL QUERIES.

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turn to Matt. xxv. 14-23, to Luke xix. 12-19, to the special promises to overcomers in Rev. ii. and iii.; to 2 Cor. v. 10, to 2 Cor. iv. 17, to Luke xiv. 14, to Matt. v. 12, to 2 Tim. iv. 8, to 1 Peter v. 4, and say if, in the face of such Scriptures, he can maintain there is no reward in heaven for a fruitful and faithful walk here below. We maintain that the doctrine is repeatedly taught, and alluded to, throughout the New Testament, and is a great incentive to Christian walk, though the power must ever be the "constraining love of Christ." (2 Cor. v.).

PRACTICAL QUERIES.

Q. 27. We much need to know by passages from Scripture the difference between man's nature, his disposition, and natural character, so often hearing the sad excuse, "I can't help it, my character is so and so."

ZURICH.

A. Natural disposition may be bad, or good, (as in the young man whom the Lord loved.) What is *always bad* is the will that directs the nature, and uses even the best qualities only for self, and without reference to God. A Christian who is naturally amiable and good is often much thought of simply for his natural qualities; whereas another who has in a measure overcome his natural defects of temper and character may be thought less of on account of these, though really more advanced. The measure of our amiability is not the standard, but how far this is the result of the work of the Spirit. It is plainly, however, no excuse for a man to say he cannot help it, for in Gal. v. the Spirit is power that we may not do the things that we would.

Q. 28. Is it according to God when we come together for worship and praise, to pray for our own daily wants, and remember the unconverted?

Z.

A. Meetings if called for a certain definite purpose should be kept to it. It is quite another question, however, whether many meetings are not called for praise that should rather be for confession. If such is evidently the case, it is better to own the Spirit's leading, and confess that we were wrong in defining the object of the meeting. At the same time it is easier to think of ourselves and even of others than of God : hence a true praise or worship meeting is very precious. At the close of such a meeting there is often a fitting opportunity for remembering the unconverted. We must beware of selfishness. Indeed, in such matters all laws are vain : we must wait on God.

Q. 29. In studying the subject of "selfishness," it has occurred to me that many Christians are selfish in the same way as he who first so painfully exhibited this sin. "Am I my brother's keeper?" I can only speak for myself of the terrible apathy there is as regards the welfare of others. How little one prays for the careless, how seldom one speaks to them, and how often by worldliness or inconsistency we stumble them. Can you please tell me "How Christians can cultivate a spirit of earnestness for the salvation of those around." One does want to be more truly a soldier, not fearing to fight for our Master, and to snatch others from Satan's power if possible?

A. Your question will strike a chord in many hearts, for all must mourn their lack of faithfulness in this respect. None can say, "I am clear as to this." We can hardly tell you how to cultivate a spirit of earnestness. The only way is to cry to God to give it you, and then each day watch that no opportunity of saying a word is passed by. The one who seeks opportunities is the one who gets them. Oh! that the Lord may stir us all up as to this, and that your remarks may be used to rouse many young believers to a sense of their responsibilities in their homes, in their business life, and in their social surroundings.

PRACTICAL PAPERS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS.

V.—COVETOUSNESS.

AN insatiable sin, a sin that grows by that on which it feeds, a sin that leads to all sorts of other sins, the one sin of the heart directly forbidden by the ten commandments, a hidden secret sin coming from the heart. "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed . . . covetousness" (Mark vii. 21). Applied to money it is "the root of all evil" (1 Tim. vi. 10); it is never satisfied. It leads to injustice and oppression (Micah ii. 2), to departure from the faith (1 Tim. vi. 10). It is *abhorred by God* (Psalm x. 3), it excludes from the kingdom of God, being classed with such sins as theft, idolatry, and adultery (1 Cor. vi. 10). It is one of the sins of the last days (2 Tim. iii. 2; 2 Pet. ii. 1-3). *Such is covetousness*, and yet so deceitful is this sin that but few are aware of its dangerous and awful character. In the world, indeed, it is hardly accounted a sin at all; and it is therefore difficult for a worldly Christian to understand how coveting what is another's, is as bad before God as theft or drunkenness. The fact is, that it is only the standard of the Word of God that shows what sin is; and in a measure the world at large has profited by this.

Theft and adultery, and other sins are now everywhere admitted to be wrong, but in other ages they were not. It is only within the last century that drunkenness has begun to be classed as a sin by the world, while covetousness and other sins of the heart (though equally condemned by the Word) are, as yet, totally unrecognised as such.

COVETOUSNESS IS THEFT BY THE HEART.

Writing, however, as we do, for those who take the Word and not the world's code of morality for their standard, we would earnestly warn them against this sin, which may be called *theft by the heart*. But, you say, it is very hard *not to covet* when I am poor and struggling, to see others so well off. This is true, but, though hard, you *must* get the victory, and by setting your affections on things above, you will find you are as rich, and, it may be, far richer than they, so that the positions are reversed, and the rich man, discontented with his riches, covets the calm and happy mind of the humble Christian. God has made us so rich that it can be only through ignorance of our wealth or through earthly tastes that we covet at all: this we see in Psalms lxxiii., the whole of which is written to prove this very point.

EXAMPLES OF COVETOUSNESS.

Before, however, saying more about it, it may be well for us to listen, as we have done before, to what the Word of God has to tell us by way of example concerning this sin, carefully observing to

what sins it especially leads. The first sin, the parent of all other sins, was partly due to covetousness. Eve saw the fruit was good for food, she knew it was not for her, but she coveted, and she took, and fell. Covetousness is frequently the result of looking at things we ought not. If we let our eyes drop from Christ to the world, we shall soon find our poor hearts running after it, and covetousness, and a whole host of other sins, will follow. In Joshua vii. 21 we find a fearful instance of covetousness in Achan. "When I saw, then I coveted, and I took." How like Eve, and how terrible in its results, causing not only his own death, and that of thirty-six others, but the defeat of Israel before their enemies; for God could not lead them to victory with a covetous man in their midst! Observe in both these cases covetousness leads to direct DISOBEDIENCE to God. Have any of my believers any hidden sin, like Achan's, destroying their happiness, eating away their spiritual life, and perhaps injuring and distressing others? Oh, let us judge ourselves, that we be not judged by the Lord.

COVETOUSNESS LEADS TO MANY SINS.

Passing on, we may notice it was the greed and covetousness of Samuel's sons, Joel and Abiah, that led the prophet to demand a king (1 Sam. viii. 1-5). This king, Saul, was dispossessed of his crown and kingdom through direct disobedience to God, into which he was led by covetousness (1 Sam. xv. 9-19). Passing down the stream of time we come to Ahab, who, through covetous-

ness of Naboth's vineyard, was led to commit judicial MURDER, led on by Jezebel. Gehazi's covetousness led him into a course of LYING and DECEIT, and brought upon himself the fearful plague of leprosy (2 Kings v. 20-24).

That covetousness was one of the besetting sins of Israel, we may see from Jer. vi. 13, "From the least of them even unto the greatest of them, every one is given to covetousness." But let us remember that this covetousness in Israel was nothing like so bad in character as it is amongst us; for after all what they coveted was merely an undue share of that which God had given to them all, for their blessings were earthly, and none could blame *them* for highly esteeming money and property. The Christian's possessions are spiritual, but it is a very rare thing for Christians, to be striving to get an undue share of these as the Jews did of their temporal blessings. On the contrary, the object of the covetousness of Christians too often, is the world and the things that are in it—things on which they should *not* set their heart or affections at all, still less envy those who possess more than they. What a tale, therefore, it tells of spiritual deadness, when a child of God, an heir of glory, is seen to covet the poor riches of earth!

Babylon, a type of this world in its prosperity was full of covetousness.

Turning now to the New Testament, we find in the fearful history of Judas, that it was covetousness of money that led him to BETRAY his Master, a character of sin of which any of us may also be

guilty, though of course not in the same way. The Pharisees are branded as covetous, and this led them to reject and despise the faithful, searching words, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Covetousness is also the sin of Balaam (2 Pet. ii. 14), those whose hearts are full of covetous practices are said to follow the way of Balaam. We have thus seen that the effects of this sin, are uniformly bad; seeing it leads to disobedience to God, rejection of His Word, lying, deceit, and murder. None are exempt from this sin; those who have little would have much, those who have much would have more. It is wonderful, therefore, to possess

THE SURE REMEDY FOR THIS SIN,

and that is in simply having the enjoyed possession of so much, that not only can we not wish for more, but cannot even hold what we have. Such a portion is the Christian's, and were our hearts more true to Christ we should be but little troubled with low covetous desires, for in Him we have more than we could wish, more than our hearts can contain. Hence, if we are really filled with all the fulness of God, what room is there for a covetous thought, however selfish we may be; if, as must be the case, occupation with Christ not only fills us, but *transforms* us. Covetousness is not absent so much because we are full, as because we have ceased to desire *for ourselves*; what we desire being for Christ's glory, His interests having supplanted our own. Christ, then, is the cure for

covetousness, by virtue both of His satisfying and His transforming power. We are sure that the lives of many Christians are miserable mainly from the effects of this one sin; for, unlike other sins which may make those who commit them happy for a time, this sin makes its victims wretched, so that there is no more unhappy object than a thoroughly covetous man; while, on the other hand, there is no happier object than a Christian *who is satisfied with Christ.*



MONTHLY BIBLE READINGS.—V.

1 Peter ii. 1-9.



—We commence the 2nd chapter to-day, which may be divided like the first into two halves; verses 1-10 speaking of our privileges, and verse 11 to the end of our responsibilities.

Just notice, *M.*, in verse 1, five things are mentioned that spoil our taste for God's word, and they must all be laid aside before we desire it.

M.—Yes, and I see that four of the five are what I call "invisible" sins, for they can be committed without anyone knowing. Evil speaking is the only "visible" one that must be seen by others.

MONTHLY BIBLE READINGS.

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~~E.—It does not matter whether they are~~
 “visible” or “invisible,” ~~they are~~ all most
 destructive to the one who allows them, eating
 into the spirit like a canker, and spoiling all love
 of the word.

G.—Is the word “babes” here the same as in 1
 Cor. iii. 1 ?

E.—No, the word used there is a different one,
 and is always used in Scripture in a bad, or at
 least unchristian, sense. You find it also in Gal.
 iv. 3 ; Eph. iv. 14 ; and Heb. v. 13. This word is
 used by Peter alone, to show that like a new-born
 infant we should desire the milk of the word, if we
 have tasted of the grace of God, though some alas !
 taste only to reject (Heb. vi.).

R.—Paul seems to think more of meat than
 milk in Heb. v.

E.—I think that Paul there uses “milk” in a
 much narrower sense than Peter ; just as our word
 “meat” may mean food, or merely animal food.
 Paul, too, was writing to those who ought to have
 been teachers (ver. 12), but were still “babes ;”
 by this word not referring to the beautiful simplicity
 of a babe, but to their state, as in Gal. iii., iv.,
 being undeveloped and still in bondage ; or, as the
 word means, unable to talk. In short, Peter
 refers to the quality of a babe that a Christian
 ought to have ; Paul, by using a different word refers
 to those qualities a Christian ought *not* to have.
 There is no doubt but that Christians, fully
 established, ought to be able to enjoy the
 strong meat of the word ; but I do not think that

any Christian is in a healthy state who ever learns to despise the "*sincere milk of the word*"—at any rate, in the sense Peter uses it.

M.—What does "*sincere*" mean?

E.—Without guile, and refers to days before paper or envelopes were invented. It means, literally, "without wax." The Greeks and Romans used to write their letters by scratching with a "style," or sharp pointed instrument, on on a smooth piece of metal or slate, or other hard substance. This tablet was then sent by a slave to the friend written to. But inasmuch as it would be very inconvenient to send private matters about in this open way, a small coat of wax was melted over the surface, which concealed the writing and acted as a most efficient envelope. When the tablet reached its destination, the wax was scraped off, and the writing clearly seen. A "sincere" letter, therefore, was one "without wax," and that every one could read. Such a letter is alluded to in 2 Cor. iii. 3. The word "sincerity" is used in 2 Cor. i. 12, in this sense, meaning "open and apparent to all." The word here translated "*sincere*," however, means simply "pure" or "unmixed."

G.—I suppose verses 4 and 5 refer to God's building, as in the end of Eph. ii.

E.—Yes, I think they do, for you see none but living stones enter into it; whereas, alas, when man builds, as in 1 Cor. iii., a good deal of wood, hay, and stubble is put in as well. However, looking at it practically, we may say that saints can-

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not be really united till they have carried out verse 1. It is a well-known fact that in frosty weather building cannot go on, for as fast as the mortar is put in during the day, it is picked out by the frost at night. Now the sins in verse 1 are indeed the frost of the soul, and living stones cannot practically be cemented together until they are laid aside. How can I be joined with another Christian if I bear him "*malice*" in my heart? or if *guile, hypocrisy, envies, and evil speakings* are not cast out? No! all the frost must go, that in the sunshine of love the building may be firmly joined together, stone to stone, in "*the bond of love.*" What are you looking so pleased about, *M*? Have you got rid of all these sins?

M.—Well, I certainly hate them all, but what I am pleased about is that I have just found another "seven;" I told *G.* I would.

G.—Where is it?

M.—Why, in verses 5 and 9; believers are called living stones and a spiritual house; a holy priesthood and a royal priesthood; a chosen generation, a holy nation, and a peculiar people.

E.—Very good, *M.* Before, however, considering these, we must just refer to verses 6-8. They consist largely of quotations from the Old Testament. The end of verse 6 rendered, "*shall not be put to shame*" (R.V.), is translated in Is. xxviii. 16, "*shall not make haste,*" a text very widely known and used in a totally different way from Peter's.

G.—Yes, I have often heard it quoted to show that believers should never be in a hurry.

E.—Just so ; and no doubt it is true that the one who is really trusting in the Lord is not so easily disturbed, or so anxious to make things go right, or in such a hurry about them, as a person who has only his own wits to depend on. Which meaning, however, is intended by the original, we must, I am afraid, be content to leave till our new version is ready. Notice in verse 6 that the corner-stone of our church has been laid, a sufficient answer if ever you are asked to assist in laying the foundation stone of a church. The Church of God is not built with hands, and is composed of living stones, not of polished granite or marble ; it is a spiritual, not a material, house (ver. 5). Verses 7 and 8 strongly remind us of Joseph's history, cast away by his brethren as worthless, but eventually becoming the head stone of the corner. We may remark in the last clause of verse 8 that the word "*appointed*" is used in verse 6, translated "*lay* ;" the sentence does not say that these were appointed to sin, but refers to the fact that the builders (specially the rebellious Jewish race), would be destined to find in the Lord of grace Himself a rock of offence. It was to this particular fall that their unbelief was destined, just as in Jude 4 we read : "*to this condemnation,*" the force being the character of condemnation, not the fact of it.

G.—I like the beginning of verse 7 very much. "*Unto you therefore which believe He is the preciousness*" (lit.). I feel that this is what I need to know more of—the preciousness of Christ.

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M.—I'm sure we all do. I know if I really loved Christ more I should not grieve Him as I do.

E.—It is a wonderful thought that God has shared what is most precious to Himself, with us, so that when we can say, "Christ is precious," we have communion (or common thoughts) with God (1 John i.) (for observe in verse 6 Christ is precious to God, in verse 7, to us). Let us now consider some of the seven privileges *M.* has pointed out. The holy and royal priesthood has often been spoken of, and I suppose we all clearly understand that the first refers to Aaron's order of priesthood, and that its duties are *to offer up* praise (ver. 5), and that the second refers to the Melchizedek order (See Hebrews), and its functions are *to show forth* the virtues of Christ. The first, then, is exercised towards God; the second towards man; and, observe, the first must come before the second. If I cease to offer up my daily sacrifice of praise to God, I shall soon cease to show forth Christ in this world.

G.—Is not Christ coming forth as Melchizedek in blessing at His second coming?

E.—Yes, and the beauty of this passage is that His virtues are given to us *now* to show forth, before He displays them Himself.

G.—I see that a holy priest has to offer up three sacrifices—his praises—his goods (Heb. xiii. 15, 16), and himself (Rom. xii. 1).

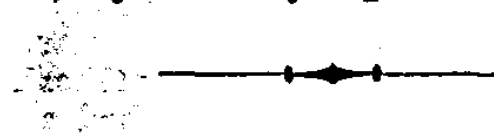
E.—Yes, and observe the first is a continual (Heb. xiii. 15) offering. In all circumstances, at all times, praise must ascend to God. Nothing

keeps Satan at such a distance as a thankful spirit; if our hearts are full of praise, he will not come near us. I was once on a mountain ridge in Switzerland, on one side of which was a very deep and wooded valley. I looked down upon the valley from the ridge, but could not see a single house, though I knew a village lay beneath me. At last, far away down among the trees, I saw a little wreath of blue smoke curling up to the sky, and then I saw another little column, and then another, and I knew there must be houses in the valley with fires alight inside. If we belong to God, He looks down on the very house we live in, to see whether praise is ascending to heaven from it every day. There may be fire without smoke, but there cannot be smoke without fire. We may be Christians, and yet not praise God; but we cannot praise Him unless we are Christians. Now God expects smoke always to be rising up from the fire He has lighted in our hearts; so if we feel inclined to murmur, let us stir up our minds as Peter says in 2 Pet. iii. 1, with a remembrance of His goodness, for the "*joy of the Lord is our strength.*"

Now the royal priest has different duties from these; he is to "*show forth,*" which means a good deal more than "*talking about.*" Supposing I gave a poor woman some money to repair and furnish her cottage, she might go all over the village from morning to night talking of my goodness; but as long as her window-panes were cracked, her door off its hinges, and her cottage

bare, my kindness would not be "shown forth." We may talk a great deal about what Christ has done for us, but until we display His virtues in a humble contented spirit, in a holy and consistent walk, in an active and self-sacrificing life, we cannot be said to be "showing forth His virtues" as royal priests. You see a man may talk about some valuable jewel in his possession, when all the time he has got none; but he cannot *show* it unless he has it. Hence the value Scripture attaches to "*showing*." A mere professor may talk now, but a true believer can show.

But I see that our time is gone, and we must leave the rest of our privileges till next time. Let us, however, this month, remember each day that we are both holy and royal priests unto God.



MARKING TIME.—Many Christians seem to think that they are left here to "mark time." "Marking time" is not marching. The feet may incessantly be moved up and down, and yet there may be no progress heavenward. We may be very busy, and yet making no spiritual advance, clearing no fresh ground, overcoming no foe, and withal proud of the fact that we keep moving. Moving is not advancing, and it is a fatal error for Christians to mistake "*marking time*" for "*marching*."

THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.—By the law is the knowledge of sin; by the Gospel is the knowledge of Christ,

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

MAY.

1	M	Gen. xi.	Behold, your God will come and save you.
2	T	Jno. xviii.	I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.
3	W	„ xix.	The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost.
4	Th	„ xx.	There is none other name given under heaven, whereby we must be saved.
5	F	„ xxi.	Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else.
6	Sa	Acts i.	Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.
7	Su	„ ii.	That through death He might destroy him that had the power of death,
— (The Holy Ghost.) —			
8	M	„ iii.	I will pray the Father, and He will give you another COMFORTER, that He may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth.
9	T	„ iv.	The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.
10	W	„ v.	The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.
11	Th	„ vi.	When the Comforter is come whom I will send unto you from the Father, . . . He shall testify of me.
12	F	Gen. xli.	Then had the churches rest. . . and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost were multiplied.
13	Sa	„ xlii.	Now the God of hope fill you with joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.
14	Su	„ xliii.	Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death.
— (The eyes of the Lord.) —			

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

MAY.

15	M	Gen. xliv.	The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole world to shew Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him.
16	T	Acts vii.	The eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good.
17	W	„ viii.	The eyes of the Lord preserve knowledge and He overthroweth the words of of the transgressor.
18	Th	„ ix.	The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry.
19	F	„ x.	All things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.
20	Sa	„ xi.	The ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord, and He pondereth all his goings.
21	Su	„ xii.	Who . . . become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.
			— (Trust.) —
22	M	„ xiii.	Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.
23	T	„ xiv.	Oh ! how great is Thy goodness which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee ; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee.
24	W	„ xv.	It is BETTER to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.
25	Th	„ xvi.	They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.
26	F	Gen. xlv.	I WILL TRUST, and not be afraid.
27	Sa	„ xlv.	He shall deliver them from the wicked and save them, BECAUSE THEY TRUST IN HIM.
28	S	„ xlvii.	He . . . should taste death for every man.
			— (Truth.) —
29	M	„ xlviii.	Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle ? . . . He that speaketh the truth in his heart.
30	Tu	Acts xvii.	Buy the truth and sell it not ; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.
31	W	„ xviii.	His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

A YOUNG TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE.

FOR the encouragement of some poor harassed, but Christ-loving Sunday-school teacher, I give the following experience. About thirteen years ago, when I was little more than a school-girl, I was induced to undertake a Sunday class for girls. The work was not much to my taste, for at that time, alas ! my heart was not in it ; but, as the endeavour to find a more suitable teacher proved fruitless, and the girls themselves were exceedingly good during the hour we spent together, I gradually became attached to them, and after a while ceased to wish to give them up.

In the meantime, however, the Lord met with me, and I was shortly afterwards brought to a saving knowledge of His truth. Then it was that I asked myself the question, for the first time, "What am I doing for the souls of my girls?" The fact was, hitherto I had been content to open the class with a hymn, and afterwards I had read to them what I myself had been in the habit of terming "A Sunday story." The sense of my responsibility before God now became overwhelmingly great, and I resolved that, for the future, by His grace, I would only read with them the Word, and nothing but the Word. On the following

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Sunday, accordingly, after giving my girls the usual friendly greeting, and opening the class with a hymn and prayer, I drew forth my Bible, and, with many heart-beatings and some hesitation, told them that hitherto I had not realised, as I ought to have done, the importance of speaking to them about their immortal souls, but that now I was deeply impressed with the folly and sin of frittering away the precious Sunday hour over a mere story-book, and that henceforth I was fully determined, by God's help, to read and explain to them nothing but His Word.

For a moment the girls were fairly dumb with surprise, then suddenly began to make a loud noise of disapproval, which finally resulted in a scene of uproar. They laughed and sneered, they turned everything I said into ridicule, and, in fact, let me fully understand that they would not bear the change of subject, that they came to hear the story-book, and the story-book they would have. For several Sundays I struggled on, praying and weeping during the week, yet defeated again and again each Sunday.

At last, one afternoon, finding they would not be quieted, and that literally my voice was drowned in the hubbub, I could no longer control my feelings, but burst into tears. This effectually silenced them, and made them all look very grave, and in the prayer which followed, I audibly told the Lord my tale of sorrow and discomfort, and how I longed for the conversion of their precious, never-dying souls.

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Not another dissentient voice was raised, they quietly left the room. When I went outside, I found my unruly girls looking very blank, but standing about in clusters, while I proceeded to walk home, feeling that I could no longer continue to hold the class. "Just one Sunday more," resolved I, "and then I must give it up."

* * * * *

From that Sunday the class was attended by a number of devoted and attentive girls. For three or four years we went on most comfortably, they became interested in searching for themselves in the Scriptures, and by God's blessing several conversions resulted. At the end of this period, I was taken ill, and absent from them for several Sundays.

Many times they called to inquire for me, and on the Sunday afternoon that I was able to return to my much-loved work, they came to meet me at the garden gate, and thus escorted me to the room where we always held our class. After a few questions and answers, I very naturally inquired, "And what sort of classes have you had since I left you?"

"Oh! miss," was the universal groan, "they were no classes at all. Miss Taverner merely heard us say our lessons, and then the rest of the time, she put on one of the girls to read 'The Sunday at Home.'"

"And did not that please you?" I asked, my mind quickly reverting to my early troubles with them in this very respect.

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"Oh! no, miss; how could it? We wanted help for the week."


In a few quiet words I was then given to understand that the simple reading and teaching of God's Word Sunday after Sunday was of such blessing to their respective souls, that they now always looked forward to it from week to week, and missed its influence in their daily life when taken from them.

This class continued several years under my charge with much blessing, and, after I left, it passed into the hands of another Christian worker, and still did well.

Let none despair in this, or any other kind of work for the Lord. The hand, whose dealings are so feebly set forth in this short chapter, is ever wondrously used in the support of the weak ones labouring in His vineyard; and none who put their trust in Him shall ever have cause to say, "He forsook me in my hour of need," but rather, "He hath done exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

THE TRUE LIGHT SHINES.—The light has entered in; the darkness is past, the true light shines. To turn now to conscience or to law, is like men who, with the sun in the zenith, nurse their scanty rushlight, with shutters barred and curtains drawn; like men who cast their anchor because the daylight has eclipsed the stars.

A PHYSICIAN'S ADVICE.

 HE advice once given by a physician to an anxious mother respecting the care of her child is of great value to the young Christian. "There are five things that are all important" said he, "in the management of young children. They must have warmth—fresh air—regular food—no stimulants—and cleanliness. These five things go a long way to banish disease."

In spiritual life, too, may we not say the same? Nine-tenths, if not all, of the diseases a Christian suffers from, are from the neglect of one or more of these five things. Let us briefly consider them.

Warmth—near to Christ's heart. You can tell a *warm* Christian the moment you see him, he looks so comfortable and happy. You don't find him trying to warm himself with Christ's enemies like Peter, and thus standing a great risk of denying Him. No, his fire is not kindled in this world, but in the warmth of Christ's love, ever shining down upon his heart. "For this cause," says the great apostle of the Gentiles, "I bow my knees unto the Father that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith: to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be strong to apprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that

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ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God." (Eph. iii. 14-19, R.V.). Is your heart, beloved reader, *warm* in the love of Christ, or are you shivering in the cold, seeking to cheer yourself at some embers of this dying world? Warmth, too, is obtained by Christian fellowship. "As iron sharpeneth iron, so the face of a man his friend." A coal in a fire will keep red and hot; when it drops out, it is black and cold in a few minutes. So with a Christian. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is," (Heb. x. 25), says the Word. The nearer young Christians get together and keep together, the warmer they will get, and the happier they will be.

"*Fresh air*" is the next thing. Warmth and fresh air do not always go together in this world, and often in obtaining the former we lose the latter. If this is true literally, how much more so spiritually! In seeking warmth from the society and friendship of this world, how the Christian loses the fresh air of heaven! He may appear outwardly for awhile to be pleased with what he has strayed after, but oh, how his soul is suffering from being forced to breathe the close, *spent* atmosphere of this world. How it sighs for its own native air! The air that we breathe is our life. Deprive a person totally of fresh air, and he will soon die a most horrible death. How different is the appearance of a child reared in some close London alley, from one born and reared among the green fields, or on the breezy hill side.

(*To be continued.*)

BIBLICAL WORDS AND PHRASES.

UNBELIEF.—*The besetting sin of man, from the simple fact that mistrust of God's word was the first evil seed sown in man's heart by the enemy in Eden, and it has flourished ever since. Indeed, so remarkable is man's mistrust of God, that He has had to send His Holy Spirit down to cause men to believe that which He has written, and thus the fact of believing God is a proof of the divine work, of eternal life. Unbelief is common amongst believers, that is to say, many have trust in God concerning their soul's salvation, but in very little else. This is most dishonouring to God, and must greatly grieve the Lord, even as the unbelief of his brethen right down to the very end grieved the tender heart of Joseph of old (Gen. 1.)*

UNITY OF THE SPIRIT is a Scriptural expression (Eph. iv.), and signifies the unity the Spirit forms in baptising every believer with Christ's body. This unity cannot actually be broken, but it may be practically denied through failing to keep it in the uniting bond of peace. All general outward manifestation of it has long since disappeared, and sects and human systems have taken its place.

UNITY OF THE BODY.—This is a scriptural thought, but not a scriptural expression. It is the work of the Spirit.

UNION means the uniting of two, but not necessarily forming them into one, or a unity. There is thus union between the persons in a family, but they do not form one person. Union may form a unity, as in the union of Christ and the Church.

UNLEAVENED BREAD.—That which is to characterise the believer's life (1 Cor. x.), that is, sincerity and truth, free from the leaven of malice and wickedness.

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Unleavened bread is always a type of purity ; hence, when the Church is prefigured at the Feast of Pentecost (Lev.xxiii.) it is with leavened loaves, because the individuals composing it contain evil.

VEIL, The Rent.—The flesh of Christ figuratively, as rent in death ; literally, the curiously wrought linen veil between the Holy and Holy of holies rent from top to bottom (showing it to be the work of God, with man), at the crucifixion.

VEIL, Inside the, means in the Holy of holies (Heb. xiii.) This is the believer's present place of worship (Heb. x.), all barriers to the Divine presence being done away Christ. Having thus Christ's place in acceptance before God, we also share His place of rejection on earth. Hence "inside the veil" goes with "outside the camp," the former our place of worship in heaven, the latter our place of service on earth.

VINE.—This was originally used as a type of the Jewish people, but on their failure (Is. v.), the Lord applies the figure to Himself (John xv.), those who attach themselves to Him on earth by profession being the branches, the proof of Divine life not being shown in their being branches, but in their bearing fruit.

WALK.—This word means the whole tenor of life of a Christian. It is to be worthy of God (1 Thess. ii. 12), worthy of the Lord (Col. i. 10), in the Spirit (Gal. v. 25), in newness of life (Rom. vi. 4), worthy of our vocation (Eph. iv. 1), as children of light (Eph. v. 8), honestly, circumspectly, &c.

WARFARE.—The Christian conflict the believer has to maintain against Satan according to Eph. vi. Observe the Christian is not called upon to war against the world, he is crucified to it, neither is he to war against his own evil nature, but to reckon it dead (Rom. vi.) His warfare is defensive and aggressive ; he holds fast what he has against all the assaults of the enemy, and attacks the powers of wickedness and darkness wherever he finds them.

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WATER OF LIFE is Christ (Rev. xxii.), and is freely offered to "whosoever will." "Living water" is the Holy Ghost (John viii.) "Water" by itself means the Word of God (1 Peter ii.), it is also a type of death in baptism.

WATCHING.—The attitude of the Christian, looking out for the Lord's return. We also watch against the enemy. "Watch and pray."

WEEKS, SEVENTY.—These are found in Dan. ix. 24, and shew in years, instead of days, the duration of time that would elapse ere the transgressions and sins of God's ancient people should finally be made an end of. This we know will happen when they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced, and mourn at the Lord's return. Inasmuch as seventy weeks only amount to 490 years, and as over 2,000 have elapsed since the prophecy, some explanation is necessary. This is found in the fact that this prophecy is distinctly Jewish, and solely refers to God's ancient people. We find in ver. 25 that this period is sub-divided into seven weeks, sixty-two weeks and one week, also that the street and wall should be built in "strait of time," or in the seven weeks, and that then, *after* sixty-two weeks, Messiah should be cut off, the *end* of the sixty-ninth week being marked by the advent of Messiah the Prince. This event probably took place on the day of Christ's entry into Jerusalem, when the Lord said, "If thou hadst known, even in *this thy day*." It is also found, by accurate calculation, that the sixty-ninth week expired on this very day. Shortly after this, according to ver. 26, Messiah was cut off, but not for Himself. Since that time, Israel has been *Lo-ammi*, "not my people," and has been scattered and rejected. Time with the Jews, therefore, is not now counted, God being engaged in calling a heavenly people out of the world to form a bride for Christ. When this is completed, and the Lord has come and fetched His people away to be with Himself, then, and not till then, Daniel's last week will run its course under the fearful reign of Anti-Christ.

OUR NOTE-BOOK.

THE following letter is written by one who has had long experience in his work, and may help some Sunday-school teacher :—

SUNDAY-SCHOOL WORK.

“ Perhaps a word or two on the subject of “ unruly boys ” may, by the blessing of God, prove a word of encouragement. I have had to contend many times during an experience for upwards of twenty years with unruly boys. Nevertheless, I am happy to say that I have generally succeeded with such. I have always given greater attention to such lads, viz., speaking to them privately, shaking them by the hand, giving them some work, giving them a prize for doing something, also showing to them that I have very great concern for them, and am most anxious to do them good. I have found that these indications of regard have proved a great advantage in my work. I have heard many teachers complain that they do not get on so well as they should wish. I am afraid they will not by impatience, and without regarding some of the things I have mentioned. Then, again, lessons must be specially prepared and adapted to meet the requirements of such lads ; they must be very striking, with good illustrations. I believe that if teachers would only take some of these hints, and endeavour to carry them out by prayer and faith, that we should not have many very unruly lads in our Sunday-Schools, especially when we also maintain our authority as teachers. We must never lose sight of this, that there must be discipline observed, both by the superintendent and teachers. Let us ever remember that the work is a glorious one, that we work under a good Master, consequently should put forth our best efforts in the strength of Him who is able to do great things for us, and those who look to Him in carrying on this important work in the vineyard. He will bless us if we labour faithfully. Let us look more and more for His help, His grace, and then we shall never feel as though we should give up the work.”

