

Mary Browne Meloy.



JEREMIAH RANKIN JOHNSTON.

# JEREMIAH RANKIN JOHNSTON:

A VOLUME OF

## BIOGRAPHY

AND SELECTIONS FROM HIS

**Poems, Editorials, Sermons, and Addresses.**

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EDITED BY HIS FRIEND,

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*My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.*

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PITTSBURGH, PA.

1892.

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## PREFACE.

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At the request of friends and admirers, and as a labor of love, the work herewith presented to the public was undertaken. It has been hastily done during a vacation from seminary work, and yet amid manifold other duties ; and will, doubtless, show many imperfections, especially to those who knew the subject of these memoirs. The plan employed was adopted in deference to the wishes of those most closely interested, and is the one Dr. Johnston himself preferred for biography. The aim has been to use material he himself had, without thought of memoirs, provided, and thus allow him to appear in garb of his own choosing. It is to be regretted that, while at his death materials for such a sketch were plentiful, many of them were destroyed before their value was recognized, or a biography undertaken. Those remaining and accessible, have been wrought into the prescribed form, as space has permitted. No use whatever has been made of his voluminous diaries, because of the immense labor their examination would involve.

The selection from the products of his pen might be very readily enlarged did the limit of a memorial volume permit. There is a great mass of material in existence, in the form both of MSS. and print, which is of his best

work. Enough MSS. remain upon various phases of pastoral and other ministerial labor to make a considerable volume. Some difficulty, however, has been felt in securing sermons which justly represent him as a preacher. There is a vast quantity of notes of sermons, more or less full, but very few fully written discourses. Many early sermons are in obscure shorthand, and are, together with much of his diary, almost undecipherable. The fully written sermons are frequently upon subjects chiefly of congregational interest. Dr. Johnston's best preaching has now no adequate form. It cannot be reproduced in a book. The specimens presented will, nevertheless, be recognized as possessing many elements of unusual power.

The Addresses and Sketches are among his best. It is to be regretted there is not room for more.

And now the volume is sent forth upon whatever mission the Master may have for it. If it please Him, may it be a solace to friends, and a stimulus to zealous Christian faith and service to all to whom it comes.

*The Allegheny Theological Seminary,  
Allegheny, Pa.*

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# JEREMIAH RANKIN JOHNSTON.

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## CHAPTER I.

### ANCESTRY AND EARLY LIFE.

**J**EREMIAH RANKIN JOHNSTON was born near Mercersburg, Pa., March 21, 1836. His father's name was Samuel Johnston, and his mother's maiden name was Maria Rankin. On his mother's side he was of Scotch-Irish, and probably of Covenanter, extraction. His ancestors emigrated from Scotland to Ireland during the religious persecutions in their native country, and because of them. Many of their descendants later came to America, seeking, according to the example of their fathers, homes in strange lands. Of these, many located in the counties of Adams, Franklin and Fulton, in Pennsylvania. They bore the names common among those original Protestants; Dr. Johnston's grandmother's maiden name being Mary Clark, and his great-grandmother's, Nancy Reed. All these families, the Reeds, Clarks, and Rankins, settled in Pennsylvania—the two former in Cumberland county, and the latter elsewhere in the southern part of the State.

Dr. Johnston's father's line in America embraces two families—the Houstons and Johnstons. These both, at an early day, came from Scotland, and settled in Lancaster county, Pa., in the Piqua Valley, famous for the ecclesiastical proceedings there which have had so great a bearing on United Presbyterian denominational history. In 1794 Thomas Johnston, the grandfather, removed to Franklin county, where Jeremiah was born. The precise dates of the immigration to this country of any of these ancestors is not known, but it is probable that the maternal ones came about 1720, while it is quite certain all were here before the Revolutionary war. In that struggle for liberty, at least the Clarks and Houstons, with almost all their church associates, participated, and, as was to be expected, they were found in the Continental army. The revolt against British tyranny was the outgrowth of forces akin alike to their theology and the civil history of their ancestors. Calvinism and the Covenants taught them the rights of man, while the generous warmth of the friendship shown to the oppressed negro of his own time was their gift to their child with the currents of their blood.

The Johnstons trace their descent from Sir Archibald Johnston, Earl of Warriston, who was one of the foremost of the laity in resisting the encroachments of the Popery of his time. "In 1638, when it was determined to renew the Covenant, he, with Mr. Henderson, was made a committee to draw it up. The latter was the author of part of it, and the second portion, which consists of the acts of Parliament condemning Popery, and confirming and ratifying the acts of the General Assembly, was prepared by the former. It was revised, discussed, and completed amid solemn devotion." "In the Greyfriar's Church, Feb.

28th, the wondrous work was to be done, and thither gathered the Scottish saints, full of pious and awful zeal as they appeared in the presence of the Almighty. After prayer by Mr. Henderson, and an explanation by Mr. Rothes, Mr. Johnston unrolled a vast sheet of parchment, and in clear and steady voice read the Covenant aloud. He finished, and stood silent. A solemn stillness followed,—deep, unbroken, sacred. Men felt the near presence of that dread Majesty to whom they were about to vow allegiance; and bowed their heads before Him in breathless awe of silent, spiritual adoration.” There was Sutherland to write first his name on the holy document. Spread on a “level grave-stone” in the church, right over the dust of a former saint, perhaps, the multitude affixed their names. Some wept, others shouted. Some wrote ‘till death’ after their names, and some, pricking their veins, recorded their vows in their own life’s blood. It was wonderful to stand amid such a scene, and more wonderful still to participate in it; but wonderful above all to be one of the chief workers, a leader in so illustrious a transaction.’\*

The Earl of Warriston was one of the Scotch commissioners to the Westminster Assembly, and participated in forming the doctrinal symbols prepared by that historic body. He afterward, under the cruel hand of Charles II, sealed his testimony with his blood. He was one of the most zealous and efficient laymen of the true Church of that period, and it is not much wonder that some of his descendants in this land, where his principles have taken such root and borne such blessed fruitage, believe themselves favored of the God of the Covenant because of

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\*From “An Old Almanac.”

this martyr's prayers. Naturally the family has cherished the memory of its famous ancestor. "An amusing anecdote lingers in the family memory connected with the title, Warriston. When one of its grandfathers was growing old, he was sitting one evening with his Psalm book in hand, just ready for family worship. A granddaughter, a young lady who had something of the pride of ancestry, addressed him, saying, 'Grandfather, did not some of your forefathers belong to the nobility in Scotland?' The old gentleman made no reply; adjusting his glasses, he opened his book and read,

'We with our fathers sinned have; and of iniquity  
Too long we have the workers been :—we have done wickedly.'

The reproof was too plain to be mistaken, and was keenly felt, nor did the young lady ask any more about the earthly distinction of her ancestry."\*

The beginnings of the Associate Church in America were in Chester and Lancaster counties, Pa., a number of the petitioners to the Associate Church of Scotland being there resident, and among them the Johnstons and Houstons. This was in 1750, seventeen years after the Secession from the Church of Scotland in 1733-4. Messrs. Gellatly and Arnot were the first who were commissioned as missionaries in response to this call; this was in 1754; but a little later came others, young men, among whom were the Revs. James Proudfit and John Murray. Of these the former was married to Miss Ellen Houston, the sister of Dr. Johnston's grandmother; the latter to Miss Mary Johnston, his grandfather's sister. Very closely, therefore, from the very beginning was his family identified with the moulding forces of the Associate Church.

\* "An Old Almanac."

These two ministers were of those who, in 1782, entered into the union between the Associate and Reformed Presbyterian Churches, and thus endeavored to obliterate ecclesiastical lines which never had any reason for existence in this country, and which later generations have refused to preserve. However, not all the family connection went with them. Local influences and a sincere regard for what was deemed important differentiating truth retained the affections and loyalty of some of them for the old Church. They said, The old is better. Dr. Johnston's immediate ancestral connection adhered to those who refused to give it up, and the family line ran through the Associate Church until the happier and more perfect union of 1858.

From the *memorabilia* of the family, it is gleaned that after the "union," the reorganization of the old Church was effected in the house of a Mrs. Johnston, "who was a widow." At the hour of the adjournment of the Presbytery a summer storm was raging, and for reasons, growing, possibly, alike out of the storm and the heated condition of the moral and intellectual atmosphere, some of the principal opposers of the "union" were left alone in the "session-house," built a little apart from the "meeting-house." Among them were Messrs. Clarkson and Marshall. It was a somewhat emphatic, although rudely inhospitable, disapproval of their course. They were sitting out the rage of the elements and sadly discussing the events of the day when Mrs. Johnston came up, riding one horse and leading another, with plenty of wraps and umbrellas, and, inviting them all to her house, cheerfully gave it up to them as a home and conventicle. On a subsequent day these

gentlemen, with others, met at her home and placed their dislocated and broken ecclesiastical machinery in working order. As the record in "An Old Almanac" runs: "On June 13, 1782, at 7 o'clock P. M., with James Clarkson in the chair, this quorum of 'two or three' met at the house of Mrs. Johnston, to take their bearings and fix the points of their departure. What this house was like, tradition does not tell; but we know it was large enough to hold a Presbytery. Not only that, but a General Assembly of a denomination now gathered within its walls, whither it had brought the ark of the covenant that was to lead them into the life of the future. Very earnest was the worship that night, when the Presbytery was ended, begun, perhaps, by singing,

' His testimony and His law in Israel He did place,  
And charged our fathers it to show to their succeeding race.'

the tune being 'raised' by the son of the widow, the echoes of whose musical voice long lingered in the ears of his children. . . . The experience of Obed-Edom was repeated in the household. For the chambers on the wall, the beds, and stools, and tables and candlesticks, the holy men of God rewarded the widow with a blessing on her children, so that in five generations not one of them has begged for bread, nor denied the gospel of the Saviour.'

In the house of this same widow was written the first "Testimony" of the Associate Church, and under the same hospitable roof Dr. John Anderson prepared his able and unique, though somewhat ponderous, work upon the Psalms. Truly her faithfulness deserves its memorial.

Although it is probable that the maternal line had transferred their church connection from the Covenanter to the new Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church at

the time the Johnstons were declining to do so, yet many of them refused to enter the Presbyterian Church in 1822, when the mass of the denomination went over, under the leading of Dr. John M. Mason and others. Instead, they transferred their membership to the now reorganized and growing Associate, or "Seceder, body." They largely constituted the congregation at Mercersburg, Pa., and being, for a considerable period, destitute of a house of worship, worshiped in the summer in barns, or, more fittingly, in the "first temples," the groves, near the heart of nature, as they endeavored to be near the heart of God. In winter the place of meeting was the house of Samuel Johnston, the father of the subject of this sketch, who is thus seen to be a child of the covenant, and who became the fitting inheritor and exhibitor of ancestral grace. Happy is the child in whose blood flows a history of piety, of inherited devotion to the cause of God and of man!

The home in which Dr. Johnston was born was "Poplar Hill," upon "a farm situated about one mile from Mercersburg, and about half that distance from the mountains, which lay a great wooded range along the western horizon, and along the north, sending out sharply projecting spurs." The scene is an imposing one; nature there is alike a display of grandeur and of quiet beauty and fruitfulness, and made profound impressions upon the plastic mind that afterwards was so often to tell the tale of her loveliness and goodness in words that were born of her own sweet, joyful spirit. The mountains were often the scene of rambling pilgrimages, led on, perhaps, by the luscious fruits that grew in summer among their beauties. The meadows knew his footsteps as he knew

where were the wild strawberries and nests of birds hidden among the grasses; while the tiny rabbits and fluttering quail were acquaintances of every day. It is the old story of the moulding by nature of man, and it was the equipment of a gospel minister to deliver his message, not in the bald forms of the logic of the schools, or in the uninteresting flatness of dull prose, but in speech reflecting the lights and shadows of the mountain, instinct with the life nesting in the trees, and breathing the fragrance of modest flowers. One can see why he loved to go with Macleod, and Arnot, and Guthrie in their tramps from the musty city out into the sweetness of nature.

The home life at "Poplar Hill" was of a healthful, and, withal, a somewhat rare type. The parents were of vigorous mind and character, competent in their sphere, respected and influential in their community, loved by a large circle of relatives, and devoutly pious. "His father, Samuel Johnston, was one of the most saintly men I ever knew; small of stature, gentle in demeanor, firm in adhesion to his sense of the right, yet courteous in his defense of it; well versed in English literature, thoughtful and intelligent, plain and unostentatious in manner, he commanded the respect of all the neighboring community. The mother, Maria Clark Rankin, was proportionately taller, of a clear, vigorous mind, and shared the strong faith and holy life of charity and duty that distinguished the husband."

Religion had been an absorbing subject with several preceding generations, and in some sense this father and mother had inherited their interest in things divine. The father was a man of somewhat slight physique, and not very able for the heavy work of the farm. He had a taste

for books, a tendency toward natural science, and had acquired a fund of interesting knowledge upon many subjects. He loved to trace the constellations, and found pleasure in wide acquaintance with the English poets. The evening table held not only the lamp and the basket of apples, but a few of the choicest periodicals of those days. These ministered not only to the pleasure and culture of the father, but of the entire household.

In the work of the farm the younger son took a full share. Indeed, after the removal of the elder brother to his own home, he became the chief dependence, and to him his father looked as his successor. Constantly glimpses of the home dependence upon him crop out in his father's letters. "Rankin and John are hauling wood from the mountain." "I often think it is a mercy that Rankin is growing up, although he is not yet able to take the foreway in the work." All this seems strange to us who have always thought of him as a foremost ecclesiastical figure, and a man of literary grace.

In these unaspiring days he was as efficient in the field and the mow as afterwards he became in the pulpit and in the editor's chair. He relished the home life and the farm work, and, so far as appears, had little ambition to change. A wide circle of affectionate relatives, a beautiful, fruitful country, a happy home life—who could ask more? His letters of this period are full of youthful spirits, abound in family and neighborhood gossip, and breathe a healthy pleasure in his surroundings and work. All through his life, memory lovingly returned to "Poplar Hill" and its circle of friends.

He was past his eighteenth birthday before he had given serious thought to another sphere of labor, and

then he began to learn lessons in the school of Jacob. One day when going to the mill, the horse he was riding fell upon him, injuring his leg, which ever after was slightly bent. In his subsequent farm work this limb gave him trouble, and induced him to consider a change in his life plans. Even then the subject was for some time in debate, and not until one hot day, when carrying a basket of corn which severely tried his strength, did he make up his mind to leave the farm for the school. The whole matter, as may well be imagined, was something of a trial to himself and the family, and yet Providence was manifestly directing to a new arrangement of things and a new line of life. Wider purposes were to be served than those centering in the farm and the churches at Mercersburg and "the Cove."

## CHAPTER II.

### COLLEGE AND SEMINARY DAYS.

IN the autumn of 1854 young Johnston entered the Academy in the neighboring town of Mercersburg, and there prepared for the sophomore class in college. "With a feeling that his age permitted him to lose no time, he threw himself with energy into his studies, speedily acquiring a habit of application and concentration of mind that he ever carried with him, and which helped him afterwards to perform the amount of literary work amid his pastoral labors that has often surprised those friends who were in a position to know. He attended this academy two years, walking or riding daily from home. Of course he stood well in his classes; he also stood well in the esteem of the other pupils, who appreciated his keen sense of humor and hearty recognition of pure fun. He was a famous batter with a broom-stick in the old game of town-ball. He was a good essayist in the literary society; his performances sometimes eliciting comment among the boys after hours. Once when his subject was 'Jephtha's Daughter,' he portrayed the meeting and the parting with such skill and force, that a student approached him afterward with, 'Johnston, where did you get the plot of that story?'"

It is not quite certain that at this period he had any definite, or even serious, thoughts of the ministry. Indeed,

he was not—probably owing to the not commendable custom then prevalent, of deferring church membership until quite mature—a professing Christian until during the vacation of his sophomore year. People at home expected him to become a lawyer, as they often do young men of exuberant life and popular gifts. Somehow they think droning and melancholy are goodness. Doubtless theology frequently presented its claims to him, but not until his senior year did he decide to enter upon its study.

The college years were more than usually formative with him. This was somewhat owing to the plans of work he adopted. Nothing can be clearer to a careful observer than that what he became was largely owing to what he began there to do. He was not simply a text-book student of the first rank, but an omnivorous reader upon the lines of work and upon very many others, and a voluminous writer upon a vast array of subjects. It was his habit, among the last tasks of the evening, to write extemporaneously upon any subject which at the moment suggested itself, to at least the extent of a page of foolscap. He thus attained a most remarkable mental alertness, and an unusually easy and beautiful, and withal forcible, expression of thought. At the close of his college course a mass of manuscript was on hand sufficient to fill several large volumes—not valuable in itself, but having served, after all, the most valuable purpose. His early letters, of which he wrote a multitude, show a measure of skill in composition and a very fair facility in utterance, but give small hint of the marvellous genius for expression which was afterward developed. Indeed, the man was several years in the ministerial harness, and had sent

several volumes through the current press, before his literary work reached its best standard ; and even then its cultured author was discovering and dropping crudities as the years went by.

The literary society of the college afforded a delightful arena for tournaments in letters, and often he was found in the lists. Upon his first appearance at the Westminster College, he took rank as an industrious, pains-taking and accomplished classman, and steadily maintained it during his stay. In his junior year, not content with the curriculum, he found time to read other Latin authors, and developed excellent linguistic ability. In view of the intolerable hatred he afterward came to have for pedantry, it is almost comical to find here and there in his correspondence of that time terse little bits of Latin, and to find the backs of the sermons of his first year among the churches bearing titles in the same language, *e. g.*, Ps. 101: 1, "*Carmina clementiæ et judicii!*" Song of Solomon, 5:16: "*De Meo Amicissimo.*" Math. 5:16, "*Populi Dei lux mundi sunt.*" Isaiah 45:25, "*De justificatione in Domino.*" However, he loved the language, and was rejoicing in new attainments, and in powers slowly being revealed to himself.

His appreciation of the school seems to have been most thorough. Hints of it crop out here and there, and none of the caustic criticisms of men and things, which a wider knowledge of life and opportunities in later years too often justified, are found in those early letters. Very few as cordially appreciative biographical sketches of professors have come from the hands of their students as the one he published in the *Evangelical Repository*, of Dr. James Patterson, the first president of the college. Even

those almost interminable sermons of an hour and a half come in for their full meed of praise. A comrade has written thus of the college days :

“ Among the students there were the usual number of childish and mischievous pranks. In none of them did Mr. Johnston engage. He had a most thorough independence, which he easily preserved without the infraction of college law or of common sense. Once, only, I knew him to have been in conflict with the authorities. He was fond of vocal music, and was active in forming a class for its furtherance ; this was found impracticable, unless their meetings could be held in the evenings, which the faculty peremptorily forbade. A week or so afterwards some female singer came to town, rented the college chapel, and had the proposed after-night concert announced by the president from the rostrum. That evening two of the students were talking with Mr. Johnston of the inconsistency evinced, when the latter proposed placarding a protest. Of course, he did the composition ; the sentences were short, sharp, strong, asserting inconsistency and injustice, calling upon the haters of these to avoid the concert. A dozen copies were transcribed, and in the night pasted around the town. Next morning most of these were on President Patterson’s desk, and I doubt if the latter ever exhibited more irritation than in his harangue against the anonymous authors, who he repeatedly invited to come up and be dismissed if they were dissatisfied with the rulings of the authorities. I remember the paper clearly. There was nothing about it to occasion such a storm, save that it pithily expressed a fair modicum of truth. Nothing came of it. The concert was well attended, and not until Mr. Johnston told one of the professors was his connection with it thought of.”

Another writes :

“ He was singularly pure minded ; could not tolerate, either an act or an utterance, on the part of any one that looked toward violation of the moral proprieties. If any one was guilty of trespass along that line, in his presence, he was certain to receive a rebuke, either by a verbal reproof or by a manifestation of disapproval that was more powerful than words. He

did not gather around him a great host of companions, but those who had the privilege and honor of an intimacy with him will ever remember him as most genial, and his companionship as helpful. He was dignified and manly—a real gentleman.”

The affectionate intercourse with “Poplar Hill” was, of course, not discontinued during these years of absence, but was cherished through fellowship with the neighboring family of his brother Thomas, and by many letters. The following was written to his mother in the latter half of the second year in college. It is interesting, as showing the young man away from home, even while the style is somewhat stilted and formal :

“NEW WILMINGTON, PA., March 1, 1858.

“*My Dear Mother* :—

“ I think I told you that I would write you a letter for your own especial benefit. At least I promised that I would write you one as plainly as I could, so that you might have the satisfaction of reading it. If my memory serves me aright, this is not the first time that I have attempted to address you by letter. Duty separated us once before, and then I wrote you. That was a long time ago, however, and although I try semi-monthly to make known my affection for you all by a small tribute of love, it may be proper now to send you a testimonial unaddressed to any other. It would be, perhaps, pleasant in so doing to review the past so far as I am able, and glean from the pages I have already turned in the book of time some reminiscences.

“ Of my childhood’s years I cannot remember. You, I know, often think of me as I was then and forgive my childish foibles. Even yet, perhaps, you smile when thinking of some funny scene connected with your growing boy, or shed a tear at the remembrance of his ills. But all his faults and rebellious pranks, although you may not forget, you have forgiven. Then as I grew, of course you looked for some return of your affection. The lisping of the word ‘mother’ would thrill your soul and awake all the sympathies of your kind nature. More eloquent would it seem to you than all the studied language of the orator,

and sweeter than the poet's song. It was nature speaking through your child. And here begins the blot on the record. Not only in ways many and diversified have I inadvertently acted contrary to your wishes, but even by arrangement gone opposite to your design. The dishonor thus occasioned was not only so in the sight of God and you, but rested on myself. My eyes were not then opened that I could see, but a riper age discloses all the faults greatly aggravated, because there has been made for them no atonement.

During my boyhood you watched me with anxious solicitude and tried to make me happy. When accident befell me, it was my mother that alleviated the pain thus occasioned. It was she that bound up all the wounds. No touch had in it the efficacy that was in hers. Her tears of sorrow mingled with mine of pain, and both fell together. Yes, dear mother, I can think of the many times you have comforted me when stretched on a bed of sickness. It was your hand that made soft my pillow. It was your kind look that bore encouragement to my heart in many an almost desponding hour. Although God in His providence has never confined me by lengthy attacks of disease, He has chastised me much. Indeed, I know you all looked on me as one of the world's unfortunates. And I have brooded over my misfortunes and wondered why I was more afflicted than my fellows. But in all these times of darkness I had a mother's love to soothe and comfort me. I knew or felt no fear when she was with me. An older brother, although claiming the greater share of your love on account of superior merit, did not receive it to the injury of the son of 'your old age.' I had not, like Esau, to plead with tears for a blessing, for there was always one ready.

"But the bright sun of boyhood, after having run its course, had at last to set. The world's ways interfered and we were parted. None knew how hard it was for me to leave the home of my youth. None but myself know how often the tears have coursed down my cheek when I would think of that dearest spot on earth and the loved ones far away.

"So now you have no little son to amuse you with his childish pranks. But I am still your son, and O! that I were a son

worthy of such a mother. How much I ought to pray with David, 'Let not the errors of my youth, nor sins, remembered be.' And when I think that many of those sins were committed by rejecting the counsel of my mother, I wonder if they are not unpardonable. But no, I know they are not. I know that she has forgiven them, and who can measure the extent of God's mercy? No sin is of such magnitude that Christ's atonement will not reach it.

"But a few short months will pass, and then, if God permit, we will meet again. How often we have yet to meet on earth we cannot tell, perhaps not often; it may not be permitted at all. But if we are permitted to spend an eternity together, what will it matter whether we stay here or not?

"But my sheet is full. When you pray I know you remember me. When you bend your knee at a throne of grace, to pray for those you love, I know I am not forgotten.

"Farewell, dear mother. I am your most affectionate but unworthy son.

RANKIN."

He was graduated with honor in the class of 1859. The first honor was divided between himself and another, and to him was given the Greek Salutatory for Commencement Day.

In the succeeding October he entered the Allegheny Theological Seminary, in due season finishing the prescribed course. The record of this period is meagre; yet there is enough to show the same industrious habits were preserved, especially in composition. In a bundle of old sermons is one on Deut. 32 : 29, "Happy art thou, O Israel!" dated December 26, 1861, and numbered "thirty-two." This was about the middle of his last year at the Seminary. The idea of an unfinished seminarian having thirty-two fully written discourses is one of the amazements, in view of the ordinary repertory of a half dozen

well thumbed and well conned! What a fortune in ready coin in the first pastorate, and from what a mint they must have sprung!

The first sermon in the Seminary was on Matthew 11 : 29-30, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me," &c. It is interesting not as showing especial homiletic skill, or because of noticeably beautiful literature. It exhibits neither. They are not to be expected; the young man was just entering upon a new range of study, and a totally new type of composition, and, as is always the case, facility was to be acquired. The interest gathers about a note written on the back nine years afterward, on a day he was overhauling the products of the past. It is as follows :

"The above was my first sermon. I distinctly recollect my fright when I preached it. Foolishly, the first year I was at the Seminary I was backward and easily embarrassed. Dr. Pressly did not criticise me very severely, but some of the boys let off characteristically. Dr. Kerr recommended me to most cultivate the quiet and easy style. One found fault with my gestures. Gradually they have fallen off until now I have hardly any. Dr. J. M. Jamieson, now of Piney Fork, O., commended my gesticulation, and bade me go—to perfection, I suppose he meant. I recollect he said, 'I was surprised at his art and taste; we all know Mr. Johnston to be a very bashful man.' It sounds quite strangely to read the luxurious rhetoric contained in the discourse. It is so widely different from what I write and preach to-day. Well, I never preached this sermon but the once. Possibly I may try it some day—take it down and build it up from the ground. May God bestow His blessing on all my labors in His cause."

Who would have thought that the self-possessed gentleman of a decade later had ever been troubled with bashfulness! And yet he was always modest and unas-

sertive. Who takes thought that his critical utterances upon a young man's work often afterward mold and determine its character; and yet those familiar with his later and better pulpit style, may trace the connection between Dr. Kerr's criticism and the preacher this young man became. The traditions, are that he was at first disposed to be stormy and dramatic, and excessively full of gesticulation ; but within a few years his pulpit work became most naturally the exhibit of graceful and impressive culture. While Dr. Johnston was one of the most gifted in producing profound impressions, he was also one of the most impressionable of men. Indeed, almost everyone of his imaginative type is so. So it came about that the early criticism of the professor and the student's intimate association with him in later years, left indelible marks upon his ministry.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE PASTOR AND PREACHER.

AFTER licensure, the usual experience of those days in itinerating was had, ranging from the Hudson to central Ohio. The result was a lodgment in the hearts of more than one people. In the spring of 1863, at the close of the Seminary course, four calls awaited his disposition: from Huntsville, Ohio; Indiana, Pa.; Mount Pleasant, Washington co., and Washington, Pa. The latter of these was accepted, at the spring meeting of the Chartiers Presbytery, in 1863. In his twenty-fifth anniversary address the reasons for acceptance are partially given. They are not those usually actuating candidates, and yet they were of the Holy Ghost, who steadily approved his ministry and made him a power, not only in his chosen field, but also, from that centre, throughout the entire Church. Washington brought him into connection with the Church press as no one of the other points would have done. He was appointed not only to speak with the tongue of the learned, but also with the pen of a ready writer. The pen for many years was the chief source of his power.

He was ordained and installed June 18, 1863. The congregation of Washington in 1863 was small, having about one hundred and twenty members, and was

poorly housed. When he went away there were three hundred and twenty-four persons in communion, worshipping in a house which is a model of comfort and chaste beauty. The entire organization was also in harmonious and effective working condition. The field was not for many years a very wide one, but the work done was of the best.

His entrance on his work seems to have been without much of what may be called personal ambition. He had earnest desire to preach the Gospel by the best expenditure of his power, and to do all his duty as it opened to him ; but to excel his fellows and to make a name for himself seem to have been singularly absent from his mind.

In common with other earnest and vigorous young ministers, he plunged with much intellectual relish into the work of making sermons and preaching. He was buoyant and confident, and expected almost marvelous results to follow his pulpit work. And marvelous they were, as are all results of conversion and sanctification under the preaching of the Gospel ; and yet not in the way he, with other young men, had dreamed, and do. Men did not yield themselves at once to follow Christ. They did not submit to be crushed by the avalanche of the truth. They did not move out of the old habits of sin under the impulse of his youthful impetuosity. Time and experience brought the knowledge that the Lord works not so much by the earthquake and the fire, as by the still small voice, and in processes of as slow growth as those which give us trees and flowers and fruit. Writing to a friend years later, he said : " It is not the one sermon that does the work, but the many.

