

# CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN

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## THE PRODIGAL SON.

Mr. Editor,—I do not remember seeing the enclosed in any of our collections of Hymns. These lines were repeated to me by a gentleman of high literary culture, one of the first ballad-writers in the State. I requested him to send me a copy. He informs me that he found them in one of the old Music Books. If agreeable and convenient to you, I respectfully ask their re-production in your journal.

September 4th, 1877.  
Afflictions, though they seem severe,  
Are of in mercy sent;  
They stopped the Prodigal's career,  
And caused him to repent.

Although he no releasing felt,  
Till he had spent his store;  
His stubborn heart began to melt,  
When famine pinched him sore.

"What have I gained by sin—he said,  
But sorrow, shame, and fear?  
My father's house abounds in bread,  
While I am starving here.

"I'll go and tell him all I've done—  
Fall down before his face,  
Unworthy to be called a son,  
I'll ask a servant's place."

The father saw him coming back:  
He looked, he ran, he smiled;  
He threw his arms about the neck  
Of his rebellious child.

"Father! I've sinned—but Oh! forgive!"  
And then the Father said:  
"Rejoice my house; my son's alive,  
For whom I mourned as dead.

"Now let the fattest calf be slain:  
Go, spread the news around;  
My son was dead, but lives again;  
Was lost, but now is found."

'Tis thus the Lord himself reveals,  
To call poor sinners home,  
More than a father's love he feels,  
And bids the sinners come.

## REMINISCENCES OF PRESBYTERIAN MINISTERS.

BY AN OCTOGENARIAN.

No. 12.  
DOCTOR FOOTE.

Dr. Foote was a native of Connecticut; but we are not able to say whether he was born in a town or on a farm. The difference is not important. My acquaintance with him was commenced at Charlestown, Jefferson county, at present in West Virginia, a State brought into being in defiance of the Constitution. It is ten miles from the junction of the Shenandoah and Potomac, the view of which is generally taken from Jefferson's Rock by all sentimental tourists. Romantic is a word which may well be applied to Harper's Ferry. Though a New Englander his predilections were always to the South, and in his professions of attachment every one felt an unshaken confidence. He joined the Princeton Seminary about 1818 or 1819, and remained one year, after graduating at Yale in 1816.

"I thought," he said, "that you were too good a Presbyterian to join the Presbytery in which you reside." "My plans," I replied, "after coming into Virginia were uncertain, but your hint is taken. It will lead me to write for my dismission with a view to connect my small self with Winchester." He had formerly taught in Fredericksburg. Not heir to a fortune, he was nevertheless able to take care of himself in a town renowned for elegant society, and the hospitality of its people. He there made many friends, and became intimate with Dr. Wilson and the Rev. Francis Thornton, the latter of whom subsequently removed to Kentucky. The Rev. Mr. Smith is at present the pastor of the church, which was founded by Dr. Wilson, succeeded by Dr. McPhail, who became President of La Fayette College in Pennsylvania. During the late war, Burnside assailed Fredericksburg with a tremendous army, but Lee and Jackson have made it the Marathon of Virginia.

We suppose shortly after his licensure, that Dr. Foote settled in Romney, the seat of justice of the county of Hampshire, Va., and became his home for a long period of time. It is situated on a branch of the Potomac, that magnificent river. The place may have been named in honor of Romney, Cinqua Ports of England, which is located in what was once a marsh but now turned into rich pasture land. Probably the pastures are fine both about Romney and Moorefield. The latter is the capital of Hardy, an adjoining county, long favored by the preaching of the Rev. Mr. Scott. Dr. Foote was not simply held in respect by his Romney flock, but greatly beloved. He shone as a Presbyter, always punctual in attendance on the body of which he was a member, and always ready for the dispatch of business.—He was equally so in Synod, and as a Director of Hampden Sidney, from which institution he received the degree of Doctor of Divinity. A large blessing attended his ministry. Secluded in a small town fifty miles from Winchester, he availed himself of books, and even the ice mountain could not cool his thirst for knowledge. A few years before the war, Lannan, an artist, published several interesting pieces in the *Intelligencer* at Washington, about the district covered by the counties of Hardy and Hampshire.