The following simple lines from the pen of a very young believer remind us not only of the power, but unchanging love, of our Saviour.

"He is able."—Jude 24.

Yes; the Good Shepherd is able to keep
From falling or straying each one of His sheep
Able to strengthen, to comfort and cheer,
Able to help in the weary way here,
Able, when care presses down, to hold up;
Able to fill, to o'er flowing, joy's cup.
Able to comfort when grief's stormy wave
Compels us to lean on One mighty to save,
When it comes with such force that no man can save.
When faith seems to fail and vanish away,
He is able to be our strength and our stay,
"He is able," thus saith the book of the Lord;
We know this is true; but one little word
That He's not alone able but WILLING to keep
Doth add to the joy of the good Shepherd's sheep.

We shall be glad of further papers on, and anecdotes connected with, Sunday-School work.

Next month we hope to give another of the old monk's poems, the author of "A Praise Song," &c., &c.

We have received from C.J.L. a valuable paper on "The Infant Class in the Sunday-School, which we will insert as soon as "Biblical Words" are finished.



PRACTICAL QUERIES.

Q. 30. Is the faith exercised by the sinner in accepting Christ as his Saviour a divine power in the heart; or is it the same trust as is placed in a fellow-creature? M.G.

A. In replying to a question so important we will reply at some length in borrowed words, which we think answers the question exactly, and we trust they will be carefully weighed. "Faith cometh by hearing, whether it be faith of the Gospel or of the news of some temporal calamity or good. There are no two ways of believing anything, and hearing

comes by the word of God, not by reasonings founded on it. The difference lies, not in the character of the faith, but in the object of it. The sinner is brought into the presence of God; He hears *God*, he believes *God*."

"In its first and simplest phase in Scripture faith is the belief of a record or testimony. It is, secondly, belief in a person; and it has, lastly, the character of trust, which always points to what is future. He who truly hears the good news of Christ believes it just as the little child believes a mother's word. And none but such shall ever enter the kingdom (Luke xviii. 17). There is neither mystery nor virtue in the *faith*, in the one case any more than in the other; but on the testimony itself all the difference depends. He who believes the gospel receives a word that is nothing less than "the power of God unto salvation." If, in fact, none can believe apart from the work of the Holy Spirit, the difficulty depends on no peculiarity in the *faith* itself. It is not a question of metaphysics, but of moral depravity and spiritual death. The hindrance lies in the apostasy of the natural heart of man. And doubtless the reason faith is made the turning point of the sinner's return to God is just because distrust was the turning point of his departure from Him. Faith, then, in its simplest character is not trust, nor even faith in a person, but belief of a record. If we read through 1 John v. we find it is the record, or witness, or testimony of God that is in question between the sinner and Himself. Metaphysical distinctions about believing with the head and with the heart, are either poetry or nonsense. In modern English "the heart" is synonymous with the affections, but not in Scripture. The Lord speaks of "the heart" as the moral being, the true man as distinguished from the mere outward man (Mark vii. 18-23.) A man cannot believe with his affections, it is the man himself who believes. But there is no subtilty in the faith. "Faith comes by hearing." "Faith in God comes by hearing God."

Let us, then, get this great fact implanted firmly in our minds, that there is neither merit nor virtue in faith, nor even in the letter of truth believed; but that *to believe God* is eter-

nal life. Faith is the opened lattice that lets in the light of heaven to the soul, bringing gladness and blessing with it.

It is only in opthalmic hospitals that people are always thinking of their eyes; and it is due entirely to the prevailing errors and follies of modern Christianity that so many Christians are hypochondriacs respecting faith. In Scripture faith is like healthy eyesight, unheeded and forgotten in the enjoyment of its use. Now-a-days it is more like the glasses of people with failing or defective vision—sometimes lost, often dim, and constantly a trouble.’

TRUST IN THE LORD.

A few lines by a Young Believer.

“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Heb. xi. 1).

NOTHING is too hard for Me,
Only trust and thou shalt see.
I the Lord am at thy side,
I thine everlasting guide.

Thou canst never go astray,
Trusting Me to lead the way;
Take My hand and thou shalt find,
I the Lord am very kind.

“Faith” is walking not by sight,
But trusting God that all is right;
That the darkest ways but tend
To a bright and glorious end.

Dearest Lord, on me bestow
Grace that I may always show
To a faithless world around
What a faithful Guide I’ve found.

PRACTICAL PAPERS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS.

VI.—DECEIT AND LYING.



THIS is one of the special sins connected with the tongue, that unruly member which no man can tame. Over and over again it is emphatically forbidden and condemned by the God of truth (Col. iii. 9 ; 1 Pet. iii. 10 ; Prov. xxiv. 28 ; Prov. xii. 22, &c.). When Peter speaks of

NO DECEIT IN CHRIST.

the life of the Lord as an example for us to copy, he emphatically points out that no deceit was found in His mouth. Those who are deceitful are therefore evidently most unlike Christ ; but not only so, but those who practise lying are children of Satan (John viii. 44), and are expressly excluded from heaven (Rev. xxi. 27 ; xxii. 18), and condemned to hell (Rev. xxi. 8). As we write for those who are professedly children of God, in looking at a few examples of this fearful sin in Scripture, we will only take those where a child of God, or at least a professor, is concerned.

LYING THROUGH FEAR.

We find, in Gen. xviii. 15, Sarah telling a direct lie through fear. How often is this the case, resulting from having done or said something we are ashamed of ? It may be a right thing, and we are thus ashamed of Christ ; or, it may be a wrong thing, and we are ashamed of being found

out. In either case a lie slips from our lips ere we are aware. The radical cure for this is not to do what we are ashamed of ; or, if the thing is right, not to be ashamed of what we do. If, however, we have slipped into a sin, let us not add to it by another, but just as the lie is about to leave our lips, let the thought " GOD HEARS ME " instantaneously arrest it. A lie of this sort to screen myself is, perhaps, the most contemptible kind, despised alike by Christians and men of the world. Having thus looked at it, let us resolutely avoid it, even in the smallest things, and never lend our tongues to such mean deceit.

LYING FOR OUR OWN ADVANTAGE.

The next instance is in Gen. xxvii. 19, when Jacob tells a direct lie for his own advantage—another despicable variety of this hydra-headed sin. Mark, too, Jacob was a child of God, and the result is that through the next thirty years of his life he suffered from the consequences of his sin ; by which, too, he gained nothing, for God would have given him all in due time. Have any of my readers fallen victims to this sin ? Making haste to be rich, or improve their position, or in some way run in advance of God ; have they ever, through selfish motives, told a lie ? If so, I am sure they have suffered since, and there can be no *real* restoration until that lie is confessed not only to God but to man. Too often, alas ! one lie leads to another, as in Jacob's case, and once embarked on this fatal course who can tell what the end will be ? Oh ! beloved reader, I plead with you : never, never

allow yourself to tell a lie for your own advantage. Think for one moment what a horrible denial such a sin is of all that Jesus ever was or did.

LYING TO COVER A SIN.

Passing over several, we come to David, who was guilty both of lying (1 Sam. xxi. 2) and deceit (2 Sam. xi.) of the most fearful character, by which he sought to cover up an awful sin, thereby making it twice as bad. Oh, how often some previous sin is the cause of a long course of deceit and lying. Beloved friends, let us, above all things, *seek to be straight* with God, with our fellow-men, with ourselves; and should we fall into a sin, never, never seek to cover it up by another, still worse than the first. A course of deceit positively *blights* the soul, destroying all simplicity, all joy, all communion. The result of these sins in David's case was a course of sufferings almost unparalleled in their severity from the hands of his own children. Let not us, therefore, think to escape the *all-searching eye* of God.

LYING FROM HABIT.

We find in 1 Kings xiii. 18, a prophet of God lying in a most wanton manner, without any apparent reason. We find some such characters now, even amongst God's people, some who apparently have no regard for the truth, and find it easier to tell a lie than to avoid it. The only remedy when the disease has so developed is to go straight to God, and cry to Him for strength and daily watchfulness to overcome it. One such case

I remember. I noticed that a person was almost always silent, and one day asked the cause. He said that he had been so addicted to lying that he was determined now not to speak at all if he could not speak the direct truth ; and, therefore, he seldom opened his lips, and always considered well before he spoke. Deep-rooted sins require some such radical measures.

TWO SOLEMN CASES OF LYING.

In the New Testament the two solemn cases, one of lying and the other of deceit, in Peter and Ananias, stand out above all others. Peter, forewarned by the Lord, yet strong in his own strength, told three lies to save himself, actually going the length of denying the Saviour while He was standing dumb before His accusers. Such sins are alas! not unknown even now. Many of us are ashamed of showing our colours, and when suddenly asked an unexpected question, through fear or shame, are betrayed into a lie to the triumph of Satan and the grief of our Lord. Let us watch earnestly against this ; and, if entrapped, let us follow Peter in his path of restoration. It is remarkable to see that the very one who fell himself is so perfectly restored as not only to be able to charge home the very same sin to the Jews (Acts iii. 14), but was also chosen by God to be the executor of His justice on the flagrant deceit of Ananias. This, too, was a wanton sin—a course of deceit being practised merely to give others a false impression of his generosity, and to appear other than he was.

This alas! is another common variety of this sin. Anxious to stand well in the eyes of our fellow men, rather than in those of God, we do not hesitate sometimes to descend to deceitful practices to appear other than we are, and so get praise from men that we do not deserve. Surely, such a course needs only to be named to be condemned by every upright heart. All these instances have been selected from the lives of professing children of God, and will well repay careful consideration; giving, as they do, striking illustrations of the main causes of deceit and lying among Christians. Lies may be told without using the lips; we may *act* so as to deceive, and seek to excuse ourselves because we have not *said* what is untrue. This is a worthless subterfuge, and will not stand before God for a moment. All such refuges of lies will He sweep away.

The *only* way to be happy before Him, and to be in any degree like Christ, is to turn our backs firmly and resolutely on deceit in every shape and form by word or deed; and determine, in God's strength, that we will earnestly seek to say and do nothing that is not absolutely *true*, thus saving ourselves from reaping the bitter fruits of shame and sorrow that will some day follow. May God help each one of us that is tempted by this sin to overcome it in His strength, and to learn to abhor and hate it because it is so hateful to Christ and so dishonouring to His name.

“The lip of truth shall be established for ever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment.”

MONTHLY BIBLE READINGS.—VI.

1 Peter ii. 10-17.



—Before going on to the practical part of the chapter, we must just consider the rest of verses 9 and 10, which are very beautiful. You will find the former closely resembles Exod. xix. 5, 6, and now these poor Jews are shown that all the blessings promised under the law, and forfeited, as their “dispersed” condition plainly showed, through its being broken, were now all theirs in Christ.

G.—“*Peculiar people*” is, I see, rendered in the R.V. “*a people for God’s own possession.*”

E.—Yes. Peculiarity is not the object of God’s people, though some dear Christians seem to think so; but is frequently a result of their belonging to God. The ways of heaven are not always understood on earth, but then we must be sure they are heavenly ways, and not eccentricities of our own devising.

R.—Is not verse 10 quoted from Hosea?

E.—Yes; in Hosea ii. we find the blessings that will belong to the Jew when restored in grace to God’s favour. The beauty of the passage is that these poor dispersed strangers had not to wait for this time, but were now, through Christ, the people of God. We now come to the practical exhortations which continue to the end of the epistle, and more exactly to chap. iii. 12. I think it may perhaps help us at this point just to give

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a general summary of the whole contents of this book, which we shall be better able to understand now that we have got thus far, than if we had only just begun. It is extracted from the Y. B., vol. i., p. 266.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER.

SUBJECT: THE PATH OF THE CHRISTIAN (more particularly a Jew of the dispersion) THROUGH THIS WORLD.

- I.—INTRODUCTION i. 1, 2.
- II.—CHRISTIAN POSITION AND
RESPONSIBILITY i. 3—ii. 10.
 - A. INDIVIDUAL PRIVILEGES i. 3-12.
 - a. Enjoyed in Christ i. 3-9.
 - b. Foretold by the Prophets i. 10-12.
 - B. RESPONSIBILITIES AS CHILDREN i. 13—ii. 3.
 - C. CORPORATE PRIVILEGES ii. 4-10.
- III.—EXHORTATIONS ii. 11—iii. 12.
 - A. TO PILGRIMS AND STRANGERS ii. 11-17.
 - B. SPECIAL ii. 18—iii. 7.
 - a. To Servants ii. 18-25.
 - b. To Wives iii. 1-6.
 - c. To Husbands iii. 7.
 - C. GENERAL iii. 8-12.
- IV.—ON SUFFERINGS iii. 13—iv. 19.
 - A. SUFFERING FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS iii. 13-17.
 - B. SUFFERING FOR SINS iii. 18-22.
 - C. SUFFERING IN THE FLESH iv. 1-6.
 - D. SUFFERING FOR CHRIST iv. 12-16.
 - E. SOBRIETY ENJOINED iv. 7-11.
 - F. JUDGMENT BEGINS AT GOD'S HOUSE iv. 17-19.
- V.—CONCLUDING EXHORTATIONS v.
 - A. TO THE ELDERS v. 1-4.
 - B. TO THE YOUNGER v. 5-11.
 - C. POSTSCRIPT v. 12-14.

Returning now to verse 11, observe the tender way in which the Apostle begins his exhortations. "*Dearly beloved, I beseech.*"

M.—Yes. I wish all our speakers pleaded with us like that. I am sure it would do a great deal more good than, "You must do this," and "You ought to do that."

E.—No doubt it would ; but all are not so like Christ as Peter, who here so beautifully carries out the last wish of his Lord (John xxi.).

R.—What is the difference between a pilgrim and a stranger ?

E.—The former has reference to the goal before us, the latter to the world around. You remember in the "*Pilgrim's Progress*" that Christian was always a pilgrim, but he was specially a stranger when surrounded with the follies of Vanity Fair. If we had lived in the middle ages on the continent of Europe, we should often have seen strange-looking men with stout sticks in their hands, a scallop shell fastened in their hats, and a generally travel-stained appearance, passing through our town. They might stay for the night, but not longer, and they always left the next morning by the eastern gate of the city. They were all strangers, but more than that, they were all pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem, affording us a beautiful illustration of this verse. The two characters must go together. It is the pilgrim's character, having our heart set on brighter things above, that keeps us strangers here. Many are strangers who are not pilgrims. Just at this time

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of the year the beautiful parts of our island are beginning to fill with strangers, but none of them are pilgrims, they are only tourists. And some Christians go through this world, alas, rather as tourists, to see and enjoy all they can, than as pilgrims, with their hearts set, like Abraham's, on a bright and better country.

G.—Yes, and I suppose that is the reason why Lot left Abraham. He had been travelling about with him as a stranger, but he was never really a pilgrim; and the result was that, not having his heart set on the heavenly country, he got attracted and drawn aside by the beauties of Sodom.

E.—Yes, and then he ceased to be even a stranger, and became a magistrate (sat in the gate), and had to be saved out of it by fire. Let us now just ask ourselves the plain question, “How far am I really a pilgrim and a stranger in this world for Christ?”

Observe in this verse Peter warns us first against evil from within, for this is always the most subtle; and he requires us to abstain from it.

G.—Yes, this is true “total abstinence,” not only from alcohol, but from every fleshly lust.

E.—Just so; and observe these “*war against the soul*;” the indulgence of them lowers the whole moral tone, and unfits us either to enjoy or stand for God.

M.—I think verse 12 is the first mention of “*good work*.”

E.—It is, and it comes here in its right place after the foundation has been well laid. Some

build upon works instead of Christ, putting them at the bottom, and a little of Him at the top, and a very poor building it makes. It is like the house upon the sand. But here, forming the ornament of the building of which Christ is the solid foundation, good works are in their right place.

M.—Yes, and this word is spelt with a “k,” not a “d.”

E.—But we must not forget that words, too, have their place, though here, as you say, it is works. As an old writer has said, “Thanksgiving is good, but thanksgiving is better.” It is important to see that Christianity is not to be picked up like a new language *to be talked*; on the contrary, it is a new life *to be lived*. We may only know a little truth, but let us *live* what we do know; let Christ be seen in our lives, even more than on our lips, The latter is so easy now-a-days. I am sure many of us would talk less glibly about the *letter* if we drank more of the *spirit* of God’s word; if we learned to sit more at His feet in deep reverence, listening to such words as these, “Be ye *holy*, for I am *holy*, saith the Lord.”

G.—The result of these good works is not to bring glory to ourselves, but to God.

E.—Yes, do not let us forget that. If we do good works for praise like the Pharisee, *we have our reward*—and poor enough it is, the praise we sought; but if we do them in secret for God, “our Father which seeth in secret Himself shall reward us openly” (Matt. vi. 4).

G.—In verse 15 we get *doing* again.

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E.—Yes ; and it is this that puts to silence the ignorance of foolish men far better than the longest arguments. Observe that the Christian does not upset the world. He is not a leveller. On the contrary, he respects all, and gives to all their due, hereby taking his own place as a pilgrim and a stranger. He honours all, especially the ruling powers ; he loves his brethren, and he fears God, and thus has the blessed sense of doing God’s will (verse 15), being free from all, but God’s bondservant in the willing chains of love. Such generally is the God-honouring path of a Christian in this world. Next time we will look at the more special instructions that follow.

“LET HER SEE IT IN MY LIFE.”



IFE testimony is most important for young, as for old. “A tree is known by its fruits.” Even a young sapling puts on its distinctive leaves and character. The words at the top of this paper were uttered by quite a little boy, about eleven years old, who had just been led to rest in Christ, and to know Him as his Saviour. Going straight home, he made his mother come into the bedroom, and told her the glad news, that he was happy now. His

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mother asked him if she should tell his grandmother down stairs. "No," he said, "*let her see it in my life.*" What a word for us Christians—young and old. Do those around us, in our homes, our workshops, our offices, our schools, do *they* know, without any doubt, "Whose we are, and whom we serve." The Lord says, "Let your light so shine before *men*, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. v. 16). Dear young reader, if you and I have learned to know Jesus as our Saviour, if we are rejoicing in what He has done for us, can we help then striving for Him? Is He not worthy? How often it is that the heart gets cold, the light grows dim, and there is no confession of Jesus either in the life or with the lips. Oh, what blessing we thus lose! If some great person had saved us from drowning, would not we be very grateful? Should not we be constantly telling others of what he had done for us? How is it, then, we do not speak of Jesus more? Are we ashamed of Him to whom we owe everything? Oh, dear fellow-Christians, let us consider how great things the Lord hath done for us—let us gaze on Him in all His beauty, and then our lives and lips will be constrained to speak of Him, and bring glory to His name. May we be so taken up with Jesus—so filled with gratitude to Him for what He has done—that we shall witness for Him, not merely by what we *say*, but by how we *live*. You know the apostle Paul said, "For me to *live* is Christ." It's the life testimony—the meekness

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—the gentleness—the manner—or even the look that may speak of Jesus to those around. It has often been said that “if you are much in a person’s company, you get like that person,” and that is just the secret, my dear fellow-Christian, whether for an apostle like Paul, or for young feeble Christians like you and me. Keep near to Christ—His lambs and sheep like to be near Him. Be close to His side, and have thus the freshness of His dying love filling your heart—gaze on *Him*, the living, risen, coming Saviour, and then *it will be seen in your life*. You can tell a soldier by his coat; and so may we be known by “putting on the Lord Jesus Christ,” as a garment to cover us—as a guard to protect us. Let us hear His voice—the shepherd’s voice calling us by name, and leading us out and on to glory. Thus, like the glow-worm, we shall shine in the dark for Jesus “till He comes.”

“Jesus bids us shine
First of all for Him,
Well He sees and knows it,
If our light grow dim
He looks down from heaven,
To see us shine,
You in your small corner,
And I in mine.”

FAITH.—Faith is not a sense, nor sight, nor reason, but a taking God at His word. It is the eye of the soul. It was not the nimble foot, nor the strong arm, that were of use; but the eyes, however dim and weak, directed to the Brazen Serpent.

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

JUNE.

1	Th	Acts xix.	Thy counsels are faithfulness and truth.
2	F	„ xx.	The Lord is the God of truth, He is the living God, and an everlasting King.
3	Sa	„ xxi.	And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us . . full of grace and truth.
4	Su	„ xxii.	Forasmuch, then, as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind.
(Joy in God.)			
5	M	„ xxiii.	Sing aloud unto God our strength, make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.
6	T	„ xxiv.	Let thy Priests be clothed with righteousness, and let thy saints shout for joy.
7	W	„ xxv.	Let Israel rejoice in Him that made him ; let the children of Zion be joyful in their king.
8	Th	„ xxvi.	Be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.
9	F	Gen. xlix.	The kingdom of God is . . . righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.
10	Sa	„ 1.	I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.
11	Su	Ex. i.	I am the Good Shepherd, the Good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.
(God's Joy.)			
12	M	„ ii.	The joy of the Lord is your strength.
13	T	Actsxxvii.	He will rejoice over thee with joy, He will joy over thee with singing.
14	W	„xxviii.	The Lord will again rejoice over thee for good as He rejoiced over thy fathers.
15	Th	Rom. i.	The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever, the Lord shall rejoice in His works.

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

JUNE.

16	<i>F</i>	Rom.	ii.	My Son if thine heart be wise my heart shall rejoice . . . When thy lips speak right things.
17	<i>Sa</i>	„	iii.	Likewise joy shall be in heaven over our sinner that repenteth.
18	<i>S</i>	„	iv.	This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. <hr/> (Happiness.) <hr/>
19	<i>M</i>	„	v.	He that hath mercy in the poor, HAPPY is he.
20	<i>T</i>	„	vi.	Happy is the people whom God is the Lord.
21	<i>W</i>	„	vii.	Happy is the man that feareth always.
22	<i>Th</i>	„	viii.	Happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore, despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty.
23	<i>F</i>	Ex.	iii.	Where there is no vision the people perish, but he that keepeth the law happy is he.
24	<i>Sa</i>	„	iv.	Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.
25	<i>Su</i>	„	v.	I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. <hr/> (Joy in Trial.) <hr/>
26	<i>M</i>	„	vi.	My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into diverse temptations.
27	<i>T</i>	Rom.	ix.	Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets.
28	<i>W</i>	„	x.	Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's suffering.
29	<i>Th</i>	„	xi.	They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.
30	<i>F</i>	„	xii.	Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

A PHYSICIAN'S ADVICE.

(Concluded.)



THE Christian who would be fresh and vigorous, and able to withstand the assaults of the enemy, must breathe the air of spiritual things. He must be occupied with Christ. He must read his Bible. He must have Christian intercourse. His soul must be provided with a suited atmosphere. He must breathe the home air of heaven. And then, and then only, is he fitted, like a diver at the bottom of the sea, to work for His master down here, surrounded by, *but not breathing*, the worldly atmosphere, drawing all his fresh air from above.

The next essential is "*regular food*," or "*food at regular hours*." This is also of great importance. The morning hour for reading and prayer, that "*one hour with Jesus*," who shall tell its worth; the evening gathering, or meeting, the Lord's day services, how refreshingly these come round at their appointed season, and truly what a blank we feel if from some cause we are deprived of them! How foolish and culpable then to starve the soul or give it hasty or irregular snatches of food, in order to find more time to imbibe the poison of this world! What shall we say of such

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an one? Surely he is blind to his own best interests. He is feeding *the wrong man*, the old instead of the new.

"No stimulants for young children" says the wise physician. Why? They exhilarate unnaturally for a time, but depress afterwards. What a description of the pleasures of this world! How often we have seen a soul that is ill at ease seek to hide its wretchedness under an unnatural gaiety produced by some worldly pleasure, only to be followed too surely by a greater depression than ever.

Is it not written of all the world's pleasures, "He that drinketh of this water shall thirst again?" The most dangerous feature of stimulants, however, is not only that they do not satisfy, but that the use of them produces an inevitable craving for more.

Have not some of us found this to our peril? We have taken up in a thoughtless moment some exciting tale and read a few chapters, and laid it down resolving to read no more, knowing we were injuring our souls. But the poison has entered our veins and created a thirst for more. We yield, and the book is read. But our thirst is not stilled. We must read another, and so on till the soul is withered and cold, and seriously damaged by the use of these poisonous stimulants. The true Christian has a calm and serene joy that needs no excitement. We need not be surprised that those who possess it not require some; but for a Christian, blest with all spiritual blessings in Christ, there is, there can be, no excuse.

The last, but not the least, of the five is "cleanliness." "Having therefore" says the apostle, "these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." If we would "perfect holiness" or separation to God, we must be entirely separate from all the impurities of this world, whether moral or spiritual. All sin is moral impurity, some sins are specially so. Having then escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, let us beware how we are entangled therein and overcome. False doctrines and heretical views are spiritual impurities. Our vain minds are often in danger of being led away, with such, especially in these closing years of the nineteenth century, when man has developed so enormously in his own esteem as hardly to leave any room for God at all.

Let us, then, see that we are careful as to these five points in order that our spiritual life may be strong and healthy. Let us take heed to the last words ever recorded of one who knew from sad experience their value and meaning. "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

“ GROWING.”

A few words spoken at a Prayer Meeting.



WOULD speak a word to-night to the “Babes” of Christ’s flock, and ask them if they are growing? A sure sign of a healthy infant, is the fact of its outgrowing its clothes.

We read in 2 Thess. i. 3, how St. Paul rejoiced, and gave thanks to God, because the faith of the converts and believers grew exceedingly.

There are two ways of growing, however, a right way and a wrong way. If we are growing in self-righteousness, self-reliance, self-esteem, or any other form of self, we may rest assured that we are branching out in wrong directions. The only way for a child of God to grow, must be that which we find in Eph. iv. 15, “growing up into Christ in all things.” This is the only safe test and standard of spiritual life and growth.

It is well said, that “The professing Christian, who is not spiritually alive, is a paralysed member of the body of Christ.” We hear very much said in meetings and conferences about justification and sanctification, but in spite of all, I constantly meet with converts who appear to think that there is a five-barred gate between the two, which they must either jump over, scramble over, or be lifted over in some miraculous way. I would assure you, dear friends, that you have neither the one nor the other to do, or to expect.

The best and most simple definition of the two words I have ever met with is,

“Justification is the sinner in Christ,
Sanctification is Christ in the sinner.”

Both commence, therefore, at the same time, but sanctification, besides being ours in Christ (1 Cor. i. 2, Jude 1.) is a progressive work of the Holy Spirit in the soul. If you turn to 2 Cor. x. 3, 4, 5, you will see that this work is called a spiritual warfare. There are so many reasonings to be cast down, so many things that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God, so many thoughts to be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

The Christian life may be compared to that of a very happy school, we must begin at the first form, but we need not be discouraged because we can't learn all our lessons at once. I like to think of it, too, as a family, a “household,” with a wise and loving father at the head of it. The new-born babes in God's family have exactly the same privileges and standing as the fathers have, although their spiritual development is not so advanced.

There is another view of this onward march in sanctification, which was expressed by a young servant girl at the time of her conversion: she said, “It is like the Lord Jesus giving us the entrance into a lovely garden; we are free to walk there and enjoy the flowers and taste the fruits, our Bible in our hand to guide us, and the Holy Spirit at our side to explain everything.”

(To be continued.)

THE BROKEN WILL.

(Translated from the German. By the Author of
"A Praise Song.")

"O Father, not my will, but Thine, be done,"
Thus with my lips I say;
Yet lags the heart, the while the lips would run,
My heart it sayeth 'Nay.'"

"Be comforted, O child of My delight,
Though yet thy heart complain;
For I would have thee suffer when I smite,
Or pain would not be pain.
Were it a chastening if it were not grief?
Yet for a moment tears,
Then glows the spring where fell the yellow leaf,
Spring of eternal years.
For sorrow is the sorrow of an hour
And is eternal love;
The dusky bud enfolds the glorious flower
For God's delight above."

"O! Lord, whose lips are lilies, sweet to me
As psaltery and as psalm,
Thy blessed words of glory that shall be
Of song, and crown, and palm.
Yet sweeter even now to see Thy face,
To find Thee now my rest;
My sorrow comforted in Thine embrace,
And soothed upon Thy breast."

Lord, there to weep is better than the joy
 Of all the sons of men ;
 For there I know the love without alloy
 I cannot lose again."

" O ! child, My heart's beloved, sweet to Me
 As psaltery and as psalm,
 The voice of him who on the midnight sea
 ' Can praise through storm and calm.
 And who is he who seeks the haven fair,
 The everlasting Home ?
 The lonely and the outcast enter there,
 The glad heart will not come.
 To Me the weary cometh when the way
 Is steep, and long, and lone ;
 To Me the friendless, when the golden day
 Behind the hills is gone."

* * * * *

Then spake my heart, ' As who a garment takes
 When drives the bitter sleet,
 Is he who singeth to the heart that breaks,
 How, then, may grief be sweet ? '

And lo ! in vision fair did I behold
 One who a psaltery strung—
 Two threads he stretched above the strings of gold
 Across, and all along.

Then, with the threads thus crosswise o'er the
 strings
 Gave he the harp to me ;
 Thus knew I how the broken-hearted sings,
 O ! Lamb of God, to Thee. (A.D. 1330).

BIBLICAL WORDS AND PHRASES.

WEEK, THE LAST.—This refers to the seventieth, and only unfulfilled, week of Daniel's prophecy. It is divided into two halves, the division being marked by Antichrist throwing off the mask of deceit, and beginning the fearful persecution of the saints for three and a half years, marked by the slaying of the two witnesses at the commencement (Rev. xiv.). At the close of this period Christ will publicly return to the Mount of Olives, and destroy the Man of Sin with the brightness of His coming (2 Thess. ii.).

WITNESS.—One who stands by God's truth, and holds it fast at all costs. In all ages God has had His witnesses, many of whom have been faithful unto death. It is of great importance in observing in 2 Tim. iv. 7 the three-fold division of the Christian's life into walk, warfare, and witness, to observe that the third has just as great a place as the other two. If Paul fights as a soldier, if he finishes his course, he also keeps the faith, and it is just as much to the glory of God to be a faithful witness as to be an earnest worker or a hardy warrior.

WILDERNESS.—This is literally the desert between Egypt and Canaan, traversed by the children of Israel in their wanderings. Figuratively it is this world, through which the believer is called to pass as a pilgrim and a stranger on his way to heaven. The history of the journeyings of the children of Israel thus becomes of special interest; indeed it was expressly recorded for our instruction (1 Cor. x.).

WISDOM.—Christ is wisdom (Prov. viii.), and He is made unto us "wisdom" (1 Cor. i.). The way to become wise is to become a fool, divine wisdom having nothing in common with human wisdom, the one being imparted by the Spirit, the other acquired by the cultivation and exercise of the natural faculties.

WORD OF GOD.—A common and beautiful name for the Scriptures, which are God-breathed (2 Tim. iii. 16,)

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and described as proceeding out of God's mouth (Matt. iv. 4). Christ is the living Word of God (1 John i.), of whom all the written Word speaks. He who would understand the written Word must know the living Word, and he that would know the living Word must study the written Word. The two go together, and the only way to avoid error is to hold fast both.

WORKS.—The Christian is created unto good works, but he can only do them by receiving a full and free salvation without works. Justification is by faith alone, but not, as has been well said, by faith which is alone; because, although to believe God is eternal life, the evidence to men, not to ourselves or God, that we have thus truly believed, is in our good works. Hence the apparent contradiction between Jas. ii. and Rom. iv., the former insisting on works, because treating of justification before man, the latter on faith, treating of justification before God. The difference between legal and Christian "good works" is that the former were to merit life, the latter a proof that we have it, *never* a means of obtaining it.

WORLD.—This may be taken in two senses, as meaning the earth and nature, or as meaning the inhabitants of the earth; and hence more limited since the fashions and customs of civilisation. In Scripture, wherever the word is used to mean the inhabitants of the earth, the meaning invariably is evil, as John vii. 7, xvi. 20, &c. Sometimes it is spoken of as the object of God's love, sometimes of His judgment (1 John iv. 14; 1 Cor. xi. 32). Of this world, not of nature, Satan is the god and prince, and all of it are his subjects. Believers are not of this world, although in it (as a sphere). This world, as such, will never be improved, and such is not the object of Christianity; on the contrary God is calling a people for Himself out of it. The believer is looked as crucified to the world (Gal. vi.), he is not to love it, for the love of the Father and of the world cannot go together. In all this, however, it must be clearly understood that it is man's world, and not God's earth that is referred to. Some, from not seeing this, have wrongly

OUR NOTE-BOOK.

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considered that to love the works of God in nature is to love the world.

WORLDLY.—Following the fashions and pleasures of this world, and thus living for self and for appearances, instead of for eternity and Christ. Those who thus live are enemies of the Cross of Christ (Phil. iii. 18). He died to deliver us, not only from coming judgment, but from the present evil world.