The impression is usually a cumulative one." This was the observation of a man who notably believed in the success of the regular and ordinary work of the Gospel. He recognized occasional great sermons, in occasional great circumstances; but with him the rule was not Pentecost and the Kirk of Shotts, but a quiet assembly on an ordinary Sabbath day.

From this settlement he discarded the full manuscript and the memoriter method, and adopted the extempore. For a period he wrote his discourses in full. This was a work of ease with him, after the draft of thought had been made. An interesting reminiscence along this line is furnished by the Rev. J. C. Wilson :

"I remember I was at South Buffalo for a few Sabbaths. Whilst there my mail came to Dr. Johnston's care: my headquarters were Washington. I remember that on one Thursday afternoon the Doctor and I had been running around together. We parted about 5.30 o'clock, the Doctor making this remark: 'Well, I must be about another sermon for the Sabbath. I have one ready, but I haven't even a text for the other.' I remember saying to him, 'Mr. Johnston, do you expect to be able to write another sermon yet before Sabbath?' for sermons with young men just entering the ministry and engaged in their maiden efforts, are as a rule a matter for days, not a day or so. 'O yes,' he said, 'it will come.' I went around next morning about ten o'clock to get my mail and found the Doctor sitting on the hall floor busy reading a weekly paper. I refused his pressing request to go in with the remark that 'I must not intrude, for I remembered that he had a sermon to prepare.' 'O, that's done,' was his reply. 'Done,' said I, 'done; when did you do it?' 'Well, I got up this morning at four o'clock, and when they called me to breakfast at seven I was just finishing it.' 'In three hours?' said I. And he quietly replied, 'Yes.' And then he showed it to me, and told me not a little about his methods of sermonizing, etc. I remember his text—

Gen. 1:31, first clause; 'And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.' That sermon was written in full, so the Doctor told me. I had a desire to hear a sermon which had been written in so short a time, so I made arrangements to come in from South Buffalo that I might hear it. I only remember this about it, that it was very beautiful, and occupied about one hour and ten minutes in delivery. I had, of course, often met the Doctor before that time, and had often heard unusual things about him, but I remember that that sermon, composed as it was in so short a time, gave me an impression of him such as I never had before, and could not well have gotten in any other way."

As years went by the full manuscript was discarded almost entirely; full notes were carefully made after due research and meditation. These were somewhat accurately memorized, even while they were often taken into the pulpit. The occasion determined the precise value of the sermon. Rarely more than the working hours of a forenoon were put upon the direct preparation of a sermon, while the habit was not to be burdened with the final preparation at the time immediately previous to delivery. A picture which was fully drawn for a friend almost a quarter of a century later was begun in very full outline, so far as Sabbath sermonic work was concerned, in his earliest ministry:

“WASHINGTON, PA., Dec. 5, 1886.

“*Dear Brother Boyd:*

“Sitting here, it occurs to me to tell you of one of my Sabbaths, that you may see me as I am, and compare me with yourself and other ministers.

“Well, it is about this way. I rise at the usual time, perhaps a little later. I care for my stock—horse, cow, etc., which has always been my custom. After that, breakfast, at which I eat lightly—one piece of bread, a small piece of meat, coffee. Then to my study (I forgot to say, after breakfast the family

worship), to look up the Sabbath school lesson. Then my sermon; to ponder, perhaps write a few sentences here and there; to go over mentally; to saturate my mind with it. To read something in the vein of my discussion. It—the sermon—has been prepared beforehand, so far as its structure is concerned. I have it in skeleton. Thus I do till ten o'clock. Then to Sabbath school. Nearly all my life till this year I have taught a Bible-class in the morning before church, enjoying it, of course, but knowing it was not the best thing to do. This year I have, whether permanently or not I cannot say, given it to another. Hence, I look into the school, say a word here and there, sometimes have a little review, etc.

“Then at eleven I preach. The usual preliminaries—singing, reading, prayer, etc., occasionally giving a running comment on the chapter. The services last nearly, sometimes altogether, an hour and a half, or till half past twelve. They often leave me tranquil, grateful, happy. Sometimes, though, miserable and disheartened, ready to resolve that I will give up the work and go at something else. Sometimes fresh and buoyant; and again tired and limp, with a certain ‘blue Monday’ in store for me on the morrow.

“Getting home, if the girl has been away, I lie down while dinner is preparing and snatch a nap—very short. If she has been here and dinner has been waiting, I eat—very lightly, though—a small potato, perhaps, a slice of bread, a bit of vegetable, cup of coffee. That saves me from dullness during the afternoon, and gives me the use of my brain at night. After dinner I sit, talk, etc., read something, lie down, sleeping if I can; if not, resting. Then I read a little, write something, talk with the household, etc. I wish, also, to walk in the open air. This I do in the yard, backward and forth on the walk, unless, the weather being good, I can take a larger range. That has a tranquilizing effect, stimulating the circulation, and giving me the equilibrium I need.

“But my evening sermon is not complete, and so I sit down to it. It has been sketched in shorthand, loosely and generally. I take it to the typewriter to put it in the shape of pulpit notes. That done, I am ready for church. A young people's meeting

at six, I do not often attend. They do better to depend on themselves. The service begins at seven. The audience is reduced somewhat from that of the day, but is attentive, and I usually enjoy the service more than that of the morning. The choir sings a voluntary; and then the common service. It is all included within the limits of an hour: the clock strikes eight, sometimes, as we conclude, sometimes after we leave, sometimes before we are through. The sermon is about as long as the morning: the other exercises are shorter. Then home: to sit by the fire; to talk; to take a glass of milk—nothing more—then to retire, weary, maybe, with the likelihood that the sleep will be broken and imperfect; reflecting that one day more has been spent; that one more day's work must be answered for; that a new start must be taken on the morrow.

“There! you have my usual Sabbath. It is interrupted, of course, by sickness here and there, and a casual meeting of some sort; but as a rule it is as I have described it.

“You will see that this makes a pretty busy day. With an all week's exercise of the mind in study and writing, together with the cares of the pastorate, etc., it consumes considerable vitality, and suggests vigorous means of repair. But I have pushed it that way all my life through, rarely missing a day or week, or if I do, making it up by extra effort. And after all, how little we accomplish! The little done seems nothing. The great world waits and waits, but we only touch its needs, and the generation through which we live hardly feels upon it the power of our influence. But ‘time is long,’ and we can only do what is best, leaving all results with God.”

His fertile mind ranged over a wide field, and, at first, indeed for years, his sermons were very lengthy. However, the rapid utterance, the vivid imagination, the abounding illustration, the exquisite diction, and, withal, the beauty and justness of his thought, conspired to give him everywhere large and attentive congregations. Later, recognizing the change of sentiment on these things, he came to preach rather under than above three-quarters of

an hour. His advice to a young pastor seeking to change his location was : "Be sure you do not preach more than forty minutes, and be careful your prayers are not wearisomely long."

The beginnings of his pastorate were in the troublous times of the war. His youthful spirit burned with a loyal flame, and his pulpit thundered against rebellion and its sympathizers in the North. Doubtless the physical accident which drew him from the farm to the college now kept him in the pulpit and out of the field. The work he did there was of the same patriotic sort as was done by almost all his denominational associates in the ministry. Almost to a man they were zealous in their pulpits for the maintenance of the Union, and did valiant service in promoting loyalty in their communities. The record of the Church in those days, when national life and human freedom were in the balance, is a proud one ; and among her ministerial sons none are more deserving of mention than the young pastor at Washington.

His sympathies were not only with a government in peril, but with his fellow-man in slavery. He was born in the abolition period. The sentiment of freedom was in the air. The religious and political creeds of his family early took root in his mind, and alike they contributed to make him the friend of the blacks in bondage. Many a word in their behalf he uttered in the public prayers of the congregation and in pulpit addresses, and in the periodicals of the day. Some of his articles in the *Evangelical Repository* sound like the blast of a trumpet.

To those who have recalled these early traits, the later preaching has been something of an astonishment, in view of its tenderness and mellowness. The

law did not appear in its strong forms, but as softened by the Gospel. He had less of arraignment and denunciation, and more of teaching and expostulation and appeal. This was almost a matter of regret with himself. Writing to a friend, he says :

“I preached yesterday on the sixth Psalm, taking the picture of the illness there to be a representation of the sin-sick soul, and running the parallels between the sickness of the body and that of the spirit. It was interesting, and I am told it was a good sermon. At night I had Noah—‘And Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.’ Even if he did, he had a hard time of it, which was one of the lessons I was trying to teach—that having God’s favor does not keep us from difficulties. Building the ark—what a labor and care ! what an expense, too. Where did he get the money ? Then to sail all those days on that shoreless sea. To begin life on land swept clear of everything. Did ever mortal have a more trying time ? And yet I think the popular conception of Noah is that he was a most romantic kind of man, living a very agreeable life, and dying at last a hero of good fortune. His ride on the flood is thought of as a summer cruise, something like that which Mr. Bennett is making in the Mediterranean in his yacht.

“An old man, now dead, said to me more than once, ‘You do not use the harrow enough.’ I believe he was making a true criticism. It is not my fault alone, but that of the ministry. The law has not proper recognition. But I have got accustomed to preaching on the tender side, and find it most difficult to do anything on the other. Nearly all my sermons relate to Christians, with hardly any distinct reference to those who are not Christians. I crave the spirit of scolding—in a good sense—now and then. It does people good to be a little ruffled up—made to feel touched, pricked, sore. An old man once told me of a man who said to the minister who visited him on his death-bed : ‘Sir, I attended your preaching many days, and you never once made me feel sick of my sins.’ Dying, he felt he had been left to himself, and without having his heart stirred to think of his sins, he had gone on in carelessness and indifference. I

wish, many times wish, I could thunder out the law. O for a brazen throat! O for the rhetoric of fire!"

Again he wrote :

"I wish I could make myself more useful during the year to come. On the ship last summer, I dreamed of wonders I would do upon getting home. But dreams that they were, they vanished away. It seems too bad to spend a lifetime in frippery, as I do. Great, rousing, passionate sermons shape themselves in my thought, and I am going to launch them at the people, fairly crushing them into the kingdom. Then they waste, and I talk only the usual gabble. One thing—I preach too little the stern Gospel. It is wrong, and I believe people like to hear the severe—the very worst of it."

His sermons, in structure, were not after the models. Perhaps it was because there are models; at any rate they were *sui generis*. Rarely does a formal division of the subject appear in his notes, and yet the treatment is distinctly progressive in thought, and the sermon is a unit. It always abounds in illustrations, drawn from wide reading and observation. Nature and persons play a prominent part. He illustrates, not by men in masses, but by men as individuals. He takes the details of nature, and not a wide sweep. It is the bud, or the cloud, or the plant, or the man he employs, and with almost marvellous ingenuity and aptness. Who that heard it has forgotten the sermon at an ordination in North Buffalo,\* in which he described the growth of the corn, from its peeping through the ground until it covered the face of the field and ripened to reward the husbandman, and its application to Christian life, as planted here and there, and as nurtured and cared

\*Curiously enough his "notes" for that year contain the rough draft of this sermon, with this inscription on the back: "MS. of the sermon left in the pulpit. One of my most successful sermons."

for by the Master, until it shall cover the face of the earth and reward him at the harvest time? That was the way with him; the roadside was an open letter from a self-revealing Creator and providence, and the forest was a companion epistle; and everywhere he saw the lineaments of beauty.

With the fripperies and sensationalisms of the times, and imperfect doctrines of grace in the pulpit, he had no patience. He himself dealt with vital truth, and in the sobriety becoming themes of salvation and the worship of God. He did not expect to "entertain" people, and scouted the idea of that being a preacher's business. It was something better—conviction, conversion, instruction, sanctification. He called "Sam" Jones "ignorant," Talmage he counted "amusing," and even in the preaching of Phillips Brooks—whose literature he admired, and whose truth was good enough so far as it went, and whom he considered to be a gentleman, one of the foremost necessities, as he thought, in a Christian minister—even in him he found lacking the heartiness and profoundness of gospel truth which is essential to the best preaching.

On the other hand, he had a high appreciation of any faithful laborer in the ministry, and a most generous admiration for any man of genius who carried wise methods and a good intent into his preaching, even while he had no toleration for any heterodoxy he might show. He was, therefore, pleased to read F. D. Maurice. So also F. W. Robertson, although it is probable his morbidity was not entirely palatable. For Mr. Beecher, simply as a man of extraordinary power and of natural pulpit methods, he had nothing but words of praise:

"We all lament Mr. Beecher. He was a marvellous man.

I was often outraged by things he said and did, and yet, now that he is dead, I can think of nothing but his genius and beautiful work. No man has so filled literature with moral thought, encased in beautiful language, as he. Nor has any one so pleaded for important interests. His death makes a great gap. I look on it with a lost feeling. We shall never see his like again. Last summer I talked with a gentleman, a minister, who was well acquainted with Mr. Beecher. He paid him the highest compliments; said he was the most spiritually minded man he knew: guileless, charitable, saying evil of no one, devout, kind and helpful. The things he often said were not spoken—the ‘bad’ things, I mean—in passion or by intention, but just because he felt like saying them, and because he could not think of a reason why they should not be said. A harsh criticism, for instance, of the Westminster Confession, would not be made in a polemic spirit, but simply as an expression of a feeling that it did not occur to him ought to be suppressed. And thus he talked. I can understand just how it would be. The truth is, such a man as Beecher moves, intellectually, in a circle that is out of the range of the rest of us. How can the bats understand the eagles? But he is gone. I see Dr. —— is mentioned as a suitable successor. But he will hardly risk it. It is almost certain sacrifice for any one who is less than extraordinary to undertake such a work. Who can come after the king?”

His own mental genius was akin to such men, and probably none of them surpassed him in occasional exhibitions of “moral thought encased in beautiful language.”

It was this feature of generous appreciation in his character, together with an unreserved candor of expression, which sometimes caused him to be misunderstood, and almost counted a sympathizer with certain erratic doctrines, where, in fact, had issues been drawn, he would have been an antagonist.

Owing to the unusual pressure of home duties, arising from the protracted sickness in the family, and the

need of economizing his time in order to satisfy his editorial engagements, he seldom preached away from home, and was therefore not very widely known as a preacher. He rarely "exchanged" with anyone, and regarded the custom of "assisting" at communion times as a waste of energy, as also something of a hindrance to the occasion. In later years his communion services were less formal than such services are in most places—the morning being devoted entirely to the dispensation of the Supper. The sermon was omitted, and instead, some remarks fitting to the occasion were given. The following is a "fragment" of one of these addresses :

"The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1 : 7.

"On this communion Sabbath we have a special longing for real peace. Something tells us that to-day, more than on other days, we ought to have our hearts free from care, from distraction and disturbance, so that we can give our minds to such thoughts as befit an occasion of profound meaning and interest. The awe that possesses us at any time when we think solemnly of the holiest things, deepens upon us to-day, and we seem to feel, more than in the usual services, the impressions produced by contemplations of the other life. There is a something, we do not know what it is, that moves us to more reverent thinking, and that gives us, in all the motions of our souls, a more active and a quicker sympathy. A voice, more authoritative, yet tenderer, speaks to us, and we listen to, and reverence it, as we should always like to do to all the voices coming to us from God, but that so often seems to be impossible. There is the same house ; the pews are the same, and the pulpit ; the people are without much change, and there is but little difference in the ceremonial. The mere fact of the introduction of a little bread and wine, and the walking hither and thither of the elders, the recital of a form of words, does not account for the difference. There seems to come down to us with new power some-

thing of the agony of the cross, something of the awfulness of the great tragedy, and all the eternal things of which our religion tells us, seem to have a reality that is peculiar to the day. In this situation we wish to have peace. The jar that at other times would be little noticed, will now be offensive. Things passing before our minds and eyes without producing any feeling in ordinary circumstances, will now become annoying and painful intrusions.

“Now the one thing that can disturb us and break this spell—almost the one thing—is sin. But little else is likely to interrupt us. External providences promise to assist us. The bent of our disposition is in the right direction. If there come distraction, either to the body of worshipers or to some soul singly, it is likely to have this origin. Whether it take its start in the soul, and its native corruption, or is brought by Satan as a messenger of evil, or whether it come at the suggestion of some external circumstance, the fact is the same. It is sin. Without sin we will have peace.

“There is a sense in which we ought to be disturbed. We are to look at the cross. We are to think of the great victim there. Perhaps, if it were not that the sight is so familiar, it might startle us and bring a pang to our spirits. But we must associate with that the fact that our sins brought him there—that the cross was only necessary, or possible, because of our guiltiness. ‘Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.’ We look upon him whom we have pierced and mourn, and are in bitterness as one is in bitterness for an only son or for a first-born.

“Furthermore, we think of God who is so good, who has loaded us with his benefits, who forgives our iniquities, who saves us in his great lovingkindness, whom we call Father, and remember we have dishonored him. We have been constantly forgetful, sometimes entirely indifferent to him, when

we should have been mindful and full of devout obedience. Moreover, we reflect upon our little progress—our poor growth in grace. We seem to be away down at the mountain foot—some of us, perhaps, in the dismal valley, amid the fogs and rushes. Instead of having grown up like trees of the Lord's planting, tall, strong, symmetrical, we are only like the wild olive that has not been grafted into the nobler stock. If our faces are towards Zion, we make but poor progress in journeying thither. All this, because it comes from our sins, humiliates us. We are broken down with shame. Sorrow fills, or ought to fill, our souls. After all, what are we? We are but poor, and weak, and miserable, and wretched, and blind, and naked. We live only on God's great mercy. If this disturb us, as it ought—as to some extent it must—it is yet such disturbance as we need, and that in the end will minister to our earnestness. In all the deeper feeling of life there must be an ingredient of pain. The shadow is as necessary as the light. We feel most in the 'gloaming,' when the storm cloud spreads its wing over the hill, when more or less of apprehension mixes in with our hope and joy. We are only helped, therefore, to-day, in gaining and retaining our peace, if the sense of our sin comes to us as part of our experience.

"Now, we are told that that which destroys sin is the blood of Christ: the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. That is a marvellous power. The thing that injures us, degrades us, shames us, destroys us,—that is taken away by the blood of Christ. It is a great fountain, opened for sin and for uncleanness. Blessed be God,

" 'There is a fountain filled with blood,  
 Drawn from Immanuel's veins,  
 And sinners plunged beneath that flood,  
 Lose all their guilty stains.'

"There is a rag lying in the gutter, covered with all kinds of filth. It is fished up by hands as vile as itself, ugly, offensive, abominable. But after a while, because of washings and chemical processes, its filth is all taken away; and later still it appears in the form of beautiful white paper, fit for the daintiest uses. If that be wonderful and beautiful, this more. The blood

of Christ takes away all sin. And what is so vile as sin? The filth of the gutter, the offal of the street, are cleanliness in comparison. And yet from the worst of it there is a full salvation.

“It is a great truth—one of the greatest; a fundamental of the fundamentals—that we have justification and peace by the blood of Christ. That is taught us on many a sublime page of the Scriptures. It underlies the whole theory and philosophy of the gospel. But in this place the lesson is one relating to the gradual removal of sin, as it interferes with and defiles the life. After the stone is taken from the quarry it needs to be cleansed, to have its sharp corners taken off, to be shaped and polished for its place. After the soul is delivered from its bondage it must be educated for its liberty. That is as gradual a work as the ripening of the fruit of the summer, or changing human life from its childhood to its age.

“To-day we hope to have some of this work done for us. Is there a besetting sin? We trust, if not to wholly remove it, at least to lessen it and put it in the way of final destruction. Is there a foul blemish in the life? We wish to partly, at least, get clear of it. Is there a spot, deeply dyed, worked into the very fiber of our being? Shall we not get it rubbed out? Have we evil thoughts, crooked dispositions, hasty tempers, sour feelings; have we pride, selfishness, covetousness, malevolence? Now, our hope is, that all these may be cleansed—taken away. Our prayer is that God may wash us, purge us, for then we shall be whiter than the snow.”

In many places this arrangement for communion services might be fittingly substituted for that now somewhat wearisomely employed.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PASTOR AND PREACHER—CONCLUDED.

AS A PREACHER he was a student, the studies being directed primarily to the pulpit. His first duties were felt to be toward the congregation. Much of the material there used was afterward employed in the "Editorial Brevities" of *The United Presbyterian*; but the chief aim was the Sabbath's work. His library was large, and for pulpit purposes was all that could be desired. One of the noticeable facts is that commentaries, theological encyclopedias, and general works of biblical exposition and reference show signs of chiefest handling. In an unusual sense, Dr. Johnston was a student of the Word of God, even while not critical in the ordinary sense of the term. He proceeded on the correct assumption, that, while he had a working knowledge of the original languages, others had done the work in them ready to his hand. His study Bible is in two volumes, with alternating printed and blank leaves. Upon the latter there is a mass of notes and comments and references, amazing to the ordinary worker in the Word. Extended quotations, from all the range of his reading, are made, bits of poetry are copied, brief comments are recorded, books and magazines are mentioned as references, the original languages are presented in text and literal rendering. Everything

points toward the "homiletic habit," and careful, pains-taking endeavor to know the mind of the Spirit.

It would be incorrect to call Dr. Johnston a technical theologian. He was not. He did not have a philosophical mind; but, nevertheless, he had a very wide knowledge of Systematic Theology, and he often had pronounced and not commonly accepted opinions upon such topics as the "Relation of death to sin," the "Method of the transmission of corrupt nature to descendants," which are counted among the difficult things. His record of reading shows volumes of theology upon his table, and exhibits him taking in course such books as Charles Hodge's great work; while his writings display a mind versed along the great lines of truth, even while his utterance was not so much in the hard forms of scholastic statement as in the pictorial combinations and views of a man of imagination.

The reading on other lines was wide and persistent. As early as 1874 he once said he had read most of the classical English poetry. Biography, especially that of Christian people, was his delight. He loved the delineations of experience and character therein contained. The Memorial of Dr. Wm. Bruce he counted defective, as not exhibiting the man's inner history. He wished to read what men themselves saw and felt, and believed and said, and as they reveal themselves in letters and diary, and sayings treasured by others. It was the same love for minutiae which showed itself in observations of nature. He had love for fiction, and believed in it as a vehicle of instruction. Many of the better novels passed through his hands, and were sometimes commended to others. The following are a few extracts from letters concerning his reading:

Hawthorne :

“I have greatly enjoyed the morning. The clouds have hung low ; the shadows have hung about my room like draperies for the windows, and the bright gas fire has curled and murmured on the hearth. It all went deep into my spirits, and my soul began to be in sympathy with the poetical surroundings. To increase the sober comfort, I was reading the life of Hawthorne. It is just like such a day as this—out of the line of that which is common, full of mystery, wonderful in its charm of indescribable seriousness. Reading of himself, then of the many of whom he speaks, then thinking of them as nearly all dead, filled me with brooding thoughts. How vain is life ! What a short appointment we have to its pleasures and honors ! How quickly our tale of years passes, and we are read of—if worth reading of—by those who succeed us ! Even amid the joys of the spring time, when nature laughs in every grass blade and blossom, such thoughts intrude to sober our spirits.”

John Quincy Adams :

“If you find these statements over strong, let me tell you I have just been reading John Quincy Adams.”

Ben Hur and Barry Cornwall :

“I have no very heavy reading on hand just now. A friend handed me ‘Ben Hur,’ and I am attempting it without being, as yet, deeply interested. President Garfield liked it, which is a recommendation. I am reading a little poetry. Barry Cornwall delights me. I had never read him much. We should all read more poetry. It should be a part of the seminary course. If it had been so twenty years ago, we would have no trouble now on the music question.”

Carlyle :

“Yes, I have read Carlyle's life, it is very interesting, and it gives me a greatly better opinion of the man than I had before. The newspapers had told all the hard things they could of him, so that I took up the impression that he was sour, crabbed, harsh, and nothing else. I find him to have been a man with a

heart full of affection, to have been specially generous, and to have stood up firmly for the truth, as he understood it, with a heroism such as I have rarely seen."

Bailey's "Festus" :

"The quotation you wished is as follows :

" ' We live in deeds, not years ; in thoughts, not breaths ;  
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.  
We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives  
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best. '

"It is [from Bailey's 'Festus,' which, in my judgment, is one of the great poems. I spent the summer of 1861 in Philadelphia, and there bought it, a very cheap edition. It took hold of me powerfully at the time—probably, since our tastes change, more strongly than it would now. One passage I recall, which has every now and then thrilled through me, and does so yet.

" ' Man is one, and has one great heart :  
'Tis thus we feel, with a gigantic throb across the seas,  
Each other's rights and wrongs. '

"There is a masterful strength in such a selection. I used often in the slavery days repeat it, and it is good sentiment still, for we are still feeling each others' rights and wrongs."

Gordon's "Our India Mission" :

"I am reading Dr. Gordon's book, and find it interesting. It is refreshing and informing. There is not much of the mock-solemn about it ; none, indeed. One gets to feel that India is a real place, a place where real human beings live, a country such as humanity may be comfortable in as well as miserable. All my old impressions of India—indeed of heathendom—were that it was a vast sand bank, crowded by people, ignorant, besotted, without a ray of intelligence, going down under an awful pall of darkness to the pit. That there were bright skies, beautiful sunsets, green fields, bird songs, marriage festivals, laughter and gladness, harvest homes, did not occur to me. Nor did it ever enter my mind to enquire how the 'toiling millions,'

rolling about in the sand, could make a living or get bread. But we are past that period of superstition. What is needed in our missionary libraries and societies, and in the hands of our young, are books like this. Plain, frank, earnest. written from the point of view of common sense."

Duchess of Gordon and Bayard Taylor :

"I read Saturday and yesterday a delightful book of biography—the life of the Duchess of Gordon. She lived during the earlier half of this century, dying, a few years since, at the age of seventy. In early life she was worldly, and lived in worldly company. Becoming a subject of divine grace, she abandoned her worldliness, and gave herself resolutely to the service of the Master. Although so high in rank, and exposed to many temptations; she made her religion the rule of her practice, and in her home, which was almost a public place, she required all, guests as well as others, to conform to the demands of her conscience. Her experience was the same with all others of which I have read. As grace took possession of her, the vanities gave way. The cards, balls, etc., disappeared, and in their place was the worship of God. I admired the lady very much, and was greatly interested in the narrative

"This morning I was reading Bayard Taylor's description of the Mammoth Cave. It is beautiful, and gave me a better idea of that wonderful freak in nature than I ever had before. Away in the cave, far down under the ground, he found houses, in ruins, in which some consumptive persons had lived, under the illusion that it would assist them in getting well. Of course they died. His description of what their hollow coughing must have been in those sepulchral places was very impressive. It suggested to me the efforts we will make to save our lives. 'All that a man hath will he give for his life'—that was a wise remark for Satan to make. It shows he is well instructed in the weakness of human nature. If we would only be careful to the same extent of our souls, how it would develop our earnestness, and how it would turn the world into a place of prayer."

And thus the allusions run on. Sometimes it is to

Stanley's "Jewish Church," or Pressense, Munger, Mac-laren, Delitzsch, Emerson, Pascal, Alexander, Spurgeon, or Marcus Dods.

The methods of Church work employed in the pastorate at Washington were not novel, but sedate, and tested by time. The Sabbath services were on the common pattern of the dissenting churches. In later years the organ had been introduced into the praise services of all the meetings. It was done without friction, and was used to great advantage. During almost all the pastorate the pastor taught a Sabbath Bible-class. On Wednesday evenings the exercises of the prayer-meeting were of an informal, unconventional type. The meeting had not much method, was without restraint, and the pastor was the chief spirit. He was frequently at his best on such occasions, and stood among his people not at all as an instructor, but as the gifted conversationalist of a pleasant hour. The modern revival endeavors were unknown. Possibly had he been less busy in other directions, they might have been tried ; as it was, they were beyond his reach, and withal somewhat distasteful, even while a considerable measure of good in them was candidly recognized. Here, as in many other things, his early surroundings and training had left an indelible impression upon him. For example, in his views upon and methods of what is called "personal work":

"Personal work is certainly a great duty. It is a minister's duty, too, when he can do it. It requires care and skill. But it tells. The people should be made to feel that it is their work. A word from them by the way during the week would often be useful. 'Let him that heareth say, Come.' I preached somewhat in that vein last Sabbath night. 'Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.' Christ commanded the blind man to

be 'brought.' Instead of going himself to him, he desired others to bring him. He would train them by giving them a part in the service. The church that works thus is the one that is strong. But it is good to have a variety of view. I always reproach myself that I 'speak' so little personally. On the other hand, a lot of people have taken up the notion that all preachers have to do is to go around and beseech them to believe. They hold, too, that, although they know their duty, if they are not button-holed by some 'worker,' the blame of their perdition will be, not on themselves, but on the guilty Christians who did not look after them. I try now and then to explode that notion. Gail Hamilton has a most sarcastic essay somewhere on that point."