Dr. Foote for some time taught an Academy in Romney. Saw him at the Synod of Virginia which met in Lexington in 1837, told me that he was about to undertake an agency for the collection of funds in behalf of Missions. His field embraced North Carolina and Virginia. In this mission he was successful. The people wherever he went greeted him with a cordial welcome. Whilst engaged in its execution we met him in Petersburg, where we were joined by Dr. John Breckenridge, where and when our talks were quite agreeable. Having visited the cemetery of Poplar Tent church, near Charlotte, he informed me that there was not even a stone or board over the grave of the Rev. Heskiah James Balch, its former pastor,

and the second signer of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. A minister of the South has since informed me by letter, that he had personally aided in rearing a tomb-stone over that long neglected mound. This piece of intelligence gave the writer sincere gratification. The second signer of that immortal document died in 1776, ten years after his graduation at Nassau Hall.

After finishing his mission, our Romney friend returned to his former charge. The moon disappears for a time, but gladdens our sight by its return, nor can we doubt that his congregation hailed his second advent with delight. Our doctor was a man of observation, and we may well believe that in a travel of two or three years over a couple of the most interesting States in the Union, that he had supplied himself with large materials touching the Church of which he had so long been a minister. He redeemed them from his pastoral duties, to prepare a volume on the Presbyterian Kirks of North Carolina, and a like volume on the churches of Virginia which have been extensively read. We deem it as unnecessary to attempt any analysis of their contents, because they have long been before the public. The writer has read both the volumes with attention, and is willing to say that the reading gave him both pleasure and information. In his compositions he sought more after authentic history and substantial facts, than after ideal pictures to be laid before us in imaginative colors. There is a good deal of quaintness in the travels of John Evelyn, but his volumes are replete with varied information. He kept a diary when on the Continent, where he was kept for years by the disturbances of England. To him the eye served the part of a great teacher, and that organ glanced over the whole area of England after his return to Surry, his native shire. He visited gardens, forests, castles, rural seats, and filled the diary with descriptions of all he saw even to minuteness. There is no end to the minerals, pictures, cascades and fish-ponds which challenged his insatiable curiosity.—The Huguenot volumes of our doctor have never yet fallen in my way.

Dr. Foote died in the Monumental city of Baltimore. But doubtless his remains were borne to Romney. Ministers like to find a resting place among the people they have served. Bonaparte wished to sleep among the French people whom he loved so well, but he never loved the French. He made them the tools of his ambition, whilst he was destitute of the talents to make that ambition successful. He did not care how many were slaughtered provided they had first gained him a victory. 'Tis of little consequence where we are buried. Many are buried in Westminster Abbey who ought not to have been, but many are left out who richly deserved the honor, especially Dissenters. But our ministers are men of peace and not law-aleved dignitaries. Our people deserve their ashes, and the laborious Foote sleeps among the mountaineers for whom he toiled in his faithful ministry.

## FOR THE CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN.

### PAUL NOT A "BAPTIST."

BY REV. H. H. HAWES.

No. 3.