WORSHIP.—This consists in praising and adoring God for what He is, as revealed to us in Christ. Christian worship, in contrast to Jewish, is in spirit, not in outward ritual, and in truth. Worship consists in an outflow from the heart, and hence is in contrast with teaching which consists in receiving truth into the heart. The one is giving, the other getting. Hearing discourses, therefore, however good, cannot properly be called worship. The Lord's Supper is a very fitting occasion, though not the only one, for worship. All worship is rendered to God by saints whose position is in the holiest (Heb. x.), and as acceptable to God by Christ.

WRATH.—The anger of God against sin. This has all been borne by Christ for us, so that nothing remains for us but love. A fearful looking for of fiery indignation, however, remains for those who obey not the Gospel, the thought of which should make us very earnest to rescue all within our reach from it. The wrath of God is said even now to rest (John iii.) on all who do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

 OUR NOTE-BOOK.

Our Correspondents seem to be, just at present, much exercised about music. We cannot make out what has stirred up so many just now, but are thankful for anything that may lead us to examine our actions in the light of

God's Word. As a sample of what we receive, we give in full two letters: "Will you kindly say whether a Christian could, as before God—for His honour—and as well pleasing to Christ, play what is termed classical music, or sing an innocent song? Would not Eph. v. 19, and Col. iii. 16, as well as 1 Cor. xiv. 15, warrant us in declining to do such things? What reply should be made to a Christian who said these Scriptures did not affect his conscience? Is it not a question of obedience, although far better if the conscience be exercised? Suppose a Christian child is requested by his parents to do either of the above, how far would Eph. vi. 1, and Col. iii. 20, apply? Would Peter's reply in Acts iv. 19 be applicable? Of course respect to parents is required. It seems to me, Sir, that these two questions are asked by a great many, and I have no doubt that, guided by the Spirit, your reply through the 'Young Believer' would be helpful to all your readers. If my questions do not include all that might have been asked (*sic*), will you kindly make any further remarks that you may think necessary for the edification and help of all of us."—*Inquirer*. Another letter is from America: "How far can we carry the study of music to the glory of God? Can a Christian girl conscientiously spend time in acquiring this art, in order to make a livelihood, by instructing others? What about drawing?"—*Perplexed*.

We have decided, instead of replying to either of the above this month, to ask all our readers who are interested in this subject to send in their thoughts on it, addressed, Editor, "Young Believer," 27, Paternoster Square, E. C. "Conversation Class." We will give selections from these replies next month, with initials (unless otherwise requested), and then in August sum up the whole subject. We trust that we shall be favoured with some valuable and practical views on the subject for the good of all.

PRACTICAL QUERIES.

Q. 31. What are the reasons against a Christian belonging to a club? S. B.

A. 2 Cor. vi. 14-18.

Q. 32. Should a Christian insure his life? May it not be the means God gives him of providing for his children? S. B.

A. If a person really has faith to trust his wife and children to the Lord, while he himself is being spent in the Master's service, they will be cared for and insured against want. But if a man spends his life in providing for those of his own house, we do not see practically much difference between investing in an insurance policy, or in shares or stocks. Faith is one thing, and God will honour it when it is real but it is also according to God's word to *work* to support one's family, and to make provision for them.

Q. 33. May a Christian sing at a private concert for the benefit of a Charitable Society? E. H. F.

A. We have no power or wish to dictate to others in such matters. All that we can do is to seek to bring the Word of God to bear upon the conscience; and we would affectionately urge any dear fellow believer contemplating making such an engagement (doubtless from charitable motives), first of all carefully and prayerfully to study 2 Cor. vi. 14-18. We do consider all such voluntary and public associations of believers and unbelievers to be contrary to this Scripture, to say nothing of the worldliness involved in such a course.

Q. 34. What would you say to a Christian who placed a wreath of fresh flowers on the coffin of a Christian friend? E. H. F.

A. We would say, "Look up: that coffin does not contain the one you knew and loved; he is now 'present with the Lord,' and it is no service to him to place flowers upon his coffin, as if he whom you loved were there confined."

Q. 35. Is it possible to serve both our earthly and heavenly masters faithfully in a business fraught with evil on every hand? * *

A. Not if you are connected with the evil. Nothing can excuse you for acting unrighteously. We grieved to see last month that a majority of (so-called) Christian young men passed a resolution after some discussion, to the effect that there were circumstances in business that justified evasion, deceit, and even absolute untruths! We need not allude to such a decision, were it not that many who would shrink in affirming such a decision to be right, daily practise its principles. Keep a *good* conscience at all costs, but not a crotchety one. Be sure what you are called upon to do is unrighteous, and then refuse steadily to do it, and take the consequences, which may be those of 1 Peter iii.

THE BASKET.

GOD OUR SAVIOUR.—*God has become our Saviour.* Our trust is not in His mercy, but in Himself. Not in divine attributes, but in the living God. “God is for us;” the Father is for us, the Son is for us, the Holy Ghost is for us. It is God who justifies; it is Christ that died; and the Holy Ghost has come down to be a witness to us of the work of Christ, and of the place that work has given us in the Father’s house.

PRECEPT AND EXAMPLE.—He that gives good precepts, and follows them by a bad example, is like a foolish man who should take great pains to kindle a fire, and when it is kindled, throw cold water upon it to quench it.

PRACTICAL PAPERS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS.

VII.—WORLDLY AMUSEMENTS.

WE have seen in a previous paper that the Christian is not to identify himself with the world, as such, religiously or socially, and have had abundant Scripture proofs that all such associations are condemned by God. If such connections then with the world, many of them for good and unselfish objects, are condemned by the Word, it is easy to see there can be no justification of joining with the world for one's own mere pleasure.

CRICKET CLUBS, ETC.

In the present day, when nearly all games and amusements have their special clubs and organisations, a young Christian is often very hardly pushed to join one or another. Some, indeed, may join willingly from various reasons, such as better to enjoy themselves, or perhaps thinking to do others good by a little Christian influence, &c. Instances, however, are exceedingly rare where any good has been effected by this means; too often the result is the other way, and the Christian soon acquires the worldly tastes that characterise his associates. When this is the case, he has only himself to blame for taking the wrong step at the outset, for with the Bible (2 Cor. vi.) in our

hands, we must characterise as wrong, contrary to, and beneath true Christian walk, any alliances for pleasure with the world.

In this, reluctant as we are to lay down any law, or to make any path narrower than God has made it, we must include all rowing, cricket, football, tennis, bicycle and other clubs. Of course, when boys are at school together, the case is quite different, and the amusements as well as the studies are largely regulated by others. We speak of those who have left school, and are free agents, and we must repeat that for any such to join a worldly club for any purpose of pleasure or amusement is beneath their calling as Christians, and contrary to the Word of God.

RECREATION AND EXERCISE ARE PROFITABLE.

Recreation and exercise are recognised by the Word as profitable for a little (1 Tim. iv. 7, R.V.) meaning, we believe, for a short time (that is this life), but these can be taken and enjoyed without joining clubs. No doubt there is not the same scope or the same advantages. An eleven often cannot be made up for cricket, or a full crew for rowing. This is true, but here the child of God must take his stand, and deliberately counting the cost, be prepared to suffer all inconveniences that may arise from his being true to Christ.

An old Christian may not think it much for a young man to refuse one club after another that is pressed upon him, for he, if not too devoted a Christian, is at any rate too old to care for such things. But Christ knows, and Christ will not

forget, what it costs at such a time to refuse resolutely for His sake, and His smile and approval is surely well worth the inconveniences that may follow. As the Christian grows in years, however, he begins to feel that to spend hours in *mere* recreation and amusement is no longer necessary, and he finds that he can combine some variety of work for the Lord with his recreation, so as not absolutely to spend all the time on himself. Long walks can often be combined with profitable visits, and change of scene and air with looking up the scattered saints of God, that seldom get a help; in many ways the believer who seeks to redeem the time, "and who feels that the Lord is at hand," can and will seek to turn even his hours of recreation to good account.

A CHRISTIAN IN THE WORLD.

But what shall we say if we look at the other side of the picture, no longer considering those who desire in all things to glorify Christ, but those who, though still His (at least professedly), are worldly in heart, who are seen at concerts, flower shows, cricket matches, athletic sports, &c., if not actively engaged at least pleased spectators, surrounded with worldly friends, and being for the moment, not only *in* but *of* the world? What a description we get of the world (say at a concert) in Job, "They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave. Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; *for we desire not the knowledge of*

thy ways" (xxi. 12-14)! And can you, dear reader, feel happy in making one of such a company? Oh, how true it is for a believer when seeking his amusement in such a way. "Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness." (Prov. xiv. 13). The reflections next morning when the Word is opened, and we are alone with God, are not pleasant, and too often the amusements of the evening lead to the neglect of the Bible in the morning. This is repeated until the soul becomes deadened under the round of worldly gaiety and want of spiritual food, while the outward course can only be characterised by, "Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." (2 Tim. iii. 4).

SATAN'S DEVICES.

Surely all would shrink from such a brand! But Satan is clever, he is subtle; and if we turn from worldly amusements, he will mix them with religion to suit us; and the deluded Christian, following his own will, and not guided by God, substitutes the oratorio for the concert, the bazaar for the flower show, and thinks himself at last consistent. Alas! he has only made matters worse. What can be more blasphemous to the ears of Almighty God, what more offensive to Christ, than to hear the most sublime passages of the word of God sung by those who openly reject Him? At first sight it certainly does seem incredible that any true Christian could be found willing to listen to the sacred sorrows of His Saviour sung by some professional vocalist or

“prima donna.” The mixture seems so horrible that surely it is a masterpiece of Satan’s skill to lead Christians to believe that their presence at oratorios is better than at concerts. Bazaars, too, are another specious, though not so repulsive, a form of mixing up what God has for ever separated by the grave of Christ—His church, and this present evil world.

The one who is following Christ is found at none of these places. Indeed, to be there would be a pain and no pleasure to him. His happiness is in Christ and in Christ’s people. How, then, can he find it in that world that crucified His Lord. Besides, he is better employed. He does not stand about idle, waiting for Satan to send him off on some errand, for surely it is true that “idlers are the devil’s workmen,” but he is busy in work for his Master, seeking to send to Him a good account of every day that he lives, and to account to him fully for every talent entrusted to his charge. We trust enough has been said to show that although recreative exercises are perfectly legitimate and needful for the young Christian, all distinctly *worldly* amusements, clubs, and other associations are not for the one who desires to be true to Christ, and to obey the Word of God.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE CROSS.—The cross has made it possible for God to bless us in perfect harmony with everything He is, and everything He has ever declared Himself to be; and in spite of all that we are, and all that He has ever said we ought to be.

MONTHLY BIBLE READINGS.—VII.

1 Peter ii. 18—iii. 7.



—We begin to-day with the special instructions of this epistle that extend from ii. 18—iii. 7, and are addressed to servants, wives, and husbands. The servants addressed here are domestic servants, not slaves. Observe, also, that from verse 19 to the end of the chapter is a parenthesis, ch. iii. 1 following after ii. 18; the parenthesis, full of the most beautiful instruction, is introduced to show why servants should be subject to evil-tempered or froward masters; and yet, long as it is, it is not uncommon to see servants who profess to have studied this epistle, entirely fail in this matter.

G.—Yes; many, indeed, think they have fully shown out the grace of Christ if they obey a good master, and I fear but few of us take in the force of this “*not only,*” and “*but also.*”

M.—Yes, and I think still more of us misunderstand verse 20.

E.—In what way?

M.—Why we, I mean I, consider it a great glory if I am patient when I am tried, though I am sure the trial is generally of my own making, and I am sure I am very impatient if I am misunderstood when I am trying to do well.

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E.—What a relief it is to turn away from ourselves and our follies to a perfect Example. I remember when I learned to swim, many years ago, friends gave me all sorts of directions as to what I should do when I was in the water, but I gained the true help by closely watching what a good swimmer did, how he glided and pushed himself through the water. Then I tried myself, but made such a splash that I could hardly get on at all. So I watched the example again, and more closely than before; and found out, little by little, what my faults were, till at last I learned to swim nearly as well as he. The verses from 11 to 20 give directions, but these verses 21 to 23 present to us a living Example, the One who breasted with perfect ease all the waves of sin and misery. How delightful it is to watch Jesus, and then we try to copy Him a little.

M.—How beautiful to see that Christ has trodden *all* the steps first, so that He *only* asks us to follow.

E.—Yes, *M.*, but it is not an easy “*only*,” for though He asks nothing more than this, too frequently our steps are those of our own devising.

G.—Is it not remarkable that when Peter gives us Christ’s life as an example, he only tells us of the way in which He used His tongue.

E.—It is, indeed. Peter no doubt remembered how he had misused his. No doubt, also, it is especially appropriate here, for the special sins that servants who have ill-tempered masters are liable to, are sins of the tongue.

G.—I believe the word example may be rendered model.

E.—It means a copy, like the line at the head of our copy-books, every stroke of which we are to imitate ; but too often now, as in our old school-days, we copy our own writing instead of the headline. It is important to notice that after verse 23 we get the Lord in a totally opposite character, no longer as an example, but as a substitute. Verses 22, 23 are for us to imitate, verse 24, was suffered instead of us, and is a suffering that none of us will ever endure.

G.—I think a good many accept verses 22, 23 who refuse verse 24 ; for substitution strikes at the root of all pride.

E.—Yes, but we must know verse 24 before verse 22 and 23. Observe, Peter says, dead to sins, or having done with sins. Paul goes deeper down to the root and says, “dead to sin.” We shall find another interesting difference between the two in chap. iv.

G.—How specially true verse 25 was of these poor scattered Jews. No longer like strayed sheep, but now under the care of the good Shepherd and Overseer of their souls.

R.—Have we time to go on any further ?

E.—I think we may finish these special exhortations. We now come to those addressed to wives, and also generally to all women, and surely in principle to others as well. The great principle brought out is to *illustrate* our Christianity by our actions. The world will look at us when they

MONTHLY BIBLE READINGS.

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will not read their Bibles, and husbands and others as well, can understand a meek and quiet spirit when they will not read about the meekness and humility of Christ.

M.—I see Peter does not object to adornments.

E.—No, but of the right sort according to verse 4 (see also Is. ix. 10, and Ezek. xvi. 14). Inward character is the real beauty of a woman, not only before God but man. I remember seeing two harmoniums in a shop: one was in a very elaborately carved oak case and certainly looked very nice; the other was only in plain rosewood, but I chose it in preference to the other.

R.—Why?

E.—Because I saw the maker's name, and on trying it I found it was worthy of him; and it is just the same with a Christian. He bears Christ's name, and should seek to have a tone worthy of Him, not to adorn the poor case.

G.—Mary did not *wear* her gold or *plait* her hair, but used the one to anoint and the other to wipe the feet of the Lord.

R.—How wonderful that God condescends to say that He deems a meek and quiet spirit of great price.

G.—What does the end of verse 6 mean?

E.—It means, not terrified by opposition. Compare also Phil. i. 28, "In nothing terrified by your adversaries." This verse must have been of great force to a Jew to whom Sarah was indeed a princess among women. I hope, *M.*, that you are one of her daughters.

M.—I hope I shall become so, for I earnestly covet the adornment spoken of here.

G.—How the next verse shows us the tenderness of Christianity, leading us to consideration for the weaker vessel, on the ground that both are recipients of pure grace. Freely you have received, freely give. Those who have tasted of the grace of God are expected to show the meekness and gentleness of Christ.


G.—What does the last line mean?

E.—The word “hindered” is *lit.*, “cut off,” and the warning is a solemn one, showing in what an important light God regards the due maintenance of these relationships. Christianity never upsets natural relationships, but shows how to discharge them in a way according to God. But we must now close, and I am sure we may all look to God that He will make what we have read of power in each of our lives for His glory.



A CHRISTIAN WORLD.—A gospel that points to the death of Christ is proof of God’s high estimate of man, and then turns that death into a problem, so that men in no way losing that self-respect, can sit down and calmly reason out their right to blessing by it, will give no offence to any one, nor be branded as foolishness. Such a gospel pays due deference to human nature, and satisfies man’s sense of need without hurting in the least his pride. Such a gospel has, in fact, produced that marvellous anomaly, *a Christian world*.

ON TESTIMONY FOR CHRIST.

O lead others to Christ is no easy work; it is a labour that requires the highest exercise of our minds, and demands a thoughtfulness and tact that can only spring from love to God, a work which more than anything else makes us feel our own utter weakness, and our absolute need of the whole armour of Christ. For we fight against an enemy who is no mean foe, who is far stronger than our own unaided power, and again and again will send us back defeated, when, perhaps, we had grown so confident from success that we had forgotten all about his existence. Sometimes, when we have been successful in the fight, and feel inclined to rest on our oars, it is well to remember that our foe is never idle, and that we must be up and doing if we do not wish to lose again the advantages we have won. And if it is our great aim to bring any that we daily meet or work with to the feet of our Lord, that our Saviour may be their Saviour too, we should no more expect to accomplish our ends without prayer and study of His word than if we went fishing in reality, we should expect to be successful, if we never inquired about the successful methods, and never prepared the necessary tackle.

As to methods, then, let us first consider the subject of speaking. Must we tell every one at once the way of salvation straight out, ask him if he is a Christian, and tell him the way if he is not?—go to work, in fact, in exactly the same way to tell each the way of salvation? Well, if it does require courage to do this, it certainly saves a great deal of trouble; but the results—and we have watched them closely — have not been at all satisfactory when this plan has been followed. Now, our Lord compares working in His vineyard to fishing, and Peter, we know, He made a fisher of men; and, to trace the analogy a little farther, should we ever think of using the same tackle for a trout and a whale? should we use promiscuously the harpoon and the fly? No; there is simply no strict rule that can be laid down as to *when* and *how* to speak and *what* to say; but in speaking to others we must take into consideration the class we have to deal with. There are very often many who, if we mention religion, consider that we are interfering with their private affairs, meddling with business that does not concern us. The character of those we have to deal with varies much; but perhaps we might roughly divide them into three classes: there are the shy, retiring people, who must be met half-way with sympathy and quiet tact; there are the open-hearted straightforward, to whom we can speak more freely and openly; and there are the proud, and self-confident, who can only be won by unobtrusive acts of kindness, and a silent self-possession, until

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we have gained their confidence and can speak to them more freely of the subject that lies nearest our heart. We must remember, too, that occasionally those who know we are Christians will come to us and expect us to speak to them; we should, I think, be prepared for this, and be careful that when in their own way they ask for bread we do not give them the stone of indifference. We do need a great deal of tact in dealing with others—wisdom, like that which Solomon prayed for—I mean an insight into human nature, as shown by the very first case he had to deal with, after his prayer was granted. How many opportunities are lost by want of tact, by not understanding the temper of the person we are dealing with? There is a verse of one of our hymns which will express my meaning:

“I ask thee for a thoughtful love,
Through constant watching wise,
To meet the glad with joyful smiles,
And wipe the weeping eyes;
And a heart at leisure from itself
To soothe and sympathise.”

(To be continued.)

OUR MINDS.—Our mind is often like a harp. In fine weather it rings loud and clear; but let the weather change, and the sun of prosperity withdraw his beams, and hide himself behind dark clouds of trouble, and then our courage vanishes, we give ourselves up to despondency, and like a harp in damp weather, our strings are all flat and out of tune.

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

JULY.

1	Sa	Rom. xiii.	I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.
2	Su	„ xiv.	<u>Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life. he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.</u> <u>Groweth.</u>
3	M	„ xv.	But (we) speaking the truth in love may grow up into Him in all things which is the head, even Christ.
4	T	„ xvi.	.. <i>As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby.</i>
5	W	1 Cor. i.	Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and INCREASE the fruits of your righteousness.
6	Th	„ ii.	Your faith GROWETH exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth.
7	F	Ex. vii.	That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and INCREASING in the knowledge of God.
8	Sa	„ viii.	Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
9	Su	„ ix.	<u>For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.</u> <u>Know.</u>
10	M	„ x.	The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He KNOWETH them that trust in Him.
11	T	1 Cor. iii.	Yea, Lord, thou KNOWEST that I love Thee
12	W	„ iv.	Therefore, take no thought . . for your heavenly Father KNOWETH that ye have need of all these things.
13	Th	„ v.	And we KNOW that all things work together for good to them that love God.
14	F	„ vi.	Let him KNOW that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death.
15	Sa	„ vii.	If ye KNOW these things, happy are ye if you do them.

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

JULY.

16	S	1 Cor.viii.	We love Him because He first loved us. —(<u>Quietness.</u>)—
17	M	„ ix.	When He giveth QUIETNESS who then can make trouble.
18	T	„ x.	It is good that a man should both hope and QUIETLY wait for the salvation of the Lord.
19	W	„ xi.	He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the waters of QUIETNESS.
20	Th	„ xii.	And that ye study to be QUIET, and to do your own business.
21	F	Ex. xi.	The ornament of a meek and QUIET spirit which is in the sight of God of great price.
22	Sa	„ xii.	In QUIETNESS and confidence shall be your strength.
23	Su	„ xiii.	I am the way and the truth and the life. —(<u>Patience.</u>)—
24	M	„ xiv.	Rest in the Lord and wait PATIENTLY for Him.
25	T	1 Cor.xiii.	I waited PATIENTLY for the Lord, and He inclined unto me and heard my cry.
26	W	„ xiv.	That ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and PATIENCE, inherit the promises.
27	Th	„ xv.	Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with PATIENCE the race that is set before us.
28	F	„ xvi.	The trying of your faith worketh PATIENCE, but let PATIENCE have her perfect work.
29	Sa	2 Cor. i.	Be ye also PATIENT, stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh
30	Su	„ ii.	I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also. —(<u>Christ's Gifts.</u>)—
31	M	„ iii.	Who loved me and GAVE Himself for me.

“ MY WAY.”

THEY told me of a way
That I must go,
Whether 'twere long or short,
They did not know.
I did not listen then,
Nor understand,
Until my Father came
And took my hand.
“ I am the guide,” He said,
“ Leave all with me ; ”
And so I went with Him
All trustingly.
And now I journey on
Day after day,
I have no need of care ;
He knows the way.
My sandals are His strength,
And His great love
The staff that helps me toward
The home above.
He holds my hand in His :
How can I fear ?
It is not hard to trust
While He is near.
I do not know how long
The way will be,
I only know it is
The best for me.
And when no longer here
He bids me roam,
I shall behold with joy,
My Father's home.

GIFTS AND THEIR USE.



Christ.

RELIEVING the subject of "*Gifts*" to be connected with the *portion and path*, if not the *prospect*, of the young believer, it may be well to consider awhile the exercise of them here for

From Eph. iv. 8 we find gifts come from an ascended Christ, bestowed for the good and profit of others, not for the exaltation of the possessor. I presume that you, dear reader, are amongst those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and are therefore now free from yourself to be exercised about the profit of others, whether in the church of God, or in the world. If so, doubtless the Lord Jesus has been pleased to bestow some spiritual gift upon you. "For there are diversities of gifts, and there are differences of *ministries* (see margin 1 Cor. xii. 5), and there are diversities of operations. But it is the same God that worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man (that is, every one in the body of Christ) to profit withal" (1 Cor. xii. 1-7). You will observe from this Scripture the gifts spoken of are *spiritual* (not natural). All connected with the church of God is of a spiritual character, by the Holy Ghost's operation upon and in us, just as no man can say that Jesus is *Lord* by the Holy Ghost, so no one can be a member of the body of Christ, the Church of God, but by the Holy Ghost,

and no one can minister the things of God to others but by the Holy Ghost.

Now let me ask you, if you have discovered *what* spiritual gift the Lord has bestowed upon you? and if discovered, are you exercising this according to the grace that is given to you?

You will doubtless remember the parable of the Lord in Matt. xxv. as to the five, talents two and one. The Lord then called His *servants* and gave unto one *five* talents, and to another *two*, and another *one*; to every one *according to his several ability*; and straightway took His journey, and a little further on in the parable we find the servants trading. And after a long time the Lord of those servants cometh and *reckoneth* with them. How pleased He was to find in His absence the five talents had gained five beside; the two—two beside—but alas! the possessor of the *one*, what of him? He charged the Lord with being a hard man, reaping where He had not sown, gathering where he had not strawed. *I was afraid*, he adds, and hid *thy* talent in the earth (what of you, young brother? are you even *afraid* to use your gift, or rather the Lord's gift in you, for you see the talents came to the servants *from the Lord*. No one is sent by Him on this own charge). What more does the wicked and slothful servant say to his Lord and Master than, "Thou hast that is thine?" Alas, no fruit to his account. May it never be the lot of any of my readers to be amongst this class of servants! Read this parable throughout, and to this end.

(*To be continued.*)

A MADE CHRISTIAN, OR A REAL ONE.



THE Gospel was being preached one Lord's Day evening to a company of people in a room at —, when a dark-coloured man entered in Indian dress. Taking his seat among the rest, he listened with marked attention to all that the speaker said.

At the close of the meeting, a Christian lady present, feeling interested in the stranger, went up to him, and, entering into conversation, inquired if he was a believer on the Lord Jesus?

"I believe all that I have heard, all that the gentleman said," he replied. "I believe in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. It has washed me from my sins. I know that I am saved. This morning I went to a great grand place, and when it was all over a gentleman came to me and asked me if I liked it? I say "Not at all, I not like the whole thing, I love Jesus. You did not say much about Jesus. I want *all Jesus*."

"A lady then ask me to go to her house, and I had a long talk with her. I spoke plainly to her, and I ask her if she know she was saved?" She says, "You cannot know that, you must wait till you come to die. I know some believe they are saved, but I think they are presumptuous."

"I tell her that what God said in His Word is true. It is not presumption to believe that. The

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Word tells us that Christ has finished the work, and if we believe we may know we are saved."

As it was now time to leave, he asked the lady who was speaking with him if he might call at her house, and having received her consent, the next morning paid his visit.

Being asked what had brought him to England, and how he was converted, he gave the following interesting account of God's dealings with him:—

"I lived with a rich lady and gentleman a long while in India. They had a beautiful place, and plenty of money. I was her servant and sat at her feet, and wait upon her always. At last her husband, the great Sahib, died. And then my lady, she call me and say, 'A——, I am returning to England, and we must part. The money is nearly all gone, and I am quite poor. I cannot afford to pay you, so you must not come with me.'

'Are you poor?'

'Yes, very poor.'

'Then I will go with you. I not want wages. I gladly serve you for nothing.'

At last she agree to take me with her, and she say she give me what she can afford.

We come to England and settle at ——. My lady go to many houses where they read the Bible, and I go with her. I not like her to go anywhere by herself, she was so delicate. There were some great people there. My lady would not go anywhere else, only where the Bible was read. I heard about Jesus. I learnt much in my head, but I did not know Him.

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At last my lady was taken ill. I always wait upon her. Every morning she read out of the Bible, and explain to me, but I did not think about what she say. I remembered texts, but I did not think about it.

When she find she soon going to leave this world, she called me one day, and she say, 'A——, here's a five pound note for you.'

'For me, for me. I have four gowns, and I can use pieces of your dresses to make my turban. I do not want it. You cannot afford to give it me. I will not take it. We shall want it all, we shall want it for the house.'

'A——, I'm going to leave you a will.'

'Ah! a pretty lot of money you owe me. But you have no money. I know you cannot leave me any.' I say this to cheer her, because she was often so sad.

'No, A——, I've something better than money to leave you. I have the will and testament of our Lord Jesus Christ. I'm going to leave this world, I'm going to heaven to be with the Lord Jesus. If you believe this book, you can come to me. We shall not long be parted. Don't shed tears. Promise me you will read this book, and believe it, and we shall soon meet again.'

When she was gone, I read the Word, and I remember what she say. It all came back to me, the things that she told me. And Jesus came into my heart. And I know now that I am saved, and I am going to be with Jesus, and I shall meet her again."

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* "How was it you had no faith when she read to you?"

"Ah! I was so occupied in attending my lady, I not think about it as I ought."

"Then came the funeral. I not like your way of burying. I wanted to stay with her to the end. But they would not let me. But I often crept up the stairs to see her when they did not know. We went to the grave, and the minister met us, and he read, read, read. I listen to what he say, and presently he say *hope*, hope. And I say, Hope! she did not say hope, she *sure*. She said she was sure. Why for you say *hope*? She has gone to be with Jesus. She not down there, and I point to the grave. I know when she left me she went up to be with Jesus. She told me so. And you say Hope! Don't say hope; *sure*. I am sure she has gone to be with Him."

"When I was a boy I was brought up in a missionary school, and was a *made* Christian. I was baptized and I was confirmed. I was a *made* Christian. But I did not know Jesus. But now I have the Lord in my heart. It is a different thing. I know that I'm going to be with Him. I don't want money, I only want to keep near the Lord."

A—— continued following his Saviour, gaining his livelihood in the service of another family. Perhaps this true story may illustrate the difference between "*profession*" and "*possession*."

“ G R O W I N G . ”

(*Concluded*).

DEAR friends, our privileges are so great and so boundless, that we should ever press on to know them better. I would urge you to be “high level” Christians. You know there are two ways of getting to the Crystal Palace, “The High Level” and “The Low Level,” and the last has a great many steps which make your knees ache. Remember that we are called to fellowship with Christ our Saviour (1 Cor. i. 9), and don’t let us try to make Him walk with us on the low level “down the steps;” we are to walk with Him “in the light, as He is in the light” (1 John i. 7).

Let the world see and know that we are King’s children.

It is a precious truth, that as we grow in grace we outgrow unbelief, and more than that, we outgrow religious shams and unrealities : they won’t do in the bright light of His searching eye.

The great secret of all spiritual growth and strength is to “set the Lord always before us,” and to live as “seeing Him who is invisible.”

A young convert wrote to an old veteran Christian, saying, “Ought I not to acquire more strength as I advance in the Christian life?” His

answer was, “ No, only acquire greater knowledge of your true *source* of strength, and greater willingness to *use* it, and thus learn the necessity as well as the happiness of constant communion with your Saviour.”

Yes, God uses our weakness for His purposes, not our strength. I would leave with you three little injunctions. *First*, Learn thoroughly and practically the meaning of that text (1 Cor. vi. 19), “ Ye are not your own.” *Secondly* : Don’t try to seize the helm of your vessel yourself ; let Christ always have that. We do not know the way, nor where the rocks or shoals are, but He does. Let us say, as in Ps. xlviii. 14, “ This God is our God for ever and ever, He will be our guide, even unto death.” Then, *Thirdly* : Don’t be looking behind, or within. “ A Christian dreamed one night, that he was walking in a beautiful field, and just before him he could see One, whom at first he did not recognise, but soon discovered that it was the Lord Jesus. And he thought to himself, now that I have got a sight of Him, wherever Christ puts His feet I will put mine ; and he walked on joyously for a good while. By-and-by he began to wonder whether anybody else was following and turned round to see, and when he looked again, Christ was gone.” Keep your eye fixed on Jesus, never mind who is coming after. Job knew what following meant, when he said, “ My foot hath held His steps ” (Job xxiii. 11).

And, now, what does God ask of us, His sanctified ones, babes, young men, fathers and veterans ?

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It is that we shall be Christ's representatives in this evil world. No one else can represent Christ before the world, just in the *same* way as you can; God did not need two Pauls, or He would have made them."

Yes, dear friends, each of us have our special place in God's school, God's family, God's household, and I will add, God's army, too, for we all wear the same uniform, the robe of Christ, our righteousness, and we all fight under the same Commander. Let us then present to Him our "bodies, a living sacrifice—which is your reasonable service," so that we may be wholly used for His glory.

 GOD'S GUIDANCE.

WE were visiting a dear old Christian to-day, and he was telling us some of his past life. One incident he mentioned interested us much, showing how the Lord guides His own in the smallest details. I give it as far as possible in his own words:—

I went down to the Isle of Wight to visit the places described in Leigh Richmond's book called "The Young Cottager."

A friend was with me, and as he drew near the landing place he said, "Where shall you stay when you get there." "Oh," he added, "I know what you will say, but you won't easily meet with Christians in this Island."

"We shall see," I said, as we landed. And we parted; he to go to the best hotel, and I to walk leisurely down the street. I did not see a single place with a card up telling of lodgings, but, looking to God to guide me to Christians, I went on. I had nearly got to the end of the street, when I saw a nice hotel, but I felt *that* was not the place for me. Over the other side was quite a new little inn, not nice looking from the outside; but as I crossed the road, I felt *compelled* to go in. I opened the door, and as I did so an old woman came towards me, I laid down my bag and said, "Do you love the Lord Jesus?"

"Come in, come in," she said, and the tears ran down her face.

As I sat down to the meal she had set before me, she said, "Shall I call you at five to-morrow morning to go with us to the prayer-meeting." "Oh! I said, this is the place for me," I then added, "I should like of all things to go with you."

I soon found that all in the house were Christians. The man had to be at his work by six, but met with others before that time for prayer.

In the evening I met my friend. "Well, how have you got on?" he said.

"Oh, beautifully, I have found some Christians."

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"Well I am at the best hotel," he said, "Very well, good-night."

Next morning we met again, "Well," I asked, "how have you got on?"