The effort was to make the most of pulpit opportunities, and upon the work there the chief reliance was placed. It is probably correct to say that for pastoral labors he had only a secondary aptitude. They were discharged with relish and effect, yet those of the study and pulpit were more to his mind. Calls upon parishioners, prompted by mere courtesy, were often something of a trial; yet if any fitting office was to be discharged, he attended with gladness. Upon one occasion he buried a victim of virulent small-pox, dying in another congregation, and saw the body in the grave, when friends declined to touch it. Much of the pastoral visitation of the time he called "gadding about," and was sometimes indignant at being required to do it. The sick excited his heartiest sympathy, and he hastened with the offices of the gospel. A tender friend and wise spiritual counsellor many such discovered in him. The shadows had been in his own home for years, and so he had learned the wants of sickness, and the mind of the Lord in afflictions. His aim was to visit all in his parish at least once in the year, and as frequently besides as circumstances might demand. To

the end of his life he devoted only the forenoons to study—the remainder of his time was given to pastoral and other labor. A few extracts from letters speaking of his pastoral experiences may not be uninteresting :

“This is November, though the blasts are not so ‘chill and surly’ as they will be after awhile. The winter will bring its pleasures, but I can find more in the milder weather. My pastoral work in the country I did, for the most part, during the earlier season. Some more of it I must do in the town, but that I can attend to at any time. It takes a vast amount of work to keep the run of the people, attending at the same time to the hundred and one calls that are constantly being made on one. There is something wrong in it. The people of our churches expect too much care from the pastors, without thinking how in claiming it they take him away from other employments that might be more valuable. No pastor can do much in the way of evangelism when he has so much required of him in the way of keeping people already in the church sweetened and cheerful. The pettiness that gathers about so much of the visiting is humiliating.”

Again :

“Your letter led me to think anew of the infinite advance you have made over me in personal grace and pastoral patience. The old ladies say to you, ‘I thought you had forgotten me’; and you actually feel good over it, and fall to thanking and praising them for thinking of you! They say that to me, and I am wounded, because it seems so much of a reflection. And so I have always felt. Sometimes, when tearing myself away from other duties and weary and worn, I have hurried off to see somebody and then have met the usual, ‘It’s about time,’ or ‘At last,’ or ‘I thought you had forgotten me.’ or ‘Don’t let it be so long again,’ etc. I have gone away all cut and scarred and disheartened. At such times I can only fall back on the texts relating to ‘Hardness,’ ‘Suffer all things,’ ‘The servant of the Lord must be meek.’ Even they do not satisfy me, and I fall to reasoning on ‘gimlets,’ ‘augers’ etc., and am not at peace till

I get down to the type-writer, where usually I can play away all the blues that gather about me.

“ I should have said, also, that thinking of the many other people who say ‘ thank you,’ and show themselves so glad when I go, is a remedial help. Not long since an old lady, dyspeptic, saw-edged, triturating, atrabilious, came in early to prayer-meeting and sat near the front. I went to speak to her, when she looked up, cloudily saying, ‘ Well, stranger.’ I had grace to say nothing, and have since gone to see her, thinking all the while how awkward she will feel when she gets to heaven, where people are all polite. I like to go to see the people, especially if I can do them good ; but it is, as usually carried on, not of much benefit. I have done too much of it ; a minister can be better employed reading, studying, making himself intelligent, and suiting himself to the work of his pulpit.

“ But I only began to say that the incident reminded me of the lengths I have to go, the steepes I have to climb, the seas I have to pass before reaching your attainment in ministerial excellence. It reminds us of the difference our feelings may make in our work. Suppose, after your experience you had gone to preach on visiting, etc. You would have done so with a genial glow in your soul over the fact that the dear lady was concerned lest you had forgotten her. I should, in the same circumstances, have felt injured, wired, clouded, and would thus have preached under a great disadvantage. Or, suppose, you had begun to write an editorial on the same subject. how you would have praised the people for their gratitude, considerateness, desire for the pastor's presence, etc., while I, at the same work, would have told of their ingratitude, impertinence, desire of notice, and all such things, which might have been full of injustice. And in general, doesn't it show how our temperaments, feelings, judgments, tell upon our work and help make us what we are ?”

Again he has a different experience :

“ Yesterday we had a visit to make in the country. Invited to dinner. It was wet, the roads muddy. I could have had pleasure in staying indoors. But they are pleasant people ; we had not been there for a long time ; the invitation was special,

and we had not been over-run with social engagements. I thought, also, of what the rural folk so often say, 'How are we to get to church each Sabbath if this little rain interrupts you?' And we had a delightful day, getting home in time for a helpful prayer-meeting."

Though acutely critical of the way in which the pastoral office is discharged, and, like other pastors, a little tired in spirit sometimes, by his experiences, he loved the work and appreciated the affection of his people. He writes :

"I know something about riding over the hills. Often I have to do it, but this year the people in the country have been healthy, and my work of pastoring has been mainly in town. I get deeply interested in the old, the sick, the unfortunate, etc., and expend, sometimes, too much feeling and labor on them. But we all need the experience that comes with such work. Thomas Arnold use to lament that at Rugby he had none of the influences that come from visiting the sick. And there are compensations. A year ago a family was moving away from the neighborhood, to whom I had shown kindness in times of affliction. The mother wept as she said her good-bye, remarking, 'Mr. Johnston, you have been a friend.' Her tones follow me yet. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction."

Having had his early theories about the whole matter of pastoral visitation, he later found it necessary to revise them. So we have him saying to a friend :

"You certainly did much hard work in visiting your people during the bad weather, and in the muddy roads. I know something of the toil of such a proceeding. As for myself, I have left the country people, for the most part, to take care of themselves during the winter, except when in sickness or death. When the roads get good I will try to visit them more. It used to be a theory with me that a pastor ought to be excused from much pastoral work, so that his main strength might be given

to preparing and preaching his sermons, and to furnishing his mind. Like many other theories, it gives way before a growing grace—as I hope, in my own case—and I now feel that no work is more of a duty, or is better for the people, than that of pastoral care. And my only trouble about it is that I have not more strength and time for it, and more facility in doing it. A mere visit may not be without its benefit, and yet a pastor ought to leave behind him, in the houses of the people to which he goes, the impression that he is a man of God, and that his life is near the Savior.’’

Few men have more fully accomplished this thing—the leaving the impression that they were men of God—than the writer of the extract given; and none have had nearer to their hearts the interests of their “beloved people”—his term of affection for his congregation. On June 18, 1888, was celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of his pastoral settlement. It was an ovation, alike from his people, his ministerial brethren, and the entire community. It was a “high day” in his history, and exhibited, not simply the hold his pulpit had taken upon men, but the power of the pastor’s personality—his genial, gentle, fragrant, Christian manliness. Few men meet after a quarter of a century such cordial, fervent-hearted expressions of good-will.

Perhaps no more fitting description of the pastor and preacher can be given than some extracts from an article by John H. Murdoch, Esq., who was with Dr. Johnston during all his settled ministry, having made profession of faith during his pastorate, and having been long associated with him in the session :

Dr. Johnston was not an eloquent man, in the sense in which that term is usually understood. He did not speak as one who had been drilled; his gestures were not studied, nor indeed always graceful; nor would his manner or style of delivery

at first, perhaps, greatly impress his hearers. Yet if real earnestness, unaffected effort to impart instruction, an uninterrupted flow of choice language, forcibly and pleasantly spoken, with clear, logical and original matter, constitute eloquence he was an eloquent preacher. His style of delivery changed perceptibly during the years of his pastorate; as a young man he moved about in the pulpit constantly, made many gestures, and was generally somewhat vehement in his manner; but toward the end of his life, and indeed for many years before, his manner was greatly toned down. He rarely moved from behind the desk, his gestures were less frequent but more graceful and expressive, and his style of speaking, while gaining, if possible, in earnestness, often partook more of the conversational than of the oratorical.

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Dr. Johnston was a *growing* preacher. He graduated from college and from the seminary, but he never graduated from his study. He kept himself also close to the real life of the day, so that few men were so fully informed on current events as was he. And the results of his study, his reading, his contact and association with men, and his ardent love for nature, always appeared in his sermons. And most and best of all, appeared the fact that he was daily walking close with his Master, and learning more and more of Him.

In no place, it always appeared to me, was he so delightfully interesting and instructive as in his prayer-meeting talks. He did not like to occupy very fully the time of the meeting by what he himself would say, and this was most noticeable during the latter part of his ministry; but whatever he said was said so easily, gracefully, and in such a pleasant, conversational way, that one could not but be pleased; and as he always had something original and forcible to say, his hearers were always impressed. His readiness, quickness and biblical learning, I recollect, were shown in a surprising way during a series of meetings continuing for a considerable time. He would have texts of Scripture read or repeated, without previous arrangement by all who would do so, and at once, as each passage was read, he would explain it, perhaps give a more literal transla-

tion, and apply the lesson contained in it, as easily and as well as if he had made special preparation on it.

Like Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, Dr. Johnston magnified his office. He felt and was not ashamed to say that God had highly exalted him in making him a preacher of the word, and while he was genial, happy, full of humor, fond of all innocent enjoyments, he never by word or deed lessened the esteem which those whom he met had for his office.

As a pastor he was eminently successful. Of a social, happy disposition, with easy manners, good conversational powers, an apparently inexhaustible store of information, and an earnest love for his people, it followed, as a matter of course, that his visits to and intercourse with the members of his congregation were pleasant and profitable. He made it a point, I think, to visit the families of his congregation at least once a year, in a social, pastoral way; not as often as some thought he should do, but far oftener than seemed possible, in view of the amount of other work he did, and the family cares which for some years rested upon him. Yet, while he could visit so pleasantly and profitably, this was not a part of the work in which he excelled; but if sickness, death, or trouble of any kind came to any of his people, then, if never before, they learned to know what a bearer of others' burdens he was, and that, not in an official way alone, but as a real friend and helper. At such a time nothing was permitted to keep him away, no matter at what cost of personal sacrifice to himself.

From the beginning of his pastorate until his strength began to fail, he was connected with and deeply interested in the Sabbath school. During nearly all of that time he was the teacher of the Bible class, which brought him in contact with and enabled him to exert an influence upon the young men and women of the congregation and the young men of the college; and I am sure many of the latter look back with pleasure to the hours spent in his class-room. He was eminently qualified as a teacher, which fact was abundantly shown in a union teachers' meeting, conducted here for some time. The original plan was that the different pastors of the town should each teach during one quarter, but so successful and satisfactory was Dr. Johnston's

teaching that he was kept in the position of leader until forced to resign on account of weakness, and with his retirement ended the meetings.

In all departments of the school his interest was displayed: he attended its teachers' meetings, he discussed its plans, he joined with us in the selection of books for the library, he aided in preparing for its entertainments, he was in constant sympathy and contact with its officers and teachers. Yet, in this, as in all his church work, he almost always put some others forward, working through them rather than himself being prominent.

His interest in the young people of his congregation was always marked, but it was an interest which grew more intense with time. Realizing fully the importance and the influence of the young in the work of the church, his constant aim was to keep a firm hold upon them from infancy, to use every proper means for their mental and spiritual advancement, and to train them for work by giving them something to do. Hence he was constantly on the alert for the discovery of new plans, and the young people's societies of various kinds were suggested and promoted by him, and were largely indebted for what success they had to his influence and encouragement.

I have said that in Sabbath school work he always put others forward, and the same was true, so far as possible, in other departments of church work. This was less true of him in some ways in his more youthful days, than after experience had taught him its advantages. He was so full of energy and zeal that it was natural that he should himself do what he saw was needed. He has often, however, told me that in this he made a mistake, and for many years his habit was, if possible, to have some one else do what naturally he would have delighted to do, and would have done so well. The result of this course is shown in the number of persons in his congregation who, on occasion, could successfully take part in public exercises or other church duties, and it is a pleasure now to recall how much satisfaction he had on his last public appearance, on "children's day," in June last, from the fact that, notwithstanding his being prevented by weakness from fully performing his part, the services were smoothly and successfully conducted by others.

Dr. Johnston was a wonderfully discreet man. Everything connected with the church was of interest to him, and received earnest thought and attention, yet neither elder, deacon, nor trustee could ever say that the pastor interfered with the work of his department. He was always ready, on proper occasions, with a hint or a suggestion, but it was never obtrusive, and most frequently it was made in private to some individual. We knew that his hand was on almost everything, but it was rarely made to appear that he was exercising any influence. During the whole time that he was our pastor an unusual degree of peace and harmony existed in the congregation—not because our Scotch-Irish blood was different from that of others, or that we were more saintly than they, but because, under the blessing of God, he, by his discretion in dealing with us and by the influence he had over us, was able to adjust differences, change conflicting opinions, induce the exercise of forbearance in love, and, in short, act as a general peacemaker. The number of storms he was enabled to avert, and the breaches he either prevented or healed, were not a few. For the good of the cause and for the love he bore for his people, he sought the things that make for peace, but never at the sacrifice of principle.

Dr. Johnston never knowingly allowed a serious fault or sin to go unnoticed. By a personal interview, not of the magisterial order, but tenderly and lovingly, he would strive to bring the erring one to a sense of his sin. Never did he advocate discipline, unless the fault was a glaring one, or the person committing it was contumacious, and even then, though his rebuke of the sin would be plain and unsparing, his tenderness toward the sinner would be touchingly shown.

He was continually watching for souls, and he sought to catch them by all means in his power. One method very frequently used by him was sending a note through the mail to persons whom he wished to influence, and many, very many of his people have reason to be thankful for the tender interest thus displayed in them. He gave the young the impression always that he was expecting them to make a profession of their faith as the natural result of their position, their privileges, and their training; and nothing appeared to afford him greater pleasure than to bring before the session young people who had been trained in the Sabbath school.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE CHURCHMAN.

THE early ecclesiastical surroundings of Dr. Johnston were not well adapted to develop piety, or to induce one to seek the ministry. They were the scene of debates and contentions and unhallowed zeal, and talk about "witnessing for the truth" over matters of no sort of importance. He frequently alludes to it as giving him his ideal of congregational life, and is often surprised and thankful that those elements were not found in his own and most other Christian congregations. He speaks of it in connection with his last visit to the old home :

"I made a little trip, with Mrs. Johnston and the two children, to Franklin county, where I revisited the old home, and introduced it to the others. I did so out of a sense of duty to myself, for I had not been there for nearly twenty years, and to the others, for they had not been there at all. The effect upon me of what I saw was depressing. \* \* \* Our church there is, I fear, gone beyond recovery. It was the victim, first, of the stubbornness and bigotry of one man, a minister. Then it fell into killing disputes, and literally wore itself down into its present disability. For some wise reason in providence, the man who began the trouble lived—in the 'Cove'—to be an old man, useless, with no influence, not in a church, a universal critic."

There is no doubt that his exceeding antagonism to Church processes and his wide charity toward all Chris-

tians came by natural revulsion of feeling, as in the case of so many others, from surroundings not normal to proper Christian conceptions of the life and work of the Church. It is fortunate when the repulsion they exert is not more rigorous, driving sensitive young men without the pale. Mere distinctions, technicalities, and traditions, with quarrels in their defence, have done a woeful work, alike in sending off into other denominational folds, or in wholly unchurching the seed of the Church.

Throughout his life Dr. Johnston was a zealous and intelligent promoter of the interests of the denomination as he understood them. He had no respect for traditions because they were traditions, and he was fully alive to the demands of the times, and our need of adaptation thereto. He did not count the age especially wicked, and recognized its right to lay requirements upon the Church, to which she is in duty bound to respond. It never entered his mind for a moment that wisdom died with the fathers, and that we are called to "receive and hold" everything they judged to be "attainments." He therefore received customs and creeds as subject to inspection, and revision, and reversal, if the best light was cast in that way

Yet, withal, he was profoundly conservative in the great fundamentals of the faith. The distinguishing doctrines of orthodox Christianity he loved with all his heart, and preached with persistent power. Even in many matters of ancient custom and denominational peculiarity, he was conservative, simply because he saw no need of change.

Upon the late matters of controversy in the Church, he had very decided views, being in favor of the revision of the Psalter and the introduction of instrumental music

into the worship of the Church. He had most pronounced opinions especially upon the latter matter, although, as he writes to a friend, and as the *United Presbyterian* will show, he carried them in very slight measure into his editorial work. The debate, as carried on in the editorial columns of that journal, was mainly by the hands of others. After the introduction of an instrument into his church, his feelings as well as judgment became very fully enlisted, owing somewhat to an effort of differing ministerial brethren to secure a secession of membership from the congregation upon the basis of anti-instrumentalism. He expressed his early views upon instrumental music as follows :

“I hope our music reformation will go on. It will greatly please me if organs, or some equivalents, are put into all or many of the churches. We are a hard kind of a people. Our education has been through the will and intellect. The imagination has been almost wholly neglected. The consequence is, we are out of sympathy with much of the real feeling of the day. And it is not healthy to be so. There is nothing gained, but much lost by being behind in such things. Our style of piety did for the days of the reformation ; for the stormy times of Scottish contention ; for the early days of our American history ; but it is out of date as a religion suited to our present conditions. We need more flexibility, more adaptation to the wants of the period through which we live. Good music will help us to this, and I hope we may have it.”

Again :

“I have heard but little lately of the music question ; haven't been in the city for some days. I was speaking yesterday of the great organ Jerome says was in the Temple at the time of the coming of Christ, and indulged in the imagination of himself and his disciples sitting there to listen to it. I suspect they often did. On tired and weary days it would be a solace to them to drink in the sweet music. Surely the Saviour loved it. It could not have been otherwise. It shocks me to think of him

frowning on it. I cannot believe he refused it either in temple or synagogue. His great soul was lifted, I know, by the harmony of sweet sounds. This talk of his having opposed it, etc., is a detraction that borders on profanity."

And again :

"The discussion of the music still goes on. It alternately amuses and disgusts me. To my mind it is all much ado about nothing. I would not give a fig for all the principle there is in it, and as for the practical results, they are too few and small to justify all this stupid writing. And yet, on the question of expediency, I would allow all latitude for argument. Isn't it queer how much of a tendency exists in the average United Presbyterian mind to settle about some small thing and make it a rallying point of orthodoxy, prejudice, or something else? We seriously lack the out-looking spirit—the grand spirit of freedom that contemplates achievements upon broad and broadening theaters, and that starts the enthusiasms. Most of our church life is devoted, not to stirring up the fire in the morning, letting the air in while the ashes sift out and are carried to the muck heap, but to slacking it down in a sobering evening with moist slack, that it may smoulder there till it burns itself away. I do tell you, this perpetual repression we practice is stifling and destructive. Faithful we ought to be and true, but in the generous exercise of judicious liberty, and not in the cramped earnestness of bondage. The genius of our Church has spent itself in playing whippoor-will over its nest of distinctives, without rising up on wings as an eagle to breathe the good air of God, and learn the beauty and fruitfulness of his vast spiritual possessions. It is the revolt against this disposition, together with a mutiny against a law that is as groundless as one made in opposition to wash-basins or walking-sticks, that has brought us into this silly fight over organs."

His later views were even more pronounced than these given. With many others, he believed the life of the Church was closely bound up in the controversy. With the disposition of some of the earlier writers in

favor of the organ, to make it a scriptural question, he had no sympathy. His own thought ranked it clearly among the incidentals, to be determined wholly upon the basis of expediency. Upon that ground it has been finally rested, not only by his own denomination, but by almost all Christendom.

With respect to the revision of the Confession, as now coming up in an affiliated denomination, and as it seemed to be upon us from the question of marriage with the deceased wife's sister, he had the same pronounced views. He writes :

"I learn that in certain quarters scolding is going on against your 'incestuous' preachers. I am sorry for it, yet the old law will be gotten off the sooner if the usual violence is displayed. There is nothing like vigorous effort to execute such enactments to secure their repeal. The Confession will have to be 'revised' even by United Presbyterians. I suspect, too, if the question is opened up, now when times are critical, something more will be attempted than simply to get rid of the bothersome 'sister.' I wish it could be avoided. The creed questions are troublesome. One hardly knows how to treat them. \* \* \* An evil thing about them is they are made denominational shibboleths, and so sometimes get an importance before the people they do not deserve. I often think of the reputation our Church gets because of its peculiarities. The mass of the people, especially those who do not know us well, regard us as a cross, secluded, morose set, from whom it is a duty to keep away. We do not think we deserve it. Yet many of our kindly Christian rivals in the evangelistic field like to propagate those notions ; with what stretch of flexible conscience is best known to themselves. Such things are, perhaps, inevitable. However, a method of statement of theories and tests, and their argumentation and 'defence,' may also bring odium. Much of this—the worst—comes from utterly inflexible extremists. A Church of the type some desire and profess to represent, must be unpopular. I should not live in a denomination of that sort.

But then it is a caricature. Outside people, however, do not know that, and the inside people refuse it. As to revision itself, we have done a good deal at it in the past, and, if occasion is found, why not in the future?"

His regard for our Christian heritage and his admiration for the "fathers" who secured it for us, was most profound, and yet he had no idea that all they held was to be the faith of their children. He regarded them as mortal men, and retained his right of judgment upon their character and doctrine. His attitude toward the past is shown by a letter to his sister, in which he mentions the "Old Puritan":

"A peaceful morning. Clouds are all about, with mists hanging low, half-shrouding the hills, and hanging like veils among the trees. A 'thaw' is coming on, I suspect. For some days the sleigh bells have been jingling merrily, though the sleighing has been very poor. Ice, with a thin covering of snow. The snows have all passed by us this year—heavy in the West and East, but none here. But February may bring us our share. Did you see the beautiful eclipse Saturday night? I was clear: not a cloud, and we could see it beautifully. If it is strange in itself, it is more strange in the fact that we—that is, our men of science know all about its causes, and can tell to the minute its appearance and departure. The universe becomes more and more a wonder to me. This earth is only a speck compared with the solar system, or as part of it, and the solar system is insignificant compared with the whole. The old Puritan had an advantage of us. He thought of this earth as the greater part of the universe, and man its lord, for whom all things were made, and about whom they all revolved. A great part of his 'high thinking' came from this fact. It tends to reduce our estimate of the man when we look at him in the light of the revelations of a telescope."

And to Dr. Boyd he speaks in much the same way:

"A little reading of times one hundred years ago has been

useful for me. How thankful we should be that we live now. The wickedness and stupidity of those days were astonishing. The vileness of the people, in some respects, was distressing. We have a notion they were so good; that society was so far ahead of ours of to-day. It is all wrong. The century's growth has been as great in sense as in material thrift. Under the shadow of the old Puritans there were practices that, even in history, fill one with revolting. So let us have hope."

And again :

"Many of the things that we are now hearing, as if for the first time, and on account of which we denounce men as heretics and schismatics, were long ago acknowledged by the foremost of the leaders in the Church. The influence of our fathers in Scotland was one of the most powerful instances of repression—to call it so—that the world ever saw. They took up a style of living, forced on them in great measure by the persecutions of their day, and under this they buried enough of real truth to have fashioned several systems. I sincerely believe they were intolerant violators of Christian liberty, and yet, under their direction the religious liberty we now enjoy was cultivated and shaped, and they pursued a kind of life that must be, as respects its many virtues, the admiration of all time. It confuses me to know such things. The liberty of the gospel they had no notion of. Having, however, a substantial foundation of real truth, they built up a community of religious power such as the world has never seen."

In somewhat the same strain he speaks of the sombre, gloomy character of a good deal of the old-time religion :

\* \* \* "But we ought to be cheerful. It is a duty—to ourselves and all others. I see many bad effects resulting from the dreadful 'dark ages' through which we passed here. I believe we too much obscure the joy of the gospel. The radiancy of the cross we bury under its dreariness. 'All hail!' were among the last words of the Saviour. His very last were full of cheer and hope. Taine says, 'England reared a gloomy people: being gloomy, they naturally accepted the Christian faith.'

There is something in it. That is, they took to it as, in its perverted way, it was presented to them. We have kept ourselves too much under the dominion of the old days of blood and tears, perpetuating the dispositions, that were real then, in a life when they could be nothing more than fictitious. The tunes, for instance, which we have sung, minors, slow, sad, sepulchral, depressing, have been such as were made and used when men hid in caves, or worshiped as driven to the moors. We have kept, also, at our communion services, the spirit of the old times when they were occasions of meeting amid perils, suggesting the hard times that had intervened since the former feast, and the dreary uncertainties that were before them. How I remember the drooping, hushing, almost shuddering influence of old Coleshill, sung as the saints—now nearly all departed to sing the ‘new song’—mustered about the little communion table in the home church. To my mind the sacrament meant sorrow, pain, and a queer, half-unconscious sensation that to be religious was to be very miserable indeed. The feeling followed me home after the services, and gave a weird, jaundiced air to the clouds and sky, and a threnodic tone to the music of the birds and bees. If it had not been for the holy life of my good father—whose real piety transfigured all travesties—I should have shunned rather than sought the Church and its offices.”

With respect to many of the controversies and opinions, he writes :

“The essential truth of the gospel is, however, not bound up in any of these theories. As for myself, I desire to believe in Christ, serve the Lord, grow in grace, and be received at last as a child at home.”

Again he writes concerning phenomena he observed in the entire Christian Church, and of Paul as an example of Christian breadth in doctrine and purpose :

“Possibly it is better not to have a faith too confident respecting things that are, as among different men, questionable. The great bottom truths—these we ought to believe in with all our hearts. The worrying thing is, so many men have all their

earnestness in the outside, temporary matters, seeming to care but little for the established and essential ones. They talk and fight about the leaves away out on the extremities of the branches—leaves already yellow and sere, and about to fall and decay, while the roots and trunks are left without interest.

“I was preaching Sabbath on the words, ‘That I might save some’ and it led me to discuss Paul’s devotion to important things to the exclusion of the small, the insignificant. He could be all things to all men. that he might ‘save some.’ He wished to save the Gentiles that he might, through emulation. ‘save some’ of the Jews. It was on this his heart was set. His whole soul went out towards the salvation of souls and the building up of the kingdom. Necessity was laid on him to ‘preach the gospel.’ I know no man who is so misunderstood. The masses of the people have no conception of his great-heartedness; his broad generosity; his supreme contempt for pettiness; his devotion to the really worthy and noble. Not alone among Unitarians, but even in evangelical circles, he is thought of as a sectarian, intensely bent on accomplishing his work by extinguishing the most liberal sentiments of those whom he brought under his power.”

Dr. Johnston was of those who heartily believed in the “mission of our Church,” although he did not define it as some do. Primarily it was, in his thought, evangelism. The Church is to live, and grow, and thrive, and be a power, not so much through her distinctives, as by preaching the fundamentals of the gospel, and pushing herself thereby upon the world. Denominationalism has no helpful vitality, except as it is the adjunct of an evangelically aggressive Church. To be effectively aggressive he felt it must belong to its times. In the doctrines of grace and closely related truth he was most conservative, while elsewhere he was disposed to be as flexible as doctrinal principle and ecclesiastical allegiance would permit.

One of the fruitful topics in the “Brevities” was

Church education. It was profoundly recognized that the day for borrowing education from other denominations and the time for meagre denominational opportunities had passed. There was an almost constant current of reference, therefore, in the paper to the colleges and seminaries, their professors, work, endowment, students, and kindred items. That the Church may reach her best measure of power, he felt she must have a better education, and his purpose was to excite interest in this department of her work. For years not a session of the Theological Seminaries opened or closed, nor a period of college commencements came, when he did not introduce the claims of the institutions and of the young men in some way to his readers. One of his very frequent topics of discussion in the Ministerial Association and elsewhere was, "Ministerial Culture," in some of its phases. Enough manuscript material remains upon this subject to make a fair-sized volume. At one time he headed a movement for the better endowment of the Allegheny Theological Seminary, which, while it was not successful, displayed his interest in these things. For a number of years he was a member of the Board of Directors of that institution, and also of the Westminster College. In 1873, upon the retirement of Dr. David A. Wallace from the Presidency of the Monmouth College, the Faculty of the Xenia Theological Seminary nominated him for the vacant place. The Rev. J. G. Carson, D. D., having written him concerning their action, elicited the following reply :

“WASHINGTON, PA., April 29, 1878.