In Rom. iv: 11-25, Paul declares, in opposition to Baptist (or modern) views, the nature of circumcision. He declares it to be, not a national mark, but "a seal of the righteousness of the faith" which Abraham had. That it is had a truly spiritual significance. The above mentioned, modern view, denies this, and in so doing, denies this declaration of God's Word. But to show further, that the view is modern, and that even the Jews themselves did not hold it, we have only to refer to their own words. In Acts xv: 1, we read: "And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, except ye be circumcised, after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." Now see. They did not represent to those Gentiles in Antioch, that unless they were circumcised they could not be members of the Jewish nation,—but they said, that circumcision was necessary for their salvation. What then becomes of the notion that the Jews held this as a national mark only? Paul did not believe it. The Jews did not believe it. The idea is altogether modern and wrong. The Jew thought that circumcision gave him a right to eternal life. Of course this was heresy, like baptismal regeneration. But so he thought. And Paul had to teach him his error. One of the Jewish sayings was: "All Israel hath a portion in eternal life." Justin Martyr of the second century says: "They suppose that to them universally, who are of the seed of Abraham, no matter how sinful and disobedient to God they may be, the eternal kingdom shall be given." This suffices to show in what light they regarded circumcision. Further; Paul says in Gal. v: 3, "For I testify to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law"—referring to the law, as opposed to faith in Christ as the way of salvation. So also Gal. vi: 12, 13, speaks of circumcision as a religious ordinance. So Paul considered it. Nor does he anywhere speak as if even entertaining the thought, that this rite of circumcision was merely national. Again we say, the idea is modern and unscriptural. But why does Paul say Abraham received "the sign of circumcision?" The modern view says, that he might find the Jewish nation, and also preserve Christ's ancestry. But Paul says: "That he might be the father of them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also. And (also that he might be) the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circum-

cision only, but who also walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham, which he had, being yet uncircumcised." Rom. iv: 11, 12. To the same intent are many other passages, which will be noted in due time.—Evidently Paul did not consider circumcision in any other than a spiritual light. And as he was inspired to tell us God's doctrine, this should settle the matter forever for all who reverence God. Whatever is contrary to this, is nothing more nor less than an innovation. "Abraham believed and was circumcised. He transmitted the practice of circumcision to infants." (See Chalmers on Romans, p. 72.) This was certainly by the command of God. He constituted Abraham the father of the visible Church,—"the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised." So when Christ changed the sign to baptism, Abraham still remained father of believers, and his example is for their guidance. Paul certainly teaches that we are as truly Abraham's posterity as the Jews were. Gal. iii: 29. The promise given to Abraham, and sealed by circumcision is also ours; and it is now sealed by baptism, according to Christ's command. Therefore "we transmit the practice of baptism to infants," as Abraham transmitted circumcision to them. And it has been well said: "Express authority is needed to warrant a change" in this practice; "but it is not needed to warrant a continuation." Again: "It is the very want of this express authority" to change the practice, "which stamps on the opposite system a character of presumptuous innovation." This is common sense, and no one can dispute it successfully. When Paul says that Abraham, with the rite of circumcision, was "the heir of the world," instead of father to the Jewish nation only, is it not presumption to deny this? The promise "is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all"—Jews and Gentiles alike and equally, "As it is written, I have made thee father of many nations." Rom. iv: 16, 17. The covenant sealed by circumcision thus reaches to all the world and to all nations. "So shall thy seed be."—Rom. iv: 18. This is Paul's doctrine. The record is plain as if written in letters of light. And this being Paul's doctrine,—yes, and Peter's, and the doctrine of the whole Bible, we rest in it as our doctrine. Therefore we fear to receive any other, lest we be found contradicting the will of God.

## UNREASONABLENESS OF UNBELIEF.

In a very public place, at a corner in the "High street" of Edinburgh, stands a monument recently erected by the Baroness Burdett Coutts, to the memory of a dog. The monument is of Scotch syenite, shaped like a Roman altar, highly polished, and surmounted with a bronze life-size image of a small dog—not a conventional, handsome artist's ideal of a dog, but one plain enough to be a likeness, and homely enough to be a good dog. An engraved brass plate, firmly set in the rock, celebrates at once the merits of the dog and the munificence of the donor; and, if anything, rather more of the lady than of the dog. Which is all regular and very proper; for is it not too much to expect any one to give away the precious money and not publish it? Unless indeed—as is too often the case—the sum given be so small they are ashamed of it. The best thing about this monument you might fail to notice, unless you approached near and walked round it. It is a drinking fountain—that is to say, it has a spout from which pure water is made to run, and a drinking cup, hanging by a chain, cordially invites all who are not too proud to stop and drink their fill of "Adam's ale," instead of resorting to the miserable dram shop hard by.

## THE SHANGHAI CONFERENCE OF MISSIONS.

Notes by H. G. D.

THE FIELD IN ALL ITS MAGNITUDE.