"Oh, such a *dreadful* night, nothing but noise: I shall come down and stay with you." That day I went to the little house where "The Young Cottager" had lived, and as I stood looking at it, a young lady and a little girl came up. Turning to her I said,

"Could you tell me where the stile is that Leigh Richmond used to cross in coming to visit the girl?"

"No," she answered, "but no doubt my sister can, here she is," she added, as another lady came towards us, and then she told her what I wanted. She soon explained to me that the stile had been lately taken away. "But," she said, turning hastily to me, "Surely you are a friend of the Redeemer."

"Oh," I replied, much moved, "I should think I do love Him *just a little*." "Then you must come and stay with us all the time you are in the Island." But as I said I could not do this, she insisted on my coming to spend the evening with them. And *such* an evening we had, I shall never forget it.

His whole face lighted up as he told his story, so greatly did he enjoy to relate the Lord's goodness and love to him in the years that were past.



PRACTICAL QUERIES.

Q. 36. Is it right for a Christian to go to law to recover money left him by will? (2.) Is it right to put money out to interest? (Psalm xv. 5).

H.R.S.

A. A Christian is called upon to "suffer wrong" (1 Pet. ii. 19), and this is acceptable before God, but not to go to law for his rights. (2.) Usury or interest was allowed to be exacted from Gentiles, not from Jews. We do not think such a Scripture forbids the lawful investment of money; but in spirit it is against the oppression of the poor by exacting heavy interest from them.


Q. 37. Shall we see and know our friends in heaven *at once* if we go there before our Lord's coming? If we go to be "present with the Lord" before His return, shall we see His face then? or shall we have to wait for the resurrection before our bodies shall be like His?

S.B.

A. The literal meaning of seeing is to have external objects conveyed to our brain through our eyes. But the perception of, and communion with, others is not confined to bodily sight. By letters we can exchange thoughts. Those who are blind can yet enjoy each other's presence. All this, however, is a most imperfect illustration of the bliss a disembodied spirit must enjoy when consciously "present with the Lord." Having our bodies now, we lay an undue stress on the organ of sight, as if this were the sole means of perception. No doubt, we shall possess it literally when we get our resurrection bodies. Until then it would only be an unprofitable study in metaphysics to reason in what ways a disembodied spirit can enjoy the presence of another. All we know is that it is far better to be up there than to be down here.

PRACTICAL PAPERS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS.

VIII.—ON OUR RELATIONS WITH THE WORLD.

T is evident that the limits of this short paper will only enable us to consider this vast subject in the briefest possible manner. The Christian is in the world, but not of it. He is surrounded with those who know not God, and it is a most important thing for him to know how to conduct himself in relation with worldly people, both publicly and privately, in social life, business life, and religious life. Before, however, speaking briefly on this, we will just take up very shortly a few examples of relationship with the world, and its effects as seen in Scripture.

WORLDLY MARRIAGES.

In 1 Kings xi. 1-8 we find the sad result in Solomon's case of marrying strange wives, idolatrous women. No doubt, as many a child of God since, he trusted in his wise heart, in the splendid temple he had built in his own long religious life, to lead him aright, but instead of that *they led him astray*. And so it is in nine cases out of ten. A Christian marries a worldly girl, an idolater; that is, one who has her heart set on earthly things called idols (1 John v.). He hopes, no

doubt, to set her straight, but having committed a sin by marrying her, he is soon lead by her into another; for not only has he all her influence to lead him wrong, but that of his own deceitful heart as well. It is, indeed, lamentable to think how many ships, starting on their heavenward voyage, have been shipwrecked on the quicksands of this life, through sailing in company with an enemy's vessel. For, hard as it is to believe, the young and attractive are equally Satan's slaves with the grey headed sinner. Beware of worldly marriages, which are condemned and forbidden by God (2 Cor. vi.); perhaps few sins so surely meet with heavy chastisement, too often life long. Most earnestly, then, would we warn young believers of this most fatal of all worldly alliances. Other false steps can be retraced at will, this NEVER. It may be these lines are read by some one whose affections are already engaged by some worldly person. We would warn you against such a marriage at your peril. Better far to have a broken heart for God's glory, and one that He can heal, than to have a heart broken later on, as you surely will, through seeing with your eyes open, and discovering when TOO LATE, the fearful error you have committed.

WORLD-BORDERING.

In Jehoshaphat we find another case of wordly alliance; this was in joining to fight a common enemy (2 Chron. xviii.)—no great sin apparently. The king of Syria was a foe to both of them, and the victory of one would help the other. Never-

theless, what saith the Lord? "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and *love* them that *hate* the Lord? Therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord." Has this no voice to those Christians who, like Jehoshaphat, would join the world to fight some common enemy? There are common enemies: drink, vice, poverty, disease, are such to a great extent. It will, then, be seen at once that this one example strikes a fatal blow at all alliances of a social nature between believer and unbeliever. In this it is evident the Christian is not to join in improving or bettering the world. He must walk in his way and the world in theirs. Indeed, if the Christian is true, they cannot work together, for the ultimate end of the one is the advancement of the world, and the good of mankind, that of the latter the glory of Christ. In a place, therefore, where He is despised and still rejected by the world at large it is evident that there cannot be much harmony in common pursuits—(See on this an important tract called "Jehoshaphat, a Word on World Bordering," by C. H. M., Morrish, Paternoster Square).

In Jehoram we get another instance of the evils of a worldly match (2 Chron. xxi. 6). Many as are the instances of the unbeliever leading the Christian astray, we do not remember a single case where in such a marriage the Christian brought the unbeliever right. In this case the evil is worse still, for not only is the husband led wrong, but the child also is led astray (xxii. 3) by the evil counsels of his mother. This, too, will often be

found to be the case, especially when the mother is the unbeliever; and thus the results of one false step may descend to generations.

Again, in Ezra ix., do we get fatal instances of these unholy alliances. But surely we have had enough to show us what are almost invariably the results of thus dishonouring God.

WORSHIPPERS MUST BE CHRISTIANS.

In Ezek. xlv. 7, we come to another class of worldly fellowship, and that is in religion. One of the crying sins of Israel of old was that they brought in unbelievers to the temple worship, and the prophet is bid to "mark well the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary;" and further, "No stranger uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel." Our sanctuary, we know, ~~can~~ only be entered by believers (Heb. x.) in reality; but surely this plainly shows that in outward worship we cannot place believers and unbelievers together before God. It is not for us, of course, to try the hearts, and a hypocrite may creep in anywhere; but surely divine worship ought to be confined to the children of God. Indeed, none else can worship, and it is an awful mockery to see those who have no pretensions to be saved (not even the lip profession), joining with God's people in singing His praises. This is strangely like this very sin of Israel of old. We do not now speak of preaching the gospel. At all such services unbelievers have their right place;

but these are surely perfectly distinct from the worship of believers, spiritually within the veil. In religion, therefore, we cannot place believers and unbelievers on a common footing.

Neither can we seek the aid and help of the world (pecuniary or other wise) in the Lord's work.

Nehemiah avoided the danger of worldly help in Neh. vi., and one reason why he was so blessed was because he was so separate to God. The people, of Israel too, at this time entered into a curse and an oath, not to marry unbelievers (x. 29). Would that every one "having understanding" (ver. 28), followed (without legality) the same course! Separation from worldly company is the result of having the Word as the enjoyed portion of the heart (Jer. xv. 16, 17). The joy of the world and delight in the Word cannot go together. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of Hosts. *I sat not in the assembly of the wicked, nor rejoiced.*" We have now seen enough to show us, without quoting the many precepts in the Word on the subject, that worldly marriages are in every way to be condemned and avoided, that all philanthropic and social worldly alliances are expressly condemned, however good their object (of course it is understood that only real *alliances* are here spoken of, *i.e.*, believers and unbelievers publicly banded together). We have also seen that no religious mixture is to be tolerated either in worship or service (such as giving money, &c., &c.):

God's people must be separate. The path is a narrow one still, and not less so because we live in Christendom. Indeed, now one needs to be closely walking with God to learn how to keep one's feet separate from all such evil alliances, and have one's heart wide enough for all right sympathies and feelings. May the Lord enable each of us, who desires to be true to Him, to discern the path of wisdom through this world, so as to be kept from all "unequal yokes," learning at the same time to bear more of the "equal yoke" of Matt. xi. "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."



MONTHLY BIBLE READINGS.—VIII.

1 Peter iii. 8-22.



—BEFORE continuing our subject, I would just like to read a note I have on "conversation," in verse 2. It points out that our conversation is to be *holy* (1-15) in its *nature*: this God alone can see, hence this is for His eye. It is also the source of the rest. Next we find it is to be *chaste*, or pure (iii. 2): this is in its *character*. Now our character is known to

our near relations and friends, those amongst whom we mix ; but beyond these, there is the circle of the world at large. In this our conversation is to be *honest* in its *actions*. So that we get these circles of nature, known to God ; of character, known to our friends ; and of actions, known to all.

E.—Thank you, *G.*, I hope you will give us a few more such notes. Coming now to verse 8 we notice the words sympathetic, (lit.) tender-hearted, humble-minded (R.V.), graces that are often not thought much of, but which yet are most distinguishing marks of a Christ-like walk. Like most of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. v.) they are quiet graces, generally more felt than seen.

G.—Verses 10-12 are all one long quotation from the Old Testament. I see that in the first chapter (i. 15) he quotes from the law, in the second (ii. 6) from the prophets, and here in the third from the Psalms.

E.—Let us also notice in passing, that the ears of the Lord are open to the cry of the righteous—meaning by this, one who is not merely justified before God, but who is practically upright in this life, and in Jas. v. 16 we get the same.

The grace of the following verses (13-18) is the contrast between suffering for sins, and for righteousness. Christ suffered for both, but in different ways. He suffered for sins as our Substitute, that we might *not*, but He suffered for righteousness as an example, that we might follow in His steps. Only the former is, however,

brought out here, the force of the argument being Christ has done that, that you might not: *your* part is to suffer for righteousness.

M.—I am afraid when we do suffer, we are too apt to take for granted that it is for what is right, and yet often I am sure it is for our own folly.

E.—I am sure that is true, and hence we ought to be very careful to find out why we are suffering, and if we cannot distinctly see it is for righteousness, or for Christ's sake, let us put it down to some undiscovered folly of our own.

R.—Why do you draw a distinction between suffering for righteousness, and for Christ? Are they not the same?

E.—No, and they are distinguished by the apostle, the one being in this chapter, the other in the next. Suffering for righteousness is the result of having our *consciences in the light* of God's presence, so that we refuse to go on with sin, or to give way to it. Joseph knew what this was, when he was put in prison in Egypt. Suffering for Christ is the result of having our *hearts in His love*, so that we follow Him at all costs, accepting His reproach and rejection. Even Moses knew, in a measure, what this meant. when he esteemed "*the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.*" I am sure we can all distinguish between being upright and God-fearing in our actions, and following Christ in His place of rejection. The two ought, of course, to be united in every Christian's life, but they are quite distinct, and are respectively the fruits of light and love.

C.—And do we not find the results correspond? We read here, that if we thus suffer for righteousness, we are happy, but in iv. 13, 14, if we are partakers of Christ's sufferings, we "*rejoice with exceeding joy,*" and *the spirit of glory and of God*" rests on us.

E.—That is quite true, and may there not be a connection between these two sufferings, and that note that I read to you in our third Bible reading, namely, the difference between endurance and surrender, that the reward in the latter is higher than in the former? Is not suffering for righteousness of the character of endurance, and has not suffering for Christ the character of surrendering, of giving up, that to which as a man of the world I have a right? Turning to Matt. v. we find these two sufferings also distinguished there. We see in verse 10 that those, who "*are persecuted for righteousness sake,*" have an earthly reward, the kingdom of heaven; the character of their sufferings being earthly, and not *necessarily* connected with a rejected and ascended Christ, but founded on the eternal principles of God's truth and justice; whereas they who are persecuted (v. 11, 12) "*for my sake*" have their reward *in heaven*; this being the reward for sharing Christ's rejection here.

M.—I am afraid that is rather too deep for me; but I notice one thing in verses 13, 14, and that is that this sort of suffering does not harm us, but on the contrary we have seen in the first chapter it often does us good.

R.—I am very anxious to know what the next

verses mean. It seems such a peculiar doctrine that Christ preached, after His death, to disembodied spirits, and particularly to those drowned in the flood, I cannot understand it at all.

E.—It does not say that Christ preached after His death, but it does speak of His Spirit speaking just as in i. 11; and if you will turn to the passage you will see what is referred to. In Gen. vi. 3 Jehovah (the One whom we now know as Jesus) says, “*My spirit shall not always strive with man, for he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years,*” meaning by this that His Spirit should strive with them for 120 years. Then Christ preached by His Spirit to those spirits that are now in prison.

G.—I have a valuable remark here which I would like to read, “The Jews expected a Messiah corporeally present, who should deliver the nation, and exalt the Jews to the summit of earthly glory. But He was not present, we know, in that manner, and the believing Jews had to endure the scoffs and the hatred of the unbelieving, on account of their trust in a Messiah who was not present, and who had wrought no deliverance for the people. Believers possessed the salvation of their souls, and they knew Jesus in heaven; but unbelieving men did not care for that. The apostle, therefore, cites the case of Noah’s testimony. The believing Jews were few in number, and Christ was theirs only according to the Spirit. By the power of that Spirit He had been raised up from the dead. It was by the power of the same Spirit

that He had gone—without being corporeally present—to preach in Noah. The world was disobedient (like the Jews in the apostle's days), and eight souls only were saved; even as the believers were now but a little flock. But the spirits of the disobedient were now in prison, because they did not obey Christ present among them by His Spirit in Noah. The long suffering of God waited then, as now, with the Jewish nation; the result would be the same." *It has been so.*

R.—It certainly would be rather extraordinary if, when God had expressly said that He would not strive with these people more than 120 years, they should be the only people with whom He again did so. But now what connection has baptism with all this?

E.—Baptism is not connected with the preaching, but with the flood, which was a type of baptism. We pass in it (like Noah in type), through death in figure. But Christ was raised from the dead for our justification, and we too are not left in death, but came out of the water (like Noah out of the ark) on to resurrection ground. This gives us a good conscience before God, because all our sins are gone, and we are in a new life before Him. Observe, it is the work of Christ gives me a good conscience before God (verse 21), but it is practical righteousness gives me a good conscience before man (verse 16). We must, however, now close, hoping that we shall all meet again next month to go on with chapter iv.

GIFTS AND THEIR USE.

(Concluded.)

WE are now traders with the gifts entrusted us from the Lord, and if used by us they will not only be increased in ourselves, but in others to the Lord's glory: hence the necessity of our knowing.

As we have asked you what gift we have, perhaps you say, I am *too young* to preach, too young to stand up and teach others—this is no reason for your not having a gift, or for not using what you have got at the Lord's hand. Saul was only a *young man* (see Acts vii.) when the Lord saved him, and called him with an holy calling, to save in the gospel of His Son. And was not Timothy, his dearly beloved son in the gospel, a *young man* when the gift was given him by prophecy, and the laying on of the hands of the presbytery? which gift the faithful apostle did not fail to tell him to *stir up* in one of his epistles, and in the other not to *neglect*. And was not Samuel a young man—yea, even a child—when He stood before the Lord and ministered? And what is the Lord's answer to His faithful servant, the prophet Jeremiah, when the word of the Lord came to him saying, "I have sanctified thee and ordained thee a prophet?" "Ah! Lord God," says Jeremiah, "Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a *child*." But the Lord said unto him, "Say not I am a child, for thou shalt go

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to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." And, oh, what a word of encouragement in the next verses ! (See Jer. i.) As much needed in this *our day* as in the days of Jeremiah. "Be *not afraid of their faces*, for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord." Now these few instances of the Lord taking up *young believers* for His service in days gone by should encourage us to believe that the Lord does use young servants as well as those in riper years.

The various gifts mentioned in Scripture, all of which are bestowed upon the several members of the body of Christ, you will find in Rom. xii., 1 Cor. xii, Eph. iv., and from these you will discover what gift in particular is bestowed upon you individually, and for your exercise thereof. In 1 Cor. xii. 29 the apostle asks, "Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing, do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet *earnestly the best gifts*." The best gifts to be coveted are those I judge which shall glorify God and exalt Christ most, while withal to the profiting of those ministered to. If the gift is *from* the Lord, it is no less to be exercised *to* Him, as responsible to Him and not to man; hence His own words in John xii., "If any man serve me let him follow me, and where I am there shall also my servant be; if any man serve me, him will my Father honour." Oh, what a loving Lord and Master to *follow* and *serve*. Not going to a place or person and asking *the Lord to be with you*;

TO BE READ.		TO BE LEARNED.	AUG.
1	T	2 Cor. iv.	For I have GIVEN unto them the words which Thou gavest Me, and they have received them.
2	W	„ v.	Peace I leave with you; My peace I GIVE unto you; not as the world GIVETH, GIVE I unto you.
3	Th	„ vi.	For I have GIVEN you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.
4	F	Ex. xv.	And the glory which thou gavest me I have GIVEN them, that they may be one, even as we are one.
5	Sa	„ xvi.	To him that overcometh will I GIVE to eat of the hidden manna, and will GIVE him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written.
6	Su	„ xvii.	Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us. —(Gifts of God the Father.)—
7	M	„ xviii.	For the GIFTS and calling of God are without repentance.
8	T	2 Cor. vii.	For God so loved the world, that He GAVE His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
9	W	„ viii.	He that spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely GIVE us all things?
10	Th	„ ix.	And I will pray the Father, and He shall GIVE you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever.
11	F	„ x.	All Scripture is GIVEN by inspiration of God.
12	Sa	„ xi.	That ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may GIVE it you.
13	Su	„ xii.	Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. —(Precious.)—
14	M	„ xiii.	Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold. . but with the PRECIOUS blood of Christ.

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

AUG.

15	T	Gal.	i.	And the word of the Lord was PRECIOUS in those days.
16	W	„	ii.	How PRECIOUS is Thy loving kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings.
17	Th	„	iii.	How PRECIOUS are Thy thoughts unto me, O God!
18	F	Ex.	xix.	That the trial of your faith being much more PRECIOUS than of gold.
19	Sa	„	xx.	Unto you, therefore, which believe He is PRECIOUS.
20	Su	„	xxi.	Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps.
(Wisdom.)				
21	M	„	xxii.	Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.
22	T	Gal.	iv.	For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.
23	W	„	v.	If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally.
24	Th	„	vi.	Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.
25	F	Eph.	i.	Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.
26	Sa	„	ii.	Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness.
27	Su	„	iii.	Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it.
(Joy.)				
28	M	„	iv.	Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and everlasting joy shall be upon their head.
29	Tu	„	v.	The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in Him.
30	W	„	vi.	The meek shall increase their joy in in the Lord.
31	Th	Phil.	i.	To the councillors of peace there is joy.

but the Lord going *before you*, and you *following* Him to the place or person; He taking notice of the least act done to His own, and in His name, as done to Himself no less than the greatest act of self-denial, which shall have its reward at His hand, "When He shall come, and His reward with Him, to give unto every man according as his work shall be."

Very recently I had a striking illustration of this reward for work, which just comes to my mind. I had occasion to be down a coal pit some 400 yards deep; after having been down there some hours, I was drawn out of it, and on coming to the top, my attention was drawn to a number of workmen outside the office window, standing in a row. On going inside the office I found the cashier had before him a table with tickets laid in order before him each with a sum of money upon it. This the men had handed them as the reward of their labour down in the pit during the week; the judgment seat of Christ was vividly brought before me, illustrated by what I had just seen, and I left that place with quickened steps to work more faithfully and lovingly for Him who saith, "Behold I come quickly." Now, beloved young believer, it may be you are neglecting the gift which you have at the Lord's hand; let me exhort you to see to its putting out to usury, and for the Lord's glory, so that its use may hasten the time when we shall all have come in the unity of the faith and to the knowing of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

“ SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD.”

Mark xiv. 8.

LET us first see what she had done. She had toiled patiently, it may have been for years, to get together those precious pence to purchase that costly ointment. No eye, perchance, knew why she worked so hard, why she denied herself so many things, but her Lord's. He knew, He watched her during those long weary hours ; He had may be, been sympathizing with her, rejoicing in, and feasting on her love, her gratitude, her self-denial, since it was for Him alone that she did it ; and at last when, in the joy and gladness of her heart, she poured that fragrant nard over His dear head and feet, noticing not the frown and angry rebuke of even the Lord's disciples, she reaped a full reward, for He smiled upon her, appreciated it all, and praised her in those tender loving words, so that none dared again to say a word against her.

Dear young Christian, there is even now One above who is watching you, putting your tears into His bottle, noting down each effort to please and serve Him. He prizes those moments when you turn to Him, when you sit at His feet, when you patiently plod on, midst the scoff and jeer of others, midst the reproof of fellow-Christians.

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"He knows the way is dreary,
 He knows the feet grow weary,
 He knows what griefs oppress you,
 Oh! how His arms will rest you!
 When Jesus comes."

And has not this word of commendation a voice also for some of us, who are seeking to do that which others call good and great? Does it not say to us, "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart?" (1 Sam. xvi. 7). The question is not, What are we doing for our Master, who gave up all He was and had for us? but, What more can I do for Him? We wonder as we read the virtuous woman in Prov. xxxi., when we shall get to the end of that catalogue of work for her Lord. But look not at your work, or you will get discouraged or puffed up; let us look at our Divine example from morn till night, and even during the night. He was occupied only in doing the will of His Father; let us, then, not be content unless we hear Him saying to us each day, "She hath done what she could." Not merely the work that we are obliged, or the commands that we see plainly set before us, but let us search for them as for hid treasure (Prov. ii. 1-9; vii. 1-3) and not be satisfied until He has enabled us to carry them all out. Day by day He will show us fresh ways in which we may bring glory and honour to His name. They may be as nothing in the sight of others; our friends may say, "Oh, I am sure you need not trouble about that;" but the command is, "*Whatsoever* He saith unto you,

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do it ;” and again, “ Occupy till I come.” I am sure we shall each of us feel how we have failed in the past ; but let us not despair, press forward to the prize ; He has grace sufficient to overcome each obstacle that comes in the way. Now we shall rejoice, knowing that He is pleased with us, and by and by, before a wondering universe, He will testify that, “ Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matt. xxv. 40).

SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD.

“ She hath done what she could,” O praise eternal,
Which through ages lasteth, undimmed by time !
Oh flower that the breath of God made vernal,
Through the world’s winters of frost and rime !
“ She hath done what she could.”

Weak are we all, and our nerveless fingers
Leave the flowers ungathered, the harps unswept ;
Round the best that we do imperfection lingers,
Yet, to dry up the tears that our brethren have wept,
Have *we* done what we could ?

Have we done what we could ? We stand affrighted
At the work neglected, the duties undone—
At the proffered love we so oft have slighted—
At the joys untasted we might have known ;
Have we done what we could ?

Have we done what we could ? When from sleep awaking
We find that our labour was spent in vain ;
That some light is for ever our life forsaking—
May these words breathe soft o’er our spirit’s pain,
Ye have done what ye could.

And oh ! when we fail in our heart’s best trying,
When our poor gift flusheth our cheek with red ;
May this bygone story soothe all our sighing,
And of us, as of old, may the Christ have said,
They have done what they could.

ON TESTIMONY FOR CHRIST.

(Continued.)

HAVE you ever seen a child sowing the seed of some plant, and watched the process? With all due care the seed is sown, the earth is carefully laid over it, and occasionally well beaten down to prevent the seed getting out, or the birds getting in, then soaked in water and left for the night. Well, the seed might grow under such circumstances, but next day the child comes, looks longingly at the spot where the seed is, and feels that it would be far more satisfactory to know how it is progressing; so, after a moment's thought, in goes a small finger and out comes the unfortunate seed, which to his disgust does not seem to have progressed much, although it has lain there a whole night; perhaps it is cast aside, perhaps put carefully back, and next day the process is repeated; but somehow or other the seed does not exactly prosper. To the child there are only two ways of accounting for it; either the ground was bad or the seed was worthless, though, perhaps, another reason would suggest itself to an intelligent looker on. Such a picture is literally true of childhood, figuratively so of men. How often a well-meaning but injudicious man will do exactly the same thing; one day sow the good seed in a straight-

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forward way that puts us to shame, and the next day go and probe the man's feelings to find out how he is progressing. We may sow and others may water, but God alone can give the increase, and we must be content to wait very patiently for it without too much interference. But after the sowing, we need not forget the watering, which is quite a different thing from pulling the seed up to see how it is getting on ; and as to the method of this, perhaps an illustration from nature will help us as much as anything. We have all of us, perhaps, noticed the water trickling through the roof of a cavern, or over some embankment, to fall on a stone beneath ; first a drop, and then a pause, and then another drop, and then another pause, until the hard, firm rock is worn through and through. If that same amount of water had fallen on the rock all in one broad stream, how little effect it would have had ; but drop by drop, each drop waiting until the preceding one had done its duty, and the hard rock gave way at last. And it is just the same, I think, with our everyday work for Christ ; we cannot change the stony hearts of unbelieving companions, though we sometimes, perhaps, overwhelm them with a sudden outburst of exhortations and entreaties, and then are astonished to find that we fail to make any impression upon them. We attribute the want of result entirely to their own hard-heartedness, and fancy that in that one burst of enthusiasm we have done our duty towards them for ever, and that their blood is no longer upon

our heads. But gently and quietly we must work ; here a kind action, and there an unselfish deed, never growing weary, walking in the way of Him who said, " My doctrine shall drop as the rain, and my speech shall distil as the dew." It is from this quiet, earnest, unceasing work, that we must look for our results, and not from sudden fits of energy.

(To be concluded.)

BY THE RIVER.

A PAINTER, a fisherman, and an oarsman were once gazing on the swift waters of the N——, about two miles above where it empties itself into the North Sea. It was a lovely evening, and the sun, ere he sank to rest, was lighting up the whole scene with the richest hues, and the brown waters shone and sparkled as they tumbled along down the little rapid at our feet, while further across the river, in the shallower part, the water was apparently as still as a lake, reflecting back all the colouring of the evening sky. " What a picture this would make," said the painter, " with that old castle in the distance, and these birches and rapid waters in the foreground !" " Well, I was just

thinking," said the fisherman, "that there must be some fine large trout lying yonder, in that still pool under that old tree on the further bank. I should think this was a fine river for salmon. What do you say?" he continued, addressing the boating man. "Well," he said, "I am not much in the fishing line. I was just wondering which would be the best part to run down this rapid. I should think there was hardly enough water for a heavy boat, unless it is just where you see the current runs strong without breaking into foam." How strange it is, I thought, to hear three such various opinions about the same river! It certainly makes all the difference from what point of view you look at it. To one it is a subject for his canvas, to another a place for his rod, while a third would launch his boat upon it.

Certainly there is a very great deal in the point of view from which we regard things. Indeed, everything depends on this. A painter scans a landscape for a picture, a shepherd for his sheep, a farmer for the chances of the weather, a traveller for his road. In nothing is the point of view more important than in the way in which we look at this world. The young men naturally regard it in various ways: one sees in it a scene for pleasuring, another a field for ambition, while a third, looks on it as a sphere for mere self-indulgence. How do you regard it, beloved reader? Scripture is quite clear as to how we are to view the world, "As thou hast sent me into the world," says the Lord, "even so have I also sent them into the world." We

know how Christ regarded it. We know it was not to Him a place of pleasure, but rather a scene of sorrow and suffering, to which He had come to do His Father's will, and gather out His own. Our object, then, is the same, and it is very helpful clearly to grasp this from the very onset of our Christian career, that we are left in the world to do our blessed Master's will, and to please Him. It is a wonderful thing when we really grasp the purpose for which we are left down here. A Christian then surveys this world as a foreign scene, in which he has a very definite work to do for his Lord, but to which he no longer belongs. He scans it to look for those he can help and befriend, for broken hearts to heal, for burdened souls to relieve, for straying feet to restore, for fainting sheep to sustain, for lambs to feed, for pilgrims to cheer on their journey.

What a blessing in this world is the Christian, who surveys it from this true standpoint, the only right point of view for one who belongs to Christ !

May God grant that both you and I, beloved reader, may look at this scene from God's point of view, and thus learn to fill our true place in it to His glory.



HOW TO BE HAPPY.—The truly happy man is he who has no interests but Christ's ; the truly unhappy man is he who has no interests but his own.

PRACTICAL CONVERSATIONS.—I.*

N.B.—We do not hold ourselves responsible for any opinions expressed in these "Conversations," but those under the initial "S."

SUBJECT:—(1) Can a Christian play classical music, or sing an innocent song? Would not Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16; and 1 Cor. xiv. 15, warrant us in declining to do such things? If a Christian is requested by his parents to play or sing, how far would Eph. vi. 1, and Col. iii. 20 apply?—*Inquirer.*

(2) How far can we carry the study of music to the glory of God? Can a Christian girl conscientiously spend time in acquiring this art, in order to make a livelihood, by instructing others? What about drawing?—*Perplexed, New York.*

E.G.O.—The first mention we have of "song" is Exodus xv. 1. It is not until salvation is accomplished that we can "sing unto the Lord," and no voice can be acceptable to Him unless the singer can sing from the heart, "He is become my salvation." We have frequent mention of song in God's word; in 1 Chron. vi. we find the names of those who were honoured by being "Set over the Service of Song" in the house of the Lord; furthermore, we read in 1 Chron. xxv. 7 that they were "*instructed.*" I think this would be a lesson for those young Christians, who find a difficulty in spending time for the practice of singing; when we are young, and time is set apart for education, let us the more willingly study what may in after years be used for the service of God, always remembering it is "with my song I will praise Him," and that he has frequently owned the singing of the gospel to the salvation of souls. At the same time, I would have no difficulty in complying with the special request of a parent, or an unconverted friend, who asked me to sing a favourite air, with thoroughly simple and harmless words; it would be

* For further information about these "Conversations" see "Note-book," this month.

to my mind not less pleasing to God, than yielding (Phil. iv. 5) to any other request, such as reading aloud a portion from a newspaper, or any other secular work: for if those we love understand not a "spiritual song," we are not justified in casting "pearls before swine."

M. C.—To do anything simply to please ourselves, or any one else, would be acting in and serving the flesh. But before reproving another for what our friend mentions, we should be quite sure that we are not doing something just as fleshly. To avoid speaking and acting in the flesh, we should be filled with the Spirit, according to Eph. v. 18. If we would attain to this standard, music and drawing, and all else would fall into beautiful harmony. They would be learnt so far as would be useful, but not injurious; but the flesh spoils all. "They that *will* do His will shall know."

A.P.C.—In answer to "*Perplexed*" as to spending time in learning music or drawing, don't you think it is much the same as spending time in learning history, geography, or grammar? I mean that we need *education* on all points, and while time is being given for educating the mind, and developing any power or talents God may have given, why should music or drawing be neglected? I think it is a great gain to develop every power we have, remembering always that we are the Lord's—body, soul, and spirit—and have the high privilege of presenting ourselves a living sacrifice unto Him. We do not know how or when He may call us to use for Him any talent He has given; how He may allow us to take it up as a means of earning a living, or to work with our hands, that we may have to give to him that needeth; but we are responsible to have each power of mind and body ready, so far as we can, for His service at any moment. If my experience will be any help, I do not mind telling you that I have very little talent for music, so that there is no question with me as to "classical music," for I could not play it if I would but; such talent as I have, has received some amount of training, and I now find it really useful in the little corner where

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the Master has bid me serve. As to drawing, I have to thank God that to some extent the skill He gave me has been instructed and developed, for I find it a great help to me now in designing, tracing, and embroidering work, which I sell to help those in need. The Lord graciously fills up my days and hours in His service, so that I have no idle time in which either music or drawing can press their attractions on me—they can only come in as servants when needed, but find no place as play-fellows. No doubt, as Dr. Watts has it—

“Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.”

and if we are not “fervent in spirit, serving the Lord,” He will try to use these things as lusts of the mind to war against the soul. Could he not, and does he not, effectually use the power of reading against numbers of souls? How many times are Christians tripped up by reading what they had better have left unread? But it would be a poor way out of the difficulty to refuse to learn the alphabet, would it not?

(To be continued.)



OUR NOTE-BOOK.

WE have received so many interesting replies to the questions asked here in June, that we have decided to commence at once a new feature in this Magazine which will, we trust, add considerably to its usefulness and interest. As will be seen we have printed the subject suggested under the head of “Practical Conversations.” In answer to them we have inserted varied and interesting replies, which give the *bona fide* views of the subject held by our various correspondents, and as in the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom, so we doubt not that from each reply we may learn something. The editor will join in the conversation at the close, under the initial “S.” As this subject has awakened so much interest, it is proposed to continue these

Conversations. The following simple rules are given for guidance:—

1. The Conversations are open to all Subscribers to the "Young Believer" or the "Bible Student."

2. The Editor holds himself responsible only for those contributions signed "S."

3. The subjects will be selected from those sent to us for "Practical Queries," any of general interest being then made the subject of conversation.