“REV. J. G. CARSON.—*Dear Cousin*.:—I have received and thought over your letter. Some news, of course, of the Monmouth business had previously reached me. At the first I

thought it was only an idle rumor which had gathered about it a few foreign accretions, and which would speedily die away under the sunshine of the opening spring. Afterwards, I understood it was taking shape in such a way as to require my thought. But, though I had heard of it in a good many ways, no one wrote me directly asking an expression of my opinion and feeling till you did so. I have not, consequently, made any enquiries in regard to it, nor have I said ought to any of the brethren, excepting my most intimate friend, Mr. McLean, respecting my impressions. An indirect request came to me from Monmouth, but I did not respond to it.

“Perhaps I do not need to tell you that I have no taste that would lead me to desire or accept such a position, even though it was offered me in the most flattering manner. It would lift me into a publicity from which I would sensitively shrink ; it would take me from my retirement and the congenial studies of my pastorate ; it would set me to planning and managing and governing ; it would require me to meet the demands of a board and the turbulence of a set of boys, and it would otherwise subject me to a kind of life that is utterly distasteful to me. I do not at present think of a single consideration in this connection that would lead me to desire or even favorably think of the post and work.

“But, feelings aside, I hope grace has been so given me that I can keep mere feeling from coming into strong competition with duty, and it is from the standpoint of conscience that I wish to answer your enquiry. Thinking it all over, I cannot persuade myself that I have any of the qualifications that are deemed necessary for a successful college president. What I might have been under a different training I cannot venture to guess ; but as it is I feel sure I am not adapted to the kind of duty to which such a place would devote me. In this quiet pastorate, among a sedate people, and interested in my study and books, I have tended more and more towards the sequestered and contemplative, finding my enjoyments in my work and in the half seclusion of my calling ; shrinking, also, from the rougher and ruder ways of a more public life. My business faculty I have not tried to develop, and the spirit of active enter-

prise I have let more and more subside. In the same way, while I have pursued my studies with some diligence, and in considerable variety, I have not made technical scholarship an object, and both in the classics and other departments of culture I am rusty and inefficient. True, I could furbish up, and by assiduous effort, gain a footing in this direction, but it would be a struggle for me to undertake it, and one I could only be persuaded to make under the strongest sense of duty. In addition to all this I feel I am doing some good here, and cannot at present find a reason why I should desire to cut myself loose from a place where Providence, if he have taught me with many stripes, has yet greatly blessed me and the work of my hands.

“I have written all this with a frankness and fullness which I could not have ventured on if communicating with a stranger, but I wish you to know my mind fully. I am well aware that the part of ambition would be to strive for the position, at least to struggle for the honor of an election which I might decline. I have some ambition, but it does not lead me in that direction. I do wish to grow in grace, to build myself up in spiritual power, to gain more facility, under the blessing of the Holy Spirit, in preaching the gospel, and to make myself a useful servant of the Master. The privilege and joy of preaching the unsearchable riches are only rising in me to a true experience, and I cannot think Providence means I should relinquish such a work just when my heart is telling me it is the noblest and the best. Worldly ambition I have fought against, and whatever tatters and shreds of it remain with me I long more earnestly to cast away, that Jesus may have my all, as I consecrate myself wholly to Him.

“I say all this, but cannot say, of course, if the position were offered me I would not consider it. I would do so with all seriousness, feeling Providence was calling me to a test of my judgment and faith. But I could only do so, with all these prepossessions against it, and under—as it appears to me at present—an invincible conviction that it would be my duty to decline.

“I cannot but feel grateful to the brethren who have thought me worthy of such mention. Appreciating it to the full, I feel

humbled under it, for it reveals to me how little they know of weakness, and how much I must be deceiving my best friends. Be kind enough to thank your faculty for their undeserved suffrage, and to accept the assurance that I will try to live so as to be more worthy of such notice in the future."

He also writes to his sister concerning the same matter :

"I have a letter from Rev. J. G. Carson, telling me I have been unanimously nominated to the Monmouth presidency by the Xenia Faculty. He wishes to know my feeling in respect to it. The way of ambition would be to hold out the thought that I would likely accept, so as to get the honor of the election, but I will take the honest way, and tell Mr. Carson that my feelings are all against it, and that nothing of the kind must be done with my consent. I have no taste for the work, nor do I think I have the most essential qualities. At the same time I feel gratified that so excellent gentlemen as those of Xenia and others of whom I know would give me the compliment of a nomination to such a responsible post."

So it came about that the nomination, which would certainly have elected him to one of the chief official positions of the Church, was not carried before the Senate of the College. Had it been done, it is quite certain he would have been chosen to the post.

From the same institution another honor came to him in the same year. He thus speaks of it to a brother :

"*My Dear Brother*:—Your letter has been received. I accept your congratulation in whatever sense you prefer. You know my estimate of the D. D. business, and hence do not need an explanation. Since I was to have it, I am glad it comes from such a distance, and in circumstances which divest it of the mercenary considerations which surround so many of the titular attachments. I try to profit by the good opinions my brethren have of me, as also to improve by their blame. And as those gentlemen of the West have said they think me wor-

thy of the distinction they intend, I will make the effort to show my appreciation by devoting myself more sedulously to the duties of my calling. If I am before the world thus advertised, I do not wish to prove it altogether false, and will seek to cultivate such a dignity, propriety, and thorough piety as becomes one committed to the duty of serving God. Whatever you can do to help me in these attainments, I shall regard as a favor coming from a friend."

In 1884 he was a delegate to the Pan Presbyterian Council, held in Belfast, Ireland. The journey abroad afforded him a fine opportunity for his gift as a correspondent, and a series of letters was addressed to the *United Presbyterian*, abounding in fine descriptions of localities and occasions, and acute criticisms of men and things. He had been appointed to prepare a paper on "The Popular Press," which was read before the Council. It is fully the equal of anything of that meeting, and by far the superior of most of the papers. The later action of the Church in withdrawing from the Alliance he very much deprecated, inasmuch as the policy of isolation tends to perpetuate that line of Church history, which had, in his view, hampered and hindered us in the past. For the Alliance itself he had no great admiration; indeed, he regarded it as somewhat a means to personal ends on the part of certain managers; but he felt that withdrawal, on the whole, weakened the denomination, both within and without, and tended to excite contempt alone in a good many quarters. However, he can speak for himself:

"I regretted exceedingly that the Church was cut off from the Alliance. Not that I care for the Alliance; it is of no use, I fear. But our cutting loose will bring upon us unlimited opprobrium. All the papers will class us with bigots, and fairly, too. We cannot have what we want—therefore, we will have nothing. The 'standing aloof' policy will not answer.

Our hope is in dignified devotion to our own, while keeping up the natural and spiritual relation with the rest of the Christian world that our Christian faith provides for. Christianity—oneness with Christ and a life in him—is better in these days than a denominational isolation. No Church can prosper that takes to solitudes.”

He was not disposed to be a “reformer,” as the term is commonly used, and gives thus his views :

“Our Church has this evil in it—it is driving too far in the direction of reform. So many of our ministers are given up to some of the outer efforts at saving society by associations, etc. The temperance question fills some ; National Reform absorbs others. They not only take up with these things themselves, but conclude they must be the policy of the Church. The men who ought to oppose them do not like to do so ; they stand aside and let them have their way. But they must be opposed, and the Church must have its policy shaped on a more comprehensive basis. Any Church that permits itself to be considered cranky, must fall behind ; drop out of sympathy, and fail. There is a broad-minded, magnanimous earnestness, which, true to right human instincts, is necessary to success. The ministers who feel this and are able to show it ought to have an understanding that they will do so.”

For Church courts he had not much relish, except as a place of meeting the brethren. Yet he was always found at the Presbytery, and usually at Synod, even while its meetings brought little profit. Here is a typical description of his experience at Synod :

“My one day at Synod amused me. The deceased wife's sister, electing professors, and the Third Party—those were all. I suspect there were some ‘religious’ exercises after I left.”

He urged helpful programmes of papers and addresses for such meetings, and not simply something of a bony and sapless sort, such as Synods are distinguished

for preparing. In the greater court he rarely presented himself in discussion, and was not very tolerant of those who spent the time in debate of details. Upon a few occasions he was a member of the General Assembly ; the last time in 1887, the meeting being in Philadelphia. He thus speaks of it :

“ I had much pleasure in the Missions Committee, though it took me some time to get the run of its business and feel at home in helping the work. We have no mission stations in our Presbytery, so that I have no contact with such business. The work in the great West interested me. After being a week in familiar relations with those who are doing it, and learning something of the vast opportunities of the Church—its responsibilities, too—I could not listen without amazement to the trivial discussions of the Assembly. Think, with all the real work of the day on our hands, of an Assembly spending whole half days in rabid talk about tobacco and unfermented wine, to say nothing of the cases of appeal.

“ The Assembly waked me up somewhat. I actually look at Assemblies with a different feeling. The years I spent here, loaded and worn with my sicknesses, unfitted me for such work as they impose. I lost my place in them. This time I found it all different, yet, hampered with the thought of lost experience and want of acquaintance with the business. I should now like to go back next year, and for two or three years. I believe, too, that the system of sending a few men during successive years would be the true one. In the line of the business one year, they would be prepared for doing it the following one, while under our present plan they forget and fall out of sympathy.”

He has passed, however, from the courts of men into the court of the Most High, and from the General Assembly of the denomination of his birth and service to the General Assembly and Church of the First Born, whose names are written in heaven, and to methods and work under the tuition of the saints who have gone before.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE EDITOR.

FROM the beginning of his work in Washington, Dr. Johnston freely used his pen for the press. The Church periodicals and the local papers were chiefly employed as the medium of reaching the public. Of these, the *Evangelical Repository*, *Youth's Evangelist*, and *Christian Instructor* contained the most of his earlier productions. The latter, perhaps, most of all. The numerous communications in it from Washington, Pa., signed with an asterisk, were from him. They run over a great range of subjects. The striking thing about the series is its variety. Here are some of the titles: "Commentaries," "Religious Biography," "Ventilation," "Winter," "Oratory," "Colored Orphans," "Jefferson," "Southern Education," "Travel," "Magazines," "Catholic Influence," "Sincerity—Faith," "Apostatizing Influences," "Elders' Convention," "The Gallows," "Kathrina." In the *Evangelical Repository*, from about 1863, a good many articles bearing his name will be found. The titles of some of them are as follows: "The Blacks," "The Prospect,"—a vigorous discussion of the national outlook—"Competent Support," "An Old Almanac," "Mahomet," "The Pastor as a Literary Man," "Oliver Cromwell," "John Halybur-

ton," "Caleb," "Paul's Fifth Visit to Jerusalem." Some of them are of more than usual length for magazine articles. His mind seized upon everything that came in its way, and much of it was made to take form under his pen. He seemed to treat almost everything with equal vigor, and with hints of the rare grace which in later years marked his writings. There is a rough edge, however, and frequently a bluntness, about the early composition which later wholly disappeared. Indeed, there is a crudity of thought and a lack of careful literary skill which teaches an impressive lesson as to processes by which genius comes fully into blossom. However, he was read with pleasure throughout the Church, and responded with enlarged gifts of pleasing and helpful thought.

About 1863 he began a series of letters to children in the *Youth's Evangelist*, which continued for several years, being rarely interrupted during the period. They are dated from "Sober Cottage," and signed "Uncle Jeremy." From their tone and the entire atmosphere they carried, the impression was current that one of the fathers of the Church was their writer. To many it was an astonishment, in later years, to meet their author, and find him scarcely yet in middle age. One of the curious items of his history was the disposition of a very few to ecclesiastically prosecute him for masquerading under grey hairs! The fiction was felt to be a moral outrage, for which nothing but satisfaction in the reverend courts of the Church could atone! Of course all this sprang from the few who insisted on calling the novel "a lie," and who had no adequate comprehension of how the same problem of moral honesty is involved in the parables of Scripture. The victim of this zealotry against

“corruption” laughed at it in after years, but, like a good many others of later time, under like provocations, he was not drawn any closer to the traditions thereby.

Probably no series of its kind ever took faster hold upon the youth of a denomination than these same letters of “Uncle Jeremy,” and certainly none ever exerted a more healthful influence. Some of us feel their impulse until this day. Things were seen in a fresh and yet just light, and, sitting with the old man in those short hours, what beautiful and inspiring pictures were beheld through the windows of “Sober Cottage”! Always a lover of children, the children of the Church loved him! As much to refresh the memories of the boys and girls of that period as to show how the work was done, two or three letters are inserted :

“SOBER COTTAGE, April, 1867.

“*Dear Children*.:—In a copy of the *Evangelist* about a month ago there was a picture representing a family at their worship. It was very pretty, and I felt sorry while looking at it that it was a scene so seldom witnessed in the families of our countrymen. We often read of children going supperless to bed, but there are thousands more who go prayerless to their rest and sleep, and that is ten times worse. The old worship scenes at Poplar Hill are still fresh in my mind, and ever shall be. Have I ever written you of them? I have in my possession the old leather-backed Psalm Book and Bible from which father read and sang. The little paper mark yet sticks where he left it. The backs and leaves of both books were broken and torn, but he carefully glued them together, and they are thus firm and safe. I think I see him yet, sitting at the little mahogany table, holding his book out toward the light, and announcing the Psalm. And I seem to hear him draw his breath in a short sigh of reverence, and then begin the tune. It was often Bangor, Rochester, Coleshill—he only used two or three others. He sang loud and strong, and was joined by mother and the rest, while I helped with some unstudied bass. His order was first to read

the portion of Psalms to be sung, then make a short prayer, then sing, read, and conclude with a prayer. He told me, 'Mr. Pringle taught him that way,' and he never deviated from it. And this was the practice every night and morning as regular as the rising and setting of the sun. No headache, nor 'don't feel very well,' nor press of business, nor anything short of positive inability, was ever allowed to interpose. On Sabbaths when we had no preaching, we had worship at noon. Besides being good as an act of devotion, it was an intermission between Boston, Harvey, and Muckarsie. Are there not many families in which this letter will be read where such a practice might be profitably adopted and carried on? On summer mornings our Psalm songs used to sound away out on the meadow, the voices mingling with those of the blackbirds and larks, that gathered on the trees as if to hear us, and with the gurgle of the stream that rippled near the door. I remember a dog that used to lie in the yard on such occasions and howl loudly, though never in good harmony with our Bangor and Coleshill. Was it singing or only letting on? But I can only mention now the worship occasions of the dark days of our autumn—dark, not because of the shortened hours, or the clouds that gathered over and hooded the mountain, but dark because the death-angel was spreading his wings over our windows. Father lay in bed, and, when he sang he sang the same old tunes and the same Psalms as of his days of health. One morning mother stopped singing, and was weeping. After worship I said, 'Mother, why did you weep?' 'Ah!' she answered, 'this was the first morning he was not able to sing!' True enough! the angels were taking him piece by piece up to the heaven above. This morning they had carried off his voice, and we knew that soon he would be all up there worshipping around the throne! Little children, do you all have worship in your families? If not, could you not have some to-night? Try, and oblige

"UNCLE JEREMY."

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"SOBER COTTAGE, Dec., 1863.

"*My Dear Little Friends*:—Besides the inkstand, three Bibles, several other books, a photographic album, a pair of scissors

and some newspapers, there lies on my table my *Diary*. And as I see it lie here, it suggests to my mind some thoughts which may be interesting and profitable to you. It is a long time since I began to keep one—many, many years, and you may well suppose I have a goodly pile of it by this time. At first the daily record was short, for I aspired to nothing more than to say what I did on a certain day, or what kind of a day it was; thus: 'June 5th, hoeing corn—clear and pleasant'; or a little later, 'Aug. 1st, making hay—cloudy in the morning—clear day'; or farther on still, 'Jan. 6th, hunting rabbits—quite frosty.' Then after a while I began to go to college, when, having more time and some literary desire, it became a habit with me to write more lengthily. I described the beauties of the morning, the dew drops, the rising sun, the rosy sky, or the sober colored beauties of the evening; or the gorgeous grandeur of the night, with its moon and stars and melancholy sounds; or the thunder storm, as I watched it gathering in such wrath along the mountains west of Poplar Hill; or the wintry winds, as they whistled around the corners of the old Stone Mansion, or moaned amid the branches of the cedar and pine near my window, or swept the snow with hurricane rapidity down the meadow,—all this, and whatever else I would see, grand, beautiful or strange.

"Then I learned to write of my studies, then of my engagements in life, then of the great questions agitated in the world of church or state, or whatever it might be. At college and a while afterwards, I was very lengthy. Now I am brief. A few minutes at my diary is enough. Still I write, and hope to continue at it as long as I live.

"Could not some of you, if not all, keep diaries in which to sketch characters, describe scenery, discuss news, record incidents, etc.? You could write your impression of your homes and surroundings. You could say something about the war; you could write of your Sabbath school, your teacher, your superintendent, of all connected with it. You could mention what the *Youth's Evangelist* is like, how glad you are to get it, and how much you labor for its pages. And I do not doubt that you could write a good description of this dear old Sober

Cottage and its serious occupant, your Uncle Jeremy! It would be pleasant for you to do so, I think, and, after a few years, if you be spared, it will be delightful for you to read what you now write. I took a look through my volumes a few days ago, and oh, it was so pleasant! How many dear faces of departed friends came into view as I read their names! How many recollections of sanctified spots were strengthened! How many mercies of an ever kind and merciful God were noticed, as detailed on so many pages! As I read, I wished there were earlier dates. How nice to have our early thoughts and history, and penmanship and style of composition in a diary! Now, will not some of you begin to keep one right away? Get your fathers or your mothers to get a book or some paper, and set about the work at once. If you do, you will do a great good to yourself and greatly please your

UNCLE JEREMY."

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"SOBER COTTAGE, February, 1867.

"*Dear Children* :—I have just been examining a photographic reprint in vignette style of my sainted mother. The wrinkles on her forehead, the curve of her lips, and every line of her features are just as familiar to me as though I had seen them yesterday, and studied them as she rocked her chair in the sitting room at Poplar Hill. I distinctly remember the day the picture was drawn, from which this print has been made. It was a clear, sharp, cold day of winter, made all the more beautiful by a deep, all-enshrouding snow. I drove her to town in the sleigh, and she carried her cap in a box, with some other indoor articles of dress, which were put on and adjusted in the room of the artist. In that room we staid all day, Mr. Zellers working with his plates and chemicals and instruments, mother patiently submitting to his professional requirements, and I looking out at the sleighs and people on the streets, inwardly wishing myself at home to sled down the meadow hill! One or two incidents I remember. About noon, Mrs. Z. brought us some sweet cake on a plate, but mother declined tasting it, lest it should produce headache. Strange to say, however, the kind lady carried away an empty plate, and I could see none of her delicious cake left behind her. There was an article in the room,

something like a brush, on the back of which was printed in large letters—'HANDSOFF.' I wondered what a '*handsoff*' was, and stroked its velvety surface with my fingers and back of my hand; only learning late in the evening that 'hands off' was a 'touch not' warning to curious meddlers. Is it not strange that we will recollect such incidents as these, and yet forget entirely things that are far more important? A little higher up the street than that artist's room, stood the old church where I attended worship. I easily remember the old stoves, and how I used to sit in the seat next to one of them, and spell out: 'Mount Pleasant Iron Works,' and wonder how they printed on such hard surface. And I recollect many of the scribblings on the backs of the seats, and the velvet tassels hanging from the pulpit, and how the minister looked when he rose, lifted up his hand, and said, 'Let us pray.' But I have forgotten nearly all his excellent sermons. Some traces of them linger yet indistinctly, but generally they are forgotten. He preached of faith and love, and repentance, and pointed us to a kind, forgiving God, and urged us to go to Christ and be saved. A few of his texts I remember; but the great body of his preaching is lost to me, except, perhaps, in its influence, by the blessing of the Spirit of God, who has been more mindful of me than I have of myself. It is of far more importance to me that I should recollect these words of life, than the little incidents of every day life that occurred during my boyhood; but they are gone. Try, my little friends, to do better than I did. Use your minds so, that when as old as I, you can look back to childhood and recall many precious lessons of our Saviour. Old Nellie and the green-backed sleigh have both passed away. Mother has long since gone to sit for the great Artist, who paints eternal pictures of the soul, and gives them a living presence. All have passed away as completely as the snow that enrobed the valley of my boyhood on that winter day. May you and I remember all that is gone, but most of all, that which contains most of Christ.

“UNCLE JEREMY.”

“SOBER COTTAGE, April. 1867.

“*Dear Children* :—‘ Winter lingers in the lap of spring,’ as it does nearly every year, loving to be nursed in its dotage and decline. It has its second childhood like man, and is just as helpless now, yet as ambitious, as it was last October, when it vainly tried to control the world. I have been looking out from the cottage window at some little patches of snow lying here and there in places where the sun could not reach them. One of them amused me. It was behind a chimney on the west side of a roof, away across a ravine. The sun got at all the roof except that one small spot, and there alone the snow remained. But as he moved on towards the West, he got finally at it, and soon it was dissolved, and a long strip of wet on the shingles is all that remains to tell of it. I see out on the hills that the north sides still wear their white apparel, while on the south the lowly green slopes exhibit their immature verdure. It makes me think of the mountain sides which I used to watch in spring-time, and wonder why the snow lay only in strips. At last I got to understand that the mountain front instead of being uniform and level, as it looked in the distance, was rough, and broken by ravines and ridges, and that while the snow melted on the sunny side, it still lay on the other, awaiting the warm breezes. And it causes me to recollect a place on the side of ‘ Two Top,’ on which the snow lay till late in the spring, and where I was told the sun never shone at all. The sun seems to have control now, but the lingering winter gives him a good deal of trouble. In the Bible Christ is called the Sun of Righteousness. You recollect the expression in relation to his rising on us with healing in his beams. He gets control of our cold, wintry hearts, melts out the ice and accumulated drifts of many years, and plants and nourishes something living and useful in their stead. Just as the old year, showing his ‘ ruling passion strong in death,’ has sent this little April snow, so do we have our hearts often chilled by returning squalls of sin. But the great Sun rules, and will rule. The little particles of snow will lie hidden all through our souls, but he will move around till he gets at them and melts them all away. Hidden on the cold side

of your hearts some place may be some little heaps that have blown in there, and that refuse to melt out. Singing Psalms, reading good books, and all you can do, will fail to remove them, just as the singing of robins and bluebirds made no impression on what I have seen to-day. You must try to get your hearts turned fully around to Christ. Get all the sides fairly towards him, and you will soon see all traces of evil disappearing. How beautiful to think of the great Sun melting all the superstition and idolatry and wickedness of every kind from all the world ! The whole earth is chilled with it now, but the time will come when all will be green, and universal spring, with its flowers and songs and thousand pleasures, will prevail throughout the earth. Let us do all we can to turn the icy places to the sun, and watch the marks of the world's great winter forever retiring.

“UNCLE JEREMY.”

As early as 1866 he begun to write for the *United Presbyterian* over the initials “J. R. J.” While covering from the first some width of field, the early articles relate considerably to the Freedmen, and show him taking advanced ground, for that time, as to their civil, ecclesiastical, and even social rights and privileges. No one can look through the record of his thought very far without discovering that he was rarely simply abreast of his times, but rather ahead of them. It was so in the case of the Freedmen, in church reforms, in the spirit of church comity and unity, in the matter of revision of creeds, and possibly in the temperance question. No justification is necessary for his position on any of these things ; but the fact that he occupied advanced positions is worthy of notice, in view of the explanation it offers of most of the antagonisms he aroused. They were almost all upon questions and methods of progress.

He was best known to the Church by the first page of the paper, where he gave from week to week his best

thoughts upon, not only matters of current, but often of lasting interest as well. It was often done in his best style, and many of the paragraphs were gems unexcelled in either the newspaper or more pretentious literature of the day.

Previous to 1870 he had done some editorial writing, but from this date the "Brevities" began to appear. They were something almost new in religious journalism. *The Interior* makes claim, which he was willing to recognize, that the idea originated with it. However that may be, as Dr. Johnston wrought it, it was his own. That first page grew to be a marked feature in the religious press. Nothing in the land, in the estimation of competent judges, some of whom were themselves journalists, equalled it. In later years its entire contents were frequently not only up to his own best standard, but worthy of as permanent form as type could give them. His paragraphs were very widely copied by other papers, while many adopted the methods of editorial work he had been chiefly instrumental in bringing into notice.

In addition to the work indicated, from 1879 onward he wrote from week to week two or more of the leading editorial articles. It is estimated that from 1870 he contributed to this journal alone over four thousand columns of matter. When it is considered that he also had charge of a large and somewhat exacting pastorate, where two sermons and a prayer-meeting talk were required during all the weeks of those years, and that his pen furnished many articles printed elsewhere, or, as being presented before clubs and small societies, were not printed at all; and that during many years sickness of severe type was continually present in his household, the magnitude of his

labors, the fertility of his mind, and the spontaneity of his energy strike ordinary mortals with amazement. And yet he seldom touched his type-writer or entered his study after dinner. His mind was always full, and much the printer received was not simply drawn from it,—it came by overflow. Expression of ideas, composition, was his delight. He threw off poems, and projected novels, and even wrote a lengthy serial, which, however, was not published. Naturally he had more affinity for the world of letters than the pulpit. He rejoiced in the embassy of Christ, but, to do the work required as an official ambassador, he gave bent to powers which would have flowed more spontaneously in other directions. His genius was at its best when handling the pen, and there does not seem to be any field of polite literature where he might not have excelled.

The specimens from his newspaper work which follow are all of one type, principally because brevity of space prevents a wider range of selection. Frequently at the lower right hand corner of the paper he gave a fable or parable from nature. A number of these are reproduced in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE EDITOR CONCLUDED.—FABLES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

**S**O soon as the sunshine and southern breezes came back after the winter storms, a blue bird appeared with its tender song, and a flower that had been hidden beneath a drift opened its leaves and exhaled its perfume. They did not say that the past storms were harmless and altogether unworthy to be remembered, nor did they declare there would be none in the future. But they told how the frailest things can live amid the severest trials, and after these are past come forth again to provide a cheerful song and pleasant aroma for those who need their ministry. And so we will find it in all of life. When the clouds break and the winds are hushed, when the frosts loosen their hold and the ice dissolves and runs away in hasty streams, there will always be a messenger to spread its wings and open its lips to bring us a song of encouragement and hope. The tempest is not so destructive as it seems. Its roar and violence stun us, and drive many a pleasant emotion to its hiding-place in the soul ; but when the calm and sunshine come back again, let us but listen, and we will hear the songs of winged and happy messengers ; let us but look and we will see the bloom of a pretty flower. The frailest affection of a soul that is at home with Jesus will live through the trial of any storm. and when genial skies return it will go forth on its mission of gentleness and love.

**An Immodest Crocus.** A crocus waited for the cold to diminish so that it could venture out to take a look at the world. For long months it had had slept in utter unconsciousness of what was going on around it. There were hot days of summer and balmy ones of autumn, with all their variety of sun, and storm, and ripening fruits and falling leaves, but it was motionless, and apparently dead. The winter came with frosts, and tempests, and deep snows, but it paid no attention to them. But with the coming spring some influence seized it, and, beginning to move in its bed, it had also a strong desire to peep above the soil and see what was going on. Under a blanketing of snow it made a motion upwards, but the blanket being suddenly removed it was compelled to shrink back to its place, and during a good many days of alternate sunshine and frost it was so buffeted and beaten that it could make but little progress. But at length there came a succession of genial days, with sunshine, bright and tender and warm winds blowing peacefully from the South, when up it started, and almost before it knew it was looking out at the great world—great to it—that lay around it. It was at once on easy terms with all the objects near it. The garden walks, the shrubs, vines, leafless trees and heaps of rubbish—it found them all as it had always known them. In its own censorious way it began to reproach its demure looking neighbors for their sluggishness, telling how it was up, now this second time, ready for work, making its contribution to the world, while there they stood and leaned and hung, as dull and useless as if they had no mission and none craved their help. And thus it railed and twitted through a whole day, the great trees treating it with silent contempt and the flaunting vines laughing roguishly at its gossippy impudence, when at length a bush that leaned seriously on a stake spoke up and said, "You are a mere up-start and pretender. Nothing equals your impertinence but your ignorance. A year ago you flirted out for a day or two, then went off again to your sleep, and there you lay, stupid and senseless, while we and all the world about us were busy with our work. Those trees blossomed and bent with beautiful fruit ;

those shrubs hung with delicious flowers that filled the air with fragrance; those vines were red with berries, and every object here was active for months with a work that you never thought of. After long toils we rest a while, waiting to begin just where we left off, using, also, what we gained last year to assist us during the coming season. While all we did was going on, you lounged and slept, and now you rise up, with daring impertinence, to ridicule what you call our want of enterprise. You are like those human crocuses who lie away in obscurity while others are at work, then push themselves out to lecture everybody on their unconcern and want of faithfulness. Dozing, sleeping, and perhaps dreaming, they remain utterly unconscious of life's progress, joy and harvest, then pop up their heads on a sunshiny day and announce themselves the saviors of the world. Go back to your place and hide your shame beneath a charitable clod." And the crocus, first turning blue, then pale, finally wilted away and was forgotten.