Rev. Dr. A. Williamson, in the discussion of this subject said he could only present it in two or three aspects, as it would require days if he were to attempt more.

### PHYSICAL ASPECTS.

Each of the eighteen provinces is as large as Great Britain; add on Manchuria and the various countries dependent upon this Empire, and we have a vast territory; taken together, equal in size to all of Europe. Extending from the Tropics to the Temperate Zone, its products include everything for the wants and luxuries of man.

Mineral resources. The aggregate of the coal fields of Europe is 20,720 square miles; of China, 419,000; twenty times as much. Its iron ore is equally abundant, as well as other metals. In the future of the world, China must, from her vast resources, take a leading part.

Is the soil worn out? Cultivated for ages, and successive generations for successive years living upon its bounties, it is constantly being improved. The sun of China's history is just arising. The two great nations of the future will be the United States and China.

### HISTORICAL ASPECTS.

This empire has stood for 4,000 years; its roots are deep and strong and the trunk is gigantic. The prejudices of this people are the outgrowth of millenniums.

### LITERARY ASPECTS.

A large proportion of the people can read, and what has been in the past can be in the future. The devotion of the people to literature is one of the elements of hope as to the future. The written language is one, and what is written in simple *Wun-ki* may be understood throughout the empire.

### MENTAL ASPECTS.

Their patience and perseverance are simply wonderful. They show an adaptability to learn every new art and science to which they apply themselves. Intellectually, they are fit for anything. This is also an element of hope. They are not dull, but inquisitive. They respect the past, but many private persons are willing to go forward and throw off the inertia of ages. There is not the same liberty given here as in Japan; the immobility of their government is the cause of this national sloth.

[The Doctor spoke of the value of souls.] One soul is worth the efforts put forth by all workers from beginning to the end.

If the Chinese were scattered throughout the earth, every third man you meet would be a Chinaman; every third house a Chinese dwelling. When China awakes, it will be like a great giant arousing from his slumbers and knowing not how to act. Three hundred millions waking up! Ah! what will that day be! It is rapidly coming! Waking up to light, to progress, to science, to religion! And we a handful of men, isolated men, what can we do? The capture of Jericho, the feats of Jonathan and his armor-bearer are nothing in comparison to the tasks imposed upon us. Great is He who is on our side! God works by means of nothing; let us then be full of the Holy Ghost as we pull down the strongholds of Satan.

Let us then, 1st. Fully occupy our talents; 2nd. Fully utilize our gifts. When an army goes forth to battle, the whole available forces are utilized. Heretofore there has been a tremendous waste of power; two or three engaged in the same work; some unuseful for it. It is the object of this conference so to devise ways and means that the most will be made of the energies of each individual. The work is too grand; there are too many evils to be overcome to afford to lose a single atom of power.

## FROM THE SOUTH-WESTERN PRESBYTERIAN.

### UNREASONABLENESS OF UNBELIEF.

In a very public place, at a corner in the "High street" of Edinburgh, stands a monument recently erected by the Baroness Burdett Coutts, to the memory of a dog. The monument is of Scotch syenite, shaped like a Roman altar, highly polished, and surmounted with a bronze life-size image of a small dog—not a conventional, handsome artist's ideal of a dog, but one plain enough to be a likeness, and homely enough to be a good dog. An engraved brass plate, firmly set in the rock, celebrates at once the merits of the dog and the munificence of the donor; and, if anything, rather more of the lady than of the dog. Which is all regular and very proper; for is it not too much to expect any one to give away the precious money and not publish it? Unless indeed—as is too often the case—the sum given be so small they are ashamed of it. The best thing about this monument you might fail to notice, unless you approached near and walked round it. It is a drinking fountain—that is to say, it has a spout from which pure water is made to run, and a drinking cup, hanging by a chain, cordially invites all who are not too proud to stop and drink their fill of "Adam's ale," instead of resorting to the miserable dram shop hard by.