4. Replies are cordially invited from all Christian subscribers who take an interest in the subject.

5. All replies must be sent in by the 20th of each month.

6. Such replies will be inserted by the "Editor" at his discretion, under the initials or "*nom de plume*" given by the writer.

From the above, it will be seen that these Conversations will enable many, who have been unable to find time regularly to answer the Bible Questions, to become occasional contributors whenever they have leisure. Our first thought was to form a "Conversation Class," but we are convinced that there are very many who, though they could not undertake to write monthly, could yet give most valuable help from time to time as opportunity offers. We have therefore left it thoroughly open, trusting that God will awaken sufficient interest in each other's welfare, that sufficient helpful and profitable matter may be sent always to ensure a good conversation on the subject before us.

The conversation on the present subject will be concluded in November. The next subject selected is the following suggestive query:—

"Is it wrong for Christians to prepare for examinations, or to do work of *any* sort on Sundays, if they have not much time in the week?"—M. A. T. All papers on this subject must be sent in by the 20th of next month, addressed, P.C. W. B. Horner, 27, Paternoster Square, London, E.C.

We have received an interesting and valuable letter from G. L., which we will allude to in our next.

MONTHLY BIBLE READINGS.—IX.

1 Peter iv. 1-11.



—The beginning of chapter iv. affords us a second contrast to Paul's way of writing. We had one in ii.24, and here we notice that the believer is to suffer in the flesh with regard to sin as

Christ suffered, armed with the same mind.

This amounts to reckoning myself dead to sin, as Paul writes, but it is not presented so absolutely. Observe, when warring against the flesh we are armed with "a mind," in order to "reckon;" when warring against Satan we are armed with weapons "to fight with."

M.—I don't quite understand this first verse yet.

G.—Does it not mean this? If I indulge my flesh, it does not suffer, but I sin in so doing; whereas if I act as here exhorted, and do not let the flesh act (that is, keep it in death), it suffers, but I do not sin.

E.—Quite so: only mark it is in connection with Christ.

M.—What a contrast between "*the time past of our lives,*" and the "*rest of our time!*"

E.—Yes; would there were this contrast in each of us, living "*the rest of our time to the will of God!*"

M.—But there cannot be such a contrast in my life, for I never did any of the wicked things described in verse 3.

E.—That is true, but the principle in your life

was the same as theirs, though your education and surroundings so greatly modified its fruits. The principle was "to please ourselves," now it is to please God ; so that, although outwardly there may not be, in many respects, much change, inwardly and to the eye of God, the springs of life are all altered; the stream of our life no longer flowing from the defiled source of self, but from the higher and purer source of love to God.

M.—I wish it were so.

E.—Be thankful even for the wish, but do not be content with it.

R.—I do not understand verse 6.

E.—It is a parenthesis inserted to explain to these Jews the judgment of the dead. With the judgment of the living they were familiar, because all their thoughts and hopes were earthly, but they knew little of what was beyond the tomb. Their portion was in this world, ours beyond. Therefore God has lifted the veil for us, and explained what lies on the further side. This verse shows that those who were dead, who had the gospel preached to them, would yet reap the result of hearing it ; if they had rejected it, there would be the judgment of God ; if they had accepted it, they were even now living by His power in spirit.

G.—It always seems very strange to me that Peter should speak of watching unto prayer here, when that is precisely what he did not do in the garden of Gethsemane.

E.—That is the very reason. Peter, too, says "*Be sober,*" whereas he was very rash. Both of

these show that a man is best fitted to warn others against those very sins to which he himself is most prone, but which he has judged. I remember, when a boy, I once very nearly got drowned when on the ice, through following the skate marks of a man who had fallen in. I noticed the hole only just in time to avoid it, for I thought I must be quite safe in following the tracks of a heavier man than myself. I had often crossed large tracts of water, relying entirely on the marks I was following for my safety. In many places if a man falls in, a pole is put up marked dangerous, thus warning others not to follow in his tracks. In life it is the same; a man's life may be useful to others in two ways, either as a warning, or an example. Peter's in this instance was a warning; hence he gives us the exhortation here to prevent others from following in his track.

C.—Why does it say in the next verse “*Above all things ?*”

E.—Because love is an “overall.” It covers all, cements all, binds all, embraces all. This love, too, is to be fervent. Fervent means burning, not smouldering. Love too often is the latter, just emitting a little smoke to show there is some there, and that is all; something like the brother in Jas. ii. who says to the poor starving beggar “*Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled.*” That is smouldering love, but not fervent love.

G.—How little of this element of fervent love there is amongst Christians now! How can it be increased?

E.—By increasing your own stock; that will not only give you more, but it will bring a great deal more out of others. I have often found those who talk most of want of love amongst Christians show but little themselves.

G.—Did you mean that personally?

E.—By no means, my dear *G.*; such a thought never entered my head. I was merely speaking generally, and I think you will agree with me that such is often the case; for those who love, get loved, and hence, personally they do not experience the want of Christian love so much as others.

The latter clause of the verse is a quotation from Prov. x. 12. (See also Prov. xvii. 9).

M.—What does it mean?

E.—Let me read a remark on the subject. "Peter does not speak here with a view to ultimate pardon, but of the present notice which God takes—His present relations of government with His people. If the church is at variance, if there is little love, if the intercourse among Christians is bad, the existing evil, the mutual wrongs, subsist before God; but if there is love, which neither commits nor resents these things, but pardons them, and only finds in them occasion for its own exercise, it is then the love which the eye of God rests upon, and not the evil. Even if there are misdeeds—sins, love occupies itself about them, the offender is brought back, is restored by the love of the church; the sins are removed from the eye of God—they are covered."

Observe, we are first taught how to use grace,

then how to use our own gifts. Grace comes first, and the man who does not know the 8th and 9th verses will not be able to follow the 10th. In verse 9 we are to entertain one another as being no longer strangers but friends, and not only friends, but relations. How wonderfully we find this sometimes carried out even in the most unexpected place! These practical ties of love are among the most convincing proofs of the new power, that binds the children of God together.

G.—In verse 11 the R. V. is an improvement. “*As of the strength which God supplieth.*” It is a beautiful thought, and when understood must bring glory to God in all work that I do. If I work by my strength, of course I deserve credit; but if all the strength is supplied by God, of course all the glory belongs to Him too.

E.—Yes, and do not let us forget it is “*in all things.*” We often glorify God “*in some things;*” but this is “*in all things.*” Well may we say, “*who is sufficient for these things?*” I think this is a good verse to close with to-day, that we may carry away the force and power of it in our hearts.

GOD’S VOICE.—He to whom the ETERNAL speaketh is delivered from many an opinion.

KNOWLEDGE BRINGS RESPONSIBILITY.—The more thou knowest, and the better thou understandest, the more strictly shalt thou be judged, unless thy life be also the more true.

PRACTICAL PAPERS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS.

IX.—ON A START IN LIFE. TO YOUNG MEN.



OUR readers are necessarily divided, with regard to this subject, into two classes—those *who have started in life* and those *about to start*. It is for the benefit of the latter that we especially write. There is no doubt that the most critical moment for a young believer is when he is called upon to make a start for himself, to begin a voyage across the great ocean of life, with apparently no hand on the tiller but his own; we say, *apparently*, for reasons that will be seen further on.

THE START.

To start is a very real thing, but may take place actually in a variety of ways. To young men, for whom we now write, it occurs when the well-thumbed lesson books are finally laid aside, and the new clerk takes his seat for the first time on the high stool, or the sailor-boy steps on board his first ship, or the apprentice gets his first instruction in his future trade, or the undergraduate first dons the cap and gown. That which makes the act so serious, is not the mere fact that the steps which were only yesterday directed to the well-known school, are now turned to the office, the

ship, the workshop, or the college, but that the boy has all at once sprung into the man. It is true that at times he seeks to blossom into the "genus homo," even at school, but this is distinctly premature, and all such attempts are justly checked. But when once a boy enters a profession, a trade, or any other calling, and begins to fight the battle of life, he justly expects to be considered and regarded, at least, a young man.

THE DANGERS.

Herein lies the chief danger for the young Christian. Up to this time he has taken all that his parents have told him for granted. He has steadily attended the well-known church, chapel, meeting, or Sunday-school, where he first learned the value of the blood of Christ; and, shielded in a comfortable home from temptation, he has caught, hitherto, but stray glimpses of the sea of wickedness without. But now comes the time when his principles are to be tested. He is sent away to a strange town, he lives in lodgings, he is thrown amongst a set of godless, careless, and often immoral young men; he is surrounded on every side with new and strange temptations. Oh, how many dear bright young believers have made shipwreck of their faith on these fatal rocks which are met with on first sailing out of the harbour of home! *It is not too much to say that one week at a time like this, largely determines a young man's fate for years.*

HOW TO MEET THEM.

If being forewarned and therefore forearmed, he leaves his home a bright, happy Christian, prepared

to stand for God, and test, in a fiercer fight, the strength already gained in many a little skirmish at school ; if he firmly believes in the truth that if the devil is resisted, he *will* flee from him, and shows his colours at the first opportunity at his work and in his leisure hours ; if on the first night in his lodgings he opens his Bible, and, after reading God's Word, prays to his Father in heaven, the victory is as good as won. In the first place, he is at once saved from a thousand temptations by showing his colours, for the really vicious at once shrink away from an openly declared Christian, and will seldom long trouble a man who at once stands up against them ; in the second place, the stand he has taken, to a certain extent commits him for the future, and makes his life comparatively easy after the first week ; and, thirdly, he having honoured God, God will *honour*, protect and strengthen him.

WE HAVE A FATHER TO GUIDE US.

But now there is another matter, and it is this. We spoke of the young man starting on the voyage of life, his hand *apparently* holding the tiller, and guiding the ship. Now many a young man, and even a young believer, thinks that this is not only *apparently*, but is really so, and that he is the architect of his own fortunes, and that it is his will that is to direct his future life. Many accept Christ as their Saviour, who have but a very faint idea of what it is to accept God as their Father, and yet the one relationship is as true as the other;

and if the one makes them happy for *eternity*, the other is certainly the secret of true happiness for *time*. There is a wonderful difference between the young man who goes forth rejoicing in his own strength and sagacity, and thinks that he can outwit the world ; and the humble Christian, who leaves home placing the tiller of the little vessel of his life into his Father's hand, and trusts *Him* to guide him aright through the dangers and difficulties of each day. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and *lean not* to thine own understanding." Do not think that any detail of your new life is too small for God to guide you in. The choice of your business, of your future home, of your companions, should all be entrusted to Him ; and He will greatly own and honour such confidence, and lead you in the *very best path*. For it is folly to suppose that if we have a loving and all-wise Father, He would or could do anything else. The poet's words are indeed true:—

" All that God does, or suffers to be done,
That we ourselves should do,
Could we the future of our lives as clearly scan,
As He does now."

THE BIBLE OUR CHART.

Start, then, in life with a definite trust that "*God will guide ;*" and though you apparently are steering the ship, get all your orders from above, so that, after all it is His hand, not yours, that is really holding the tiller. One other word and we have done. A ship requires a chart and compass as well as a rudder. Now the Christian's chart

is the Word of God, which shows him his course plainly down here, telling him that his first object should ever be, under all circumstances, the glory of God ; that he is left here for this very purpose, not to please himself, but Christ. The compass is the conscience, instructed by the Word of God, that tells me in an instant when I am out of the true course.


MAKE A GOOD START.

We would, in closing, again entreat every young man just about to sail out of harbour, *to make a good start*. If he wavers at first, or yields a little for the sake of peace, he will not get it ; but, on the contrary, he may be drawn on, little by little, from bad to worse, until no outward sign of Christianity is left at all. A bold front at first, saves a great deal of trouble and fighting afterwards. Be sure, however, that the trust is not in your own strength, but that every step is taken with prayer and dependence on God. As for the future, leave that with your heavenly Father, seeking only to live each day more truly to His glory than you did the day before. Such a course is worth a hundred sermons, for who can tell the mighty power of the unconscious influence exercised by a consistent Christian life ?

OUR WORST ENEMIES.—Who hinder and trouble thee more than the unmortified affections of thine own heart ?

ON TESTIMONY FOR CHRIST.

(Concluded.)

N discussing the subject of speaking we have looked as yet only on the good done in this way; we must now consider the evil often done by words or by silence. Though it may be positively wrong for us to even talk of the deep things of God before a perfectly unappreciative audience, yet by entirely hiding the secret of our lives, and absolutely keeping it out of our conversation, we hide our light under a bushel; we are never told to *make* our light shine before men, we *are* told to *let* it shine. Not that we must ever force conversation on such matters, but simply not stifle and choke it down whenever it wants to come up. Natural and unaffected such conversation must be, for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," or ought to speak. Whether directly religious or not, all our conversation should be seasoned with salt, kept pure and wholesome by the love and fear of God, and the realisation of His presence; and, I think, we should make it a matter of constant prayer, never by repeating, or even joining in the laugh at impure and irreverent stories, however witty or well told, to countenance them. But though we may never countenance such language, yet the Christian is not called upon to set himself by as a sort of daily reviewer—a

moral critic of the character and conduct of all he knows. The Christian is not commanded to tell every bad man he meets exactly what he thinks of him, nor forbidden to be civil, and even respectful, in answer to those of whose conduct he disapproves most. But there is a silent, unobtrusive disapproval, by which the humblest may be a check upon the highest, expressed without words or demonstration of manner, one can hardly tell how, which even the most hardened sinner will find it very hard, very uncomfortable to bear. Again, in our conversation, there is another difficulty we have felt. We are so accustomed to be reserved in speaking about Christ that, when once the ice is broken and conversation begins, our pent-up feelings, unaccustomed to that healthy exercise and intercourse to which they should be accustomed, often run perfectly riot; and when we quietly think over what we have said, what numbers of things we remember that more mature reflection convinces us had far better have been left unsaid, we would give almost anything to have that conversation over again, to speak more calmly, more collectedly.

Not once only does this occur, but again and again; and I believe, with most, it is only after repeated failures of this sort that they learn at last, relying on their Saviour's strength, to put the curb on their runaway words. It is in connection with this difficulty that we understand the text, "If any man offend not in tongue, the same is a perfect man, and able to bridle the

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whole body." But it is better, even so, I think, to go to battle, and fail again and again, for we shall be victors in the end, than to be always silent—hold oneself aloof from the strife of words. No possibility of a victory for him who never fights.

Amongst the evils of conversation, there is another very important one—I mean unkind criticism. Now, although no one would hesitate, even if he were amongst worldly men, to criticise a fellow-Christian's abilities and all that sort of thing, which is a perfectly justifiable proceeding; yet I think criticising his faults and failings, especially amongst outsiders, is a proceeding we cannot too firmly discourage. Every Christian has his failings, and, as a rule, they are very apparent to others. We can generally see the little mote in our neighbour's eye with alarming accuracy. I can hardly imagine anything more calculated to give a worldly-minded man a bad and low idea of religion than to hear one Christian laughing at another's failings. If we would avoid such conversation, and be true to our Master, we must try to be so in our thoughts and lives. Again, we may repeat it, "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh." Indeed, if we would never speak evil of our neighbours, we must learn to believe all things, to hope all things; perhaps, the more fully we realise our own evil nature and remember the number of times we fall, unknown to the outside world, the more we shall appreciate our fellow-Christians,

TO BE READ. TO BE LEARNED. SEPT

1	F	Ex. xxiii.	We will REJOICE in thy salvation, and, in the name of our God, we will set up our banners.
2	Sa	„ xxiv.	I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord.
3	Su	„ xxv.	Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us.
— (The Word (Living).) —			
4	M	„ xxvi.	In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.
5	T	Phil. ii.	And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory.
6	W	„ iii.	That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life.
7	Th	„ iv.	For the life was manifested, and we have seen it.
8	F	Col. i.	God . . . hath in these last days SPOKEN unto us by His Son
9	Sa	„ ii.	And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the word of God.
10	Su	„ iii.	Surely I come quickly.
— (The Word (written).) —			
11	M	„ iv.	Search the SCRIPTURES, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.
12	T	1 Thes. i.	So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
13	W	„ ii.	I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world.
14	Th	„ iii.	As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby
15	F	Ex. xxvii.	Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

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16	Sa	Ex.xxviii.	But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only,deceiving your own selves
17	S	„ xxix.	Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. —— (The Word (love of)) ——
18	M	„ xxx.	How sweet are thy words unto my taste ! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth.
19	T	1 Thes.iv.	Therefore, I love thy commandments above gold, yea above fine gold.
20	W	„ v.	I opened my mouth and panted, for I longed for thy commandments.
21	Th	2 Thes. i.	Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it.
22	F	„ ii.	I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.
23	Sa	„ iii.	I have longed for thy salvation, O Lord, and thy law is my delight.
24	Su	1 Tim. i.	Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. —— (The Word (use of).) ——
25	M	„ ii.	Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.
26	T	„ iii.	The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.
27	W	„ iv.	I will walk at liberty, for I seek thy precepts.
28	Th	„ v.	Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.
29	Fr	Ex. xxxi.	Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.
30	Sa	„ xxxii.	For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.

good features, and the less we shall be inclined to judge their failures.

Now we must pass on from *speaking*, to what is really far more important, *acting*. There may be doubts in the minds of some whether it is our duty to speak at all; but there can be no doubt in the mind of any that we are to let our light so shine before men that may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven. Now, it is very certain that we influence others far more by our actions than by our words; and it is, perhaps, just the former that we are apt to miss, not so much because we are ashamed to do it, or do not know how to do it, as is the case with speaking, as that we never think of it. There is a great fear of Christians neglecting the opportunities of doing good thrown daily in their way by an apparent chance, simply because, having chalked out a path for themselves—a path which they consider, and perhaps rightly so, one of usefulness and honour—they look upon all interruptions, whether God-sent or man-sent, as simply beneath their notice, and reply in deeds if not in words, “I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down.” Little deeds of kindness which we could often perform, and which are thrown daily in our way, are missed by us, and a golden harvest reaped, or rather gleaned, by those who are not Christians, but whose natural humanity prompts them to seize upon the opportunity. Of course, the objection naturally arises, that if we have, or think we have, some definite

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work to perform, some mission to accomplish, it is most certainly our duty to try and execute it, and not to be running after some new work here or some fresh deed there; but then we are not considering new works or fresh deeds, which require running after, but rather those which run after us—opportunities which do not require hunting up, but which present themselves to us in our very path. Whenever there is an opportunity of helping some other man in difficulty, of bearing another's burden, and we are asked to assist him, how often the words come up naturally to our lips, "Do not bother me now," or, "I am busy." We are doing a great work for the Lord, though I think it is oftener we are doing a great work for ourselves, so that we cannot come down. It was not in the first place to minister to the wounded man's spiritual but his bodily wants, that the priest and Levite ought to have, and the Samaritan actually did turn aside. If we come to think it over quietly, how many little acts of kindness we neglect in one day; how naturally we reply to the request, I wish you would help me in this or that, with the answer, "I cannot spare the time, I want to finish what I am doing." And then the oft-repeated reply becomes a habit, as everything oft-repeated does, and the answer "I am busy" is given, often without a moment's thought as to whether we really are busy or not. It is a spontaneous reply, very likely, without the slightest intention of falsehood, prompted, in fact, simply and purely by habit. And when we try to break

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ourselves of the habit, how again and again we fall unconsciously into the old reply, "I am busy," "I will do it presently"—words not noticed at the time, but to be thought over and regretted afterwards. Or, again, when we have broken ourselves of the habit, how few and far between are the calls for help to what they used to be; few people care to be repulsed twice, and we are never asked for help by those who would often have done so but for the first and, perhaps, the second refusal. Opportunities as they are missed become scantier, and a reputation for indifference to others is very, very hard to get rid of. In this way we lose many an opportunity of saying a word for our Master, or, if we do say it, how much less effect it has. Do they believe in our faith? I think if there is one text more than another believed in by the world when they have intercourse with Christians, it is the one in St. James, that "faith without works is dead." And when some quiet call for help or unspoken appeal for assistance interrupts us in the noisy rush of human work and care, we ought not to pass by on the other side, or repulse it with the words "I cannot come down." I think we often fail to follow so closely as we might in our Master's footsteps, fancying we hear His voice in the strong wind which nothing can resist, in the earthquake or in the fire, passing by unnoticed the still small voice, which would fain draw us aside from the too eager pursuit of our own wishes, of our own ends, even of work which we consider to be for

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the Lord, pointing us to another path, another duty, perhaps only temporarily, perhaps permanently, the gentle pleading voice ever behind us, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Again, there is an inclination in us to neglect the small duties of life, to despise the little trifling acts of kindness which we can all perform, in the hope that we may one day be able to do some great deed which few of us can achieve. How often we need the advice of that faithful Syrian servant, "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it, how much more when he saith to thee wash and be clean." *(Extracted).*

 THE TWO WISHES.

 A WORD TO ANY WHO ARE NOT "YOUNG
BELIEVERS."

"Away with him, away with him, crucify him" (John xix. 15).

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Luke xxiii. 34).

T would be difficult to conceive a greater contrast than we get in this cry of the multitude, and the prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ. The one expresses the height to which man's enmity had reached, the other the depth of love that filled the Saviour's heart. The solemn fact remains, that man in that day spurned and

rejected the One whom God had sent into the world as Saviour of it.

Christ was the expression of divine and perfect love. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son," and this is the One of whom they cry, "Away with him, crucify him." Man with all his boasted religion—man in his best estate—has nothing but enmity in his heart toward God's beloved Son. So blinded is he—so benighted by sin—so under the power of Satan, that his lips but express what his heart desires: "Away with him, away with him, crucify him." Oh! what sin, what hatred, what darkness this prayer manifests; what a pitch man's enmity had reached when he could thus cast from him that holy spotless One, whose every step and act was love—whose life had been but the unfolding of the fact that God was for man—and seeking his blessing! for "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved."

Thus is man's day of trial over. He has rejected the One of whom the Master of the vineyard said: "I have yet one son, surely they will reverence him." Alas! they say, "This is the heir, come, let us kill him." So they did with Jesus; and let me tell you, dear reader, that such is your heart and mine by nature. You may shrink from the thought now, but be assured on the authority of God's Word, that (if you are unconverted) your mind is enmity against God, and the occasion is but needed to bring it out. "As face answereth

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to face in water, so doth the heart of man to man."

Paul sums up his arguments, in the third of Romans, by showing that the *whole* world is guilty, that *all* have sinned, and therefore this cry of the multitude was but the terrible expression of the extent to which man had fallen, of the depth of sin to which he could stoop. Oh! dear friend, mark it well; this is the world—to which you belong, if unconverted—the world that is governed by the prince of the power of the air, the world that God is going to judge in righteousness. Have *you* ever been brought as a poor guilty rebel to the Saviour's feet? If not, judgment is before you; the wrath of God hangs over you. Oh! if you are refusing His love, and choosing the world for your portion, God must judge you in righteousness.

Could not God have righteously consumed those rejecters, who cried, "Away with Him?" But did He? No. His purpose was to *save*. Yet there *is* judgment coming, and the sin, that will stand out in bold relief above all others, will be the rejection of Christ. Tell me then, will you not be persuaded *now*, in view of that righteous judgment, in view of that everlasting torment, with the certainty of *death* before you, and after death the judgment; yea, with eternity staring you in the face, will you not yield to Christ? Will you not now confess Him for salvation, ere you are forced to confess Him to your eternal damnation?

How striking is the contrast! "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

There in grace is the loving Saviour—there, to the cross, has man's hatred brought Him—there has His love led Him. “O mystery of love!” There, when man had done his worst, God comes forth in richest, fullest, deepest love; God manifest in the flesh, love exceeding all hatred, grace superabounding. O! the grace of the Lord Jesus; the tenderness, the pity, the yearnings of love told out to us in that prayer, “Father forgive them!” He prays for His murderers.

Reader, do that voice and that prayer strike no chord in your heart? Does not the enmity break down, as you there behold that bleeding victim? Is it not enough to make you cast yourself at His blessed feet? Tell me, were your sins there, or were they not? Think of Him, as the Sin-bearer—enduring God's wrath against sin, infinitely more terrible than all that man had heaped upon Him. Ask yourself, “Was it for *me*?” Oh! that you might be able to say from the depth of your heart:

“For me, O miracle of grace,
For *me* the Saviour bled.”

If the wrath to come affright you not, surely the love of Jesus must win you. Think of His tenderness, His willingness to suffer, His purpose to save; and then cast away your unbelief, your cold rejection, your heartless enmity, and receive Him joyfully as your Saviour, your all. Oh! that it might be so, even *now*, ere the Master of the house (this same Jesus) rises up and shuts to the door. Then the voice of love will be changed into

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that of judgment—the rejected Jesus will be the “Judge of quick and dead.” All, who receive Him not now as Saviour, shall know Him *then* only as Judge, and then shall He say, “I know you not . . . depart from me.”

“O sinner pause, ere yet too late,
Now is the day of grace;
Now Jesus calls—oh, do obey
His pleading, loving voice.”



PRACTICAL CONVERSATIONS.—I.
(*Continued.*)

N.B.—We do not hold ourselves responsible for any opinions expressed in these “Conversations,” but those under the initial “S.”

SUBJECT:—(1) Can a Christian play classical music, or sing an innocent song? Would not Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16; and 1 Cor. xiv. 15, warrant us in declining to do such things? If a Christian is requested by his parents to play or sing, how far would Eph. vi. 1, and Col. iii. 20 apply?—*Inquirer.*

(2) How far can we carry the study of music to the glory of God? Can a Christian girl conscientiously spend time in acquiring this art, in order to make a livelihood, by instructing others? What about drawing?—*Perplexed, New York.*

4. C.H.P.—“Often when spending an evening with Christian friends they have played one or two pieces, and on some occasions I have even heard worldly songs sung. If they ask me to play I always decline, and say that I don’t think it right, but only practise at home for the sake of teaching; but I should be glad of some definite *Scriptural* answer for them. Surely it cannot be pleasing to the Lord when young saints meet together, that any of the world’s amusements should be needed to fill up the time. One

always feels it grate upon one's feelings, however beautiful the music may be; one feels uncomfortable and out of place, and yet it is difficult to give a reason that will convince others. Very often, too, I feel that those who are doing it are much better Christians than myself, and that makes it so hard to speak of it. I met with a young sister the other day who is very fond of music and painting; she said that she lived in the country, where there were no poor to visit, and she had scarcely anything to do, and therefore she did not think it wrong to spend part of her time in that way. What ought I to have said in such a case? I am sure I should not like the Lord to come and find me occupied with such a thing (unless simply as a matter of duty). Doesn't it come in very clearly among 'the things that are in the world,' which we are so expressly told not to love? And we are told that 'God is jealous,' and will not He be jealous if He hears our voices, which He has sanctified to sing His praise and that of His Son, lent every now and then to the world, and therefore to its prince? Don't you think, also there is often danger even in singing hymns, that we should be more taken up with the tune and our voices than with the words, especially when it is divided into *parts*? Isn't that part-singing rather after the principles of the world? I know it would take away my thoughts from God, and then would the singing be any more pleasing to Him than a mere worldly song? Don't you think the simpler the music, the less likely it will be to distract our thoughts from the Lord? "

5. A.R.B.—As a "Young Believer," and one very much interested in the question mooted in your last number, I feel I may venture to address you on the subject of music. I have been brought up to consider music as a means of providing one of the needful relaxations of life, and among ourselves privately, we find much pleasure in studying the works of different composers. It seems to me that music must certainly be one of the talents, which, when placed in us, we ought to cultivate and employ. If it is *wrong* for a child of God to use a good deal of her time in bringing this art to perfection, would our heavenly Father ever have

bestowed this gift on her? I cannot understand how God would implant an ardent love of music in a man's nature, if it could only be gratified by the sacrifice of his own spiritual good. Music seems certainly to have been ordained of God to be used in His service under the Old Testament dispensation, as there are a great many instances of musical instruments and singing being used. I have often heard it maintained that music should *only* be used in the direct service of God. Of course in one sense this is true, but I think you can serve God as much in playing, as in walking, and other exercises needful for the body. But supposing that classical music should *not* be played, I cannot understand why the great Creator should give to wise men minds capable of conceiving such ideas, if He did not intend His children to reap a benefit from their works! I have already spent some time in gaining proficiency in the art of performing on the pianoforte, and I feel that under any circumstances I should hardly feel at liberty to give up its study, for if at any time I should be called upon to earn my own livelihood, this would seem one of the best means to employ.

6. A.M.—On reading "Inquirer's" letter, I find that the writer has arrived at a point where there is a branch line, and is desirous of knowing whether it is safe travelling; and I should, in reply, say that to go straight on is most certainly safely, while the song-singing and classical music line is dangerous. Experience has taught me that this self-same thing is a little of Satan's corn, thrown in the way of believers, which, if eaten, will cause a deal of uneasiness afterwards. It is the key-note to a minor tune, which the devil loves to pitch, and results in—decline—decline—decline. The Scripture referred to in the letter is just what the Spirit of God will do if not hindered, and, therefore, He would be grieved if a believer acted contrary to Him. Another passage might be added, "Is any merry, let him sing psalms" (James v. 13). With regard to replying to any whose conscience is not very tender on the subject, I should say he is much lower down the ladder than "Inquirer," and I would advise setting an example, so that by it he

may probably be lifted up to "Inquirer's" level. Lastly: the duty to parents in this instance. If they are unconverted, they are not in a position to instruct a believer, because they are the enemies of God; while, on the contrary, if believers, and living in close communion with Jesus, they would not desire one to follow after anything but godliness. Inquirer would do well to read Matt. x. 34-38.

7. E.S.M.—In reference to the queries as to singing worldly songs, I heard a devoted servant of the Lord ask a young believer, "Would you like the Lord to come while thus singing?" If one could not do it to the Lord, I would consider Acts iv. 19 quite conclusive. As to a Christian girl acquiring the art in order to make a livelihood, I regard it as a matter for individual conscience, and, if sure that it is the right path, God can keep her true to Himself.

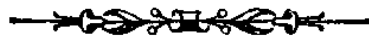
8. H.—You invite remarks upon the subject of music, as to its being suitable or not for the Christian. I do not see how any can positively condemn its use, while the Word of God sanctions it; giving it such a place in the temple worship; mentioning so many of David's instruments, showing how it was to his soul a channel of prayer, praise, and worship; also mentioning a hymn sung at the time of the institution of the Lord's Supper; alluding to it in Christian meetings (1 Cor. xiv. 15), and in Christian private life (Eph. v. 19); and, finally (whether figuratively or not), representing it as part of the worship of heaven (Rev. v. 8; xiv. 2; xv. 2). That it may prove a snare to the Christian is true, but what is there that will not? In order to sing with melody the praises of God, some measure of instruction in music is most useful and essential, and, when taught early, forms part of a child's education. Further, we must not forget that, "When I was a child I spake as a child," &c., and that you might as well forbid dolls and playthings, as little childish rhymes and songs. But how far a child of God should sing or play anything of a worldly or godless character does not seem to me the question of a loyal heart. There is obedience to parents and teachers, due from a child or scholar, which would include much not positively sinful, this we leave on one side. It is that which is done wilfully,

PRACTICAL QUERIES.

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for one's own amusement, which alone can be spoken of here, and can any answer be given but this—"Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. x. 31)? "And whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God and the Father by him" (Col. iii. 17)? I feel this strikes at much besides music—and one must not allow a morbid conscience, which would make it become legal, and bring one into bondage. Let us walk at liberty, yet remembering we are bound to serve *God*. The broad truth remains that while we have to do with a tender Shepherd, who "knoweth our frame," we have a life within us needing every help to nourish and strengthen it, and, at the same time, a *bad nature*, and enemies of various kinds without and within, all requiring to be kept in check.

(*To be continued.*)



PRACTICAL QUERIES.

Q. 38. I feel very often that I am not in communion with Christ, and yet I am not conscious of any unconfessed sin which is keeping me from His presence. How is this? M.

A. Many things defile and mar communion that cannot be classed as sins, seeing they are not the result of the will of the flesh. We find this in Leviticus, where the touch of a bone, or passing over a grave, defiled. Hearing light conversation, the presence of worldly company, having to hear about evil, in short, the thousand incidents connected with our passage through this sin-stained world, all tend to hinder our enjoyment of the Lord's presence. But the blessing is that the change is gone in an instant. We have only to go straight to Him, and tell Him just how we feel, and we shall be like the man in Ps. lxxiii., who was out of communion in the first part, not through direct

sin, but because he had slipped away from God's view of things, and got discontented; but the moment he told all to God he was set free, and his heart was full of praise, and communion, and joy restored. Go and do likewise.

Q. 39. I know some young believers, who used to dress as becomes women professing godliness, but now they dress in the fashions of the world. What would you say to such? Y. B.