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A violet was lodged near the steps of a house where, in the early spring, it could receive the noonday sun. When a pleasant day came around the early sun touched it tenderly, and it began to lift itself up to see once more the world from which it had been so long retired, and to hear the bird songs that were part of the vernal happiness. But the north wind happened to see it, and enraged at its audacity and presumption, and especially at its contempt of hyperborean authority, attacked it fiercely and drove it back to its seclusion. It was the most savage wind of the season. The brightness and joy that were appearing where it had reigned with its rigors and destructions irritated it to unaccustomed passion, and its bluster was such as neither December nor January had equalled. Its wrath was all concentrated upon the retreating violet. By night and day it scolded, shook its fists, brandished its weapons, shrieking, threatening, and abusing as only the north wind can. And then it came with chilling rains, after which it beat it with snow and pelted it with rain and hail. The least sign of activity in the violet would start it up, when, all over again, the plant would bear

its reproaches and peltings for daring to intrude its flippant vanity upon the traditional gravity of the season. All this while the violet said nothing. Why should it fight with anything so unreasoning as a Rocky Mountain tempest? But as it had opportunity it sent its roots a little further down into the soil and starting the life to circulating through its stems and leaves, waited for the wind to become jaded and discouraged, when it would no longer interfere with its liberty. And at length it had its reward, for one bright day it pushed up its purple face and smiled a breath of fragrance on the air, the north wind only frowning, grumbling, then sulkily stalking off to leave it to itself. When the owner who had planted and watched it leaned down close to see its beauty and inhale its sweetness, it pleasantly whispered in his ear, "Let me be a lesson to you. When men assail you, just let them have their way. Nothing is gained by fighting ill-tempered passion. Wait in patience, do your work as you can, believe in the coming sunshine, look out hopefully on the future, trust in God, and when your assailants have wearied themselves and gone off, you can smile and be thankful just as I do to-day."

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Two little birds sat on a twig of a maple having a quiet autumnal talk. The air was serene, as it is likely to be in October, and a seriousness came to their hearts, just as it does to those of another and higher race. One of the birds was of some age, and had learned many of the world's ways by experience; the other was younger, and though not so wise was full of that youthful confidence that is at once the glory and peril of one of its years. The older was advising the fitting to a milder clime, pleading the uncertainties of this one, which the other stoutly resisted. I very well know, the more paternal one said, the curious pranks cut by the weather at this season and a little later, and it is safer to be out of the way in time. When the leaves are tinted with gold and purple, as you see these about you, when the apples are all ripe on the trees, and the chestnuts are all falling from the burs, it is a sign that storms are very near, the severity of which you know nothing about. Besides, these

mornings the frost has been nipping, and we had to keep our feet well covered up to keep them from suffering. We would much better hurry off to a place that is more agreeable. But the other smiled, and with a toss of the head replied that it could endure a great deal of cold, and that, knowing some snug places in ravines and thickets, it could go there and hide till the tempest would pass by, and if the very worst would come, it said, it knew of cozy places in some barns where it could have a perch as comfortable as many a house, and could even get into a garret, warmed by fires in the lower parts of the building. In a sly way, too, it insinuated that its habits of youth had given it an insight of current things that age could not be expected to attain to. After another suitable talk they parted, the one to fly away off towards the South, the other to nestle for the night in a hemlock that would nicely screen it from the wind. Some time after, when the conversation was forgotten, a storm swept down on its neighborhood, and, caught in the winds, it was driven hither and thither, beaten, pelted and almost killed; and this followed by freezing cold, it could do nothing but lie down and die, and then the words of its wiser friend came back to it, all too late, save to wake the spirit of remorse that stung its waning hopes. There was some one near at hand to moralize over it and say, that like the foolish little bird are many men, who, warned respecting trials soon to come, neglect it all and learn in a dismal hour of helplessness the recklessness of their behavior. They are told of the wrath to come and pleaded with to fly to a place of safety. They are pointed to a "hiding place from the wind, and a covert from tempest," and told of a rock of safety and quiet waters in a place of peace; but all these are made light of, as they have some choice spot of their own looked out, which they think will answer every end. But the storm overtakes them and teaches them their defences are but refuges of lies. It is too late when they get to know their peril—too late for their salvation, but not too late to teach a lesson to all who know the mistakes of their career.

A little leaf, green and tender, hung in the early summer sunshine, gently swayed by the genial wind. It was as innocent as virtue itself, having no experience of guilt within, and being without a thought of doing injury to anyone outside. But, towards the evening, just when it was most at rest, an insect, small, and green like itself, alighted on it and seemed to be settling down as if it wished to stay. "What do you wish here?" pleasantly asked the leaf as it turned its brighter side towards the declining sun. The insect apologized, said it was simply passing that way, and had casually stopped for a little rest. This was granted it, but as it prolonged its stay, the leaf modestly said, "Would you not better be hurrying on? it is growing late, and the night may overtake you with your journey only half performed." The insect was all deference, and, begging pardon for its intrusion, asked if it might be permitted to remain, since it found itself more weary than it had known, and dozed away time it should have spent on the wing. The leaf, though not without hesitation, after a little parley, agreed that it might remain, the certain condition being that it would be off early in the morning; and then the two composed themselves to rest. But in the morning the first sensation of the leaf as it stirred to greet the sunrise was that of a stinging pain, and, upon inquiry, found that the visitor had fastened itself on it as if it meant to stay. When remonstrated with, it refused to let go, and then dared the leaf to put it off if it could, saying, also, that it intended to remain where it was as long as it wished. And stay it did, making for itself a nest which it filled with eggs, and which it compelled the leaf to support. And it did support them, wasting itself in doing so till it began to droop and die, reflecting, also, with a feeling of remorse, that it was not only destroyed itself, but was spreading a pest that it had unwisely entertained. And then the company of leaves above it looked down and said: "You are learning a lesson that youthful leaves and children should not neglect—that the simplest toleration of that which is suspicious may lead to disastrous results. The suspected enemy, even though it be no larger than a midget, should be at once driven off, for, permitted to remain for a night, it may bring pain, misery, and even death itself."

**The Disputing Winds.** A dispute arose between the north and south winds as to which was the most popular with the earth, a place they were in the habit of alternately visiting. The latter claimed that it was the favorite, and that the other, no matter what were its good qualities, nor how many there were of them, was only tolerated as an evil that could not wholly be avoided. The former refused to listen to talk so absurd, but agreed to the proposition that there should be a trial of their respective influences. It, therefore, issued fiercely from its icy dominion, full of wrath, tempestuous roaring and blustering, filling the air with clouds of snow, and storming in a fashion that nothing could appease. The great earth, it thought, will like the majesty of its behavior and turn with contempt from the feeble ways of its puny rival. But the earth did not so regard it. It shrank away as from an enemy. The birds hid themselves in caves and barns—wherever they could find shelter. The streams ceased their songs, and the laugh of the children was heard no more on the streets, while both animals and men put themselves in position of defence, as if assailed by a foe they would spare no effort to resist. But the south wind came quietly, afterwards, feeling its way along the valleys and over the hills, and gently seeking to undo the work of its predecessor. The great earth looked up and smiled. The brooks started up their songs again, the birds and children were alive with new gaiety, and from doors, windows, porches, garden-walks, and every place there was a greeting to the visitor that had come both as a deliverer and friend. The sun had been appointed umpire and announced its decision thus: The earth likes you not, O north wind, but simply endures your visits because it is as yet unable to keep them off. It is the south wind that is the favorite. For birds, and children and running brooks, aye, and animals and men, enjoy kindness, sympathy, gentleness and peace, and shrink away from bitterness and strife. It is the gospel of goodness that is needed, and until you have learned to preach it, you must fail of the affection that is so widely shown to your gentle rival.

Two little birds held a consultation in **Nest Building.** the early spring on the question as to where they should build their nests. The one thought it would choose the eaves of a house near by, where there were both solidity and protection, and where, also, there was retirement enough to make the summer's residence pleasant as well as safe. The other treated such a suggestion with half contempt. It had its eye on a large tree, and was ambitious to locate itself on one of its conspicuous branches. Away up there, it would have a pre-eminence over its slow-going associates, and enjoying the situation for itself, it would usher its young into the world in a situation that would give them advanced notions of life, and afford them opportunities for an immediately striking career. Besides, what a joy it would be to sit there swaying in the gentle winds, with the sunshine gently sifting through the ever-changing foliage. The other presented some objections, but it evidently did not care to be advised, and the two parted to carry out their own ideas of what was proper in the premises. The slower one fixed itself plainly on a window under a cornice, and there reared her brood, safe from all disturbance and unvexed by any apprehension, sending them all off at last to care for themselves in a world for which they were precisely fitted. The other mounted the maple tree. After innumerable chatterings, which were all intended to be so many advertisements of its enterprise, away out among the slenderest twigs, it selected a situation ; and then, with much toil, through a good many days, it succeeded in framing its nest. It was with much satisfaction it looked down upon the trudging world from its ærial home, and the music of the June breezes gave it a joy that was only less than that which grew out of its domestic hopes and the prophecies for its young. But one day a furious storm arose, and swinging the limb until it almost threw the bird to the ground, it finally tore it from its place and dashed it, nest and all, to destruction far below, leaving the palpitating bird to fly off in a panic to a place of safety. When the pain of its defeat was somewhat abated, it indulged in many reflections that should be as profitable for men as for their fellow-sufferers, the birds. " If I had but been more humble," it began, " and

less disposed to have my own way than take the advice of those wiser than myself, I might now be prosperous in a happy home. I was determined to build my nest on high, and thus to prove how foolish they are who keep to the old ways and live so near the ground; but here I am, broken and ruined, while my more meek associates are happy as the summer day. Let all take warning by my fate, and, building in the way Providence teaches them, avoid the calamities that have followed my perversity." And then it flew away, homeless and alone, a sad but yet a wiser bird.

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A snowflake came dancing down the  
**A Snowflake.** sky and lighted on a paling-fence, where, in the clear, frosty air, it glistened in the sun.

It was like a crystal, so bright it appeared, but was only an irregular little speck, after all, which the hundreds of people passing by hardly cared to look at. What is more commonplace than a crystal of snow? But a youth with a scientific turn of mind saw it, and thought at once of what he had learned of crystallization and of the pictures he had seen of snowflake forms in the books, and then of the microscope that had been given him as a present by a friend. He got the snowflake, and, putting it on his object-glass, subjected it to the test of many diameters to see if he could find its alleged grace and beauty. And there it all was, strictly conformed to law, handsome as a jewel, and exceeding in regular form the best work of human art. And the snowflake, becoming to him almost a living thing, seemed to want to tell him something of its history. It had once been but a little moisture on a leaf in a garden by the roadside, but had been carried by the sun into the upper air, and then, condensed into a cloud, had, driven by the wind, sailed hither and thither till at last a chilly blast sent it down to the earth on its evanescent mission. It had now done all it had been sent to do. It had caught a human eye and stirred a human soul, and had given it a taste for studying the works, and even the smallest works, of God. Too full of native grace to hint a reproof, it yet seemed to the youth to suggest a rebuke to humanity, so much of which, blessed with a lofty nature and great opportunities, brings

to the earth no other ministry than that of deformity and pain. "A moment white, then gone forever"—but in eternity will be told the story of its useful service.

During all the summer the leaves  
**The Jealousies** on some trees that studded a lawn were  
**of the Trees.** having a kind of strife in an effort to meet  
 on common ground and be at one. The  
 more lofty ones were looking down pleasantly on those below,  
 while the latter were unhappy that they could not reach the elevation of their neighbors. The birch leaves complained that they could not enjoy the breezes that swept those of the maple and elm, and the kilmarnock clusters wept that they could not emulate the graceful tresses of the sugar and poplar. Even the apple foliage, which ought to have been content with the honor of sheltering its growing fruit, was soured because a spruce towered above it, and had a leafy grace that it vainly strove to equal. And thus all the season through, from June till October, there was a social unrest that springs from envy and rivalry, so that by night and day, they who had ears to hear such language knew of the murmurs that circulated among the branches and were blown away upon the winds. But at length the frosts came, curling this leaf and blanching that, and tumbling them all, of all kinds, to the ground. And then came the winds sweeping them into groups and eddying drifts, and piling them here and there in faded heaps of litter and rubbish. And there at last they were at one. Elm, birch, poplar, willow, sugar, apple, maple and others lay side by side, their rivalry gone, a perfect peace being the experience of them all. It is precisely so with the foliage that grows on the tree of human life. It has its jealousies and strifes, its bickerings, animosities, and reproaches, but never reaches the equality it professes to desire till death tumbles it down to a common ruin. In groups on the hillside, or in other rural sleeping place, it is at peace—the peace of death and hastening decay.

**The Story of the Rocks.** As a geologist worked in his quarry, he uncovered a rock, on the surface of which were little holes such as those we see in the dust after a summer shower. Long years ago, when the rock was only mud or other soft soil, the rain-drops had fallen there, and these were the records of their visits. Though small and mute, and of a very humble sort, they are yet intelligent historians of a period so remote that, compared with them, our chronicles of Egypt and Babylon are but as stories of yesterday. They teach us a lesson of the stability of nature. They tell us also of God's unchanging processes in the management of the world. We imagine a cloud rising on some summer day, and the sun darkening, and a shadow gathering over the landscape. Lightning blazed and thunder echoed, and then down dashed the rain. In a little while it was gone again, but here is the literature, written as Job wished his words to be, which gives a partial description of its character. It is thus we write, briefly and intelligibly, the history of human life, which, graven more permanently than even a pen of iron, shall be read by those who come after us. We are but as the drops of rain, and the records of whole generations will be comprised in a few cypher signs, which alone will save them from oblivion. Our individual names are indeed but "writ in water," but like the careless drops on the rock are histories of the race. Happy are we if, through God's abundant grace, our record is on high—our names written in the eternal book.

**The Lilac and the Elm.** A bud on a lilac bush that stood in a sunny corner of a door-yard looked at all the other buds pushing out into leaf early in April, and, being possessed of an eccentric spirit, said to itself, "Now, I will wait awhile. There is no need to hurry. Besides, I like to show my independence. In two weeks, when all these others are out full-blown, I will begin to unfold, and then on the most beautiful day that shines I will pass them all in a hasty bursting into foliage." But its experiment was a failure, for the others that acted out their nature took away from it all the sap and nourishment, and hid it away

from the sun, so that when it tried to open out its leaflets it could not do so. There was nothing left for it but to shrivel up and die. But on an elm there was a bud of the same peculiar trait, which it sought to manifest in a different way, and it, therefore, said: "I see the lilac there wearing its spring attire. The cherry tree also, and the plums and peaches are gay with their vernal robes. Why need I wait on these conservatives with whom I live? I will not do it, but will break away from all the old traditions and practices and start off with the foremost of the premises." And so it did, but made a sad mistake, for just as it gave its first full smile a chilly wind swept over it from the North, and that night, all bare on the unprotected bough, the frost found it and forced it, crisp and blackened, to the ground. There was no place for reflection in either case, but all around the remark was passed that, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." Buds—and men—must be obedient to the laws under which they are placed, or if they fail to be, must bear the inevitable penalty.

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An idle zephyr started off one bright morning on a little excursion, intending to visit a far-off spot of which a bird of the air had told it. It was cheery and bright, and went caroling on its way across a community of hillocks that rose near its starting place. But after a little it swept down into a ravine full of trees and bramble, where also a lonely stream was murmuring among its solitudes. A tone of sadness here entered into its song, darkened as it was by the somber influences among which it moved. Hurrying to reach higher ground, it found itself in a clump of evergreens that fringed a hillside, and now its tone, spite of all its efforts to the contrary, was changed to a sigh, and even wail, with but little left of the buoyancy with which it started. Emerging thence and into the beautiful sunlight, it was to find itself a moment afterwards traversing a shadowed street among scenes of human shame and wretchedness, with pain on every side and sorrow looking out from all the windows; and now its voice is a threnody, weighted with a burden of misery and woe. It is enough to say that its day of

recreation had become one of gloom, and that its hope of reaching its destination wholly died away. But a neighbor, that had begun its journey a little later, had a different experience. Its flight was away above the ravines, over the cedar-tops, and higher far than the groaning city, nor from morning till night did it have aught else than the wild, eager joy of its prosperous career. And seeing the other clouded and wearily beating with its leaden wings, it called down to it, saying, "Oh thou foolish one! Why hast thou chosen so low a flight? There are infinite light and gayety and joy up here, and no other song is possible but that which is inspired by the smiling sky. Thou remindest me of those miserable mortals, who walk among the shadows and in desert places, instead of seeking the sunny hills, and delectable mountains, where God is with his gospel of peace and hope. It is here, and here alone, that one can pursue his way with everlasting joy upon his head."

**Housekeeping  
Taught  
By Birds.**

If a young lady care to do so, she may learn something as to housekeeping from the birds. It is nesting time, and they are busy with house building and furnishing; some of them having got on so far as to establish themselves in actual domestic industry. They seem to show that cheerfulness and courage are seen in the tidiness and grace of their building and household economy. That robin is one of the most active and energetic of birds, filling the air, also, with song. so soon as the East is streaked with dawn. And look at her nest. It is in a secure place, and is built with orderly care, and of good material, and so strong that it will last a year. Then there is the English sparrow. It is a splenetic, quarrelsome chatterer, songless, and without a friend. Its nest is an accumulation of rubbish, roughly piled in some cornice or recess, ugly, tattered and disgusting. On a tall tree, fixed on a swaying branch, is the nest of an oriole, or "hanging bird." It is woven with the skill of an artist, and finished with a downy interior worthy of an expert upholsterer, with a canopy of leaves or fabric over it to protect its contents from the rain and sun. We know at once its occupant is possessed of a lofty soul. But

away below it is a nest that is hardly a nest at all. A few sticks, laid carelessly on a web of branches, with no suggestion of taste or security. It belongs to a meek looking, dilatory specimen which sits by the hour on a fence, uttering a complaining cry, and snapping at flies and other insects that venture near it. The contrast will hold, if not in all, yet in many instances, and they teach that there is a correspondence between the spirit and character of a bird and its chief work, which is that of homekeeping. Is it not so with men and women? The soul that is fullest of good cheer, of faith and hope, of love to God and man, of regulated dispositions, exhibits its character in its home-making and home life. A noble spirit, with a plumage given it from on high, will provide a fitting nest for its residence.

Securely fastened to a fence, where it is

**A Deserted Home.** sheltered from the rains, is a nest of last summer. It is cheerless-looking and desolate, for there is no sign of life about it, and the winds sweep its original tapestry into shredded streams of distress. But it suggests the life that was there a few months ago, when the builders and occupants were enthusiastic in their work and joy. There they labored and waited, sang and hoped, enacted their parental care and filial gratitude, and told all who saw them the happiness of their thrifty home. But as the season advanced they were seldom seen, and when the skies became austere with autumn storms, they flitted away, and the home they loved so much was given over to the approaching desolations. But we imagine them as still happy and full of song in a sunny land to which they have gone, cherishing, perhaps, memories of their toils and rejoicings in the places from which the rigors had driven them. They thus exhibit, in their own small way, what is as common among men as with birds. The home has its experience of building and making, and then of growth, industry, songs, tears, and all the conditions of human life till at length with beaten casements and broken windows, it is left to the mercy of the winds. But its occupants have only left it to continue their living and loving in another residence. Away off amidst the peace of an unshadowed country

they have their home, where beside its still waters and on its beautiful hills they carry on their service and sing the song—the song of Moses and of the Lamb—the strains of which seem to almost reach the ears of those whom they have left behind them. May we not believe, also, that of all places in the earth which they keep in mind, none is thought of so feelingly and gratefully as that in which they received the culture and strength that fitted them for their journey to the better land ?

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**The Child and the Star.** A child sat looking at a star one bright evening as it gleamed and twinkled in a faultless sky. It was so bright and pure, so constant in its apparent gaze upon the world, and even on the child itself, that the wondering soul began to feel that it was the eye of the Infinite One beaming upon it something of the peace of heaven. For heaven, it said to itself, is all beauty and love, and nothing can be looked for from it but that which is good. But while it gazed and admired, feeling within it also the thrill of its gentle, yet lofty meditation, a mist moved up from a neighboring stream, and the star was gone. "Gone," sadly said the little one ; " I shall see it no more." A little later the mists grew into heavy clouds, that rolled in masses along the hill-tops and over the forests, and, the rain beginning to fall, a hopeless shadow gathered over all the sky. Following this came the thunder, growling, rumbling, roaring, the heavens being full of an angry storm that seemed to have obliterated all the beauty of the evening. The little watcher, half in terror, as well as grief, bewailed the extinguished light, and especially the " eye " that had so kindly kindled for it, and was ready to weep over the loss of that which it could never see again. But even while it sobbed, a strip of light appeared in the West, and as the thunder rolled off and became indistinct in the East, the broad sky began to bend again over the dripping earth, and lo ! the same star, undimmed, but almost brighter than before, was looking from the peaceful heavens. And then the child rejoiced and thoughtfully said, " Is not this, wrought into a majestic picture, the lesson the mother was teaching me—that though mists, clouds and storms

come and hide away the face of our Father, if we only wait and watch, they all disappear, and we shall see His love and goodness as beautiful as before?" And then, as her eyes closed amidst the clustering ringlets, her sleep was that of the beloved.

**The Negligent Tuber.** On a pleasant Southern exposure a little tuber lay slightly covered with a mellow soil. A soft wind of June swept over it, and, putting its lips close to the surface, said, "Come, little tuber, rise up from your resting place, and add something to the beauty of the reviving world." The tuber listened and was pleased, but said, "Wait awhile, I am not ready yet." A month went by, when the breeze returned, accompanied by a gentle shower, and they together repeated the invitation to the sluggish tuber, adding, also, that time was passing, and that it was losing its opportunities. It still professed its pleasure at the kindness shown it, and saying it would not forget the call, asked that they would wait till it should be more fully prepared for doing what they desired. Two months more were quickly gone, when the zephyr, bringing with it the rain and sunshine, all of them happy in contemplating the triumphs of the season, stopped to see the object of its former care. Very earnestly and with a tinge of pathos in its tone, it cried, "Little tuber, little tuber, the days are shortening, the birds are ceasing their songs, and you hear the crickets as they tell of the season's decline. I come again, and, uniting my call with that of my friends and helpers, ask you to hurry forth to take part in the glory of the earth. It may be my last visit, for I must hurry off to perform neglected offices on shores that are far away." But the tuber answered slowly and sadly, "Alas! I feel all unable to move. The springs of my life seem to have perished. A queer paralysis has seized me, and unless all signs fail there is nothing left for me but to sink into decay. If I had but obeyed your first entreaty I might have hung in festoons and flowers about the doorway, to be praised by all who saw me, and to be perpetuated in a better life through years that are to follow. It is now too late, too late." And as the little breeze started away it said—and there was a plaintive sadness

in its utterance—"The foolish tuber is like the men I see in my travels, to whom the gospel is offered, asking them to rise to a new and holy life. They think they will, but do not, and rejecting this call and another, wait and wait, till at last it seems they become incapable of any effort, and can only say, 'The harvest is past, the summer is ended and I am not saved.'"

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**Beets In** family, the beet, held a conversation one summer day, which ran in this wise: Said one, "I am going to lift myself up to the top of the soil. I wish to be where I can see and be seen. This is dreadfully tiresome and unpromising down here." But the other quietly replied, "I think you would better keep yourself hidden. Nature teaches that you will shine best where your home is, and that is under the ground." But this only angered the other, which replied with much spirit, "What do I care for nature? I know what is best for myself. Does not common sense teach that it is nobler to be up in the sunshine and having a place in the open world, than to be fastened down among the clods and worms? Look at our neighbor, the cabbage. It has pushed itself away up from the surface, and is branching out with an ample body and leaves till it is one of the lordliest objects of the premises. And see the bean; it has climbed up that bit of a pole till now it can see clear out into the street, and be looked at by every one who passes. And the tomatoes, and corn, and asparagus—they all have the dignity of self-elevation, while here you are willing to remain as base and poor as the worst of your ancestors." "Well," soberly replied the other, "do as you wish, but as for me I do not mean to ape places and ways for which I am not fitted. Do as you wish." And so it did, and was delighted with its distinction, imagining, meanwhile, that all the inhabitants of the place were filled with envy, seeing its success. But after awhile the frost came, and winds from the North laden with ice, and it saw all the glory it had so admired wilting, fading, and falling to the ground. One morning, too, it was chilled and frosted, and in terror began to shriek, "Let me down, let me down! It is misery here, and death!" But the

earth was iron around it, and grimly refused to move; but up from a crevice, all white with an icy fringe, came a voice that said, "What do you think now of seeing the world? You learn when it is too late that mad ambition leads to ruin, while modest contentment and doing one's best in his own place can never fail to succeed." And then a gust of wind came and with motherly care spread over it a coverlet of leaves to further protect it from the coming storms.

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A plant growing in a small pot on the window-sill looked across at its larger neighbor, and fell into a mood of complaint and fault-finding. Why, it said, if only I had that larger premises! Or if this pot of mine were only as large as that one, how happy I would be, and how my branches would rise and extend under the influence of this sunshine, now becoming so delightful. But here I am so closely confined that my roots have no room to spread or forage, and I am destined to spend a miserable existence, and at last perish uncared for and unknown. And the other plant, rejoicing in its prosperity and luxuriant in its growth, added to the bitterness of its neighbor by flaunting its foliage in its face, and laughing at its discontent and worryment. It had a wide space for its roots, which ran hither and thither, taking up food and water, and each day it became more happy as its stems extended, and as people looked with surprise and pleasure at its abundant vigor. But the value of the plants was in their capacity to produce flowers. "Nothing but leaves," was sure condemnation, even though they might be large and handsome. And after a time, the little root-bound plant began to push out buds, very small at first, but distinct and constantly increasing, and then in due time to exhibit full-blown flowers, beautiful, abundant, and full of a fragrance that was diffused through all the apartment. It was happy then, while the other, strong and striking as before, stood without a sign of anything better than its straggling leaves, which now appeared coarse and gross, especially in comparison with the dainty blossoms beside them. And it was even shocked to hear some one say, "Take the old thing

away ; it's no use here." "Root-bound !" After all, it was not a misfortune. The little pot—the restricted sphere, the confined, hampered ways, the hindered ambitions, possibly the life of sickness and pain, bring out the bloom of piety, and give beauty and fragrance to the Christian life.

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**An Orchard Debate.** Two apple blossoms had a dispute, which finally grew almost into a wrangle, about their relative positions. The one, budding out near the trunk of the tree, and low down, looked up through the sparse foliage, and saw another on a high branch waving there in the May breeze. It called out to it in an angry tone, "Why do you flaunt your beauty so proudly in the public eye? Such airs are unbecoming. That garish show of yourself, as you dance back and forth and waltz this way and that, is in unseemly contrast with the habits of others just as good as you, who remain quietly obscure down here not far from the ground. They are as pretty as you, can boast of as honorable ancestry, and are nurtured warmly near the mother heart." And the other answered sharply back that it had a right to do as it wished ; it liked to be out in the sunshine, to see and be seen, and since it was made beautiful there was no reason why it should hide itself out of sight. As for pride, it caustically suggested, there was often as much of it in a cynical contempt for seeing it as in a love of it. And so they had their warfare, while the bees hummed, the wind whispered, the children played, and all the gay world sang on, unmindful of their ill temper. But one night a frost came, sharp and cruel, and when the morning sun arose, the poor blossom at the top withered and fell, for it had nothing to protect it from its enemy. "There now," growled its rival, "if you had kept yourself in place, this would not have happened to you." It grimly rejoiced in its victory. But its triumph was short-lived. For the foliage thickened so that the sun could not shine through it, and shadow and dampness gathering about the tree trunk, the self-righteous blossom paled, and finally wilted and fell to the ground, dead as the other. And then a bird that now sat on the tree-top to sing, and now in the interior to rest and cheer its brooding

mate, moralized as follows : How the two blossoms were equally to blame, and how foolish was their controversy. The one was vain and died of its recklessness ; the other was censorious, and perished through its exclusiveness. Here are hundreds of others alive still, and pushing on towards fruitage, because they kept on that middle ground, provided by a modest idea of their worth and responsibility. We deceive ourselves by strutting forth to catch popular applause, but also by claiming merit for hiding away in recluse isolation. A modest, manly place in the world, held in the fear of God, is that for which we are made.