The story of this little dog, whose statue is thus likely to become the palladium of the poor in that quarter of Edinburgh, has been told before. It went the round of the newspapers years ago, but it will bear repeating. His master, whom he had followed lovingly while living, died and was buried in the Gray Friar's church-yard. That is a very ancient burial place, in the heart of the city, and rarely used now for interments. It is the spot where the *Magna Charta* of Scottish freedom was signed about three hundred years ago. I allude to the "Covenant" of 1581. There many of the Covenanters, when captured, were penned, months at a time, without shelter, in very inclement weather, until they sickened and died like sheep. And there stands now a monument, with an inscription which narrates the sickening story—how 18,000 martyrs perished in that cause between the years 1661 and 1688. An ugly record for the "Merry Monarch," Charles II., and his brother, James II.; the former of whom signed the Covenant himself, and then broke it, persecuting to death those who acted out in good faith what he had falsely sanctioned.

But to return to the story of the dog.—His master died and was buried in that old church-yard, where the persecuted and their persecutors lie side by side, their bodies mouldering until the great day when all wrongs will be set right by the Righteous Judge. Refusing to leave his master, the poor little dog laid himself down by the new-made grave, and from that time until the day he died, years afterwards, he never could be induced to leave that spot, day or night, except to go to a certain time each day in search of necessary food. He was never suffered to want for anything. His story was generally known. The frequenters of a neighboring eating-house, especially, took delight in petting him and supplying his wants. It was furthermore known, to those who noted his habits, that every Saturday he hid away a surplus of food to do him over Sunday. Not that he was supposed to have any notion of the fourth commandment—of course not; but because eating-houses in cities like Edinburgh are, by law, not open during Church time on Sunday; and if they were, their ordinary customers would be miles away. So the dog kept some kind of reckoning in his head or elsewhere, by means of which he knew Saturday when it came, and provided for himself a cold Sunday dinner, like any good Presbyterian.

But what I specially want to add to that dog's published history is this. He has only recently died. While he lived he was publicly well known. There are many now living who remember all the circumstances. A good lady, surviving him, is well enough satisfied of the facts to be at considerable expense for his monument. And yet there are already unbelieving people in Edinburgh (that learned city) who doubt the story!—Leastwise they say it is a myth to them; and one editor undertakes to say that, allowing the story to be somehow half true, the dog was of no account, but a very disagreeable beast indeed!

That is always the way with some people. They think it a superior kind of wisdom to doubt. They cultivate the habit of doubting; they try to doubt, until at length they

lose the truth-taking mind altogether, and at last, when they come to die, annihilation (if they could only have it so) would quite satisfy the aspirations of their debilitated souls.

I remember once, years ago, when looking about in Switzerland, I went, like other tourists, to see the chapel of William Tell, on the spot where that hero, when a prisoner, sprang on shore, and vigorously pushed back the governor's boat with his foot, leaving himself once more a free man among his native hills. How it shocked me when some one of German turn of mind told me all that story was doubtful! How some German scholar had, by dint of a laborious negative sort of ratiocination, formulated an argument proving to his own satisfaction that no such hero as William Tell ever flourished in Switzerland! I don't know when I was ever more provoked. There was the tradition of the Canton. There was the story recorded in every authentic history of Switzerland, and there was the monument, a chapel dedicated at a time when more than a hundred people were present who had seen William Tell living, and knew the circumstances of his life and death.

What earthly good would it do to the learned German if he could possibly destroy the faith of all Switzerland in every one of those traditions which have, for so many centuries, been a staple in the early training of a heroic race, and might serve the same high purpose for ages to come? It would be a bad deed, and it would not be true.

For my part I had rather believe too much than too little. It is the wiser, safer and more peaceful state of mind. Even in the conduct of business affairs, wherein it is currently supposed one must be mostly on his guard, I do not know but a life-long observation will show that those business men have lived the longest and been the most successful, ten to one, who have, in their dealings, possessed themselves in a reasonable, healthy spirit of confidence and hopefulness.