A. In all such cases there are three things to be done before attacking directly the question of their dress. You must remember that the showy dress you observe, is only the outward sign of the inward disease from which these Christians are suffering; and if indeed you have a care for others, your desire will be, not to reform the dress, but the state of heart that leads to the dress. The *first* thing, therefore, is to win such souls back into the sunshine of Christ's presence in two ways; first, by encouraging confession to God as to what may have led them astray; and secondly, in bringing God's love to bear afresh on the poor cold heart. The *next* thing is to set an example in your own dress and ways of "a woman professing godliness," and the *third* step is to pray earnestly to God about them. By the time you have fully carried out these three means of reaching the soul, most likely there will be no necessity for what is, as a rule, most superficial, and often dangerous treatment, and that is attacking mere outward symptoms. Two sad results, too, follow such treatment: either the soul is driven still further into the world, or the fashionable dress is only replaced by spiritual pride, not by *Christ*.

TRUE GREATNESS.—He is truly great who hath great love. He is truly wise, that accounteth all earthly things as dung, that he may win Christ; and he is truly learned that doeth the will of God, and forsaketh his own will,

MONTHLY BIBLE READINGS.—X.

1 Peter iv. 12-19.



—THIS is the second occasion, I believe, that the word “beloved” is used in this epistle.

E.—Yes, and it is peculiarly appropriate in both cases. Peter would speak tenderly to them, when he thought of the fiery crown of martyrdom, which would soon be the portion of many whom he was addressing; and he bids them, as good soldiers of Christ Jesus, not to lose heart when they found themselves exposed to the full fury of the enemy’s fire. -

M.—I liked what we found out when reading chap. iii., about the two sorts of suffering, very much: about the difference between suffering for righteousness’ sake, and for Christ Himself; but I cannot say that I *know* much of either. I should like, *E.*, for you to tell me exactly what is meant by Christ’s sufferings.

E.—Much persecution, *M.*, is doubtless escaped by being brought up amongst God-fearing people, but not all, if we are true to Christ; and as you go more out in the world, you will find the necessity of standing more and more decidedly for Christ, and the Word of God, and will get persecuted in proportion. But your question is an important one. Can *you* tell us, *G.*, what the sufferings of Christ may include?

G.—Christ suffered from Satan, from man, and from God.

E.—Yes, and so do we; and in addition we suffer in internal conflicts, which Christ never did; but because we suffer from these four, it does not follow that in any one we are partakers of Christ's sufferings. About this we ought to be very clear, and if you will try and follow me I will be as simple, *M.*, as I can. Christ suffered from the assaults of the devil, and so do we, in proportion as we follow in His steps. Wicked men are Satan's tools, and therefore both Christ and His true disciples suffer from them. But when Christ suffered from the hand of God *it was not as our example*, but as our substitute. We can *never* share Christ's sufferings in this respect. He suffered the wrath of God that we never might.

M.—But I thought you said that Christians *do* suffer from the hand of God.

E.—That is quite true; but just as I have said that we can never suffer at God's hands as Christ did, so is it true that He never suffered from God as we do. Our suffering is described in Heb. xii., and is of the nature of fatherly correction, and chastisement for our sins and follies.

G.—It would, then, be a serious error for any Christian, suffering from the hand of God, to believe they were sharing Christ's sufferings?

E.—Indeed it would, and would also largely tend to hinder any good, that might arise from the needed discipline. Many Christians, when being corrected by God for their faults, self-complacently

imagine they are sharing Christ's sufferings, through following His example. I think we all need to guard against this, for it is a very common and a very serious mistake. To be a real sharer in our Lord's sufferings is a very blessed thing, but these must come from man, or Satan, never from the hand of God.

M.—I think I see it more clearly than I did.

E.—Observe, in verse 13, how the cross and crown go together, the sufferings and the glory; as they do also in chapter v., verse 1.

G.—Yes, I think we noticed, in one of our earlier readings, that they were thrice repeated in this epistle.

E.—Would that we shared more of the one, and looked more earnestly forward to the other! How little we think of that wondrous and glorious "eternal weight of glory" that we shall shortly enter! In verse 14 we get a beautiful thought. You remember in the end of Matt. xi., that Christ shows us how *we* can obtain rest. Here the same word is used to show where the Spirit of God and of His glory can "*take its rest*" (*lit.*); the word is the same in both cases. *We* get rest in coming to Christ, and the Spirit of God can take *His* rest in us, in satisfaction, when we are suffering for Him. The word is often rendered refreshed (1 Cor. xvi. 18; 2 Cor. vii. 13; Phil. 20), which adds still more to the beauty of the thought.

M.—The other sufferings, that are not Christ's, are in verse 15.

G.—Yes, and the last, literally translate^d, is a

“bishop over others,” a place many of us are very proud of, though *it does* keep getting us into trouble.

M.—Like the “child on the judgment seat,” who looked after all the gardens but his own.

E.—Just so ; there are many of us that need to be warned against this class of suffering. In verse 16 we get the word “Christian,” which is only used thrice in the New Testament. It is well to remember that we *are* Christians, followers of Christ, and not merely, as the word became corrupted soon after among the Greeks—Chrestians, or useful people.

G.—What does verse 17 mean ?

E.—If we refer to Ezek. xliii. 12, we find that the same law holds good, whether as regards the earthly, or the spiritual house, “*It is holy.*” If, then, evil creeps in (and surely we get the grossest corruptions bearing the name of Christ in Christendom), judgment will fall here, first on professors, not, however, ceasing until the whole earth is purged to its utmost limits. In Psalm xciii. 5 we find the same thought.

G.—Do we not get this order, too, in Revelation—Christ reviewing and judging the churches first, before He goes on to judge the world at large ?

E.—Certainly. Evil must be most obnoxious to God, when found in that which outwardly bears His name.

Before closing this reading, I would like just to call our attention to the reading in the Revised Version in verse 16 : “Let him glorify God *in this*

name," that is, the name of a Christian, a change which makes the meaning much more simple and clear.

PRACTICAL PAPERS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS.

X.—ON A START IN LIFE. FOR YOUNG WOMEN.

A START in life must come sooner or later to young women as well as to young men. Like the latter, they must say farewell to their quiet girlhood in entering upon some occupation—it may be as servant, it may be as seamstress, or as a clerk in some of the higher branches of women's work, in the postal, telegraph, and other services ; or it may be as a governess, or music-mistress. In entering on any of these new positions, a great and important step is taken, entirely analogous to that on which we wrote a few words last month. To such who have thus, in some way or other, to leave their homes to earn their daily bread, what we said then is perfectly applicable.

SHOW YOUR COLOURS.

A young girl, going out from under her mother's care to service, or becoming an apprentice, or a clerk, is surrounded with temptations. She will, in most cases, find that those around her are

worldly, giddy, and have a general dislike to "religion." If she would live to God's glory, she *must begin by showing her colours*, and the sooner she lets it be plainly known amongst her fellow-servants, or fellow-workers, that she belongs to Christ, and means to stand up for Him, the sooner she will be understood. It is in vain to try and go on with the world, and to follow Christ as well. Once she has taken her stand, the world—represented by her godless companions—is against her, and she must understand this. Of course, in her ways and manners she must be additionally obliging and kind, doing others a good turn whenever it lies in her power. But she must be prepared for every little inconsistency to be shown up in the most glaring light. The very fact of her being in such company will help to keep her straight, for if she tries to copy any worldly ways, her companions will be the first to point out the inconsistency with some such kind remark as, "She a Christian, indeed!" These taunts are felt, because in a measure they are deserved, and the young Christian sees that the world is sharp enough to discover when she does not adorn her profession.

BY PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY.

It is evident, therefore, that both for her own sake and for her Master's, the more quiet and consistent her walk, the happier her life. Respecting her work, it must be well and thoroughly done. No worldly master or mistress can understand or respect a Christianity, which consists in reading religious books, instead of doing one's work, or in

always wishing to go out to some meeting, instead of keeping the house straight. Our work must be done cheerfully, and be "Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over." A Christianity that makes one help a slower worker, when one has done one's own task, that does not draw the line at the exact amount of work paid for, that seeks to help and assist generally, that takes an interest in what is being done, is readily understood and appreciated. Oh! seek, then, my dear fellow-believers, thus to adorn the gospel of God your Saviour *in all things*. Not only in being in your accustomed seat on the Sunday, but in little acts of kindness all through the week, done *for Christ's sake*—ever seeking opportunities of doing good. If you have helped some poor girl to get through her heavy task, and taken half the load on your own shoulders, you have won the gratitude of your sister, and may have opened a door in her heart to some loving words about the One who took *your* burden on His shoulders. In your dress, too, surely there is great scope for adorning the gospel of Christ, in a way those of your own sex especially, are ready to observe. I do not mean in dressing like a nun, or sister of mercy, but like a Christian, having a desire to please Christ even in your outward appearance.

A GOOD EXAMPLE ENCOURAGES OTHERS.

One reward, of standing up for Christ, is that it frequently is the means of encouraging some more timid sister to show *her* colours, and you will often discover some hidden member of Christ in this

manner. It is a wonderful help, when there are two in a business or situation, that love the Lord. It doubles their strength and halves their trials. If, therefore, you find you are really alone, resolve that by God's grace you will not remain alone, and earnestly seek to win some soul for Him from amongst your companions.

MARRIAGE.

Besides all these ways, however, in which you make a start in life, there is another and a more important way still, and that is by marriage. To young men marriage seldom comes as a beginning in life, for, generally, they have been out in the world some years before. But to girls, and especially to those who are not compelled to labour for a livelihood, marriage is often the portal through which they are introduced, from the quiet seclusion of home, into the vast world without. Papers in this magazine have, from time to time, borne witness as to the vast importance, for good or evil, of this momentous step. It has been shown by instances drawn from real life, and by the direct Word of God, how this union, to be blest, must be *in* the Lord (that is, both husband and wife children of God), and *of* the Lord (that is, both naturally and spiritually suited to each other, and His guidance sought in the matter). We do not now allude further to this, save again to point out that more young Christians are wrecked, and the fair promise of their young lives blighted, by hasty and ill-assorted marriages, than by anything else. It is probable that most, who read these

lines, are yet unmarried; to such we would earnestly say, above all things *honour God* in this step. Let no inclination, no apparent worldly advantage, lead you to overlook the fact that as surely as you are God's child, and as surely as He is your Father, so surely as you sow you shall reap; and if you, with your eyes open, disobey Him to please yourself, you must inevitably suffer deeply for it, whereas if you seek in this truly to glorify Him, He will uphold you.

HOW TO ACT IN MARRIED LIFE.

We will suppose, however, that you have taken the step, and that no objection is to be made to your marriage, there still remains the question, "How are you to act in your new relationship?" In the first place, never let the new scenes and occupations interfere with the old duties—daily private reading, and prayer. This is the sheet-anchor of your soul, and if you have already experienced the blessing of it in your girlhood, it is worse than folly to neglect it now. Next, as in business, so here—it is the first step which is all-important. Let it be plainly understood at the outset by your new connections and friends that you are a believer, by your servants that they have to do with a Christian mistress. Lastly, make your start in life with a definite object before you for attainment, and that is, to glorify God in the new sphere in which He has placed you, as a wife—a mistress—a friend—and a mother. Let nothing obscure this object, but let it quietly underlie all your actions, and you will be blessed

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in all your relations. Not that such a steady course is easy. You will have to strive through many cross-currents, especially when your interests, or those of your children, seem to point one way, and God's glory another. But if it is the constant habit of your life to know and feel that this is your object, you will be greatly helped at such times, and—by God's grace—ever gain the victory.



THE INFANT CLASS IN THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL.



JUST a few loving words of sympathy, (and I should be deeply thankful if they prove words of cheer and help) to any beloved fellow-workers who may be engaged (as it was, for some time, my privilege to be) as teachers of very little children on Lord's Day afternoons.

"I should think almost anyone could get on with the infant class," a young friend (who, I need hardly add, was quite new to the work), remarked one day to an elder teacher, who answered her with a smile, "Have you ever tried it?"

"No; I cannot say that I have, but it must be easy work; the children are so young, and, besides that, they know so little."

So young, and knowing so little—quite true—yet I think all, who have any practical knowledge

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of infant class work, will agree that two of the real difficulties of the teacher were, in the remark I have quoted, fairly, though unintentionally, stated.

Their ages vary, perhaps, from three to seven years; they are restless little beings, to whom even the order and attention so much to be desired are trying, needing much wisdom and loving patience on the part of the teacher to prevent the lesson from becoming irksome in the extreme. Of course, where a class-room can be given up to the infants, it is a great help to the teacher to change the position. A hymn sung, or a verse of Scripture repeated *standing*, often acts as an escape valve for restlessness, and is helpful in regaining order.

Still, many infant classes have to be taught in a corner of the large room. In such circumstances, perhaps, the question, "How can I keep my class in order?" is most often and anxiously asked by the teacher.

A Highland shepherd was asked one day how it was that his flock, no matter what the season, always seemed so large and thriving? His answer, given with a knowing shake of the head and twinkle of the eye, was, "Dinna ye ken? Dinna ye ken I take gude care of the wee lammies?"

And this, beloved fellow-teacher, is our work for Him, who said, "Feed my lambs" (John xxi. 15), for our own precious Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Surely the true secret of keeping order in our classes is going there with a vivid sense of the Master's presence with us. Our own hearts will glow with a deeper, holier, love to the little

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ones, as the remembrance of His love is real and bright in our own souls.

He knows how weary we get sometimes. How much we have each hour to tell the Lord in connection with our classes; how many a story of joy and sorrow, failure and success, has been poured into His listening ear; how often our own faith has been strengthened by the simple trust of a little child!

Be bright with the little ones. They are learning, not only the texts and Bible stories from your lips, but lessons that will never be forgotten from your voice and manner.

"My teacher always looks so cross," said a very little child, of one whose rule was certainly not one of love. "I don't want to go to heaven if he's going."

Tell Bible stories in very simple words; giving as many minute details as possible—they have a strange charm for the little ones. After a Scripture lesson has been given a few times, it sometimes works well to get the class to tell it to you, asking leading questions, or filling in blanks, as required.

It is by no means necessary to limit our Bible lessons to the stories of Moses, or Joseph, or the parable of the Prodigal Son. The whole Word of God is in our hands, and the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to guide into all truth, is as able to make even a very little child "wise unto salvation," as one of older years.

"Are coloured prints or pictures of Bible scenes any help to the Infant Class teacher?" is a ques-

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tion often asked. It is a well-known principle in day-school teaching that nothing should be taught through the ear alone, which can also be taught through the eye, and the rule holds good in *our* work. Pictures of Old Testament scenes often help to secure the attention of the children. Pictures of animals, too, may be used with advantage; for instance, a picture of a lion, and a little talk about the homes and habits of the animal, will give new and vivid interest to the story of Daniel.

Encourage your class to commit verses of Scripture to memory. The seed thus early sown has a life germ in it.

Much gospel truth may also be taught through wisely chosen hymns, and a love of really good poetry, which may prove a source of pure healthful pleasure through life, be developed at the same time.

But the question of deeper interest than any to the faithful teacher is, Are these little ones capable of being subjects of the saving grace of God? or are we just to go on teaching them, and expect the seed sown to bear fruit some day?

Is there any reason why a child of five or six years old should not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? Scripture, as far as I know, gives none, and all who have had much to do with very young children can recall some, at least, about whom there could be no doubt as to their being lambs of the Good Shepherd's flock. Of course, to expect anything more than the experience and faith of a

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

OCT.

1	Su	Ex. xxxiii.	Jesus Christ who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.
			(Hand of the Lord.)
2	M	„ xxxiv.	That all the people on the earth might know the HAND of the Lord, that it is mighty.
3	T	1 Tim. v.	The king's heart is in the HAND of the Lord as the rivers of water, He turneth it whithersoever He will.
4	W	2 Tim. i.	Is the Lord's HAND waxed short? Thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not.
5	Th	„ ii.	Behold the Lord's HAND is not shortened that it cannot save, neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear.
6	F	„ iii.	And the HAND of the Lord shall be known towards His servants.
7	Sa	„ iv.	And the HAND of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.
8	Su	Tit. i.	I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending.
			(Ear.)
9	M	„ ii.	I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice, and He gave EAR unto me.
10	T	„ iii.	He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine EAR to hear as the learned (learner).
11	W	Phil. i.	Let your EAR receive the word of His mouth.
12	Th	Heb. i.	Because He has inclined His EAR unto me, therefore will I call unto Him as long as I live.
13	F	Ex. xxxv.	The EAR that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.
14	Sa	„ xxxvi.	He that turneth away his EAR even his prayer shall be abomination.
15	Su	„ xxxvii.	I am the first and the last, I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore.

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

OCT.

			(Lips.)
16	M	Ex. xxxviii	My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful LIPS.
17	T	Heb. ii.	Lying LIPS are an abomination unto the Lord, but they that deal truly are His delight.
18	W	" iii.	In all labour there is profit, but the talk of the LIPS tendeth only to penury.
19	Th	" iv.	There is gold and a multitude of rubies, but the LIPS of knowledge are a precious jewel.
20	F	" v.	The LIPS of the righteous feed many, but fools die for want of wisdom.
21	Sa	" vi.	Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth. Keep the door of my LIPS.
22	Su	" vii.	The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David . . . a Lamb as it had been slain.
			(Feet.)
23	M	" viii.	Ponder the path of thy FEET, and let all thy ways be established.
24	Tu	" ix.	How beautiful upon the mountains are the FEET of him that bringeth good tidings that publisheth peace.
25	W	" x.	For Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my FEET from falling.
26	Th	" xi.	He maketh my FEET like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places.
27	F	Ex. xxxix.	Thy word is a lamp unto my FEET and a light unto my path.
28	Sa	" xl.	O bless our God. . . which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our FEET to be moved.
29	Su	Lev. i.	His Son whom He hath appointed heir of all things by whom also He made the worlds.
			(Heart.)
30	M	" ii.	Keep thy HEART with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.
31	T	Heb. xii.	Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in HEART.

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very little child in these cases of early conversion, would be unreal.

A touching story was told to the writer, not long ago, of a little girl, only four years of age, who became a Sunday scholar. Mabel's school-life was a very brief one, only four Sunday afternoons. One, only one text, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10), was committed to memory, when severe illness set in beyond the skill of the doctor to relieve. Only three days and nights of suffering, during which loving parents watched, with almost breaking hearts, by the bed of their only child. In every conscious interval, Mabel repeated her "text," adding her own simple comments in such words as, "The Son of man, that's Jesus, you know, mamma, came to seek and to save the lost, that's me, your own little Mabel."

And so the little one went to be with Him whose kingdom is of such.

We know, too, of cases in which the little ones, early taught to lisp the Saviour's name, have become real missionaries to their homes, and the simple message of the grace of God, heard from the lips of their own children, has proved the means of leading parents to Christ.

After all our hearts know only too well of discouragement and weariness, what a privilege it is, even in the lowest class in the school, to be permitted to serve Him, our blessed Master! How one finds oneself wondering at the grace, that in spite of all our mistakes and failures, has not sent us back from following Him!

Let us, then, go on patiently, speaking of Him whom "having not seen we love;" not forgetting, too, to tell the little ones of how Jesus is coming back again shortly, to gather His redeemed ones to the bright home above. He can give the needed grace and gentleness, even when, as is often the case on a hot summer afternoon, we feel weary, and the children are restless and trying. It is but a little while, and He that shall come, will come; then our opportunities of serving Him on earth will have passed away for ever, and we shall see Him, whose words now, through grace, have found an echo in our souls, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. xxii. 12).

PATHS OF UPRIGHTNESS.—I.



HAVE it very much on my heart, dear young believers, to say a few words to you on being upright and honest in all your ways, that you may have a good report from them that are without.

It is very sorrowful how the testimony of many a child of God is marred by a lack of practical righteousness, and this, often not so

much from deliberate wrong-doing, as from thoughtlessness in not sufficiently realising the importance of every little action, now that their name is linked with Christ's.

It is well to bear in mind that we are walking before a world, which, however indulgent and blind to its own shortcomings, has very sharp eyes to see anything wrong in those who belong to Christ, and can be very severe on them too. Knowing this should serve as a wholesome check on us, should it not? Like our Lord Himself, when down here, we ought to increase in favour, both with God and man, and this cannot be, while our ways are stamped with any want of uprightness, which the world, while indulging in, condemns.

Our God, who knows all the wiles of the devil, our great adversary, has provided us with an armour of light, by which we can resist every attack, and come off victors to His glory. I think "the breastplate of righteousness" is a very important piece of that armour; and no doubt, if it is lacking, the good soldier is not fully equipped for his warfare, and the enemy will quickly get the advantage. Satan knows, perhaps better than we do, the value of this breastplate as a defensive weapon, and therefore wilily tempts the Christian to do something, by which he will forfeit his fair name for righteousness.

For example, it may be that you are placed in a position of trust, having a sum of money belonging to others in your keeping; the devil whispers

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that it is but of little importance what you do with the money, so long as you have the whole sum at hand when called for. A time of need comes, and with his suggestion in your ear, you appropriate to your own use what was never yours—your conscience hushed with the thought that you do but borrow what you can shortly repay. Now this is a most solemn tampering with sin, and what you yourself would be quick to condemn in the case of another as downright theft. Whether you could at a future time replace the money or not does not alter the principle. Many a Christian has, in this way, been hopelessly entangled in Satan's net, and found himself involved beyond his powers of extrication; well indeed for him if God, in mercy, shows him the danger of his course, ere the name of Christ is blasphemed by his dishonesty, and he is branded as a thief before a world, which knows nothing of grace or forgiveness for the repentant sinner.

(To be continued.)

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TRUTH NOT TALK.—We should rather search after profit in the Scriptures, than after subtle arguments.

GIVING AND TAKING.—I have often heard, that it is safer to hear and to take counsel, than to give it.

THE SHADOW OF A GREAT ROCK.

WE started off the other morning for a walk up the steep sides of the mountain. The morning was cool, but before we reached the top it became intolerably hot. We toiled slowly up the long grassy slopes with sun beating down upon us, and not a breath of air stirring to fan our burning cheeks. At last we left the grass, and reached the rock and heather; but, alas! here, if possible, the heat was greater than ever. The heather was full of dust. Where it came from on that mountain side, far away from any dusty road, it is impossible to say, but we were almost blinded by it. However, we went stumbling on, for we could not see a bit of shade anywhere. The nearest trees were far down in the valley below, and to sit on the scorching stones, or in the dusty heather, was quite out of the question. So we consoled ourselves by anticipating the delightful breezes at the top. When, however, we reached the first ridge, which appeared to be the summit from the bottom, and saw another equally long, but much steeper, in front of us, our courage gave way. We did not like to go back, but we felt we could never climb the mountain in the intolerable, suffocating heat. In the midst of our perplexity, one of the party, who had strayed on a little in front, set up a shout which brought us all to him. He was standing in

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the shade cast by a wall of rock that rose some twenty feet perpendicularly, having a smooth bit of very green grass at its base. I shall never forget our feelings as we all stepped out of the glare into the shade. It was most surprising to find what a difference there was in the very air ; instead of being hot and suffocating, to us at least it was cool and delicious. Great was the relief that we experienced from the shadow of that solitary rock. We stretched ourselves on the grass, and did not move until our exhaustion from the fierce heat had passed off. We then sat up, and for the first time enjoyed the lovely landscape, and deep blue lakes that lay apparently at our feet. Where we were it was so delicious and cool that it seemed impossible to believe that one step into the sun could make all the difference. On moving out of the shade for a moment, however, we soon found that the heat was just as intolerable as ever, the coolness was all owing to the rock. After resting for some time, those who were sufficiently recruited went out into the sun and pushed on to the top, while the ladies and younger ones of the party remained safely in the shade until our return ; when, in the cooler afternoon, we all descended the mountain together.

I have often thought of that shady rock since, in connection with our Lord, who is to His people as rivers of water in a dry place, as "*the shadow of a great rock in a weary land*" (Is. xxii. 2). I often think that we do not sufficiently enjoy the Lord as a shadow from the heat. Of course, to enjoy shade

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one must have toiled in the sunshine. Perhaps few of us are really bearing the burden and heat of the day enough, to value the refreshment that the shadow of our great Rock gives. This is one great advantage that a true labourer enjoys, he can appreciate Christ as no idler ever can. He needs Him; without Him, indeed, no pilgrim could ever reach his goal, no toiler ever fulfil his task. When ready to drop with the noontide heat, when faint and overcome with a struggle with the hard cold world that knows Him not, He leads us into the shade and says, "Fear not, my grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in thy weakness." None know the stores of grace that are in Christ, but those who really need them.

Perhaps some of us, on the other hand, are *too* busy, and think that a rest in the shade must be lost time. There can be no greater error; and I am quite sure that much of the fruitless work, and profitless labour that abounds, is because the servant has been overworked, and has given out faster than he has taken in, and so has run dry. Remember the words of our Lord in Mark vi. 31, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest awhile." I shall never forget the recipe once given by an aged servant of God for never becoming "dry." "Always keep your heart wider open than your mouth," and it seems to me that a rest in the shade is *sure* to fill the heart with joy and praise when the Rock that gives the shade is Christ.

OUR NOTE-BOOK.

"Dot" writes as follows, "I have taught boys, as well as girls, for more than twelve years, and I have often been discouraged, and have had to stop in the midst of teaching, and cover my eyes to hide the tears; but I have at the same time, sent up an earnest prayer for patience, and I have always come off more than conqueror." She also encloses the following extract from her Sunday-school diary—a book which, by the way, we would recommend each of our Sunday-school friends to keep, as a record of their failures, and of God's mercies.

"On Tuesday, 3rd, we met the mothers of our girls, twenty-five in number. The room was very tastefully adorned with "nothing but leaves." I had asked the dear children in the autumn to collect a variety of dead leaves, and sew them very neatly on sheets of note paper. It was such a novel idea, that the children set about it most heartily, and we had several lessons from our withered leaves. I pinned them round the room for our mothers to see, and very amusing it was during tea, to hear the mothers say, "I'll show you which is my Susie's," and again, "I say, Mrs. —, your Ada's are just beautiful," "Yes," says another, "but look at Florry's, her star of leaves beats 'em all." After tea, we had singing, and prayer, and the Word. Mrs. F—— spoke to them from these words, "We all do fade as a leaf." Several of the mothers wept, as she pleaded with them to come to Jesus; one dear woman, in a choking voice, said she wished she had become a Christian when she was a happy girl, in dear Mrs. F——'s class, many years ago. Two of our mothers spent a few minutes in prayer; and one spoke so earnestly to them, saying her boy will ever thank God for being in the class; dear Mrs. F—— was the means of his conversion. I may add this "boy" is now the superintendent of a large Sunday-school in his native town."

The hint conveyed by the above, may not be lost on some

of our readers, who are somewhat at a loss to give an interest (without bringing in worldliness) to their evening gatherings.

Yet another suggestion. Mr. Haslam in his new book, "Yet not I," says that he could get no order in his unruly school in Avon Street, Bath, until he tried the plan of transposing all the teachers, and making all the men teach the girls, and all the ladies teach the boys, when he had no further difficulty. We think the suggestion valuable, though it may not always be accompanied with the same success. Certainly in many schools besides his, this plan has answered when all others have failed.

Two answers were given to "S. B." on p. 167 in "Practical Queries, No. 31, 32, respecting which T. P. writes as follows:—

May I trouble you to give a little further explanation on Q. 32. Your answer to Q. 31 seems clear, but I cannot quite understand how a Christian could insure his life; it seems to me to be just the same as the other case. A man joins a club with the object of providing for his family in the case of sickness or death. In the other, a man joins an Insurance Society, to provide for his family in case of death. In either case they have a claim upon the society for a certain amount, whether they have paid that amount into the society or not. Is not this joining a worldly institution, on purpose to get certain advantages from it?

In reply we may say that we believe Q. 31 solely referred to social, or political clubs, not to provident clubs, common among the working classes. Even these, however, though in one sense insurance societies, have a social element about them, which we think must be very prejudicial to the Christian's spiritual life. The objection against Insurance Companies rests on different grounds, which we discussed before. It is important for the Christian, who desires to walk separately from the world, to distinguish between a mere investment, and "an unequal yoke."

PRACTICAL CONVERSATIONS.—I. (Continued.)

N.B.—We do not hold ourselves responsible for any opinions expressed in these "Conversations," but those under the initial "S."

SUBJECT:—(1) Can a Christian play classical music, or sing an innocent song? Would not Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16; and 1 Cor. xiv. 15, warrant us in declining to do such things? If a Christian is requested by his parents to play or sing, how far would Eph. vi. 1, and Col. iii. 20 apply?—*Inquirer.*

(2) How far can we carry the study of music to the glory of God? Can a Christian girl conscientiously spend time in acquiring this art, in order to make a livelihood, by instructing others? What about drawing?—*Perplexed, New York.*

9. A.K.—I have been much exercised many years ago about music, and I am fully satisfied that it is not the mind of God to use instrumental music, either privately or publicly; if we practise, or use it in private, it will soon come to the front: be sure your sin will find you out. I mean if we use it for our own enjoyment, we shall find ourselves among those who think it no harm to use it at a gospel meeting. The first of the inventors of music are found among the offspring of Cain (Gen. iv. 21), and, from what I can gather from the Word of God, He never was the Author of instrumental music. David used it, and many new kinds, no doubt, he invented. (See Amos vi. 5, and 1 Chron. xxiii. 5). My mind is, he had no more right to do this than he had to have so many wives. It is clear from many Old Testament Scriptures that it was used in the Jewish worship; God, in His grace and mercy, permits some things He never was the author of. I cannot see the least ground for believing it was ever used in this dispensation by the apostles or the early Churches. We see from Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16, it is the heart that is pleasing to God; see also Heb. xiii. 15.

10. * * .—The subject of music is one about which I feel much perplexed. It seems to me that when a Christian has talent, and is wishful to study in order to teach, and so

obtain remunerative employment, the way is open and clear, if done in the spirit of Col. iii. 17. I shall be very glad of help, as regards those who enjoy it, and who practise for pleasure; does it not give enjoyment to our friends, and form innocent recreation for ourselves? It seems to me, that the reason so many are anxious to know what God's Word teaches about it, is that such numbers of concerts are got up now in connection with various charitable institutions. Will the Editor in his answer mention Bach's Passion music? Although I should enjoy hearing it, I feel I cannot, as the subject seems to me too sacred to sing; but numbers say that it helps them to realise the solemnity of the great sacrifice.

11. Y.B.—It seems quite clear to me that singing is intended to be part of divine worship; and the question arises—Should the Christian seek to make that singing as good as possible? Is it not dishonouring to God for Christians, with musical talent, and who sing sweetly at home, to be indifferent as to the character of their singing in the assembly? Ought not Christians to *learn* to sing at home, in order to acquire skill, and not to neglect what God has given to be used for His glory? How did the Lord and His disciples sing that psalm in Mark xiv. 26? With *all* that was within them. Sing with melody in your heart, and with music in your voice. We have more reason to sing than an angel unfallen, and shall we not sing *thus*?

12. E.B.—I can see no difference in a Christian girl spending her time in learning drawing, or music, in order to gain her living, than in spending her time in sweeping a room, or dusting it; I think both need the Lord's help and guidance. I have often found it necessary, in teaching, to lift up my heart to the Lord to give me patience, and ask Him to bless the pupil and the teacher; and so, when I used to learn, I have often asked the Lord to help me in a difficult part, and He has. I think the motive must be the test; how could I ask the Lord's blessing on anything, even a hymn, or a Bible class, if it were that those around

might say, "How good you are!" or, "You are clever!" But if I can sit down to play on the piano, or draw, as a child might take a run with her hoop, or ball for her health, I can see no harm. I think a true test would be to ask ourselves, "Should I be ashamed for my Saviour to find me here, or doing this, if He came now?"

13. G.—In reference to the questions on music and drawing, may we not bear this in mind—That a talent for these arts is a gift from God? Can it then be wrong for one of His children to make use of such a gift, in the maintenance of him or herself, or, perhaps, an aged parent? Surely such talents may be cultivated, and sanctified to the Master's use, and the time spent in so doing cannot be termed wasted. It is true they are often laid at the feet of the "god of this world," but not necessarily so.

14. C.H.S.—The subject of music has been in my thoughts lately: so as you request those who are exercised about it, to send in their views as to it, I do so; though, since I have no time for practising myself, and, being a teacher, must spend time in teaching it, perhaps I am hardly a fair judge. I think, as to spending time in acquiring the art, in order to make a livelihood by it (as asks your second correspondent of the two you quote), that the Lord cannot but honour it, as it seems to me that the evil only lies in the *time* occupied in pursuing it, and that to do so without any special aim, only to gratify one's self, or perhaps one's friends, cannot be honouring to the Lord, or to His glory. As to singing, *if to please Christ, as a well-known Christian writer said and did*, surely it cannot be wrong; but great grace must be needed to sing as she did, *only* of Christ, under whatever circumstances, amongst worldly people, or others. She fully carried out her own words—

"Take my voice, and let it sing
Ever, only, to my King."

I think if we ask ourselves, as has so often been said, "Can I honour Christ, and ask His blessing in what I undertake?" He will make it clear to us. This is very easy to write, but, oh! how difficult all of us find to put it into practice, and to have faith enough to trust Him as to consequences.