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It is interesting, these early spring days, **Spring Life.** to see the insects and other creatures that have been dormant all winter creeping forth to greet the sun and enjoy his warmth. If one go to the garret he will find flies and wasps, still stiff after their long sleep, gathered about the window sills or attempting the panes, practicing with their wings, also, in anticipation of soarings yet to come. Here and there an earth worm is pushing up through the soil—to be seized almost as soon as it appears by a hungry robin—a caterpillar is pushing itself along the walk or clinging to the fence ; a bee is buzzing about in tireless search of a flower from which to replenish its wasted stores ; and in some sunny corner colonies of gnats are enjoying the dance to which the cheerful situation has invited them. Wherever there is a bud that has opened into even the slightest foliage, there is likely to be found some inhabitant, hiding among its crevices and stealing away its juices, and if we examine with the aid of a microscope, some of the tufts of blossoms that precede the leaves on maples and willows, we shall find them harboring worms of many sizes and colors, that are not visible to the naked eye. The bark of the trees, each little heap of last year's leaves, the mounds of rubbish gathered by the winds of November, are all astir with a life that is coming forth under the call of the genial vernal influences. If a cold wind return, a " wave " from the North, or if a frost silently invest it during the night, it shrinks back somewhat and waits, yet without returning to its winter hiding place, which it has forever abandoned. If it is all inter-

esting to see it is also useful as a lesson. The great Sun of Righteousness is rising more and more upon us, giving us his light and warmth, and we should be as prompt as the insects and worms in making use of our advantages. Shall we not go forth to meet Him? In His beautiful light we shall find unspeakable joy, and warmed by His spirit of love, we shall be kept in a condition of growth and expansion that shall continue and increase until we reach the light of the perfect day.

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**The Crocus and Dandelion.** One spring day, as a blink of sunshine made everything happy, a dandelion and a crocus engaged in an animated conversation respecting their future engagements. They talked in a tone quite low, but still loud enough to be heard, and this is what they said: "I expect," said the dandelion, "to make as good a start as possible, and after that to keep myself constantly in view. As fast as I can I will push myself into notice, and my seeds shall be sown over all these premises, so that I may be reproduced sufficiently to give me a monopoly of the domestic attentions. Before the autumn you may look for a representative of mine to appear in every spare bit of ground inside these fences; I will even supplant grass and other flowers when I can, and on sunny days, as far along as to late September, I will make the lawn yellow, and the walks, too, if possible, with my promiscuous blooming. That is my way of securing attention. One must compel the world to notice him. Retirement is a kind of suicide." There was a little hint to the crocus in this last remark, a hint just touched with sarcasm, yet it was not disturbed by it, but went on to say: "My purpose is different from yours. I have no wish to get special publicity. I shall only attempt, in a noiseless, modest way, to present my cause in my own person, displaying whatever of quiet beauty I am possessed of, and trying to add a little to the fragrance of the vernal gales as they come in this direction. My idea is that one so humble as I should be shrinking rather than otherwise, and not try to force upon himself attention of which he cannot claim to be deserving. I shall stay right here, and without the least attempt at parade, I shall

make my little contribution to the world and retire again." The dandelion treated this "affectation of virtue" with great disdain, and then set to making preparations for its opening. The season passed. The crocus had bloomed a day or two and disappeared. The grass matted over its bed, and it could hardly be told that it had a home there. But the dandelion was everywhere. It filled the lawn, intruded into the flower-beds, stuck in the crevices of the walks, and held itself forth to sight wherever it could get a foothold. It was soon a weariness. Then it became an enemy. Finally it was looked upon as a pest, and hoes, knives, hot water, gas tar, and other implements and means were used to exterminate it. Every thought of the crocus was pleasant; every reference to the other was accompanied by a frown. A kilmarnock willow that had stood by in the spring time and had heard the planning and then watched the result, moralized in this way: "It is not best to thrust ourselves too persistently upon the public. Modesty is useful. A quiet work well done, and at the proper time, is far better than an obtrusive performance that becomes tiresome, and then irritating and disgusting."

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Away in November, before the Thanksgiving day, a little snow gathered itself into a heap and lay down in a quarry on the hillside. The sun passed along to the southland without looking in on it, and lying there so low the occasional south wind seemed to always sweep above it. Week by week it drew itself more gains, which it hoarded with miserly care. The winds—all the winds—became its agents and contributors, and hardly a cloud sailed above it without adding something to its increasing store. And thus it grew and grew, until there was no room for it to grow any farther, after which it lay quietly in its place, taking its ease, and smiling carelessly at the world around it. It had no mission, and no flower was claiming it as a protector. No stock of wheat was resting under its sheltering wing. It lived simply for the purpose of living, hoarding all its accumulations, giving nothing, doing nothing, and never for an hour softening into pity for any unfortunate that needed

its care. But the sun found it out, and calling the winds, they asked and then commanded it to join in the world's work of benevolence. "O, snowdrift, use your wealth for the good of those about you." But it only heard and did nothing, seeming to say it had no responsibility for those about it. And then the sun and wind consulted and determined to make it do the good it would not do itself. The one took up some of its treasure and carried it away off toward the sky; the other loaded itself with more and bore it across the hills. In a thousand directions the vast fortune was distributed around the world, until at length the lordly drift was wasted away—wasted so utterly that "lo, he was not!" And then the sun issued his proclamation, saying to all the trees, streams and fields, and to all of human kind, that selfishness, avarice and simple hoarding cannot be tolerated in his dominion. The law of the world is to do good, and miserly snowdrifts and miserly men alike shall disappear, leaving nothing behind them but the turfless scar where they had rested.

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A little fountain trickled from a hill-side, and, forming for itself a channel in the soil, ran off down the meadow. During the summer season it sang all the days through, as full of happiness and contentment as if it had been always used to the bright world into which it had so suddenly been introduced. The children played beside it, partaking of its spirit, and adding to its music, and thoughtful men walked along its margins, refreshed by its familiar prattle and ceaseless gayety. No one came near it without stopping to bestow his share of admiration and gratitude, and whether in the light of morning or in the shadows of the gathering night, they who heard its canticles received an inspiration and walked away in consciousness of possessing a pleasant memory. The winter came and the frosts, but, keeping its channel open in the snow, it went on with its singing. It was the same unchanging song, as sweet in January as in June, and as gentle in telling out its messages of joy and peace. But no one came to listen. Neither child nor man turned eye or ear to notice it. No loiterer lingered

to smile a response to its cheerfulness, no company rested as if under the spell of its silvery chords, but all, hurrying away, left it in a condition of neglect that suggested indifference, if not contempt. It set the little fountain to philosophizing as well as singing, and the conclusion it came to was that it is not the singing alone that is needed to reach the soul, but a proper environment also for him who hears the song. Let him stand in the glow or twilight of God's beautiful summer and his soul will be open at every gate and avenue, but let him live under the chill of some crisp winter of frost, unbelief or worldliness, and his heart will be shut against the tenderest notes and the sweetest symphonies. But it determined to sing on and on, and thus fulfill its mission, waiting for the better days to come—to come to it and to us all.

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Out there in the yard is a bird's nest.

**A Battle for**      about which six months ago there was many  
**a Nest.**            a fierce battle. In it there were eggs, then  
                               the younglings, and over it a strict watch was  
 kept by those who had built it, and who therefore claimed it as their own. When a glossy crow-blackbird would come near, he was assailed with cries, screams, buffetings, and usually with such success that he was glad to hurry off. The English sparrows were treated in the same way. If a cat appeared it was beset, not only by the two proprietors, but by many friends who gathered upon call, to give their assistance. It was as stormy a neighborhood as existed in the community. One would have thought that premises so fought for would never be given up. But now they are deserted, all being quiet about them, rain falling into the open house, and the wind trailing some of its fragments as if it would tear them all away. The courageous householders have gone off to other climes, where they doubtless live in peace, telling, as warriors are likely to do, of the "battles long ago." But they have acted wisely. While the nest was of use they risked everything to defend it. After that, they were ready to leave it and go to something else. Men do not always do so; they have their fiercest strifes over things that have had their day, and ought to be given up to the

past to which they belong. Over many an old nest, out of which the life has long since departed, they wage destructive war, not only beating it to pieces—which would be no great matter—but destroying many other things that, in their better moments, they would think of only to save and promote.

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A tree stood in a yard loaded with fruit.

**Ripe Fruit.** During all the summer, tossed by the winds and smitten by the hottest suns, the branches kept their places, gradually bending towards the earth as their burdens grew greater. During June the specimens were small; in July they were larger, and in August, growing still, the red and purple tints began to appear on their surfaces. It was not till the mellow air of the shortening days began to be felt, and the sober expression of the early autumn showed itself on the fields, that the owner went to gather the "first ripe fruit," claiming it against the protests of the robins, bees and rabbits. But after that, because of pickings, the silent droppings of the nights, and the shakings of the winds, the branches were gradually unloading, and finally there was but a single pear swinging on an upper limb. It had fought away all the influences that had carried the others to the ground, and there alone, quietly and without the appearance of triumph or defiance, with the whole tree to itself, held on its way. Its southern side deepened its early red into a kind of crimson tinged with yellow, and the other, green up to the time of perfect growth, changed into a becoming hue almost as rich as that of the goldenrod of the neighboring fence-row. How beautiful it was becoming! What a perfect specimen it would be at last! What wholesome juices were pouring into it! How sun, air, earth, trunk and foliage were doing their best to make it the illustration and proof of their genial power, and when at last, the fulness of time having come, it was tenderly picked by the master hand and carried off to the house, what beautiful thoughts it started, and what beautiful emotions it enkindled. How happy is he who thus hangs and ripens, lingering after his generation has passed away. He is supplied with all the graces from sources of which the covenant makes him sure, and thus growing more

rich and lovely, he is ready to be plucked at last from the withered stem, and, "fully ripe," to be placed where he will be forever seen as part of the inheritance and portion of Him who made and fashioned him.

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**A Sheltered Flower.** A little flower grew on a hillside, pleasantly sheltered by some shrubs, and especially by a slight rise in the soil, enjoying its life and situation and sending out its good cheer to the world around it. Till late in September, when the severest frosts began to come, it dispensed its odors, which, without knowing whence they came, people breathed as they rode along the neighboring highway. But the storms seemed to have a spite at it and beset it with their rudest violence. They blew and blustered, scowling, scolding and raging, storming all the more because it took it so patiently and cheerfully. It only shrank up a little closer to the soil that was its mother, hiding itself there for "a little moment" till the "indignation would be overpast." Then, the storms, being baffled in that way, adopted another, and unlocking the "treasures of the snow," sent whole fleets of it to discharge themselves upon it and bury it in oblivion. But the flower, though deeply hidden, did not lose heart, but rather grew brighter than before, and said to itself, "Now when I do not need my strength to battle with the winds, I will use it for other purposes," and it began to feel among the soil and push its rootlets away down through the crevices and among the pebbles. It was delighted with its explorations and the success attending them, and could not but praise its own wisdom in so economically employing its time, and congratulate itself on the easier, better life it would have when once again it would reach the open world. And when at last the snow was gone, the wind was surprised to see their supposed victim heartier, brighter and stronger than before, and seeming to be filled with a promise of beauty and fragrance that would but mock at it in the day of its defeat. A little bird came along on a sunny day and heard the story of the flower, and away it flew to the chamber of a sick man, who, retired from his work and life with the public, chafed under

his restraints, and lamented that his days and weeks were being so sadly lost. As it sat on his pillow and related to him his story he grew thoughtful, a little feeling kindled its glow on his pale cheek, and when it had concluded, he said, "O, now I see it all. I am held here, covered up by a load that I cannot put aside, but my good Father means that I shall be happy and seek to turn this waiting to good account. I, too, will strike my roots down more deeply into the soil, and when I again go out of this chamber of seclusion I will be a heartier, stronger and more devoted man. Go away to the flower on the hillside and tell it its ministry has helped me, and go thou away and carry this message you brought me to some other sufferer and my blessing along with it." And off flew the little bird, twittering as it went, happy in thinking it had been an angel of blessing to a troubled fellow-mortal.

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Two robins, moved by domestic instincts, **The Robins.** chose a place for building a summer home on a tree near a window. It was chosen with discretion. During the beautiful days of June the nest was completed, after which came the eggs, then the long days of incubating, then of rearing the young, till at last the fledglings, amid much maternal twitter and warning, half hopped and half flew away to care for themselves. A second brood followed, caring for which carried the work far into the summer, and kept up the interest of the parent birds in the place and neighborhood. But the autumn frosts have come, tumbling the leaves to the ground, and leaving exposed the nest which was so prettily screened by the summer foliage. It is silent and bleak looking. The rains fall into it, the snows fill it, the wind sweeps it, but, securely built, it keeps its place, and seems to show that its little artificers builded better than they knew. But the birds, where are they? Gone off to some sunnier clime, happy in the change, yet recalling, perhaps, the home they left behind them, and the joyful toils of the days that are departed. How like they are to us of the human family! We build our homes, often as strong as we can make them, and there employ our time, work out our mission, sing and weep; then take wing

and fly away to another land—if we be Christians, to a better one. But our nests remain, with the tapestry that we wove around them all torn away, and useful only as memorials to tell the frailty of their former tenantry.

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The type-writer, standing against a tree, **An Outdoor Study.** stops to call attention to the variety of life that is moving about it. Neither its appearance nor its click awakens the least alarm. On the tree trunk there are countless ants, moving in trains and processions, eager and busy, as if conducting a traffic that forbids all trifling. They spread themselves out also, on the ground, creeping hither and thither among the grass and rootlets, traveling agents, messengers and runners of a "house" that is building up its fortunes by their toil. They are happy looking, but whether working for wages or on the plan of co-operation and profit-sharing, there is nothing to tell. Some kinds of bugs and beetles appear and cross their pathways, while a katydid, young and tender and unfit for the music of the later season, has mounted a grass blade, as if to "view the boundless prospect o'er," and fill itself with reflections upon the wonders—and vanities—of this busy, trafficking world; and now a caterpillar, yellow, grizzly and fat with the spoils of its predatory life, has climbed the stand and is surveying the Remington with the eye of an expert and critic. There are flies and smaller insects, and fruit that has fallen shows by its wounds that it is inhabited by the life of which it is the victim. The thing to wonder at is that any of it gets leave to show itself, and even to live. The birds are hopping about in great numbers, and their entire employment seems to be that of capturing these crawlers. They examine all the crevices of the trunk, look over and under every leaf, sit about to spy and catch every specimen that spreads its wing, and leave no square inch of the soil without the hungriest scrutiny. And yet, here, after the robins, old and young, are fed, there are the teeming populations thronging the broadways and regent streets as they jostle each other in pursuing their pleasures and industries. Is it the "survival of the fittest?"

under a law of nature, or is it something better than that—the Providence that watches men, and even the angels—which protects them in their joy of this beautiful summer day?

A leisurely star was leaning down from its place in the empyrean, listening to two little raindrops, which, hanging on the verge of a cloud, were about starting on their mission to the earth. They were of equal size, and, apparently, of capacity, too, and the prophecy that would have foreshadowed their influence might have credited them with a similar beneficence. The one, all gay and sparkling, had bright visions before it. It promised itself the joy of giving pleasure to the world that would see it, and the greater joy of receiving the homage that would be paid its beauty. It said it had concluded to fix itself on a leaf of a tree standing in the public square of a city, and then, when the sun would shine on it, the passing people would stop, attracted by its brilliancy, and as it turned hither and thither by the evening breeze they would pay it the tribute its heart was craving, and which, to tell the truth, it felt it so richly deserved. The other was more thoughtful, though equally full of life, and said it had concluded to fix itself beside a seed it saw planted in a bed not far from the tree on which its companion was to glitter: "For," it said, "it needs me to start it into life, and save it from wasting where it ought to grow and be useful." So utilitarian a decision could not but be laughed at, but nothing, not even ridicule itself, could turn the little missionary from its benevolent purpose. At a given signal away they started on their errand. Though it had looked so long, the journey was but short, and soon the happy little crystal was lodged on an aspen leaf ready for its appearance and display. Ere long the sun came out in beauty, and it, radiant as a star it had left behind it, glistened and sparkled on the trembling foliage. It reached the eye of a child as it looked from a window; it sent a throb of joy into the heart of an artist as he saw it from his studio, and men and women walking along the street exclaimed, "How beautiful!" as they caught its splendor. But the sun was warm as well as bright, and almost

before it knew the little drop was gone and the aspen leaf was as plain as any of the rest. The other drop sought the waiting seed and nestled close beside it in the obscurity of the soil. No eye saw it, nor did any mortal of all the crowd around it know of its coming. But the sensitive life of the seed felt its touch and began to move, and after a time, still helped by its heavenly Samaritan, burst the shell that had confined it, and began its work of life. Through a good many days and weeks it grew, until at last a beautiful flower crowned its upper twig, while buds gathered in clusters on all its branches. Hundreds of smiling people saw them and felt better for their lessons. The millionaire and the beggar were at one in praising their sweetness, while their fragrance was carried by many a wind along the streets and into the homes of the citizens. When a little child died one of them was laid upon its bosom as a symbol of its purity; when a bride stood at the altar some of them were wreathed in her hair to help express the joy of the marriage scene; and in a church where the disciples of Jesus gathered about the table of the Lord, the buds were blushing their promises of the resurrection day for which they were to wait "till he come." The sidereal umpire held his place on the watch-tower far away. Gone was the cloud and forgotten, but this was its decision respecting the pioneers, the statement of whose plans it had heard in the calm of the summer afternoon: "I see that love of display leads only to vanity, while a disposition to give help in a lowly way to that which needs it, is sure to produce the happiest results. The life that wishes simply to shine will go out in hasty darkness, while that which hides itself in modest effort for the benefit of someone else, becomes a sure and constant benefactor. Let this be a lesson for men of every station, and let me remember that, with a better purpose than to shine and sparkle at my leisure, I am commissioned, like all the rest of the 'spacious firmament on high,' to help 'proclaim the great original.'"

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE POET.

**I**T WOULD be remarkable if one of a literary taste, and of so vigorous an imagination and powers of mellifluous expression as Dr. Johnston possessed, did not sometimes express himself in song. From time to time, scarcely of set purpose, but in moments of happy leisure, his thoughts flowed out in verse. All are beautiful, while some of his pieces have the aroma of true poetry. What can be more musical than "The Lingering Music," and what more devout than "My Heart," and "O Sing of Jesus"? A selection from his poems is appended.

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#### THE LINGERING MUSIC.

The bird has felt the Autumn's breath,  
And fled beyond the sea ;  
But nought can drive away the song  
It left with you and me.

The mother long has slept within  
Her grave upon the hill ;  
And yet the lullaby she sang,  
Her child is hearing still.

The clouds have gone, and yet keeps up,  
 The patter of the rain ;  
 The harp 's unstrung, but still we hear  
 Its delicate refrain.

From every voice and trembling string,  
 Undying music starts ;  
 They die away, or break, but it  
 Beats on in living hearts.

The strains we sing will soon be spent,  
 The singers soon be gone ;  
 But, O the joy, if through the years,  
 Our songs go trilling on !



#### HOURS NOT FORGOTTEN.

Do I forget the afternoon,  
 So calm, so sweet, so opportune  
 For you and me,  
 When, stroked by Summer's gentle breath,  
 We linger'd dreamy hours beneath  
 The apple-tree?

The garden thrush forgot its fear,  
 And stopped to fill our waiting ear  
 With music sweet ;  
 The robin loitered in the shade,  
 And watched the leafy games that played  
 About our feet.

The sky above was pearly blue,  
 And softly lay a rosy hue  
 Upon the slopes ;  
 Where thoughtful shadows slowly crept,  
 The patient sheep and cattle slept  
 In peaceful groups.

We read of orator and priest,  
Of mansions great and homes the least,  
Of kings and queens ;  
And yielding to the Wizard's spell,  
We silent sat to hear him tell  
Of Jeanie Deans.

We look to-day : the leaves and birds,  
The playing beams and sleeping herds,  
We cannot see ;  
But neither frost nor snowy wreath  
Can dim the hours we sat beneath  
The apple-tree.



## A WORD OF ADVICE.

Thou, Robin, art a friendly bird,  
A friendly bird to me,  
Nor wilt thou doubt my ready word  
That I'm a friend to thee.  
Thy notes are like a prophet's song,  
Sweet harbinger of Spring,  
And Summer's day is never long  
When I can hear thee sing.

I'm almost willing to agree  
That all of mine is thine ;  
Please feel at home on any tree,  
Or any shrub or vine.  
In Summer when the fruits are grown,  
Be sure to have thy share ;  
The lawn and garden make thine own,  
Nor be a stranger there.

But heed you, Robin, my request,  
 Repeated o'er and o'er ;  
 Do not attempt to rear thy nest  
 Above this hall-way door :  
 The maple, willow, spruce, and birch  
 Each offers thee a home ;  
 They'll wreath with green thy leafy perch  
 Long ere thy birdlets come.

Thou art a lover of the breeze,  
 Of dew and sifting rain ;  
 The whispers of the night thee please,  
 And evening's soft refrain.  
 Too dull and somber, far, this place,  
 For rustic ones like you ;  
 Too tame for one, this hampered space,  
 Who takes a noble view.

And friendship, both with birds and men,  
 Remains the longer green—  
 Is fresher, truer, kindlier, when  
 Right order stands between :  
 Go, therefore, build your dwelling where,  
 Though far, 'twill yet be near ;  
 Your music you can render there,  
 And I will listen here.



#### THE RIVULET'S STORY.

I listen to thee, little rill,  
 As starting from that sober hill,  
 Thy singing waters sweetly flow  
 To join the larger stream below.  
 Thy song, though of to-day, is more ;  
 It breathes of rich historic lore ;  
 Forgive the freak, that, half in play,  
 Records in short-hand what you say.

- " More years ago than I can tell,  
     I held my way adown this dell ;  
 Above me reared the oak his head,  
     While o'er me thorn and hazel spread ;  
 The wigwam smoked upon my brink,  
     The deer and bear came near to drink ;  
 A gloomy silence, like a pall,  
     Hung dark and brooding over all.
- " At length there came the woodman's axe ;  
     Away the fleeing warrior's tracks ;  
 Adown the cheerful sunlight streamed,  
     And stars with twinkling beauty beamed ;  
 The farmer's call, the milkmaid's song,  
     Their echoes spent the hills among ;  
 And peaceful, 'neath the smile of God,  
     The harvest home was spread abroad.
- " And night by night, when creeping fast,  
     Or in the morning, slipping past,  
 I heard a psalm, a yearning prayer,  
     Arise upon the list'ning air ;  
 Its burden, thanks for love and grace,  
     A hope of future dwelling place,  
 With pleadings for the King's increase,  
     For Judah's strength and Zion's peace.
- " The voices changed, the prayers went on,  
     As blessings passed from sire to son ;  
 Though graves were thick'ning on the hill,  
     Jehovah's songs were singing still ;  
 And week by week, as o'er us fell  
     The sacred Sabbath's spell,  
 To meadow, hill and stream were given,  
     A tender touch like that of Heaven.

" The beauty lingers in the sky,  
     And happy scenes still greet the eye ;  
 The laugh and song of joy are blent,  
     With rural peace and sweet content ;  
 But why, O why, have passed away,  
     The prayer, and psalm, and holy day ?  
 And why, O why, are here no more,  
     The sons of fathers gone before ? "



#### MY MOTHER.

Thy brow is calm with native grace,  
 A Christian peace adorns thy face,  
     To hide its care ;  
 The print of years is on thy cheek,  
 And time has wrought its silver streak  
     Within thy hair :  
     Thou art—thou art my mother !

Thy lips have long been closed to speech,  
 Thy tender eyes have ceased to teach  
     Love's magic lore ;  
 The smile, the laugh, the song, the tears,  
 Are hidden 'neath the shroud of years  
     And sodded o'er ;  
     But still, thou art my mother !

My friends of early youth remain.  
 Who tightly wind their golden chain  
     About my heart ;  
 At every step I meet anew  
 Some brother, sister, kind and true,  
     To take my part ;  
     But thou—thou art my mother !

Thou lookest at me from the wall,  
 A picture true—but is that all  
 I dare to claim ?  
 May I not feel that from above,  
 Thine eyes are on me, full of love,  
 Fore'er the same ;  
 My mother, O my mother ?



## FROM BRIGHT TO DARK.

The morning is bright as it rises,  
 And the sky is a beautiful blue ;  
 The meadows are gay with surprises,  
 From drops of glittering dew.

And yet 'tis the month of November,  
 When the fields and the forests are bare—  
 The month of all months, I remember,  
 When brightness and glory are rare.

Have the clouds forgotten their mission,  
 And their tempests of drift and of sleet ?  
 Has the winter resigned its position,  
 And forsaken its terrible seat ?

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Alas ! the beauty has vanished,  
 The brightness and sparkle have fled,  
 The joy of the morning is banished,  
 The hope of the noonday is dead.

The clouds above us are drifting,  
 And our hearts cannot baffle the pain  
 That throbs, as the heavens are sifting  
 The gloomy and wearisome rain.

O thus it has been with my morning,  
 My morning of sparkle and bloom ;  
 Its gladness, almost without warning,  
 Has changed to encompassing gloom.

But, alike in the bright and the dreary,  
 The sky bends in beauty above,  
 And ne'er will it slacken or weary  
 Performing its office of love.

So, alike in our joys and our sorrows,  
 One above us is ever the same,  
 And He brightens with hope the to-morrows  
 Of those who believe in His name.



#### WINTER'S REIGN.

The surly winter thundered on,  
 So wild at dark, so fierce at dawn ;  
 Snow draped the elm and bent the pine,  
 Entombed the rose, and hid the vine,  
 And grinding, cracking, 'neath the feet,  
 Spread o'er the hills its winding sheet.  
 The sun asserted it was Spring,  
 The birds proclaimed their right to sing :  
 By margins where the cresses grow,  
 In sunny nooks where daisies blow,  
 On sodded slopes, by lichen'd walls,  
 Where breezes play and sunshine falls,  
 The whisper to a murmur grew,  
 That winter reigned beyond its due.

On every hand complaints arose :  
 "How grey the skies, how deep the snows !"  
 "The sun, how chill, how drear the moan  
 Of winds that sweep o'er fields unsown."  
 But now, behold the glad surprise !  
 The balmy air, the tender skies :  
 The blushing morn, the radiant noon,  
 And tints as soft as those of June :  
 The sparkling dews, the sunbeam's glance,

The humming bee, the midget's dance :  
 The sparrow's song, the robin's joy,  
 The whistle of the rustic boy :  
 While o'er the fields in soft repose,  
 The mist its trembling mantle throws.

'Tis thus our faults are often met :  
 We murmur, sigh, complain, and fret,  
 And chafing under love's delays  
 Forget the love of other days :  
 When all at once the gleaming light  
 Breaks on our souls in beauty bright,  
 And God, our childish sins forgiven,  
 Rewards us with the smile of heaven.



## MY HEART.

O Lord, my heart is cold ;  
 The ice lies thick upon its side,  
 And sweeping winds, with driving snow,  
 Around its top careering go,  
 Till all its forms the tempest hides ;  
 It is so cold, so cold.

O Lord, my heart is bare ;  
 No verdure smiles along its slopes,  
 Nor fragrant flower, nor trembling leaf,  
 Nor waving field, nor golden sheaf,  
 Fulfills its eager, early hopes ;  
 It is so bare, so bare.

O Lord, my heart is lone ;  
 It stands apart from all its kind ;  
 If other hearts their friendships know,  
 And live in sweet communion's glow,  
 My heart this joy has yet to find ;  
 It is so lone, so lone.

O Lord, my heart is dark ;  
 The clouds enshroud it day and night ;  
 It catches not the morning gleams,  
 Nor wakes to greet the joy that streams  
 In happy evening's sparkling light ;  
 It is so dark, so dark.

But, Lord, Thy love is good ;  
 Beneath its sweet, transforming power,  
 The cold, the barrenness and gloom,  
 Give place to radiant Beauty's bloom,  
 They all are gone within an hour ;  
 It is so good, so good.