## BACK-COUNTRY ELDER.

### THE HOLY LAND.

Bishop Marvin says: But the visitor of the Holy Land must not come expecting to find its beauty such as will answer to his expectations or sentiments. Much of the country is a mere stretch of barren, rocky hills. There are not wanting many visitors who see little or no beauty anywhere. To my eyes there are many beautiful landscapes; yet many parts of America afford far richer scenery. We see Palestine in the light of a religious feeling before we visit it, and this divine radiance constitutes a medium through which all appears in an unreal coloring. The effect of an actual visit is diverse in different individuals. In some the prepossession of religious sentiment is so strong, and occupies the imagination so completely, as to project itself upon all they see—so that to them the very desert becomes a paradise of beauty, every mountain glow in the light of another transfiguration, the poorest and most naked landscape is transformed, and where there is a real beauty—as there often is—it appears a very paradise, a new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. In others, less under the dominion of their prepossessions, there is a sudden disenchantment. Jerusalem—they have seen a hundred cities more beautiful, and with more beautiful surroundings. Even the Mount of Olives suffers in comparison with the hills they rambled over in childhood. The most beautiful valleys here are yet not so lovely as those they have seen in Virginia or Kentucky. The Sea of Galilee itself disappoints them. In the revulsion of feeling which follows they are unable to perceive the beauties that would otherwise be apparent.

God did not select this region as the home of his chosen people on account of its beauty. The seats of the tabernacle and of the temple were not selected upon any grounds of natural superiority. The local background of divine manifestations was matter of no consequence. Perhaps it were better that it should not be in any high degree attractive. The glory of the Shekinah must be all its own. Revelation must run no risk of being overlooked and disregarded through the too great interests of its natural setting, lest the glory of the Creator should be transferred to the creature; nor yet must it be exposed to the danger of a sensuous degeneration through a too vital connection with scenes of physical enchantment.

The true interest of all this country is in its history, though a man in sympathy with nature will see much in the aspects of both the mountains and valleys to admire. Those who fail to do so are persons of local tastes, who can appreciate only a given style, and are quite incapable of a broader interest, either in art or nature, than that which attaches to objects conforming to their type. The man of deep insight and true sympathy—the genuine lover of nature—who is open to all that comes to him in its multifarious disclosures, will find a real pleasure here, even aside from the main purpose of his visit. But it is, after all, because Jerusalem was the city of holy solemnities, and the place where Jesus suffered; because the tabernacle was in Shiloh, and Samuel judged Israel there; because our Lord sailed upon the waters of the Lake of Galilee, and called his chief disciples from among its fishermen; and because that in the coasts of Caesarea Philippi he was formally confessed to be the Son of the living God, that we take any

special and deep interest in these places; and come from the ends of the earth to see them.

## FINE READING.

The following description of the devotional services of Rev. Mr. Ritchie, of the Scottish United Presbyterian Church, was originally written by George Russell Jackson for the *New York Independent*:

At the opening, the psalm ended, the minister selected and read the third chapter of Habakkuk. The congregation followed him by looking on their Bibles at first, and as he proceeded, by fixing their eyes upon him. He was a splendid reader, and the deep, gurgling roll of his Scottish accent lent an impressiveness to the language that held my breathless interest. He evidently felt the sublimity of the passages. There was a power and solemnity in his tones as he proceeded with the magnificent description of the God of Israel that were absolutely awe-inspiring. I thought, as I listened to him, that I had never heard grand elocution before. And when he came to describe the faith and trust of the prophet there was an exultation in his voice so magnetic in its effect, that the congregation seemed on the point of rising to their feet. Every eye was fixed upon him; every heart beat in unison with his. To me he seemed to represent the prophet.

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be on the vines."  
(He swept his eagle glance over the congregation, and with a sudden upward motion of the arm brought all eyes within the focus of his own.)

"The labor of the olive shall fail and the field shall yield no meat."  
(His voice rose higher and his eye glistened with holy fervor.)

"The flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stall."  
Higher still rose the clarion voice, deeper still became the interest of the congregation. Then followed the climax with the grand declaration:

"Yet will I rejoice in the Lord. I will joy in the God of my salvation."  
The minister's voice trembled, his eyes filled with tears, and in husky tones he said: "Let us pray!"