15. B.—He who belongs to Christ, is bought with a price, and is not his own (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20). Music is pleasing to the *old* nature, not to the new. It acts on the senses, and one has a nice, happy feeling, but it does not last. Christ alone can give real and lasting joy. If the world were really happy, it would not want music; the Christian is really happy, and so does not want it to add to his happiness. “Singing and making *melody in your hearts to the Lord*” (Eph. v. 19) is a very different thing from engaging in, or listening to, beautiful music and singing. Each one must act as before the Lord, we cannot lay down rules for one another; and it may *seem* very narrow minded, &c., to speak against music, it seems like taking away everything, good or bad, and leaving nothing but Christ; and to those who value *His work*, but do not know *Himself*, this is really dreadful; but to those, who do know Him, who have been led to know Him, in all His personal worth, and loveliness, and find Him day by day more precious, there is no wish, and no room for anything else. Worship, such as God can accept, is from the *heart*, and no musical instrument is equal to it in His sight. “Our joy is *in the Lord*;” nothing pleasant or bright here, can add to that joy, nor can difficulties or trials take it away. We know, alas! that we do often let these things come in between, but really the truth remains the same, our joy is only in *Him*.

“My joy, my life, my crown!
 My heart was meaning all the day,
 Something it fain would say;
 But still it runneth mattering up and down
 With only this; my joy, my life, my crown!”

These words I have seen somewhere, and think of many of the Lord's dear people, who do not know Him thus, and are often in doubt as to whether this is right? or, is there any harm in that? If they were near to Him, they would know His mind, and rejoice in being allowed to *give up* anything for Him, and He values, too, any little sacrifice, and knows what it costs us. May there be more giving up for Him, and more denying of self, for *He is worthy*.

MONTHLY BIBLE READINGS.—XI.

1 Peter v. 1-5.



—We have now reached the last chapter of our epistle, which we may take in three divisions; the first four verses being addressed to elders, the next seven to Christians generally, while the last three form the postscript. It is beautiful to see the apostle in the first verse exhorting others to the same sphere of labour in which he had been placed by Christ. “Feed *my* sheep,” says the Great Shepherd, “Feed the flock of *God*,” says the under shepherd.

G.—I am told that the word “feed” gives us a very imperfect idea of what is meant in the original, which comprehends the whole of the tending and care in winter and summer, in fine weather and in wet, by day and by night, that the sheep get from the shepherd.

E.—Yes, and this is the very thing that shepherds in the present day need to feel more. Their work is not over with the preaching or the lecture. Expounding the Word of God is but a small part, though often the pleasantest, of a true shepherd’s work. A far more thankless work is seeking to point out the still cherished sin, the cooling affection, the crooked ways, or the careless walk. Another point of the utmost importance for shepherds to remember is, that the sheep belong to Christ, not to themselves; that the flock is God’s, not theirs. Too often is this forgotten, and the phrase “*My*

flock " is substituted for " God's." Observe, too, how the apostle foresaw the fatal effects of a love of filthy lucre in the Church.

M.—Do not the shepherds in the east still walk before their flocks?

E.—Yes; why do you ask?

M.—Because verse three seems to allude to this.

E.—In what way?

M.—Does it not mean, " Do not drive the sheep, but lead them by your example?"

E.—Yes, it does, *M.*, and I think your paraphrase makes the meaning of the verse very clear. There is a rule that is according to God, and an overrule that is not according to Him. The essence of the one appears to be that it is enforced with the weight of example rather than precept. The shepherd, as it were, imitating in his little measure the great Master, goes before, even as Paul, who could say, " Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ." Not that any can say this as Paul did, but still it is the bounden duty of pastors to be living exemplars of what they teach. The other way is by driving, by precepts, leading Christ's sheep into a legality and a bondage harder to bear than even that of the law. All such should remember that the day of reckoning is fast approaching, when the Chief Shepherd will inquire from each, how *His* flock has been cared for during *His* absence. Do you know, *M.*, where Christ is elsewhere compared to a shepherd?

M.—Yes, *E.*, I do. There are three sorts of

shepherds, and I have them arranged in my notebook like this, which I will copy out for the benefit of *R*.

Our faith rests on
Our love confides in
Our hope looks for

JESUS

the Great Shepherd (Heb. xiii. 20)
the Good Shepherd (John x. 14).
the Chief Shepherd (1 Pet. v. 4).

E.—Very good, *M*., and you might add that Jesus is the Good Shepherd in death, the Great Shepherd in resurrection, and the Chief Shepherd in glory.

G.—And also that we get the first in Psalm xxiii., laying down His life for the sheep; which is *past*; we get the second, Christ leading His sheep now, in Psalm xxiii., which is *present*; while we get the glory in Psalm xxiv., which is *future*.

G.—Thanks; I will add both to my note. Can you tell me, *E*., if there is not some special allusion to the crowns then used, in verse four?

E.—Certainly. The crowns in Greece were nearly always wreaths of laurel or bay leaves, which faded in a day, and it is in contrast with these poor rewards, that the "amarynth" crown of glory is described. The Greek word is "amar-ynth," a name given, as you know, to the flower that never fades. This carries us back to the beginning of our epistle. You will see, then, that in the fourth verse of the *first* chapter, all saints are promised an inheritance that will not fade away, while here, in the fourth verse of the *last* chapter, those who are faithful servants of Christ are promised an unfading crown.

M.—This is all very interesting for shepherds; but I want to get on to the next verse, "*Likewise*

ye younger." Don't you think, *E.*, that verse six is much easier than verse five? I mean one does not mind submitting one's self to God nearly as much as to one's fellow creature, though he be an elder.

E.—I cannot quite agree with you, there, *M.* I think you will often find the blindest submission to the priest, while all the time there is great insubjection to God. But the fact is, that both verses are really hard to carry out truly, for naturally we cannot bear any restraint, but love to say, "Who is lord over us?"

However, I really think we must break off now, leaving the rest of our chapter for our next reading, which I believe will be our last for the present, for which I am sure *R.* will be sorry; for, though he has not spoken much, he has certainly been a most attentive listener.

PRACTICAL PAPERS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS.

XI.—BACKSLIDING.



WE have three great enemies ever seeking to overcome us: the world, the flesh, and the devil; and in proportion as we give place to any of these, do we depart from God. These three we find in Peter's case in Luke xxii. In verses 45 and 50 he is led astray by the *flesh* in sleeping when he should have watched, in striking

when he should not have resisted. In verses 54 and 55 he is led astray by the fear of the *world* : first, in straying far from Christ's side ; secondly, in fellowship with His enemies. And, lastly, in verses 57, 58 and 60, he is thrice led astray by the *devil* : to deny Christ, to swear, and to deny Him again.

One might, indeed, say such a course is foreshadowed in the first Psalm. The *counsel of the ungodly*, the dictates of fleshy reason, led to the smiting with the sword ; *standing in the way of sinners* is illustrated by standing and warming himself ; while *sitting in the seat of the scornful* is found in verse 55.

THE PATH OF THE BACKSLIDER.

And now, dear reader, what about yourself ? Listen to the following words :—

There is no heart, in the wide world, so unhappy as his, who has been drawn aside from the holiness and joy of obedience, to paths of self-seeking and of sin.

“ What peaceful hours I once enjoy'd !
How sweet their memory still !
But they have left an aching void
The world can never fill.”

And such is the language, in poetry or in prose, of the soul, whose “ earliest love ” has been left ; who has, alas ! in some way or other, forsaken the Lord, for the enjoyment of the favours of the world.

“ My people have committed two evils ; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water ” (Jer. ii. 13). Such was God's

lamentation of old. How rightly He styled Himself "THE FOUNTAIN OF LIVING WATERS"—the source and spring of blessing; and how solemnly descriptive is the expression, "*broken cisterns, that can hold no water*," of the experience acquired by departing from Him.

He knows where the blessing is found. We, alas! often through seas of sorrow, have to learn that the cisterns to which we have recourse are, in truth, *broken*, and that they hold *no water*, and that there remains, as the only result of our declension, "an aching void," a distracted and discontented heart; a state of soul, indeed, which had no parallel in the most wretched hours of our unconverted days.

Ah! beneath many a smiling face, behind many a ringing laugh, underlying much forced activity and unnatural effort, there is to be found a heart of misery, that seeks by these means to conceal the fact of its departure from God.

And yet how vain that effort—how hollow that laugh! The stag may continue to bound gaily over crag and moor, and the bird may soar awhile swiftly on high, but the gunshot wound is doing its work, and, sooner or later, the gay bounding will cease, and the strong wing will droop. So, too, the Word of God will prove effectual, though long slighted; and the wayward soul, though brought by paths of deep and searching trial, will find that the love, wherewith it was loved, was an "*everlasting love*"; such a love as could turn its eye, full and forgiving, on a poor failing Peter, and effect by its silent, yet wounded look, his entire restoration.

THOU HAST LEFT THY FIRST LOVE.

Do you not own and feel the truth of these words? Can you not recall, with an aching heart, the bright and holy memories of the past, the once loved Bible, the place where "prayer was wont to be made," the happy work for your Lord? It may be some poor, cold, formal task, professedly for Him, still occupies you, but all the time you hear His voice ever saying, "Thou hast left thy first love." You have gradually not only left the things you once loved, but returned to those you once hated for Christ. The ensnaring novel, eating away your brain and time, the worldly song, the amusements of this world, are all binding their chains around you, and *you are not happy*. You try to be, but you cannot succeed. You envy the happy carelessness of the dead souls around you. They feel no remorse, the pleasures of the world contain no hidden sting for them. They have never known and loved the Saviour you have forsaken. The voice of conscience is not ceaselessly saying to them, as to you, "You are doing wrong. You are sinning against the light." Consider now where was your first step of departure? Was it not so small as to be almost imperceptible? You did not begin by throwing away your Bible for a romance, you did not at once exchange the meeting for the concert hall. No! the first thing was a *gradual neglect of private reading and prayer*. As your heart got cold, and you lost your interest in it, the devil whispered, "Give it up, it is no use going on with a form; wait till your heart gets warm again;"

well knowing that in saying this, he was cutting you off from the warmth and light. And you obeyed him. You did not read, or pray, this morning when you arose, nor yesterday, nor the day before. Oh! beloved reader, truly yours is a sad case; but yet, there is abundant grace to meet it.

A SOLEMN EXAMPLE.

In closing, we give two letters, one written *to*, and the other *by* one in the worst of states, and next month we hope to give others, showing that even such a case was not too hard for God's grace to reach.

"Some time ago," says a servant of the Lord, "when labouring in the Gospel, in a certain town, I was asked to visit one who had formerly taken the ground of being a child of God, but had given up all profession at that time. I found that the world had supplanted the love of God in her heart. Poor exchange! I remembered the solemn truth in the Epistle of St. James, that, if a man be the friend of the world, he is *the enemy of God*. And this awful truth I sought to press home—'*enmity against God*.' The soul, that loves the world, assumes the position of open and determined hostility against the living God; a terrible position for a poor worm of the dust! Shortly after I wrote to her as follows:—

"My dear——, I have thought of you before the Lord, not once nor twice, since I bade you farewell on Monday. I cannot but feel that this is a most important moment in your spiritual history. I cannot say what may be the

issues flowing from the course you now take. It may be that eternal destinies are at stake. At any rate, the question is one relating to eternity.

“The fact is simply and solemnly this:—You have been led captive by the devil, and the world has been the silken cord used by him. Whether you have ever been converted is not for me to say; but the word of God never recognises those as following Jesus, who find more pleasure in worldly histories, miserable novels, foolish dancing, and worldly companions, than in the truth, the ways, and the people of God. I would beseech you not to consider yourself safe, while in your heart you regard such iniquity, as that of which you have been confessedly guilty.

“The world, together with its course, is judged in the mind of God (see John xii. 31), and ‘Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God’ (James iv. 4). Take this solemn truth to heart. Face it. Hear the words of the Apostle Paul, ‘The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world’ (Gal. vi. 14), and then ask yourself the question, ‘What is to be my path in it?’

“But, on the other hand, trusting that God may grant you repentance from the evil of your ways, I would say that the blessed Lord never sends His people to fight at their own charges, or in their own strength. Thus, for instance, you may say, ‘Where can I find strength to walk in the ways of the Lord, seeing I have so grievously departed, and fallen?’ Now, such a question is the fruit of unbelief. A similar question was raised by rebel Israel of old, ‘Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?’ (Psalm lxxviii. 19). Follow not their bad example! If only your heart be right with the Lord, you may trust Him most fully for ‘grace to help in time of need.’

“Now, I ask you, is your soul determined to know nothing henceforth but ‘Jesus Christ, and him crucified?’ Oh! let it be so. Make no compromise. Close each affection against the world; be its slave no more. Betake yourself to the feet of Jesus, and there permit the sweet flowings of His love to melt your heart, and remove all

indecision and half-heartedness. 'Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils' (Isaiah ii. 22).

"Hoping soon to hear that you have made straight paths for your feet,

"Believe me, ever yours most truly, ——."

ANSWER. "20th Oct., 1871.

"Dear Sir,—I received your kind letter, for which I return my grateful thanks. I believe what you say about the things of eternity, and wish I could say from my heart that I am willing to live as dead to the world. But I cannot. *I would like to be the child of God, and the friend of the world at the same time.* But I find I cannot be both. Truly I have been 'led captive by the wicked one,' and it seems as if I had been given over to his tyranny, for the more I try to do right, the further I seem to go from God. Surely it has proved a 'bitter and an evil thing (in my case) that I have departed from God.'

"My friends continue faithfully to warn me, but I fear they will give me over soon.

"I will now conclude, by again thanking you for your kind interest in me.

"Ever yours gratefully, ——."



THE WELL OF SYCHAR.

I.—JESUS' SEVEN UTTERANCES TO THE WOMAN.



IRST. "*Give me to drink.*"—He who was God over all, blessed for evermore, humbles Himself to ask for a drop of water at His creature's hands! Could one conceive a brighter example of humility?

SECOND. "*If thou knewest the gift*

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of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink ; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Here divine power shines forth from under the lowly guise. "Living Water," alone could be given by Him, who is the "Living Lord." Able and willing Saviour !

THIRD. "*Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again : but whosoever drinketh 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.*" The world, in its most extravagant promises, never proposes to give such a boon as this—"Never thirst." Satisfied. Yet still it is "That I shall give." O, the inimitable grace ! O, the absolute power !

FOURTH. "*Go, call thy husband.*" Here is divine wisdom used in probing the deep recesses of the human heart. Sin must be uncovered. Guilt must be judged ; aye, and confessed, too, preparatory to blessing.

FIFTH. "*Thou hast well said, I have no husband : for thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband ; in that saidst thou truly.*" "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did." Such are the words of the woman to her fellow citizens. How conscience did its work ! The divine finger had been placed upon the plague-spot of her life. He knew it all, yet spurned her not ! What grace !

SIXTH. "*Woman, believe me, the hour cometh,*


when ye shall neither at this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Who could impart instruction and gauge the reception thereof as He? Who could speak of worship as He? Truly it could be said, "No man speaketh like this man." The Father seeking worshippers; and the Son seeking the confidence of her poor heart, and the Spirit the living power of it all!

SEVENTH. "*I that speak unto thee am He.*" The mystery is solved. The discovery is complete. "*The Christ*" is there! In silent conviction, and yet in boundless joy she receives this last utterance of the stranger. Her eyes are opened. Her heart is full—aye, full to overflowing. Forgetful of her water-pot she hastens to the city. Faith has made her bold—not brazen. She attracts to Jesus. How beautiful! The *truth* on souls to the *Person*. What is the summing up of this lovely scene? "And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman." "And many more believed because of His own word."

(*To be concluded.*)

PATHS OF UPRIGHTNESS.—I.

(Continued).

GAIN, I see a very common case of practical dishonesty among Christians. I mean a habit of going into debt. That very plain little text, "Owe no man anything," is not allowed the full weight that every word of our God should have with us. Now, as I am sure you love the Lord, and wish to show your love, too, by keeping His commandments, I think you will not mind our looking at this Scripture together. Of course the world thinks very little of running into debt. I have heard many plead that it keeps trade going, which would be injured were no debts contracted; that merchants and shop-keepers reckon on having a certain amount owed to them, &c. This *may* be all very true; I really cannot say. But you and I do not turn to the world to ask how we are to behave, do we? We have the Word of God as a lamp to our feet. Surely a most unerring guide, that will help us to cleanse our ways, and to walk so as to please Him in all things; and on this point that Word says, "Owe no man anything."

Now I want to be very simple and straightforward with you about this; so I ask you, Have you seriously taken into account that, now you belong to Christ, all you do concerns Him, and is to His

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

NOV.

1	W	Heb. xiii.	Out of the abundance of the HEART the mouth speaketh.
2	Th	Jas, i.	For the word of God is quick and powerful. . and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the HEART.
3	F	„ ii.	Trust in the Lord with all thine HEART, and lean not unto thy own understanding.
4	Sa	„ iii.	I will praise Thee, O Lord, my God with all my HEART.
5	Su	„ iv.	Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power.
— (Battle.) —			
6	M	„ v.	The Lord, your God, which goeth before you, He shall FIGHT for you.
7	T	1 Pet. i.	For Thou hast girded me with strength unto the BATTLE.
8	W	„ ii.	Who is this king of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in BATTLE.
9	Th	„ iii.	O God, the Lord, the strength of my salvation, Thou hast covered my head in the day of BATTLE.
10	F	Lev. iii.	I returned and saw under the sun, the race is not to the swift, nor the BATTLE to the strong.
11	Sa	„ iv.	The Lord shall FIGHT for you, and ye shall hold your peace.
12	Su	„ v.	When He had by Himself purged our sins sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.
— (Bear Witness.) —			
13	M	„ vi.	The Father that sent me BEARETH WITNESS of me.
14	T	1 Pet. iv.	The same works that I do BEAR WITNESS of me that the Father hath sent me.
15	W	„ v.	And ye also shall BEAR WITNESS, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

NOV.

16	Th	2 Pet.	i.	For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and BEAR WITNESS.
17	F	"	ii.	The spirit itself BEARETH WITNESS with our spirit, that we are the children of God.
18	Sa	"	iii.	The Lord stood by him and said, Be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou BEAR WITNESS also at Rome.
19	Su	1 John	i.	Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee. <hr/> (Light.) <hr/>
20	M	"	ii.	God is LIGHT, and in Him is no darkness at all.
21	T	"	iii.	I am the LIGHT of the world, he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the LIGHT of life.
22	W	"	iv.	Ye are the LIGHT of the world.
23	Th	"	v.	Let your LIGHT so shine before men that they may see your good works.
24	Fr	Lev.	vii.	For God... hath shined in our hearts, to give the LIGHT of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
25	Sa	"	viii.	And the city had no need of the sun... for the glory of God did LIGHTEN it, and the Lamb is the LIGHT thereof.
26	S	"	ix.	Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy Kingdom <hr/> (Darkness.) <hr/>
27	M	"	x.	Who is among you... that walketh in DARKNESS, and hath no light.
28	T	2 John		Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of DARKNESS, but rather reprove them.
29	W	3 John		This is your hour and the power of DARKNESS.
30	Th	Jude		Who hath delivered us from the power of DARKNESS, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.

honour or dishonour? To me, this is the starting point for all uprightness in deed or word, "Bought with a price, ye are not your own."

Let us turn aside from our subject, for a moment, to consider Him, whom we know not only as our Saviour, but as our Example in all things, who paid to the full that tremendous debt—never His own—in which, but for Him, we should have been eternally involved. Oh, what a price did Jesus pay to make us His! Having taken upon Himself to meet the claims of a holy God upon unholy sinners, He came not out until He had paid the uttermost farthing; not one fraction was left unpaid. Surely He must have had a very tender love for those whom at such a cost He made His own. Note now how He met that debt. We do not read that He paid it so easily, from the fulness of the divine riches, as not to miss what He gave, but that "He emptied Himself," "sold all that He had," to purchase the field that held His treasure; "Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye, through his poverty might be made rich." He did not take what He had set His heart on until He had paid for it, with all reverence we may say it. A risen Christ at God's right hand is the receipt for that paid debt.

You and I, through infinite grace, have believed the record that God gave of His Son, therefore we are His. With deep joy we own it; our hearts respond gladly to the words, "Ye are not your own," and to "the Man that paid the debt," we can now sing—

“We are Thine, and Thine alone,
This we gladly, fully own.”

As we study our blessed Lord's path, we can but wish to set our feet where we see the print of His. Should we then, unlike Him, take what our hearts desire, before we have the means to pay for it? You see, dear young believers, that as our Father knows what things we have need of, He is quite sure to give us enough to pay for them. “The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord,” and He can let us have just as much of it as He wants us to spend. He does not forget, as some of us are apt to do, that He has said, “Owe no man anything;” and therefore it could not be His wish that you should get what you cannot pay for, could it?

No doubt acting on this principle will involve some self-denial. You may think you need a new coat, or a new dress, and may not have the money to buy it. Now to walk in obedience to this word, you must certainly go without the new garment until you can pay for it. Your heavenly Father will take care that your *needs* are met, but He will not always give you what you *think* you need. When Paul, writing to Timothy, says, “Having food and raiment let us be therewith content,” he does not mean having the luxuries, and fine raiment, that our natural hearts might crave for, but to be content with what our Father gives us of wilderness fare on the homeward journey.

Far be it from me to be hard on any of you who may be in real poverty. I know there are cases

when, from dire necessity, poor Christians are driven into debt. But, even amongst such, do we not often find great indifference about paying off what is owing, when a more prosperous time puts it into their power? The ways of the world come in again here; instead of feeling that every penny they now have, beyond providing the daily bread, belongs to their creditors, and ought to be handed over to them in simple honesty, the surplus generally goes in supplying comforts, that were lacking in the time of poverty. There is but little or no conscience about paying off the debts, unless hardly pressed. Now is this walking honestly toward them that are without? and are Christians so acting, "lifting up holy hands" in the assemblies of the saints? I have heard one bemoan that he felt his mouth closed, because his conscience troubled him as to long-standing debts unpaid. I do not wonder that it was so, for the holy Spirit within him was grieved, and could not but remind him that, when he would exhort others, he was himself living in disobedience.

We are told that "the effectual fervent prayer of a *righteous* man availeth much." Is a man righteous in praying in an unpaid-for coat? and can his prayers prevail with God? A soldier would not think himself ready for the combat, when he had put on but one piece of his armour, and that the one which should come last. Are the soldiers of Jesus Christ equipped for the fight, when they have taken prayer for their only weapon, the last piece in the bright armoury of God, neglecting the breastplate of

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righteousness, and the sword of the Spirit, which precede?

I once read of a poor naked savage, in a far off land, receiving with intense delight a pair of military spurs, fixing them upon his bare heels, and strutting about in the height of his pride, imagining himself a warrior ready for battle. Is not the Christian we have been speaking of just such another? Do, dear young believer, study the sixth chapter of Ephesians, and be sure you "put on the *whole* armour of God."

But I must not keep you too long, so what I have more to say I will reserve for another day.



A WORD FOR THE GOSPEL.

BE thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel." How few know the meaning of such words in these days of ease. Let us appeal to each other's hearts by them. Do we *suffer* for the gospel? Does it *cost* us aught? Have we our souls so linked up with it, that they *travail* for others? Some seem to have few tears to shed in its behalf, few moments of time to yield, and little of their means and ability to enlist in its precious interests. Poor, at the

coming of the Lord, must be their returns at His hands. Has not our Lord spoken of "losing our lives for *His sake* and the *gospel's*?"

Alas! how many there are who have never lost a single hour's ease for the gospel's sake! Can it be that we say of this (so dear to Christ's heart), as I have known it to be remarked, "It is only the gospel!"

Brethren, it is high time in this, as in many other respects, to "awake out of sleep." Do we feel the creeping of spiritual paralysis over our souls? Is it not because our members, bought and owned by Christ, are so little used? Thousands are perishing for want of knowledge. What can we do for them? Pray for them? Bear them on our hearts? Yes, surely; but to what avail, if there be not in us love sufficient to present the Lord to them? Let us *pray* for them, *write* to them, *preach* to them, *minister* to them of our substance; in short, serve them in whatever way we can. Say not, God can and will do His work without us. One raised up of Him to deliver Israel, tells us that His bitterest curse rested upon those who, sharing His favour, "came not to *the help* of the Lord against the mighty" (Judges v. 23). Do we satisfy our minds in this matter by some small contribution for those who labour for the Lord. Be assured, identification with the gospel means much more than this. If you and I believe the principal propounded by our blessed Lord Himself, "*to the poor the gospel is preached,*" then let us cast in ourselves with Him in the carrying of it

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out; and how can it be, except we send or carry it ourselves?

The beloved Paul, whose exhortations we have been considering, could say, "God is my witness, whom I serve with my *spirit* in the *gospel of His Son*," &c. "*So, as much as in me is*, I am ready to *preach* the *gospel* to you that are at Rome also." Do we seek to be of like spirit with him—to act out our own little part, to be engaged according to our measure, *as much as in us is*?

Are we taught by God to care for the honour of the Lord's name, to be separate from the world, and faithful to Him? It is well.

But let us not miss the compassion of His heart whose truth we seek to be true to. Let us not forget that He who said, "Ye are not of this world," and "keep them from the evil," said also, "I have sent you into it;" and again, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

Our train of testimony for Him can only run well upon two rails—*grace* as well as *truth*.

The religion that is not vain, but pure and undefiled before God and our Father, is this, "visiting the fatherless and the widows in their affliction," equally with "keeping ourselves unspotted from the world." The wisdom that is from above, while first "*pure and peaceable*," is also "*full of mercy and good fruits*."

I am persuaded, my brethren, that many of us are little obeying the Saviour's words, "*to lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven*," where thief, nor

moth, nor rust can come. Are our investments *poor* on earth? Then let us hear His voice in it, bidding us put them in better stock on high, and "lay up in store for ourselves a good foundation against the time to come."

Not *half* the truth sanctifies, but *the* truth *itself*; and Christ, in all the self-sacrifice of love that gave *Himself* for us, as well as in His perfect obedience to God, is "the Truth."

Some time since I experienced a difficulty as to passing our money in another country, and it brought forcibly to my mind the importance of having the coin of the country we are going to. So let us get the coin of heaven by our little service of love to Him while here below.

Was not our Lord here amongst us, poor and ministering to others? Was it not to enrich *us*, and then set us in the enjoyment of His love, as well as to follow in His steps toward others? "Freely ye have received, freely give," is one of His blessed principles. Are we those that have *nothing* to give? Is it not because we have been so little *givers*? "There is that *scattereth*, and yet *increaseth*; and there is that *withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty*. The *liberal* soul shall be *made fat*; and he that *watereth* shall be *watered also himself*."

Blessed be God, He does not stipulate the amount nor manner of our giving, but only that we truthfully tell our Father's ways, and commend our Saviour's grace, to the world that knows them not.

He does not lay upon us heavy burdens grievous

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to be borne. The simple measure is, if there first be the willing mind, it is accepted according to *that a man hath*, &c.; but how real and testing do we find it? "*According to that a man hath*," that which *God* knows him to have; not what he has compared with others, or after he has invested well-nigh all in ways to please himself; and even the little sighed over, that we would make ourselves believe we wished were more.

Dearly beloved, *all* God's people gave of old, till He had to charge them to withhold their hands (Ex. xxxvi.). And can it be that we, so far beyond them in our place and calling, are yet as far behind in joy and gladsome service to the One who brought us to Himself, to be for Him alone? Take heed, if it be so, that He say not of us as of them, "*Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; therefore thou shalt serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee*" (Deut. xxviii. 47, 48).

Oh! rather let us have Him say, "*Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful in a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*" "*Ye did it unto Me.*" May what *He* is to us, and what through grace *we* are to Him, be ever and increasingly our spur to this end, for His name's sake, Amen.

IN HIS PRESENCE.

I.—Now.

WE meet in conscious weakness,
A remnant poor and small ;
A lowly feeble people,
Who boast no might at all.
But not to speak of weakness,
We gather here to-day,
Or e'en to mourn the failure
That clouds our pilgrim way.
We meet around His table,
Who is Himself our peace ;
Once in His blessed presence,
Our fears, our murmurs, cease.
We find in Thee, Lord Jesus,
Far richer treasure *now*,
Than golden store of monarchs,
Or gems that wreath their brow
We find in Thy blest Person
One greater than our need ;
And love that passeth knowledge,
And peerless worth indeed.
We bring the love Thou gavest,
An echo faint of Thine ;
And through Thy Spirit's teaching
We claim a ground divine.
We bring the reverent worship
Of loyal hearts to-day,
And though the hallowed hour
Must quickly pass away !

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And we again may mingle
 In labour's crowded throng ;
 Yet there beneath Thy shadow,
 We'll raise some happy song.
 We wait for Thee, Lord Jesus,
 Thy promise, true of old,
 To-day seems sweeter, dearer,
 More precious than fine gold.

II.—THEN.

To be in the presence of Him who loves us and gave Himself for us ! To gaze without a single distracting object or thought on His beauty ; to behold His loveliness, so that we are changed into the same image. " We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

What a moment will that be, when you and I, dear young fellow-believer, are for the first time in His very presence ! The thought seems overwhelming ; yet I love to dwell on it. The time when this poor scene, which now, alas, so often attracts our hearts and eyes away from our blessed Lord, will be past for ever for us, and we shall in a moment be with that precious One, who still in the glory bears the marks of that agony and sorrow and suffering which He endured. Yes, which He came out of triumphantly, that He might place us in such a glorious and happy place. " His visage was so marred, more than any man's, and His form more than the sons of men." Oh,

to look at that Lord and Saviour. To be in His presence! To gaze not only on His glory, but what is more, on His precious self.

Surely He is lovely to our hearts, even now "He is fairer than the sons of men," "the altogether lovely One." Let us look at, yes, gaze upon Him even now, by faith in the glory, until we see Him "without a cloud between," and bask for ever in the sunshine of His very presence.

PRACTICAL CONVERSATIONS.—I. (Continued.)

N B.—We do not hold ourselves responsible for any opinions expressed in these "Conversations," but those under the initial "S."

SUBJECT:—(1) Can a Christian play classical music, or sing an innocent song? Would not Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16; and 1 Cor. xiv. 15, warrant us in declining to do such things? If a Christian is requested by his parents to play or sing, how far would Eph. vi. 1, and Col. iii. 20 apply?—*Inquirer.*

(2) How far can we carry the study of music to the glory of God? Can a Christian girl conscientiously spend time in acquiring this art, in order to make a livelihood, by instructing others? What about drawing?—*Perplexed, New York.*

16. E. R.—If God has given me a good voice, I think it must be right to cultivate it, and I do not see that this can be done by singing hymns only. Would it not be far better, to exercise the voice, by singing a song with sound and sensible words? A good voice *may* become a snare. For instance, if we devote very little time to studying the Word of God, visiting the poor, &c., &c., and yet can find plenty of time for music and singing, would this not prove that we are becoming ensnared? With reference to drawing, and instrumental music, these talents might, if cultivated, eventu-

ally be useful as a means of earning a living. Still there may, doubtless, be circumstances where the only safe path for the Christian is to give up both vocal and instrumental music. Supposing such an one to be converted in a thoroughly worldly family, it might be necessary to give up music entirely, on account of the associations to which it leads, and to refuse to sing anything but the words of scripture, or a hymn of praise. I suppose if we honestly test our actions with 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20, and chap. x. 31, we shall not be in much doubt as to what we ought to do.

17. J.E.M.B.—I do not think a Christian could do either of the above to the glory of God, because they are undoubtedly things of the world, and in 1 John ii. 15-16, we are told plainly not to love them. And, again, if we have any spare time, when it is not absolutely necessary to be at our earthly work, we can fill it up better by doing as we are told in Eph. v. 19, and Col. iii. 16. I should think Eph. v. 19, Col. iii. 16, and 1 Cor. xiv. 15, would give us a reason for declining to do such things, but it depends greatly who asks you to do so. If a Christian, you would have to show him that you could fill up your time more to the glory of God than by so doing; if one of the world, you would be obliged to say, "I am sure it would not please my heavenly Father, and therefore I do not feel that I can do it." If a Christian child is requested by his parents to do either of these two things, I should think Eph. vi. 1 meant that he was to try all he could to be let off; and if his parents would not, that Col. iii. 20 would mean he must give in, and do it. Unless, as in Acts iv. 19, they felt they were distinctly told by God that they must not, then they must take the consequences, even if they were those of 1 Peter iii. I hope you will explain this fully next month, as I know my ideas are very imperfect, and far from quite right.