### O SING OF JESUS !

O sing the name of Jesus !  
 Like precious ointment let it flow,  
 Through all the nations let it go,  
 Till, heard and known from sea to sea,  
 Men may confess and bow the knee ;  
 O sing the name of Jesus.

O sing the love of Jesus !  
 A love so tender, kind and true,  
 Such as a mother never knew ;  
 Eternal, sure, and freely given,  
 The joy of earth and hope of heaven ;  
 O sing the love of Jesus.

O sing the blood of Jesus !  
 In it our guilt all disappears,  
 Our burdens, sorrows, guilty fears ;  
 When washed in it there can remain  
 No crimson tint, no scarlet stain ;  
 O sing the blood of Jesus.

O sing the cause of Jesus !  
 Let every heart with gladness swell,  
 Its grace to praise, its glory tell ;  
 Its beauty, dignity, and peace,  
 Its courage, hope, and rich increase ;  
 O sing the cause of Jesus.

O sing, sing all of Jesus !  
 The rich and poor, the high and low—  
 Let people all his mercy know ;  
 Let every soul its tribute bring  
 Of praises to the Saviour King ;  
 O sing, sing all of Jesus.



#### HIS VOICE TO A CHILD.

When thou calledst, O Lord, I heard thy dear voice,  
 And happy in childhood, could keenly rejoice ;  
 For oft I was told that, all others above,  
 The voice of the Lord is a voice full of love.

At first it was gentle as if from afar,  
 A whisper of sunrise or song of a star ;  
 In words that were tender, persuasive and mild,  
 Like those of a mother who comforts her child.

So sweetly it came, that, though felt in the night,  
 It was pleasant and kind as when heard in the light ;  
 In stillness and tumult 'twould over me break,  
 " I will never desert thee, nor ever forsake."

But louder it grew—like a trumpet at last,  
 When it suddenly shouts an awakening blast ;  
 " Surrender ! surrender ! thou needst to be shown,  
 Jehovah forgets not to call for his own !"

I saw her departing one fierce winter day,  
 And the solemn procession that bore her away ;  
 For the summons had found her made willing to go,  
 And sleep where they laid her, enshrouded by snow.

O teach me to know Thee, and hearing Thy voice,  
 To listen and love it, and still to rejoice ;  
 And make me submissive and true to Thy will  
 When my heart has its pain by the grave on the hill.



#### LA FRANCE.

They call thee, pretty rose, La France,  
 But no decree of rare descent,  
 Though proudly told and kindly meant,  
 Thy native beauty can enhance.

Like blushes on a maiden's face,  
 Those timid tints reveal thy soul,  
 And hint how much thy leaves enroll  
 Of fragrant thought and quiet grace.

A thing of beauty—first of flowers ;  
 In scented bud, or fully blown,  
 Thou art in loveliness alone,  
 A triumph of the summer showers.

Thou wast a queen upon the lawn,  
 And though thou reignedst but a day,  
 Thou art supreme in this bouquet,  
 An empress from her throne withdrawn.

I look upon thee with a tear,  
 And listen fondly to thy lore ;  
 But liking thee, I love still more,  
 The hand that plucked and placed thee here.

## AN APRIL BEE.

Thou little busy bee,  
Thy glancing wing I see,  
In April's sunny hours,  
In vainest search for flowers,  
That yet are lying low,  
Beneath the Winter's snow.

When last you passed this way,  
The bright October day  
Was gentle, peaceful, calm,  
Its air perfumed with balm ;  
And many petals gave  
The sweets you came to crave.

But night shut up your cell,  
And winds flew by to tell  
That all the flowers were lost  
Beneath the power of frost,  
And that the Winter's reign  
Had seized on your domain.

And then you lay and slept,  
While storms and tempests swept  
The garden, field and hill,  
The vale and rippling rill,  
Till leaf and fragrance fled  
Before their fury dread.

But now you gladly come  
And start your happy hum,  
To taste the crocus' bloom,  
And violet's perfume :  
In dews both rare and sweet,  
To bathe your eager feet.

But listen, little bee :  
This day is not for thee.  
At home, with folded wing,  
Expect the tardy Spring,  
But learn, like me, though late,  
How blessed 'tis to wait.

## A DANDELION.

One day, in wintry weather,  
Two lovers strolled together,  
At noon-tide hour :  
They saw thee struggle faintly,  
And smile at them so quaintly,  
And cried, "A flower!"

A lady, full of hurry,  
Went out in heat and flurry,  
To sow some seed :  
But seeing thee abiding,  
Where thou wast slyly hiding,  
She screamed, "A weed!"

A little child was playing,  
Her eyes her joy betraying,  
And cheeks so rosy :  
When all at once, beside thee,  
She cunningly espied thee,  
And lisped, "A posie!"

A gard'ner who was hoeing,  
And felt him weary growing,  
Sat down to rest :  
At once he 'gan to hate thee,  
To threaten and berate thee,  
And growled, "A pest!"

And now, 'mid these surprises,  
A doubt with thee arises,  
And starts the thought :  
"Have I, in this creation,  
A rightful lot and station,  
Or have I not?"

But never mind the query,  
Which will but vex and weary,  
And fail at last :  
Just reach your hand above you,  
To Him who says, "I love you,"  
And hold Him fast.

## THE EARLY HOME.

I look at the hills as in gaiety robed,  
 They rest in the light of this beautiful day ;  
 But my thoughts hurry off, spite of all I can do,  
 To the home of my youth in the far, far away.

The house is of stone, two-storied and plain,  
 With its cornices white and gables of blue ;  
 Behind it the fields and sheltering trees,  
 The meadow before with a stream running through,

Its doorway is bright with verdure and flower,  
 And beckons to scenes of strength and repose ;  
 Its pathways run out to fountains that sing  
 By slopes where the blue blushing violet grows.

The mists pitch their tents, by its windows at morn,  
 And shadows fall thick from the mountains at e'en ;  
 But touched by the winds and kissed by the sun,  
 A whole day of gladness lies smiling between.

I've seen many homes of affection and peace,  
 Some near and some far, some over the sea,  
 But they cannot enkindle the delicate glow  
 That the old Poplar Hill awakens in me.



## SOWING THE SEED.

Let your seed be sown in the morning ;  
 While the stars are still in view,  
 While the leaves are wet with dew ;  
 And watch for its verdant adorning,  
 As you humbly wait and pray  
 In the coming sunny day.

Let it scattered be at the nooning ;  
When the sky is all aglow,  
When the tender breezes blow ;  
And think in your happy communing,  
Of the day when it shall spread  
All its beauty o'er your head.

Let ev'ning forbid to withhold it ;  
As the air collects its chill,  
As the shadows cloud the hill ;  
And trust, as the earth shall enfold it,  
That its golden sheaves shall stand  
In the singing reaper's hand.

But the seed is His that you're sowing ;  
From His hand distill the rains  
That shall multiply your gains ;  
And from Him is the love bestowing,  
That at last shall glory shed  
On the happy sower's head.

## CHAPTER IX.

### AT HOME.

**M**EN are best known in their homes. It is the heart-touch which reveals the noblest and truest in humanity, and this is most fully gotten at the table and fireside, and through the contact and offices of daily and protracted domestic life. The home circle at Poplar Hill was of the happiest, and its type was reproduced in the parsonage at Washington.

The beginnings of the home were in 1863, when, on Nov. 17, the pastor was married to Miss M. E. McCulloh, of Franklin Co., Pa. She was a beautiful woman, of quiet, retiring disposition. Of this union one child was born, a son, still in the home, of whom Mr. Johnston's letters of the period speak with the warmth of a young father's affection. The home at the parsonage was soon broken. Death came Sept. 25, 1868, and the young wife was gone.

On July 6, 1870, he was married again to Miss Mattie A. Harris, daughter of Gen. T. M. Harris,\* of West Virginia.

\*One of the singular facts in our national history is that the comparatively small United Presbyterian denomination furnished three of the principal actors in the trial of the conspirators who took the life of President Lincoln, viz., Gen. T. M. Harris, Gen. Jas. A. Ekin, members of the Commission, a small body, and the Hon. John A. Bingham, counsel for the prosecution. Gen. Ekin is dead. The others are yet living.

Of this marriage one child was born. Mrs. Johnston was a lady of fine intellectual gifts and attainments, an excellent conversationalist, and a devout Christian. Her tastes were literary, and her pen a graceful one. Her thoughts and life in later years were much devoted to religion, and her reading was largely on its practical and experimental lines. Her conceptions of divine things grew into the better mysticism which was then coming into prominence in certain quarters. The effect of it in the home was to give an impulse to her husband's spiritual life, and to help him to a better consecration and wiser views of Christian living.

For a number of years the wife was under the spell of consumption, and made a brave and pathetic battle for her life, receiving the most tender and thoughtful care from her husband; but in vain. She fell asleep Feb. 21, 1882.

During a large part of this period an invalid sister was also a member of the family, and so afflicted as to require much attention. Both these dear ones drew, during all these years, heavily upon the husband and brother's time and strength. He slept for many nights at a time with doors open and clothes on ready to respond to the calls from the sufferers. Necessarily, the care of the household devolved largely upon him; indeed, frequently to the minutest details. It was not much wonder, if, as he said himself, when speaking of these great trials, his "whiskers turned gray in a night," and his "face took on furrows of care."

On Nov. 29, 1883, he was again married, and to Miss Helen H. Donnan, of Washington, a member of his own congregation, a most estimable and capable lady and

devoted wife, still living and presiding over the home he has vacated. During this period Dr. Johnston was able to do his best work, and show, as he had not done before, the range of his powers. The freedom from domestic care afforded opportunities he had not for many years enjoyed. The study became a delight, instead of a place to relieve a wearied body and an aching heart, and the typewriter rattled joyously over the pages of newspaper copy, long letters to friends, and the sermons for the Sabbath.

The life at the parsonage flowed smoothly and happily. The large grounds made it a sort of *rus in urbe* place, and the old bucolic habits of the proprietor asserted themselves, if not as in years before at "Poplar Hill," at least in the odds and ends of the day. For a time he kept a horse and a Jersey cow, and to these he gave personal attention. He also "kept" a garden and a lawn, and here at five in the morning he might sometimes be heard rattling the mower or striking the hoe into the soil. The long lines of carefully "sticked" "Champion of England," and the trellised tomatoes, and the considerable "patch" of broad-faced, smiling cabbages, with the other "stuff," delighted his heart, and he took especial pleasure in seeing his own product on the table. In a quizzical, half-humorous sort of way, he writes his sister in the last days of seeing the new domestic, whose Sabbath training had been neglected, and whose instruction for the day had been overlooked, bringing in potatoes and corn from the garden where she had been a "Sabbath day's journey" without the knowledge of the family; and as to whether the vegetables had better be thrown out or eaten; wondering at the same time what the "fathers" would think of the proceeding if they could see it!

The grounds were largely stocked with pears and other fruit, of which he was a connoisseur, and his letters tell about the "good fruit" and the "poorly ripened fruit" of the year, and of matutinal pilgrimages through the wet grass to find the "falls" of the night, to be eaten before breakfast; of the damage done by the frost and "the wind with its rough brush," and that he thought there would "yet be enough for the robin and woodpecker, and you and me."

The freshness of the morning, the birds that came to his grounds for a residence, the blossoming of the early rose, the fellowship of the cow and horse, the congenial labor in the soil, all drew him out into the open air when others were asleep. So his letters tell of the sights of the early day; of the hoe and pruning knife, of the rose bed he dug for Mary, "the apple of his eye," of Ernest's dog, which the boy, in a funny, clandestine way introduced to the premises, and of the hundred other matters that appealed to a heart that loved the home and nature, and all simple and natural and beautiful things. He finds pleasure in the letter of a brother minister who writes him of an experience in "pitching hay," and counts it entirely consistent with his friend's college doctorate; he is delighted with the conversation of another brother who discusses the merits of "Charles Downing" and "Sharpless" among the strawberries, and he sits down, after a morning with the vines, and writes to the whole Church about "grape culture." He lived "near to nature's heart." A surpassing genius in the field of letters, his industrious habits and sympathy with the pulses of life and beauty and fruitfulness and power about him would have made him content to spend all his days on his father's farm. A

man who refused a presidency of a college, he would yet have been content to dwell in grain fields and orchards in summer, and in winter to sit by a farmer's fireside waiting for the return of spring. Here is a bit of spring idyl that will put a smile on many a face, and stir many a heavy pulse :

“The spring is upon us. The grass is greening, the buds swelling, the birds building, the flowers blooming, the winds perfuming, the vines budding, the tubers rooting, the waters singing, the hills swelling, the roads drying, the chickens hatching, the lambs frisking, the invalids promenading, the housekeepers cleaning, the farmers plowing, the gardeners sowing, the children romping, the mornings hastening, the evenings lingering, the dews sparkling, the sunshine brightening, the fogs retreating, the nights shortening, the joys increasing, the odors floating, the zephyrs playing, the north winds lulling, the dove cooing, the flicker predicting, the sparrow chattering, the robin warbling, the blackbird humming, the peet weet saluting, the crow cawing, the snow bird departing, the bee buzzing, the insects dancing, the reptiles crawling, the frogs croaking—all else going on according to its order—and I am

“Your brother, vernally, J. R. J.”

There are some glimpses afforded of the life within the family. His sister received many of the domestic details :

“Saturday we took a ride—H., M. and I—away out over the hills. There is one road starting out at the lower side of town which I never traveled till about this time last year. Almost a quarter of a century in the place, and yet a spot, on a public road, not a mile from the town, that I had never touched. We took it this time. It is very hilly, but that makes the ‘view’ all the nobler. Mary was enthusiastic over the splendors. Coming home, we traveled over another highway, part of which I had never before seen. In this hilly country the roads run in all directions, presumably to get around the hills.

They are rather haphazard, without reference to any thing. Very often they go over high hills when they might get around them. In the early days, houses were built deep in the hollows, because the springs were there. Then the roads, growing up from the foot paths and wagon tracks, followed them. There never was a system, such as prevails in most of the Western States."

“WASHINGTON, PA., Dec. 25, 1885.

*“Dear Brother Boyd:—*A merry Christmas to you and yours! And yet, are we likely to be merry in a scriptural way on such a holiday? ‘Is any merry? let him sing Psalms.’ It hardly seems the thing to strike up Mear and Bangor, or even Old Hundred, just for fun. It would look like a ‘corruption.’ Though, it must be confessed, I have seen many persons greatly amused at hearing orthodox singing, even of those. They were more diverted than the singers, who lacked art more than piety. We have had a pleasant Christmas. Our plan is to wait till after dinner to distribute the gifts. In the morning we send around what we have, then attend to those—if any—that come in. To-day it fell to me to arrange them in the parlor, which I did according to my best taste and judgment. After the turkey, we gathered in the parlor, when I auctioned off the goods. We remember each other, and we have several friends who never forget us. A Presbyterian family in town, curious to say, gives us among the best of our gifts, and the most regularly. They are exceedingly kind.”

Again :

“Christmas was very pleasant with us. Some of our friends are always kind, and we had quite an array of ‘presents’—some sent in and some contributed by one to the other by ourselves. I like it, and the children think they never have quite so good a day as this of St. Nicholas. Even the little gifts become treasures. We exchange cards, etc., with some friends we made in Ireland, and I sent a barrel of apples this year to a family in the north of England, which was kind to us during our visit there.”

Another letter :

“ Yes, I suspect I enter more into the holidays than you. Christmas has grown to be an important day with us. Many of our friends send us presents, we give something to each other, and I like to make up packages for friends outside. Our presents we take to the parlor and put into some kind of impressive shape. Sometimes we make a pyramid by putting a small table on top of a large one, and wrapping both with tissue papers of the different colors. This year we simply made the pyramid and let the gifts themselves form the drapery. It looked very pretty, and we had much pleasure in distributing the gifts. Mary had the largest collection, many of the articles being of substantial value.

“ I have grown to like ‘ days.’ Birthdays, marriage anniversaries—other such, I should like to observe with some appropriate exercises. It would serve to break the monotony of life, and I think the variety it would give would be useful. God has made the peaks on which the sun shines all day through ; why may we not elevate one day above another ? Paul spoke of one man esteeming one day above another, but of a second one esteeming every day alike. Then, like the great souled man he was, he said, ‘ Let every man be persuaded in his own mind.’ The main thing was to do whatever was done ‘ to the Lord.’

“ I could learn to like days made distinct by religious services—provided it could be done heartily and devotionally. It is astonishing how far—to what extremes—the reaction from popery drove our fathers of the later reformation. It is sad, too, to think what it cost them. Even that would not be so bad, were it not for the cost it has inflicted on us. We are yet worrying under a deal of nonsense imposed upon us by their austerity. I used to admire the New England Puritans, and think it was treason to all that is holiest in human character to find fault with them. I still admire them, but am no longer blind to the fact that they were the veriest bigots.”

Here are his thoughts on child training :

“ WASHINGTON, Pa., Jan. 29, 1888.

“ *My Dear Sister:* My time is scarce, but a line is possible. My sermon for the evening is in shape. It has the finishing

touches. And yet there is not much 'finish' about it. In our church two sets of people can be pleased. There are the educated—college and seminary people—to say nothing of the professionals. Then there are the 'common people.' Some, also, of the totally uncultured. It is better to aim at the last than the first. To be simple, at least. The most intelligent like simple things. This morning I was on a primary and fundamental subject—'Honor thy father and mother.' Eph. 6 : 2. Perhaps I did not follow the regulation pathway, but I told some truth. I have observed this : that children are likely to be reverential towards their parents, other things be equal, if taught to serve them. That is, to wait on them, help them, anticipate their wants. If waited on they get selfish. Were I rearing a child again, I would educate him in all such offices—bring my slippers, coat, get me drinks, run errands, etc. It is the way to cultivate reverence. I was also talking of the mistake parents make in 'saving' for their children. Refusing all calls—agreeing to be called parsimonious, etc., all to leave a fortune for their boys ; they only prepare for themselves trouble. The children grow selfish, wish them out of the way, hate them. A man should teach them to feel that his money is for himself—to use, give away, etc. If they get any of it it will be by his grace."

We get glimpses sometimes of the little things which go so much to give life its character. For example :

" WASHINGTON, Pa., Nov. 6, 1886.

" *Dear Brother Boyd:* I suspect that lazy preachers like you are still in bed, or are you one of the early sort? It is half-past six, and I have fed a calf, a horse, the chickens, and milked a cow. You see from that, not only how early, but how bucolic I am. The calf is a product that I could not think of sending to the butcher—a Guernsey-Jersey. The cow is a kind of household luxury. We pay a girl the customary wages, but it is a kind of Freemasonry among the class to say, ' We cannot milk.' I have a horse, and seem to think I must have a few chickens for eggs and the cackle. Sometimes I think I will let my chicken industry lapse. What crowing I need the neighbors' roosts will

afford me! And having all these—yes, and a dog and a cat—I am compelled to give them some attention myself. A boy is only an additional care, and no elderly man is at present within reach. In one sense it is unfortunate—the animals get but scant attention.

“A pastorate such as mine, half city and half country, causes some requirements that one wholly of either would not demand. On the street and about the town houses one wishes to have something of the air of neatness. Then, if he ride, the roads being muddy, his neatness suffers. More suits are necessary. It is a bother to change them. But in everything, there are compensations, and by weighing one thing over against another, we reach the right conclusions.”

Again :

“Feb’y 14, 1888. \* \* \* I was out trimming grape vines during the afternoon. The air was balmy. The sunshine warm and healing. I thought of an old vine that grew at our early home doorway. It shaded a southern window. In my earlier years it was not pruned—let go at will. A new ‘hand,’ with some new ideas, proposed to trim it. He did, and when the folk saw the bare limbs, they were in despair. ‘No grapes this year,’ they said, holding in mind sundry reflections on the stupid man and his impudent intrusion. But lo! such a crop they never had before. A robin came this morning. It twittered, but did not sing. A tint of green started on the lawn. I was at the ‘pussy-willow’ tree and saw its swelling leaves. Who told them of the coming spring?”

The kindly, wise, sweet spirit of the man in his home is seen in the letters he from time to time addressed to his children, when on temporary absences from home. A few are presented :

“June, 1884.

“I know you will enjoy your visit. Learn all you can. Always be frank and natural. Little girls sometimes get to practice affectation, which is always unbecoming. Talk, speak, smile, behave naturally, without ‘putting on’ any kind of

airs. Do not dress too much. Do not exaggerate. Plain good taste is always the best dressing. Do not think of dress beyond making a proper effort to be neat and becoming. A well stored mind is far better than a handsomely-dressed body and ignorance. Do not read too many stories. Learn facts, things, histories, etc. The stories will do for confectionery."

"August, 1886.

"Your mother and I have had a little walk over to the lot. First, we sat by the spring below the stable. It was filled up with drifted sand and matted with many kinds of weeds. I pulled the latter aside, and, with the little tincup, scooped out a place for the water to collect. It was trickling sweetly out from among the stones, and soon a bright, sparkling pool had collected, which seemed to look up to me and smilingly say, 'Dip me and have a drink.' And I did dip it, and had as delightful a drink as anybody in Washington.

"I thought, as I sat there, of stooping with your grandfather, perhaps forty years ago, at a little spring in a back meadow, and of his expressing his gratitude for so healthful a blessing as the pure spring water. Then I thought of another thing—of the pleasure there would be in having a nice bed made for the water, a canopy over it of vines, a tree at one side to cast an evening shadow, and a bench long enough for reclining. Couldn't one read in so pleasant a place?

"Off to the East there were great piles of clouds. They were like mountains, and almost as magnificent as Mont Blanc, as we saw it two years ago. Along the base they were dense and black, gradually tinted with lighter shades as they ascended, and at the top, brilliant and gorgeous under the touch of the unobstructed sun. But they were very unsubstantial, for while we looked they shrank and seemed to melt away. And this will call to your mind what our Father says to us, 'I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins.' 'Blotted out'—swept entirely out of existence. O the graciousness of Him who saves us!

"Then we walked across the 'burnie,' looking as we passed at the playful water as it came trickling down from the fields above. It called to mind Tennyson's 'The Brook': 'Men may

come and men may go, but I go on forever.' 'Pussy' followed us, seeming to be delighted to have visitors in her domain. As if to show off a little, she knelt, both knees, and took a drink from the stream where the bank was high. I had never seen a cow go about it in so orderly a way before, and we both had a laugh at her skill while admiring her good cow sense. We looked a while at the great, high hills, sleeping so peacefully under the summer sun; smiling, too, in a green as beautiful as any that spreads itself over the Emerald Isle. Horses were feeding and cows, a man and a boy were walking here and there, but the work of the week was suspended. The peaceful Sabbath! It is one of our best blessings. Let us pray that it may remain without increasing desecration.

"But we spoke of a cloud that was gathering hastily in the North, and spreading itself on both sides threatening rain. It had soon reached the sun and its light was dimmed: and still growing, darkening, widening, we started for home. In a little while its cooler air came down to us, rustling the leaves of the poplar and maples; and then the drops began to fall, a few, then more and more, and then the dripping shower. And now the delicious rain is sprinkling, quietly, pleasantly, pattering musically on the leaves, tinkling in the spouts, and filling the air with delicious perfume. It adds to the sweetness of the tranquil evening. The grass laughs under its tender touch."

"July, 1889.

"You will, of course, make the most of your visit. Do not only enjoy it, but profit by it. I wish you this summer to have all the benefit you can from your recreation. You have been long in school; now other parts of your education must be begun and carried on. 'Out of school,' you must learn the lessons waiting there. There is much to learn by care, even without official instructors. One thing, I wish you to learn to converse. This is very important, in a practical way, and it is a first-class accomplishment. Try to acquire the habit of speaking with dignity, and intelligent, modest self-assurance.

"To converse we must have something to talk about. This implies knowledge. The more we know the greater is our resource. But it is not the knowledge I now refer to so much as

the faculty and habit. The special grace is to converse with propriety on the smallest subjects. The philosophies may be talked of now and then, but potatoes, robins, rose-bugs, etc., are with us all the time. Our everyday intercourse requires adaptations including innumerable trifles.

“Avoid all forced tones, all conscious notions, all assumed laughter, all insincerity, even in a look. Be genial. Esteem it a duty to entertain. Learn to listen. Be thoughtful. Enjoy by helping others to enjoy. Take pleasure in interesting people older than yourself. Enter into the pleasures of people whose tastes are different from your own.

“All this is thoroughly consistent with that gayety which I would encourage rather than dampen. Liveliness is one of the charms of the youthful girl. Be bright, of course. A few rare natures may talk well as a ‘gift,’ but usually good conversation is a part of culture. People who practice it have trained themselves to it.

“A care in your correspondence will assist you in it. It is not formal writing, but free, familiar, spontaneous, while affording the opportunity for the best expression. Indeed, any kind of writing, anything that enforces the habit of good verbal expression, aids in conversing.

All such things show the life he lived when not discharging duties toward the outside world. And, perhaps, the sketch may be fitly closed by allowing him to picture the spot in the home to which he retired for his more serious work, and from which issued the influences which made him known to the “men and brethren,” to whom his words came as messengers of beauty and power :

“*Dear Brother:* \* \* \* \* I am sitting in what I call my ‘little study.’ It is a room over the hall, connected with my study proper by a door, six feet wide and about sixteen long. I have two book-cases in it, besides some other furniture, and still have room enough to turn about and stretch myself. I like it because it is so close and cozy. My ideas cannot run away or take a wide range. They seem to flock down close to me and run through

the caligraph just because there is no other place to go. Very often I come here, both in summer and winter, and the place is getting to have a sanctuary air, sacred alike as connected with the past, and consecrated to the present and future.

“ A single gas jet burns on the wall. The clock in the other room is ticking, ticking, ticking the moments away and the night. Outside all is dark, dismal. There is no star—not a sign of one, and as it is so late, the ‘ lights in the windows ’ are all extinguished. I see a street lamp or two shining dimly through the fog, suggesting a weakness in comparison with their tasks that makes them uncertain as factors in the work of helping guard our homes. The wind is blowing just a little, and the windows are indulging in a series of performances similar to some of the feats of spirit rappers. All the forenoon it rained— from morn till noon it fell, from noon till dewy eve ’— nor did the night drive away the bleak and shadowy clouds. The house is all silent, excepting these slight noises. And now, just as I am so near the bottom of my second page, the clock strikes twelve, and tells me, imperatively, that I should go to bed. I will obey. May the blessing of our heavenly Father rest on us all night and day. Amen ! ”

## CHAPTER X.

### THE INNER LIFE.

**F**ROM the nature of the case it is often difficult to know a man's inner spiritual life. Relationship with God affects the profoundest depths of the nature, and a natural and fitting delicacy retires these from common view. Only an occasional person can happily and without either affectation or obtrusiveness uncover his religious processes, and methods and experiences to the view of others. He seems to be sent as an apostle of the Holy Ghost concerning the "secret of the Lord," of the white stone with the new name written thereon, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth, and he commonly has no immediate successors. And yet there is nothing of which we wish more to know about a good man than his measure of nearness to God, his conflicts with himself and sin, his doubts and faith respecting revealed truth and accepted dogma.

There are some pleasant glimpses to be had of the inner piety of Dr. Johnston. Even if these were not accessible, the externals of his life were of a sort to impress one with his consecration to God and his work, and the power of His Spirit within him. He was always and

everywhere a minister of the gospel. Nothing diminishing the savor of grace was heard in his conversation. No act of his intruded upon the rights of others, or showed forgetfulness of the precepts of holy life. His letters show a constant thoughtfulness of duty to God and men, in whatever surroundings he or others were placed. For example, writing to a friend going from home :

“In going away you have, of course, something to do. Somebody where you go is to be helped by your visit. Perhaps there is some soul to be reached by your words or influence, so that it will respond to the call of God and turn to him and be saved. Probably there is some Christian waiting for your stimulation and strengthening. You are to be God’s messenger of good, carrying good news and glad tidings. If you can feel this, you will feel the journey a delight, apart from all its considerations of common influence.”

If a social party claimed his attention, the feeling was that he must in some way turn it to good spiritual account for himself and others. If his presbytery or synod convened, he hoped it would not simply transact its business, but also leave a happy spiritual impression upon the community, and he often made effort in that direction. There was much of the spiritual everywhere in his life, and yet it did not take on the hackneyed forms ; it had no cant, and was not in the least obtrusive.