The old minister had evidently traveled in the Holy Land—a holier land than "Egypt, Arabia Petrea, and the land of the Bible." He had traveled in the land of Faith, the land in which Moses traveled, who never set his foot in Canaan.

The sermon was not brief nor lively, but at its close the congregation sang the scriptural paraphrase:

"'Tis finished! 'tis his latest voice  
These sacred accents o'er,  
He bowed his head, gave up the ghost,  
And suffered pain no more.

Nothing could be finer than Mr. Ritchie's manner of reading this paraphrase. His tones were inexpressibly tender, his eyes were full of tears. He seemed to be speaking of the demise of some near and dear friend. The Every thought of annoyance and impatience called into action by his long sermon was submerged in the grand tide of sorrow which poured as a flood from his own soul, as he brought so vividly before their minds the self-assumed sufferings of the man-God.

## WORDS FOR ANXIOUS SOULS.

Would you feign return to God? The way is open—Christ has rent the veil. The path is sprinkled with blood—it is now safe for a sinner to draw near to God through that new and living way—it is now righteous in God to forgive and receive every sinner thus returning—God bids you return thus—why doubt then? Hesitate no more.

But I am so unfit to come. Granted. If you were not unfit to come there would have been no necessity why Christ should die—because you cannot help yourself, He came in his infinite pity to help you—it is just because of your unfitness that Christ offers to you a free salvation—but know this sinner—that your very unfitness constitutes your fitness to come to Jesus. Your sinfulness and helplessness are your truest, strongest plea—you are to come just as you are, with all your infirmities and sins cleaving to you. He has infinite merit to cover all your wants of merit—doubt no more. Only come!

Where shall I find warrant for coming to God with so much sin cleaving to me? Open your Bible; find, if you can, any reason for staying away. God's Word is just a message to you to come to Him as a poor sinner needing pardon and life. From first to last it is this—the controversy that God has with your soul is that you will not come—"The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

But may I come now? Yes, now! "All things are ready." There is no greater delusion and no greater peril than in fancying that you will come at a future time. "Putting off for a little" is the devil's plan, not God's. Satan suggests to-morrow; God says to-day! To-morrow your heart may be harder than it is to-day—to-morrow the Spirit may have ceased to strive with you—to-morrow is another world—to-morrow you may be wrapped in your winding-sheet, and ready for your tomb—COME NOW!—Presbyterian.

They are without fault before the throne of God. Rev. xiv: 6.

Is not this a most glorious prospect and portion for the believer? Am I looking forward to it as my own? And am I living a life of preparation for the blessedness thus promised to the faithful? Do I so trust in Christ, and so live a life of conformity to his will, as, through grace, to be fitted for heaven, as through the divine mercy and promise I may have a title to it? Does the expectation of coming glory encourage me to be faithful unto death?

FICKLENESS is the characteristic of fortune; sorrow surrounded sweeten life; the highest human attainment is a contented mind.

## ARNOT OF SCOTLAND.

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

Not William Arnot, of Glasgow, although he preached there with great power and popularity for twenty-five years. Not William Arnot, of Edinburgh, although he ended his fruitful ministry there as pastor of the Free Presbyterian "High Church." But he was Arnot of Scotland, with a name as familiar to the people as a Bible-text—from the Tweed to the Shetland—with all the "canny" humor and poetry and racy dialect of a genuine countryman of Burns, and with a loyalty to Gospel truth as unshaken as Schottland. Of all the Free Church leaders who stood around Chalmers and who sleep beside him in the Grange Cemetery, Arnot was the youngest, and, with the exception of Alexander Duff, he was the last survivor. Such a galaxy of pulpit power and genius has not shone upon any one city at any other period in modern times.