18. C.M.A.—As one, who has been particularly exercised about drawing, painting, &c., I would add a few remarks upon the above question, by giving a little of my own experience, at the same time, not wishing for one moment to set myself up as an example, for I feel it is one of those matters in which we, as Christians, must act as *before God*,

and not be led by what others say. At one time, I almost gave up drawing, &c., not feeling sure of the Lord's mind. I did nothing but a few texts, and refrained from going to a picture gallery, or anything of the kind; but, after due consideration, and waiting on God, it seemed to me that it was God, who had given me the natural taste for the art, and, as He plainly showed me, I had to gain my own livelihood by imparting to others what I myself had learned, I felt it right to seek to excel in it, believing it to be more for His glory to be fully competent to do *well* what I undertook to teach, and now I believe I can truthfully say, I can "do it heartily, as to the Lord." At the same time, I feel the need of watchfulness, lest I should be giving time, which, perhaps, is not my own, to the art, or neglecting anything else. As regards music, there are greater temptations; it is difficult to carry on a musical education simply in one's own home, it seems almost necessary to hear good music, and to do that, one must go to places where there is much, that every whole-hearted Christian must at once condemn, and refrain from countenancing. To me, painting, &c., is very different, and for myself I can truly say I can go to the Academy or National Gallery, &c., with a view of improving myself in the art, and so learn something, without its being the least hindrance to communion with God. May the Lord lead each one of us from our hearts to say daily and hourly, "Lord, what wilt *Thou* have *me* to do?" and if it be our desire to live for Him, He will give the needed wisdom and grace to walk consistently in the narrow path, in these days of difficulty and perplexity.

19. E.E.B.—I think whatever we may do, so long as there is no sin connected with it, or likely to proceed from it, must be pleasing to God, if done with an unselfish motive, and an intention of good. With regard to the study of music itself, I know that our lot in life is so differently placed, that it is only with careful thought and prayer to be able to see where the gracious hand of God is moving, that each separate individual can *at all* say whether a thing is right or wrong for them. Surely we should be careful not to neglect any talents God may have given us.

(*To be conclude!*.)

PRACTICAL PAPERS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS.

XII.—RESTORATION.



IN Christian life we must distinguish between two things that differ: daily defilement and positive backsliding; from the one we need cleansing, for the other we need restoration.

Touching a dead body unawares brought defilement to the Israelite under the law, and so any contact of *spirit* with this world and evil is defiling. There is no excuse, however, for it, for we are called to walk in spirit above it all, and if we get defiled by inadvertence or carelessness, we have only ourselves to blame. Still these constant defilements, practically almost inseparable from our walk in this world of sin, are quite distinct from a gradual departure, first in our heart, but after in our walk, from the living God. We have already dwelt on the steps of failure. It is our happier task now to describe the return of a soul to full joy and communion.

In the place, we must observe that daily defilements contracted, and not cleansed, are a bar to fellowship with Christ, and thus tend to lead us astray altogether. *No soul that is in communion with Christ strays away.* Communion (maintained by the word and prayer) must cease ere backsliding begins. And it is because many of us are content to go on for so long, without enjoying

real communion in our souls with Christ, that we are in such danger of backsliding. Restoration, therefore, means restoring communion. The daily defilement, in fact any contact with evil, is met by the constant washing of the word carried on by Christ, who as a servant for ever (Ex. xxi. 6), loving His wife (believers collectively, Eph. v.), and His children (believers individually, Heb. ii.), cleanses us by the washing of water by the word, as shown in the lovely scene in John xiii.

A special provision, however, exists for the restoration of a believer, after having fallen into sin, which is set forth by the type of the red heifer in Numb. xix. The essence of this type is that it presents the application of the cleansing power of the word, in special connection with the death of Christ, (typified by the ashes of the heifer in the running, or living, water); in whose death, on reference to Numb. xix. 6, we also find that all that is of this world, from the highest to the lowest (cedar and hyssop, see 1 Kings iv. 33), as well as all its glory (the scarlet) has been consumed. Thus our heart is reminded not only of the wondrous love of Christ in dying, but of the separating power of this death, which we in our sins had forgotten. (The water is called the "water of separation"). We find that these ashes were sprinkled twice, on the third day and on the seventh day; the first doubtless showing the convicting power of the word on the conscience, leading to true confession, and the other bringing the full sense to the heart, of the love that has put all our sin away.

In the history of the apostle Peter, we get the first of these sprinklings, when the Lord turned and looked on his erring disciple. That look broke Peter's heart, it brought all the enormity and heartlessness of his sin to mind; and he went out and wept bitterly. The Lord, however, did not cease His work of restoration at this point. When He rose from the dead on the third day, His first thought was for poor, erring, broken-hearted Peter. "He appeared first of all to Simon Peter." Then, in that secret interview of which we have no details, the Lord completed the work of grace He had begun. One thing which we may learn from the secrecy of this interview, is that restoration is a secret work between the soul and Christ. Another point of great practical interest is to remember that although there may have been years of backsliding, there is no need for years of restoration. There is no such a thing as gradual restoration to Christ. When once His love has melted and conquered the straying heart, all the coldness of years is gone in a moment. And what a moment for the soul! When once more the long silent voice of our Beloved is heard speaking to our hearts again, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever, and then at last we know the deep meaning of those words, "He restoreth my soul."

The active work of the Lord in our soul, however, is not the first work of His grace towards us.

We must remember that from Rev. xii. 10, and from other Scriptures, it appears that in some way

Satan has access at any rate to the outer courts of God's presence, and his hateful business is to accuse us to God day and night. But we have One there ready to answer every charge on our behalf, on the ground of His accomplished redemption. Hence it is written, "If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." This advocacy of Christ may long precede His work of restoration which leads us to confession according to 1 John i. 9. The one is what He does *for* us in heaven, the other what He works *in* us down here, leading us to true self-judgment. A soul truly restored has a deep sense of the love of Christ, just as we get a far greater view of the death of Christ in the red heifer than we have in the Paschal Lamb. Two things always accompany restoration, a deeper horror of sin and all that hinders communion with Christ, and a deeper sense of His changeless love.

Before closing we would illustrate the way of restoration by one or two more extracts, following those we gave last month :—

ANSWER II.

" 18th Dec., 1871.

Dear Sir,—No doubt before this time you have thought that your kind letter to me was thrown away, never to be answered ; but you will remember that you asked me to write you that I was *free*.

" Now, praise and thanks to God, who has been pleased to 'reveal his Son in me,' I am free ! Satan had a firm hold of me, but the Lord Jesus proved stronger than he. I shall bless God through eternity for sending you to speak with me. Your words were continually before me wherever I went. These words rang in my ears, '*You are the*

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enemy of God. In this state I wrote to you. You said truly in your second note, that I was beginning at the wrong end. After that I began to be in earnest about my soul, but was very much afraid of God. I did not see in Him any love for me. I could only think of Him as a just God who hated all sin. In this state I continued for some time, when I thought I would read over your letter. In one part of it you spoke of the *Father's heart* yearning over returning sinners. Then the scales seemed to fall from my eyes, and now I am 'rejoicing in God my Saviour.' Truly, it was a precious letter to me.

"I am, ever yours in the Lord——."

LETTER III.

"25th Dec., 1871.

"My dear Sister in the Lord,—Your last letter, received on Saturday, filled my heart with joy and my tongue with praise to Him, the exceeding riches of whose grace you have now been led to understand. To His name be all the glory.

"I had not forgotten you. Indeed, your case had of late been frequently before me. God had a purpose of blessing for you, despite all your secret love of the world and enmity against Him.

"I am so thankful that the yearning, abounding love of the Father is that truth by which your wayward soul has been impressed and reclaimed. There is none other so affecting, none other so well calculated to keep the heart loyal in its after course. . . .

"A little hymn says—

'I dare not work my soul to save,
That work my Lord hath done!
But I will work like any slave,
From love to God's dear Son.'

"Like Mary, in Luke x., be sitting at Jesus' feet, hearing His word, and be sure you read the Word daily, regularly and systematically, and pray without ceasing.

"Believe me, ever yours in the Lord——"

ANSWER III.

“ 30th June, 1872.

“ My dear sir,—How unspeakably blessed it will be to see our Lord Jesus, face to face. I have been much impressed for some days with the watchful care of God over His weak ones.

“ He knew the perplexing thoughts which filled my heart, as to where my *standing* was before Him, and directed me to the meeting, giving words to suit my need; and I can thank Him that I heard them, not as the words of men, but, as they were in truth, the word of God.

“ I cannot convey in words the calm peace enjoyed by me since I have believed what I am in God’s sight. Blessed glorious truth, that I live now before God *in Christ Jesus*. But I begin to think that, if I am accepted by God as Christ is accepted, I must also be rejected by the world as He was.

“ When I think on what the Lord has done for me; that while my thoughts towards Him were those of enmity and rebellion, His thoughts towards me were those of love, such love—endless, enduring as eternity—surely I may trust this God of love.

“ Ever yours in our risen Lord——.”

LETTER IV.

12th July, 1880.

“ Dear Brother in the Lord,—Pardon me for not replying to your kind note ere now. . . I have everything to say in praise of the wondrous grace which has preserved me during the past years, and given me to know, at least in some measure, the worth of that blessed One who loved me and gave Himself for me. . . .

“ Yours ever gratefully in the Lord——.”

These extracts plainly show that the grace of God can not only *restore*, but *keep*.

It may be that now, towards the close of another year of grace, the eye of some one is reading these lines who has strayed from Christ. The heart has

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become cold, hard, and apparently dead; and yet it is not really dead, for some feelings have passed through it even while reading these few lines. And still, as the gradual steps of backsliding are thought over, the distance that separates us from Christ seem so vast that return seems impossible. Do not, beloved reader, rise with this hopeless thought. You may be fully restored *at this moment*. All that is needed is that you should turn from your sin to Christ, and fully own and confess to Him all that you have done. He will not keep you waiting years, or months, or weeks, or even days. Let there be but true, full confession, and He is faithful and just now to forgive you, and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness.



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1 Peter v. 5-14.



—I think we left off in the middle of verse 5 last time. Have you noticed, M., how much Peter thinks of humility? It is clothing here; in chapter iii. you remember it was an ornament.

M.—Yes, I see he does, but I think we must have it inside first. It is very easy to look humble, the difficulty is to *feel* humble.

G.—But is not that exactly the order Peter gives? It is the spirit in chapter iii., while here it is the outward behaviour.

E.—Having now spoken about our inward dangers, of pride and self-will, Peter speaks of our great enemy outside, the devil; warning us against sleeping (as he did) when we should be watching as sentinels against the enemy.

R.—Have you not passed over a very beautiful verse without remark?

E.—Yes, indeed, were it not for the fact that God *cares* for us with all the tenderness of a Father's love, all our resistance and watchfulness would be of little avail, for "*except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.*" This eighth verse was very quaintly explained to me some time ago by a converted Parsee: "In our country," he said, "the traveller never sleeps without fires all round him, when any wild beasts are near; and when he has the fires round him he feels safe. So with the Christian, the devil keeps walking round and round to see where he can get in. But as for the Christian one who loves the Lord, what does the Bible say? Why, he sets God before him, so he has the Lord in front; he walks before the Lord all the days of his life, so he has the Lord behind him, he has the Lord at his right hand, so He is at his side, He is as a 'wall of fire' round about us, and He encamps round about us, so that if we walk every day with God the devil can roar, but he must overcome God before he can touch us."

G.—It seems to me from verse 9 that the poor Jews were being already greatly persecuted, and Peter was seeking to encourage them by showing them that others had to go through the same fiery trial.

M.—Yes, it is a relief to find we are not suffering alone. You remember the story, *E.*, of that poor woman in the hospital who kept calling out no one ever suffered like her, and a woman in another bed kept saying, “One” or “once;” and then told her that One *had* suffered even greater agonies than any she endured, and thus spoke to her of Christ. It must have comforted these poor people to hear that Christ suffered too, as well as that others were suffering at the same time.

E.—And do we not find the “needs be” for all this suffering in the next beautiful verse? Peter speaks of God as the God of all grace, as much as to assure them that He would not cause them a needless tear; next he places the eternal glory, that glorious goal, straight before them to cheer them up; and, lastly, he intimates that the discipline of suffering was needed (as also in i. 7) in order that the Master’s image might be reflected in them, and His strength made perfect in their weakness.

G.—I think the R.V. is very beautiful here, “Shall Himself *perfect, stablish, strengthen you.*” God will commit to no other the work of cheering up, and building up, these beloved saints.

E.—We now come to the postscript, where you notice they are again told, according to the R. V.,

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to stand fast, so that in verse 9 we get "*stand fast in the faith*," and here "*stand fast in grace*," two things that go beautifully together. There is yet another "stand fast," can you give it us, *M.*?

M.—Do you mean the first verse of Phil. iv., "*Stand fast in the Lord*?"

E.—Yes, I do. Now put these three together. We are to stand fast in the grace of God, in Christ Himself, and in that faith which is taught us by the Spirit in the word.

G.—How should the 13th verse be translated?

E.—The word is simply "She," and may allude to the church in Babylon, or a sister there; possibly, and not improbably, Peter's own wife, for the great head (so called) of the celibate Catholic church was undoubtedly married, whereas Paul was not.

M.—It is a pity they did not choose Paul, then, for their head instead of Peter, especially as he certainly was in Rome; whereas it is, I believe, doubtful whether Peter really was there at all.

G.—Our epistle ends, as it began in i. 2, with peace.

E.—Yes, and it is a peace that passes all understanding, God's richest blessing to a poor, tried, persecuted saint in this weary world. I trust, now that we have reached the last of our Monthly Readings, that each of us will "take stock" of what we have really learned from this Epistle. It would be much to our shame if we separated none the better, none the wiser, none the more like Christ for these twelve little meetings.

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G.—I have often read this Epistle before, but I never read it without feeling rebuked as to myself, and also learning some new truth from it.

M.—I am sure I've learned a great deal, and I only hope I shall be able to put it into practice.

E.—And I trust, dear *R.*, that you have the same desire, and will be able to give a good account to God hereafter for the privilege of receiving such a letter penned by the Holy Ghost—so full of instruction for the daily path, and so full of comfort for the tried saint.



PATHS OF UPRIGHTNESS.—II.



IHAVE a little to add, dear young believer, on the same subject that we spoke of a short time ago. I mean about uprightness and honesty. There are so many ways of being dishonest, without actually stealing, that I can hardly point out all. I trust that not one of you would be really guilty of theft, and still I question if you are all really honest as God understands honesty.

Look in your Bibles, at Titus iii. 14, taking the marginal reading, and you will find there a word for those of you who have to earn your own living. "Let our's also learn to profess *honest* trades for necessary uses." If you are in trade, let me ask

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

DEC.

			(Darkness.)
1	F	Rev. i.	Ye are the children of light and the children of the day; we are not of the night nor of DARKNESS.
2	Sa	„ ii.	The light shineth in DARKNESS, and the DARKNESS comprehended it not.
3	Su	„ iii.	Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.
			(He is Able.)
4	M	„ iv.	Believe ye that I am ABLE to do this?
5	T	„ v.	And God is ABLE to make all grace abound towards you.
6	W	Lev. xi.	For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is ABLE to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.
7	Th	„ xiii.	For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is ABLE to succour them that are tempted.
8	F	„ xiv. being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was ABLE also to perform. ^{V338} ₀₅₄₀₁₅ V
9	Sa	„ xvi.	Now unto him that is ABLE to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think to him be glory.
10	Su	„ xvii.	Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.
			(We are Able.)
11	M	Rev. vi.	If any man offend not in word the same is a perfect man and ABLE also to bridle the whole body.
12	T	„ vii.	Put on the whole armour of God that ye may be ABLE to stand against the wiles of the devil.
13	W	„ viii.	But who am I and what is my people that we should be ABLE to offer so willingly after this sort.
14	Th	„ ix.	God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are ABLE.

TO BE READ.

TO BE LEARNED.

DEC.

15	F	Rev. x.	And I myself also am persuaded of you my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, ABLE also to admonish one another.
16	Sa	„ xi.	Above all taking the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be ABLE to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.
17	Su	„ xii.	Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it.
— (With One Accord.) —			
18	M	„ xiii.	These all continued with ONE ACCORD in prayer and supplication.
19	Tu	„ xiv.	And when the day of Pentecost was fully come they were all with ONE ACCORD in one place.
20	W	„ xv.	And they continuing daily with ONE ACCORD in the temple.
21	Th	Lev. xix.	And when they heard that they lifted up their voice to God with ONE ACCORD, and said, Lord thou art God
22	F	„ xxi.	And they were all with ONE ACCORD in Solomon's porch.
23	Sa	„ xxii.	Fulfil ye my joy that ye belike-minded, having the same love, being of ONE ACCORD, of one mind.
24	Su	„ xxiii.	We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.
— (God's Loving-Kindness.) —			
25	M	Rev. xvi.	How excellent is thy LOVING-KINDNESS, O God!
26	T	„ xvii.	Because thy LOVING-KINDNESS is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.
27	W	„ xviii.	Who crowneth thee with LOVING-KINDNESS and tender mercies.
28	Th	„ xix.	Hear my voice according unto thy LOVING-KINDNESS.
29	F	„ xx.	Yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with LOVING-KINDNESS have I drawn thee.
30	Sa	„ xxi.	Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the LOVING-KINDNESS of the Lord.
31	Su	„ xxii.	Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.

you the plain question, Is it what God would call an "honest trade?" Judged in the light of His presence, how do those ways appear, that even some Christians follow, commonly called "the tricks of the trade?" The world may say that business men would not prosper without them. Perhaps not; but is it not better for a saint of God not to get on, than to lower himself to the world's level? Money got by such dishonest means could not bring true happiness with it; and a Christian who had thus enriched himself would be still really poor, for it is "the blessing of the Lord which maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it."

Another thing that has pained me, among Christian tradesmen, is that I have found them often less faithful in business than worldly ones, being careless to supplying really good articles, and yet their prices often at the same time higher.

I give you one instance of this, out of many that have come under my own notice. Having once to provide cake for a school feast, I divided the order between two bakers in the town. One of them was a thoroughly worldly man, and the other a Christian, who had taken his stand with those gathered to the name of Christ. Both undertook to supply the cake at the same price. When it came, that sent by the unconverted man was rich, and good, and every way excellent, while that of the Christian was so poor, and the fruit so scanty, that it was hardly fit to put on the table. Why was this? Certainly it was not

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Christianity that made the latter provide such inferior cake for a good price, though it might be unworldly fare!

I am sure that God would have His servants faithful in that which is least, and that in His eyes they are neither upright nor honest when acting like this. There are no lack of very plain precepts in the Word of God for you who are in trade, so that it is sorrowful if any should be ignorant as to His mind. He tells us that "a false balance is abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is His delight" (Prov. xi. 1). I think, too, we may apply to trade, as to other things, the principle in Luke vi., showing that it is pleasing to Him that we should give always "good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over."

It is a poor testimony to those outside when Christians carry on trade in a slovenly, unconscientious manner, which the Scriptures condemn, exhorting to be not "slothful in business." Christ in the heart, and heaven in view, should surely make a man a better tradesman, instead of a worse one, for he ought now to do all "heartily as to the Lord and not to men."

Do not think I shall have pointed out "the paths of uprightness," unless I warn you against straying into other "crooked ways," so I will add a little on being upright and honest in word as well as in deed. We have spoken of being righteous, but we find to be truly so before God, the tongue must correspond with the actions, for "a righteous man hateth lying" (Prov. xii. 5).

I trust, indeed, that none of you would tell lies, for "lying lips are an abomination to the Lord," and we know without a doubt from what source all falsehoods come, from the devil, the father of lies. The one thing we are told that the God, who can do all things, cannot do, is that He "*cannot lie*." Remember, too, that as lying came in by the devil, so "truth came in by Jesus Christ."

But, without sinking so low as to tell lies, I wonder are you all honest with your lips. Do you never try to give a false impression, aiming at deceiving others? Do you never, when wishing to clear yourself from blame, or to prove a point, tell only as much of the truth as is to your own advantage, suppressing what does not suit your purpose, and so virtually making of the half truth a lie? This is truly a "crooked way," and does not commend itself to an upright mind.

No doubt your own consciences will suggest to you many other forms of untruthfulness, into which you may fall, such as exaggeration, evasion, or subterfuge; but time would fail us to take up all; I only beg of you to weigh your words in the light of God's presence, and "putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour."

In our last conversation we spoke of the armour of God, as that by which we may "be able to withstand in the evil day." Note, then, the girdle of truth. Our God would not give us any piece of armour that would not be of real value to us. He knows we have no power to resist the devil, save

as we are found in the path of practical truthfulness, closely following Him, who has said, "I am the truth."

One more word, and I have done. While every debt to our fellow-creatures may be honestly paid, let us not forget that there is one debt which can never be fully met by us, but remains unpaid on into eternity. Let me ask, "How much owest thou unto my Lord?" and how much earnest, whole-hearted devotion are you seeking to meet His claims on you, who may well remind you, "Thou owest unto me even thine own self besides."

"When I see Thee as Thou art,
Love Thee with unceasing heart,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe."

PRACTICAL CONVERSATIONS.—I. (*Concluded.*)

N B.—We do not hold ourselves responsible for any opinions expressed in these "Conversations," but those under the initial "S."

SUBJECT:—(1) Can a Christian play classical music, or sing an innocent song? Would not Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16; and 1 Cor. xiv. 15, warrant us in declining to do such things? If a Christian is requested by his parents to play or sing, how far would Eph. vi. 1, and Col. iii. 20 apply?—*Inquirer.*

(2) How far can we carry the study of music to the glory of God? Can a Christian girl conscientiously spend time in acquiring this art, in order to make a livelihood, by instructing others? What about drawing?—*Perplexed, New York.*

20. T.E.—I really do not see the difficulty as regards music. I think the only question which arises is, Am I thoroughly surrendered to Christ? If so, I take Him for an

example. When I feel at all disposed to attend any place, or engage in any occupation, that there arises any doubt in my mind about, I ask myself:— If the Lord were here, would He spend (say two hours), in such an occupation? I need hardly add, the answer soon comes: if we are subject to the Spirit, and if the same mind be in us “which was also in Christ Jesus who humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death” (Phil. ii. 5-8). He will always guide us in the right path. If we are seeking to please Him, it will not be a question how far we can go without committing positive sin, but rather, how much we can deny ourselves, and what we can give up for His sake, “who became poor that we might become rich,” who sold all that He had, that He might purchase the field. It is one thing to sing “We’re not of this world that fadeth away,” &c., and quite another to be living so practically. I think it a very sad state of things, that some can play the piano, and sing so well at home, but when they are in the meetings they have no heart to sing, their voices are scarcely ever heard, and it seems hard to move their lips. Surely, if the Lord has given us a voice, and any talent in music or singing, we should use them to praise Him in the assembly, rather than for the amusement of our friends in private.

21. S.—The above subject, which has engaged our attention so long, and excited such widespread interest, may fairly be divided into three questions:—(1) *Is it right to play or sing secular music, and how far should a parent’s request to do so be complied with?* (2) *Is it right to learn music for the purpose of teaching others?* and (3) *Is it right to learn drawing for the same object?* The answers to the first question, we may briefly summarise as follows:—1 (ARB) answers “Yes;” 1 (EGO), 12 (EB), 16 (ER), 19 (EEB) answers “Yes,” with certain reserves; 7 (ESM), 8 (H) answer “No,” with certain exceptions; 3 (APC) has no time for such pursuits; 4 (CHP) says, “not with Christians;” 6 (AM) says it is “dangerous;” 14 (CHS) would only play or sing sacred music; 9 (AK), 15 (B), 17 (JEMB) answer “No,” while the

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rest do not answer the question at all. These varying replies show what a wide divergence of judgment exists on the subject ; or, at any rate, from what different standpoints the question is considered. To the question, as put, it is impossible to answer "Yes," or "No." There are reasons, such as for educational purposes, &c., which would enable one, unhesitatingly, to answer "Yes;" and others, such as to avoid the Cross, and to conform to worldly society when one could but say, "No." Between these two exists a wide territory, covered only by such texts as Col. iii. 17, and Rom. xiv. 22. The great help to the right *understanding* of this, and similar questions, is to have a clear apprehension of our position as Christians in this world, the only *power*, however, that can give effect to such an understanding, is the constraining love of Christ. Many of our readers have considered the innocence of the pursuits in question, and others, the natural gifts that are thus called into exercise.

We would, however, venture to think that neither of these considerations enable us rightly to answer the question. One who has been "born again" is not placed in this world, as Adam was, for the enjoyment of it, and the exercise of his natural faculties in innocence. On the contrary, the scene in which he finds himself is no longer the earth, as God made it, still less paradise, but is "*the world*," a sphere of which the devil is the ruler and prince, which neither is, nor contains, anything that is of the Father (1 John ii. 16). In this scene the Christian is placed, but he is not of it ; he is *not to be conformed of it, he is not to love it, or the things that are in it ;* nay, more, by virtue of his very position as a Christian, he, like his Master, is crucified to it. Now, practically, as Christians, we are all moving in one of two directions, either towards this world in heart and ways, or away from it. We move in the direction in which our hearts lie, and the two objects, Christ and the world, are in opposite directions, and though we shall not, as one has beautifully said, "abhor an Egyptian, for we were once strangers in the land of Egypt ; but on the other hand, the world that we loved before we shall love no longer, because

the love of the Father is in us." With regard to the texts quoted, we do not think 1 Cor. xiv. 15 applies at all, neither could we say that Eph. v. 19; or Col. iii. 16 would warrant us positively in declining to do such things, but, at the same time, we think, in the majority of cases, Col. iii. 17 would. If Christ be *really* our object, the habit of our lives naturally and without bondage, will be to be occupied with those things and interests that are His; but, at the same time, exceptions will frequently occur when we can, with a good conscience, and for His glory, take up the things of this world for some special object. Most of us, doubtless, are not practically up to this standard, but it would not be right to lower it on account of our imperfections. Our answer, then, to the first part of the question would be as a habit and rule, "No;" the many exceptions to this to be tested by Col. iii. 17 and Rom. xiv. 22. To the second part we would answer, as a rule, "Yes;" the few exceptions when the parent's wish runs contrary to the express commands of God, will be very rare indeed. JEMB writes a thoughtful letter on this subject, though we cannot fully agree with ~~all~~ he says.

Turning now, to the second question, we find that twelve ~~out of twenty~~ practically answer "Yes," that two say "No," while the rest do not touch the question. As our answer agrees mainly with that of the twelve, we will see on what grounds two correspondents say "No." 9 (AK) takes very high grounds. Not content with tracing (rightly enough) the first use of instrumental music to Jubal, he proceeds to say that God was never the author of instrumental music, and that David's use of it was as bad as a plurality of wives, and that the use of it was "permitted" only by God in the Jewish ritual. All this appears to us so unfounded, so contrary to such Scriptures as Numb. x. 2-10; Lev. xxiii. 24; 1 Chron. xxv., that we need not say more about it. The latter part of the letter we quite agree with. The reason, however, that our correspondent says "No," is really because the question has been not fully considered. Music is looked at rather as a

mere amusement, than a legitimate means of livelihood. Had the subject been considered in *this* light, we doubt not the answer would be different. The other that answered in the negative is 15 (B), and the reason is the same, music being regarded as a snare, a means of self enjoyment, taking the place of Christ. There is, however, much of value in this letter. 10 (* *) asks about Bach's Passion Music. We have already in this periodical frequently expressed our opinion that of all form of concerts the "sacred" is the most objectionable, and we cannot conceive one to whom the Lord is dear, and His sufferings sacred, bearing to hear them sung about for money at a worldly gathering. We would specially recommend our readers to study the replies of 3 (APC) and 8 (H), on this and the following questions.

To the third, all who have answered (5), have said "Yes." 3 (APC) alone shows, and we think, truly, how, even if one is not employed in teaching, it is possible for a Christian, whose heart is set on Christ, to employ both of these talents for His glory; 14 (CHS) also points out the same as to music. As a matter of practical experience, we should agree with 18 (CMA), that on the whole the study of music to any extent is more ensnaring and dangerous for a Christian, than that of drawing. The one almost necessarily brings us, more or less, into worldly scenes and society, the other not nearly so much, or necessarily so. Various as have been the answers given to these questions, we cannot but thank God that so many young believers are exercised upon the subject, and really desirous of pleasing the Lord according to their light; and we do trust that the result of our little talk together may be a truer apprehension of the place in which the cross of Christ has placed all, to whom it is a boast and joy; as separating us in heart from the world and the things in it, while still we can take them up in subjection to God as a means (certain or possible) of earning our daily bread, or still better, though in a limited way, use such talents as we possess to the glory of God. Many valuable points in our

correspondents' letters we have passed over in silence, as well as many statements we could not wholly agree with, as our space is more than gone. May the Lord grant that, in these as in all other matters, our judgment may be formed by the light of God's Word, and the spring of our actions be the constraining power of the love of Christ. We have not alluded in these remarks to No. 20 (TE). We consider this an admirable letter, and we fully agree with the spirit of its remarks.

OUR NOTE-BOOK.

We print the following from G. L. on account of the importance of the subject. It is occasioned by an unfortunate misprint of "with" for "into," on page 134.

"I do not feel happy in your definition of 'the Unity of the Spirit' given in the May number of 'Y. B.' I fear Scripture will not support it. You say it 'signifies the unity the Spirit forms in baptising every believer with Christ's body.' In 1 Cor. xii. 13 we read, 'For by one Spirit are we all baptised *into* (not '*with* Christ's body') one body,' &c. That is what the Spirit has done (*not doing*) as given in this Scripture. 'The unity of the Spirit' in Eph. iv. 3-6 is the great work of making Jew and Gentile believers *one* (ii. 11-22). You say also that 'the unity of the body' is 'Not a scriptural expression, but a scriptural thought.' I cannot find it in the Word, it is simply an intellectual phrase, and not worth a straw, and must be discarded as an intellectual invention. If the body is a unity, can there be a unity of a unity?"

We may say that the "unity of the body," thereby meaning that the body is one, is a scriptural and true thought according to 1 Cor. xii.; and further, no scholar would deny that "there is" is implied, though not expressed; for the beginning of ver. 4 of Eph. iv. G. L. is wrong in taking ver. 4-6 as explanatory of the unity of the Spirit, and we

think he speaks unwisely of the unity of the body, which all ought to admit who see the "one body" of Scripture.

We trust all our Christian readers will take a part in the "Practical Conversations" now going on. We do not want long letters, but short pointed remarks, or records of experience on the subject discussed. The subject for the third conversation is the following query : "*I want to know how best to study the Bible in my daily reading.*" M. J. W.

We invite all our readers to send us the result of their experience. All remarks showing how best to make the daily reading and prayer *regular, interesting, profitable, and a reason of true communion*, will be most welcome. All papers must be sent by the 20th inst., and will appear in February, 1883.

We shall be glad of future subjects for future conversations.

In completing another yearly volume of this periodical we do indeed "thank God and take courage." In various ways a year of peculiar trial, we are still rejoiced to see so many persevering in Scripture study. Though, indeed, glad to have an increasing number of subscribers, our aim is not so much to secure a wide field for the "Young Believer," as to make young believers themselves more diligent, earnest and constant readers of the Word of God. Part of Christian ministry is to supply streams of refreshing to the thirsty pilgrim ; another part, surely as important, is to seek to guide his steps to the fountain-head, where he can drink for himself. We make these remarks because we are sure that the close of this year still finds many of our readers feeble in faith and wavering in walk, simply from a neglect of private communion with God. To aid in the study of the Word we have prepared a little book* to be kept with the Bible in the bed-room. It is intended to receive each day the new thoughts and points arising from the chapter, and contains full directions for its use, which if carefully followed will, it is hoped, tend to increased interest to the private study of the Word. As a means of

* "The Bible Student's Note-Book," Price Sixpence, Post Free 7½d.
W. B. Horner, 27, Paternoster Square.

further encouragement in this the Editor will undertake to correct these private notes (however brief and imperfect they may be) every three months, provided they are kept regularly. We therefore trust that each of our readers will procure this simple aid to Bible study.

Respecting the future, should the Lord tarry, our thought has been to teach, next year, rather more by example than by precept. We, therefore, hope to provide some interesting records of the faith and steadfastness of God's people in various times, and other narratives of Christian life. Once again, therefore, do we ask our readers to communicate to us any simple and authentic records of God's dealings with His children. We hope also to give a series of practical papers on the book of Nehemiah, to continue the Text Book, and also the Conversation Class. Respecting the latter we shall seek to select topics of general Christian interest, allowing the greatest possible liberty of discussion consistent, in our judgment, with the interests of truth.

PRACTICAL QUERIES.

Q. 40. How are we to act in the matter of Sunday travelling by railway and otherwise? X.

A. Always to avoid it, unless it be absolutely necessary for the Lord's service. It is the Lord's Day, not the Jewish Sabbath, though still intended doubtless, in the providence of God, as a day for rest from labouring for the bread which perisheth.

Q. 41. What are we to do if stopped from preaching in the street by the police?

A. Obey the powers that be (Rom. xiii.).

Q. 42. Are we *always* to expect that our prayers are to be answered?

A. Not directly, unless asked in faith and according to God's will, but if truly made known to God. His peace, at any rate, will garrison our hearts (Phil. iv.). See article on "Prayer" in B. S. for October.