The charm of Arnot's discourses and volumes lies in his illustrations. No preacher of our day—not Spurgeon, or Hamilton, or Beecher, or even Guthrie—has equalled him in fresh, pertinent, chaste, and exquisitely perfect illustrations of spiritual truths, drawn from Nature and every-day life. If any young preacher wishes to know how to teach by the use of simile and parable, let him study William Arnot. His epigrammatic sentences stick to the memory like rows of pins. For example, he tells us in his diary that as he grew older he grew more brief and simple in his closest devotions. He tersely says: "I suppose there are really two kinds of brevity in prayer: one because you are far off and one because you are far in."—None but a profoundly experienced Christian could have penned that pithy sentence.

But in this short article I cannot more than outline a few of the many-sided beauties of Arnot's massive and noble character. When Dr. Candlish was dying, he imagined himself in a meeting of the General Assembly, and was overheard to say: "That's Arnot. I want to hear what he is saying." His son whispered: "Do you love Arnot?" The dying theologian answered: "Love him? Who would not love Arnot? I love him as a brother." And so did the humble American penman of this tribute to his memory. He was my benefactor in the study of God's Word. He was one of my models of a grand and a godly manhood. I can see again the big, burly form of the old Scotchman among his family and his flowers in the Merchiston Avenue home, and listen afresh to his racy humor and his fertilizing talk. He died in the early morning of a bright June day. As he listened to the warbling of the birds in his yard, he exclaimed: "These sweet birds, they are singing for me." Then, being heard to speak a few words, his wife inquired what he wished. He answered: "No, dear, I was not speaking to you." His departing spirit was already conversing with Him who had gone to prepare a place for him. These were his last words on earth. Within an hour or two there was another voice praising before the throne of GOD and of the LAMB.—*Independent.*

## THAT VACATION PICTURE.

One of our illustrated papers has lately sore vexed our pastoralists. It printed a picture of this style:—A closed church shining under a fervid sun; above it a figure of its unmentionable majesty standing, with leering eyes directed upon the church as if said: "Beneath all this strange device:—'Do they think that I take a vacation?' We shall not say how many times our lay brethren have called our attention to this work of art. We may say, however, that if they are as faithful to give line upon line, and precept upon precept in the ordinary duties of their profession, the sinners in their neighborhood certainly do not go without due admonition. We are provoked at last (in lawful self-defense) to raise the query:—Who are meant by that "they" in the legend above quoted? Pastors alone? Dear Mr. Artist, you cannot have been so innocent.—Please do justice to a long-suffering profession, and make your picture like this:—Put in glimpses of sea-side, mountain-tops, hill-sides, ocean steamers, railroad cars, and all other places and things whither and by which our Christian laymen now wander or lodge. Then put down before every one of them that unmentionable figure above cited, or at least some imp-like diminution of the same. Now add your legend, "Do they think, &c." And what do you think of that, Messrs. Laymen?

Stand to your post, O faithful pastors! Nonsense, O inconsiderate reader, for our post is a scattered mass of splinters just now, and we are not omnipresent. When a man's post, which is not walls of stone and brick, but the people who worship therein—runs away from him, and diffuses itself over the face of the globe, how can he stand to it?—He had better go aside into a desert place and rest awhile. The splinters will be flying homeward soon, the post will stand solid by and by, and then the refreshed pastor can "stand" by it with a vigor, unction and success that come with the renewed vitality of vacation.—*Presbyterian.*

## TRACTS FOR TEACHERS.

POWER OF THE WORD.

God's Word has power to do its work. It often works quickly. No hopeful signs in that girl? But the word from your lips may some time reach her heart, doing its work in a moment. Paul's conversion is singular only in its surroundings. The substantial fact is exemplified every day. It often works slowly. A man in middle life, profane, godless, never seen in church, presented himself for church membership. History abridged: "My dying mother said—I forgot the words long ago; but I cannot forget *it*. I have had to give up. I have surrendered to the Lord Jesus Christ. I think he is my friend. I want to be on his side." The seed had been planted deep by a feeble, loving hand, and watered with tears and prayers. The parched ground let the moisture sink from sight. The surface was barren. But God gave the increase. In due time, the seed having long vanished, its green and mighty life shot up, matured, bare fruit. While God's Word has such power we will be of good courage.

THE work of religion is of no service any further than the heart is engaged in it.