His study table held a type of literature which is not always found in pastors’ libraries in large amount, but which with him was very considerable, and was constantly and profitably read. It was along the line of experimental religion, a quickened and fervent piety. Such books as “Grace and Truth” ; “The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life” ; “A Present Heaven” ; Thomas a’ Kempis’ “Imitation of Christ” ; all of Anna Shipton’s books ; Miss

Havergal's works—in such reading he abounded, and with a word of commendation the volumes were afterward handed to friends. They gave a glow to his own spirit, and he coveted the blessing for others.

His Bible is a repository of devout sentiments, written upon blank leaves and margins, either as suggested to his own mind or copied from favorite authors. At the head of the first page stands the following, apparently from his own pen: "I expect to pass through this world but once; any good thing, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any fellow-creature, let me do it NOW. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again." Other sentiments are credited to their authors: "I have sinned; I have repented; I have trusted; I have loved; I sleep; I shall rise; and (through the grace of Christ, though unworthy) I shall reign."—*Epitaph of Dr. Morrison, Missionary in China.* "Lord, pardon this I have been, sanctify what I am, and order what I shall be, that thine may be the glory, and mine the eternal salvation." "I long so earnestly to be growing in grace hourly, to be filled with the fullness of the Spirit; burning with love to Christ, and Christians and sinners; to be a reflection of Him in the world, and working while it is day."—*Adelaide Newton.* "Resolved, by the grace of God, never, by looks or words or outward conduct, to make an impression that there is more grace in my heart than there really is." "I must pray especially for fixedness of purpose, singleness of aim, whole-souled consecration to the work of personal holy living—holy living by the moment, reaching to the minutest secular employment, to every word and deed."—*Rhea.*

“Leave God to order all thy *ways*,  
 And hope in Him *whate'er* betide ;  
 Thou'lt find Him in the evil days  
 Thine all-sufficient Strength and Guide.”

—*George Neumark.*

“Be satisfied if you sometimes arrive, in your meditations, at that glow of elevated enjoyment which you desire ; seek rather in **general** for a **certain** and composed **state** of the affections, an equanimity of spirit, a **serenity** of temper, not always excited to ecstasy by the thought of your Heavenly Father's goodness, but living **beneath** it in a state of equal and affectionate trust.”—*Henry Dare.*  
 “A calm hour with God is worth a whole lifetime with man.”—*McCheyne.*

Such adopted thoughts, with which the volumes abound, tell us much of the heart that put them in that sacred place. He had an hour in the morning for devotions, and an occasional ray comes out to us through a crevice in the closet. For example, in a letter to a friend :

“I was reading in the 107th Psalm this morning for my devotional lesson, in course, and was delighted, as I so often am, with the pleasant way in which Mr. Spurgeon spiritualized the text. He takes all those verses about the storm, the ships at sea, the wilderness and water springs, etc., and makes them teach beautiful lessons of grace. I like it ; though not very successful in it myself, I like it very much in him, and have seen it done by a few others in a way that I thought very pretty and edifying indeed.”

Again :

“I entreat your remembrance of me in your prayers, as I bear you up before the mercy seat.”

And again :

“We were speaking yesterday of the higher life. Possibly I did not give you a proper definition of it, and indeed I have

not seen one that is very distinct. But the philosophy is that this second conversion, which the subjects of it experience, brings them into a condition of perfect trust, and gives them complete victory over all sin and temptation. Knowing how much sin wars in me, and how much it has fought the best Christians of the world, I have but little sympathy with these theorists, and yet I realize that there is a higher life than most Christians pursue. We ought to be above a great deal that now belongs to us, and give ourselves in devotion to Him whose we are with a nobler spirit of consecration. A Christian is too noble a being to be classed among the mere worldlings of the day, and he ought to be so conspicuous by his piety that all will take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus. How delightful it is to live in the grace of God as it comes to us in sanctification. I have no longing so intense as to reach such an attainment. Will you not pray, my dear friend, that in all things I may be helped towards the Saviour, and that living above the world I may be able to honor him in a life of obedience and service? I confess to depending largely on you for much that I need, and am glad to acknowledge the help you have often given me. Please do not deny me the liberty of still claiming your assistance, and of seeking from you what I know you are so well fitted to bestow. And though there is nothing in it in the way of return, I am yet constrained to assure you that it is one of my greatest pleasures to remember you to our Friend on high, asking Him to fill you with all the grace needed to give you joy in Him, and to make you a blessing to all within your reach."

Many of his letters abound in expressions of religious sentiment, some of which are appended, as best showing his inner life :

"December 4, 1878.

"*Dear Friend:* The snow is falling, suggesting winter and coming storms. The landscape is dun and dreary, looking as if its hope for the season had fled, as if it felt doomed to subjection and desolation during the months that are to come. I always have a fancy for imagining the clouds as having life, and picture

them to myself as thinking and reasoning like the rest of us! For what are we all but clouds—'a vapor that appeareth for a little while, then vanisheth away'! And it seems to me, the clouds, making their journeys around the world, and sweeping over and above the earth, must be taking notes of all they see, and turning them to some good account in their philosophy. To-day their thoughts must be dull and heavy. They reason of things serious and profound. Is it because they see so much that is dreary on the hills—in human hearts and homes? Who can tell? And yet, after all, they do not think at all—they only come and go, and that is the end of them.

"I have had a trip to Pigeon Creek, attending the convention called to meet there in the interest of improved piety. The ride was not disagreeable, and the meeting was pleasant. Not many attended, for the roads were bad, and—who can tell all the other reasons? But the few who were there seemed to enjoy the services, and I believe the Master was present with His blessing. We were discussing holiness—its nature, its source, its method of communication, its cultivation, manifestation, etc. The interest many of the best people are taking in this subject is one of the encouraging signs of the times. They are feeling that if we are to properly do our work on the earth, if we are to live in right realization of the gospel, and if we are to enter the kingdom hereafter prepared for its joys, we must cultivate a likeness to Christ.

"'Be ye holy, for I am holy,' says our Father; and we are expressly told that Christ came to purify unto himself a peculiar people. 'Without holiness no one shall see the Lord.' 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' With all these thoughts in our minds—and there are many other similar texts to stir us up to our duty—we ought to be filled with a constant ambition to seek the attainment of the image of the Master. And yet is there anything we seek so sluggishly? Is there anything, the loss of which we feel so poorly? If we meet with a disappointment in respect to anything earthly or temporal, it gives us deep pain and we lament it with tears, but do we regret with deep feeling as we ought to do, our poor realizations of the cleansing grace of God? Are we longing for the good things of

his Spirit, striving to secure his purifying blessing, reaching forth after the purification that we so much need? Very happy are we if we know we have made progress in this way, for it tells us we have overcome our sins in some measure, and that we are rising to some appreciation of what we need and what the honor of God demands. O for more earnest longing for the blessings of the covenant. O for a more passionate wish to be made like our divine Master. I have not yet recovered that buoyancy of spiritual life which for some time I lost, though I seek it and pray that it may be granted me. The clouds still gather about me. The darkness still more or less envelops me. Now and then there is a rift in the clouds and the bright sun shines through, but for the most part there is a sky dimmed and deadened. But every night has its succeeding day, and I am looking for mine, when the shadows flee away. The brightest days I ever had came after just such an experience, and I am solacing myself with the hope that this is again in store. But it is not to be concluded that our prayers are not heard and will not be answered when we cannot offer them with elasticity and mental vigor. It is according to our faith—not our feeling, that we are to be blessed, and I have hope that faith is still firm, resting in and holding on to the great refuge and rock of our salvation."

On growing in grace :

*"Dear Friend:* The following extract is from one of Dr. Guthrie's sermons. I think it very beautiful, and that it presents, in a forcible way, a very important principle. Some time since, I was talking to an acquaintance, and after coming home, took up the book, apparently by accident, and read this page. It was Providence, as I then thought—as I still think—directing me to something which I might use for his benefit. I read it yesterday, and, remembering our talk of the day before, I copied it for you. I am sure it is full of meaning, and also of comfort. If we have made attainment in this way, let us 'hold fast,' and let us 'go on to perfection,' 'forgetting the things that are behind.'

"Can you say, I am not what I once was, but better, godlier, holier? Happy are you! Happy, although afraid of presumption, and in the blushing modesty of spiritual childhood, you can venture no further than one who was urged to say whether she had been converted. How modest, yet how satisfactory her reply: 'That,' she answered, 'I cannot, that I dare not say; but there is a change somewhere; either I am changed or the world is changed.' If you can say so it is well. Such an answer leaves no room for painful doubt. Our little child—watching with curious emotion the apparent motions of objects—calls out in ecstasy, and bids us see how hedge and house are flying past our carriage. It is not these that move, nor is it the fixed and firm shore, with its trees and fields, and boats at anchor, and harbors and headlands, that is gliding by the cabin window. That is an illusion of the eye. The motion is not in them, but in us. And if the world is growing less in your eye, it shows that you are retreating from it, rising above it, and ascending in the arms of grace to higher regions; and if the fashion of the world, to our eye, seems to be passing away, it is because we ourselves are passing—passing and pressing on in the way to heaven. Sin never changes. And if what was once lovely looks loathsome now; if what was once desired is detested now; if what was once sought we now shun and shrink from, it is not because sin has changed, but—blessed be God and praise be to his grace—we are changed, our eyes are opened; the scales have dropt from them; and the solution of the problem may be found in the blind man's answer: 'Whereas I was blind, now I see.'"

Concerning nature, suggested reflections:

"Jan. 27th, 1878.

"*Dear Friend:* I have had a little letter to you simmering in my mind for some days, but interruptions of one kind or another have kept it in repression. A quiet half hour of the Sabbath evening invites at least a beginning, and whether the future will permit it to be finished or not, must depend on the will of Him who holds our lives in His hands. Isn't it a striking illustration of our frailty and the uncertainty of our lives,

that we cannot be sure when we begin to write a letter whether we will be able to finish it? We go out for a walk, not knowing that we shall return. We lie down at night without being sure we shall rise again. Every day and all the time we walk along the grave's mouth, whence a little push, or the slightest trip may cast us into another world. If we could only feel this as well as we know it, we would certainly try to improve the time as it is given us, and be ready at all times and in all places for the Master's call.

“This is as quiet a Sabbath evening as I have seen for a long while. I do not hear a sound. The voice of the entire world seems to be silenced. Often there is a boy shouting, or a child crying; a dog baying or a cow lowing. But just now there is not a voice of anything, nor is there wind enough to rattle the sashes or whistle around the gables. It is all in keeping with the character of the day, which ought to be peaceful, permitting us thus to give our hearts in better devotion to Him who is claiming our every thought. I have had much pleasure looking out at the world about me, and think I learned many lessons just in meditation upon what I see from my window. The rifted clouds, the gilded fogs, the bedraggled hills, the snow patches, the frowning forests, the blue smoke—all these are silent teachers whose lessons are well worth our study. They suggest so many thoughts relating to man and God, and bring to the mind so many images of things both temporal and eternal, that we can well afford to sit quietly and let them give us their instruction. Nature has always been a kind of foster mother to me. When a child I used to watch the mist wrapping about the mountains and the storms gathering about their crests, and many a night I have stood for hours gazing at the clouds as, driven by the winds, they wheeled around in the sky, or swept in their grand processions athwart the moon and stars. It has always been a wonder to me, therefore, that so many persons see nothing in all these attractions that afford me so much enjoyment, and live under cloud and sky and stars, and amid all kinds of surrounding beauties and sublimities, without receiving any of their pleasant and awe-inspiring impressions. God in all is always my thought, and, seeing him pictured so

visibly in every object that comes under the eye, there is a joy in peering up into the sky and feeling that away above—away beyond clouds and stars, the mysterious regions where he has his seat, there is a home for me and all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth. It invests the whole world with a new glory when we associate with its common material character the happy thought, that it is but part of that eternal resting-place of those whom God will gather to himself. And there is a sense in which this house in which I live, and these hills upon which I every day am looking, are one with the house not made with hands, and with the 'beautiful hills' in the upper kingdom."

On feeling and faith :

"*Dear Friend:* \* \* \* \* How every heart has its own experience! I have a letter from a minister, in which he tells me of his spiritual difficulties. Once, he says, he is down and then up; once depressed and discouraged, and again exuberant and enthusiastic. His life is thus a fluctuating one, and he is not sure, even if his soul is in a right state as to its relation to God, that he is making real progress in the divine life. He has a wish for the more steady improvement of his brethren, as, he believes, they experience it; and, because he finds few to sympathize with him in his moods, he fears there is something radically wrong in his situation. I suspect he is laboring under the difficulty which disturbs so many: he depends more on his feelings than his faith. He is deciding as to his relation to the Saviour by his unsteady sensibilities, rather than by his trust in the living God. I am not sure that pure feeling in our religion ought to have much influence with us, save as it will measure our enjoyment. That is its office, instead of being the arbiter itself. It is when we accept Christ, making ourselves sure that we take Him as he is offered to us in the gospel, that we have a right to feel safe and comforted. It is faith that saves—not sensibility. But then the feeling is so full of blessing. How it gives glow and pathos to our souls and living. How it comes out in our conversation and all our dealings with our friends. How it gives a new character to our worship. Our prayers—

they are made new by it. Our songs—they have another character from its power. And resting upon, or rather dwelling within, a whole people, it makes our religious assemblies to be aglow with spiritual life and fervor that are a joy even to the angels. And should I not say that it gives a new power, also, to the preacher and preaching? I am not sure that there is anything we—we ministers—more need than unction, fervor, earnest warmth. Will you not pray that I may be safe on the rock, but also that I may be ardent in the discharge of every duty, but especially in preaching the glorious gospel of the grace of God?

“Another letter is from a young man who begins, as he takes his place in life, to review the follies of the past. He is one of those ‘brothers’ of whom you speak, a dear one, as he is also the beloved son of his mother; but his disposition has been averse to many of the things she has so much desired. Looking over the past he sees it full of that which it gives him no comfort to remember and recall. The beautiful creations with which he peopled it as he passed along have all disappeared. The gayeties which attracted him and won his spirit, have vanished. The happiness of the hour which he so much enjoyed has melted away like smoke. He now finds himself face to face with earnest life, unhelped by the greater part of that which commanded his attention and strength. But it is good to have him feel as he does, though late in the day, for there is the hope that he will be able to make more profitable use of the days yet to be given him, and he can pray as the Psalmist did: ‘Let not the errors of my youth, nor sins remembered be.’ With him a different kind of feeling has given place to faith.

“And to-day I met a lady who wears the saddest face; it is a settled sadness, resting on her all the time. Her very smile is sad. When she tries hard she lifts the cloud that hangs over her, but it is only to disclose the gloom that lurks behind. What the cause of her grief is, what the sorrow by which she is encompassed, what the weight that bears her down—who knows but herself and God? Very probably she would not tell anyone she has a weight at all, choosing to keep close and concealed what might be helped by sharing it with a sympathizing friend.”

Another letter :

“MONDAY MORNING.

“I am too Mondayish just now to interest anybody in a letter, and ought not, therefore, make the attempt. But you accustom me to feel that you will accept the good intention for the right performance, and, under that liberty, I write a line. Monday ought to be to all of us a day of special brightness, since we have spent the previous day in the worship of God. The effects of the intercourse we have had with him and his people ought to be so refreshing to our spirits, that more than any other day of the week we would feel the inspiration of His grace. I am not sure that it is so. Worship gets to be so much a matter of routine, and loses in that way so much of what it is meant to be, that we do not get from it what we might—what we are entitled to. If our hearts were right, all occasions of communion with Jesus would fill us with spiritual pleasure, and, being filled with such a joy, all others would seem to be commonplace in comparison. I was wondering the other day whether we do right in thinking of our experiences as we do, or, in other words, our emotions of pleasure and pain in the contemplation of Jesus and our relation to him. We are certainly taught that our hope is not in our feeling, but in our faith, and that when we rest in our sensibilities we have a false trust. This we know, as we also know that when we grow discouraged, when our feelings are not as we would have them, we permit ourselves to have unnecessary pain. At the same time we are encouraged to seek after the joy of salvation, and to regard the possession of a conscious acceptance as one of the highest Christian blessings. I think that while faith is what we are to depend on for our salvation, we do a great wrong when we fail.”

On failure to deserve God's good gifts :

“This, you know, is the shortest day. What a difference between it and the long days of June, when the sun seemed almost unwilling to disappear, and which, when it did finally set, hurried up again to its watchfulness and nurture of the earth. And what a blessing it is that the cold days are the short ones. If we had to worry through long days of eighteen

hours with the thermometer at zero, and have only the shorter time for rest and sleep, wouldn't we soon wear out, or at least deteriorate? I was reading, a while ago, of the Esquimaux and their country, and came to the conclusion that it was wrong for us ever to complain of weather, or any of these conditions dependent on the sun and atmosphere. It is all so nearly perfect with us, that gratitude ought to be our prevailing disposition, instead of fault-finding. Besides, as we do not deserve anything, why shall we complain if some of our surroundings are not just as we wish them? If some benevolent man of wealth were to take persons who had deeply injured him and place them in a home full of a bountiful provision for all their wants, and ornamented with every conceivable beauty, would we not think them most ungrateful and unworthy if they would blame him for not making even every little thing to their mind? And so, as God in his goodness has placed us here where all is so happily adapted to our necessities, why shall we show a disposition to criticise when, according to our fickle and perverted tastes, we find things, in some cases, not quite agreeable? In any case, it is better to look on the good, see the beauty, and feel happy, than hunt up the disagreeable and complain of what we cannot understand, much less remedy."

His feeling in discharging his pulpit offices :

"I have just fashioned a sermon for to-morrow—I mean for Sabbath. 'I am persuaded that—cannot separate me from the love of God,' etc. The theme is a grand one, and my homiletics are tolerably flexible and promising, but it will need much of the power from above to make the sermon good. I always shudder when going to preach on a subject that brings me so near God. Probably the fact that this is so, indicates that I have too meager an appreciation of all preaching, for is not 'all scripture given by the inspiration of God'? and are we not near him in every attempt at his service? It would be well if we could have the 'Who is sufficient for these things?' feeling in every exercise, and in the performance of every duty."

Respecting the power of sorrow to give hold upon the hearts of men as illustrated in Pollok :

“ I was writing during the forenoon. Since dinner I have read some in a history, and for a half hour was looking through Pollok's course of time. It is a wonderful book, notwithstanding its many faults. Though I had read it often, I almost shuddered anew, as I thought of the meaning of the lines descriptive of hell :

“ ‘ The waves of fiery darkness 'gainst the rocks  
Of dark damnation broke, and music made  
Of melancholy sort ; and overhead  
And all around, wind warred with wind, storm howled  
To storm, and lightning, forked lightning, crossed,  
And thunder answering thunder, muttering sound  
Of sullen wrath.’

“ The whole description—and it is a pretty long one—ending with the awful picture :

“ ‘ And to their everlasting anguish still,  
The thunders from above responsive spoke  
These words, which through the caverns of perdition,  
Forlornly echoing—fell on every ear :  
“ Ye knew your duty, but ye did it not.” ’

“ I always like to think of Pollok. His beautiful little stories—Helen of the Glen, etc., were among the delightful ones of my early life, and there is so much of a pathos in what he wrote, and in the history of the man himself, that I cannot think of him without emotion. Do you notice how it is the men who were filled with great thoughts, which saddened them, bore them down, rested on them like a mountain or overspread them like a cloud—that it is these men who live in the respect and affection of the world? The gay, laughing, glad-hearted people, soon lose their hold on posterity ; and even in a man who was impulsive, having gayety and pathos in turn, it is the latter that entitles him to the thought of the world's regard. Indeed, with many the very thought that they were else than profoundly sober, seems to be like an interruption to the memory. It is deeply true that the shadow of the cross lies across the path

that leads to heaven—that we must be brought into sympathy with that which is best by being made like to Him who was perfected by suffering.”

All this grew out of the conviction that the furnace had refined himself and thus fitted him for sympathy with men and the service of God.

Reflections on an unearned salvation :

“The struggle of life is not likely to kill off affection for a place. When I was a boy I used to pass, on the mountain, several homes that had been literally reduced from the rocks and forests. The fields were steep, so that it was with difficulty they could farm them, and so that heavy rains would sometimes wash the soil almost all away. To save some of it, they would build great stone walls along the lower sides to catch it. But the people living there grew old calling it their home, and it had attractions for them that the richer and less severe situations of the valleys never seemed to lessen. And, writing the other day from West Virginia, Mrs. Johnston told of a young man who had been one of her scholars when she taught the village school. His father had endorsed for some one and thus lost his property, and, moving into that part of West Virginia, he bought a very hilly and poor farm, or rather tract of forest land, proposing there to establish a home instead of the one he had lost. Soon after this he died, and the care of all devolved on this boy. He now has a little frame house, some fields of grain and some fruit, and is building up for himself there a character as well as a resting-place. Speaking of the change to Mrs. Johnston, he said, ‘It might have been well if the old property had been left them, but,’ said he, ‘I could never have had the same fondness for it that I have for this.’ Here there was the mark of his industry on everything ; it was his own in a double sense, and, living on and by it, he enjoyed it as part of himself. And I think it is a rule in everything, that that which we come by easily we esteem but slightly ; while that which it requires effort to gain, we set more store by. In respect to the latter we connect all our efforts with the possession, and every

part of it we use, we do it thinking of the cost by which it was obtained. And if this be so, how we should value all the blessings of our salvation, for they have been provided for us at so infinite a cost. Our rescue from sin, our hope of the everlasting life, our peace in God, our joy in his service, our gladness in prayer and praise—our all relating to the blessing of the gospel has been secured for us by no less an expenditure than the sacrifice of the Son of God. True enough, it was not our own sacrifice, but can we—can any of us think of it as having been done for us by another without being stirred as if it had been done in our own persons, and then fail to be devoutly grateful, and deeply earnest? O, if we could only estimate it as we ought, how every day and every moment we would be reflecting upon the blood of the Holy One, and consecrating ourselves anew to his service, and for the extension of his kingdom.”

On thankfulness to God for his goodness :

“What a delightful day Sabbath was! Or was it so pretty with you? Here, after the storm, came the calm and brightness, and the entire day was a picture—a better picture than one of a human artist; one of God’s own. There was no cloud, the sky was bright, deep, cheerful, yet profound; the air was delicious and full of invigoration, and the earth was full of the sober smile which is characteristic of the later summer days. In the church in the morning, everything seemed so exhilarant. There were no fans, and that was a relief. The people looked less oppressed and more hopeful than during the warmer days. And in the afternoon—I think I never more enjoyed the quiet of the Lord’s Day than I did then, walking up and down in the yard under and among the trees. It was so beautiful as to make me think it a type of heaven—a suggestion of the better country—a foretaste of the celestial joy. But it made me also think of the blessing I enjoy in having about me so much to make me happy. And I wondered if it could possibly remain. Can it be, I thought, that this pleasant situation can long be mine? Can this ‘nest’ be without its ‘stick’? and I sought to feel that, while expressing my gratitude to the great Giver, I should give myself more earnestly to his service. To sit down

under 'my vine' and rest there is not what Providence means that I shall do. O, no; he means that I shall have it for a refreshment after my appointed labor—an inspiration for more abundant work in his cause rather than an inducement to sloth. And this I tried to feel all the more since I know the luxury of resting among the genial influences granted me, and feel the power of the temptation that sometimes would persuade me to neglect some duty while yielding to the sweetness of the rural peace. Taken altogether, I enjoyed the Sabbath, and, when evening came, I had something of the peace that I do so often crave but fail to enjoy. I hope it was peace of conscience, real and true, and not that which comes from a sense of poor, and, very probably, mistaken pride."

On the comparative results of good and evil life :

"It is always curious to me how people can agree to spend their time uselessly, even though they do find enjoyment in social gossip and frivolity. One would think that the fact of immortality and the brevity of human life, together with the thought that we must all give an account of our doings here, would teach them to deny themselves in the interest of that which is profitable and helpful. I look at persons sometimes who seem to have no thought of life beyond its froth and foam. If they can talk, and laugh, and gossip, and thus put in days and weeks and worry the time along, they are contented. Without this they are miserable. The idea of sitting down to read a good book, to meditate, to engage in useful work for others, to talk together of themes which would assist them in their higher wants—such an idea does not occur to them. It argues always a poor appreciation of what is best, as well as a poorly developed moral consciousness. It exhibits, also, minds badly trained, or rather, not trained at all. I notice that persons who have their intellectual and moral faculties well trained, are able to supply themselves with means of employment and entertainment that are utterly distasteful to others. They can take a good book and get from it that which interests and helps them. They can engage in some good work, and find a real happiness in contributing to the comfort of some friend or person in want. They can

attach themselves to a needy cause, and find satisfaction in adding to the efforts made towards its success. Wherever I see people of the purely gossippy class, I know there is something radically wrong in their character."

\* \* \* "As to the comparative results of the two kinds of life, we easily know which are the more to be desired. The one ends as foam always does, in burst bubbles. No, not just in that! It were a blessing if it did. Along with the bursting, there is many a pain and heartache, many a wreck of life, many a destruction of soul. The other is completed by a well rounded life, and by the hope of joys in the life to come. Yet people see this and acknowledge how true it is, while going on as madly as ever in the pursuit of that which affords them the moment's sensual happiness.

"I think we can never be thankful enough for our training in the good way, and especially for the blessings we have of the gospel. The rest and peace that are found in Jesus—is there ought in the world to be compared to these? Suppose all we say in regard to the future life were visionary; suppose heaven is not a reality, and that the joys we are now looking for were never to be realized, would not the experiences we derive while here from our religion amply compensate us for all our outlay? That is hardly a fair way of stating it, for in reality we make no expenditure. Our devotion to God, when it becomes to us as life itself, is our rest and peace—our refreshment and gladness."

"*Dear Friend:* Was it not but as yesterday we were planting the roses and gathering the first bouquets? It all suggests the rapidity with which our lives are being spent, and how soon we must answer the call to stand at the bar of God. It teaches us also the duty of earnestness in our lives, that redeeming the time we may honor the Master and be ready to receive the rewards he, in his grace, will give to those who are saluted with the 'Well done.'

"This is a morning of damp and drip. The heavy clouds are hanging over all the sky, their lower edges trailing along the hill tops and among the trees. The grass is dripping with the lately fallen rain, the ground is thoroughly soaked, and the air is full of the freshness resulting from the beautiful baptism.

As I saw it fall, and thought of its vast beneficence, I wondered how many persons remembered to thank the Father for it, and receive it as a prompting to a holier and more earnest life. For so we should all accept, seeking it as one of his good gifts, sent to us in the mercy that will not only keep us from fearing, but that will enrich us with blessing. And it ought to be a suggestion to us of the heavenly baptism that is sent through the Saviour for the enrichment of our souls. He promises to pour out upon us blessings till there will not be room enough to receive, opening the windows of heaven to do it. He will come as rain on the mown grass, and if we rightly open our hearts to receive His blessing how rich we may be !

“ I have been reading the ‘ Tennesseean in Persia,’ a book, I believe, you have already enjoyed. It interested me very deeply, even though the biographer is a chief of blunderers. His poor style, his want of simplicity and perspicuity, would have made his book intolerable, but for the interest of the subject, which was so great as to make failure impossible. Mr. Rhea was a man of true consecration. He literally gave his life for the souls of men. As I read of his labors and spirit of self-sacrifice, and saw how he yearned for the souls of those among whom he was placed, I could not but adore the grace that thus fills a heart with devotion. And I was impressed with the great difference between such a life and my own. After reading of what he did and endured it seems as if I do nothing. His was the work of a hero, mine that of a mere pretender. And if there is the difference in the work, there will be an equal difference in the reward. That devotion and earnest labor in Koordistan and Persia will not be forgotten in the day when God makes up his jewels. O it is blessed to think of living thus wholly absorbed by the love of the Saviour ; to spend a short life-time in abundant labors in the cause of God ! It is a life worth living, and lifts the thought so far, so infinitely far above the trifling existence which is the rule with the mass of humanity. I finished the book praying for a like precious faith, for an equal consecration, for a career to be made even yet somewhat like his in holy pathos.

“ One of his remarks deeply impressed me. He said he believed every true soul would have a day to which it would look

back as one when it was born to a right apprehension of the love of the Saviour, and of the responsibility of the Christian life. He meant, of course, that to all who are real Christians there will be a time of re-awakening, when they will be specially devoted to God. I believe it. There is no man or woman who rightly appreciates the love of the Saviour, who properly does the work of a religious profession, who is not lifted as if by a special work of the Spirit from the dead level of ordinary profession into the better condition of advanced experience. We may not approve the doctrine of second conversion as advocated by the higher life people. The name sounds incorrect. And the way in which they insist upon it gives it a character that makes it almost disagreeable. But that there is a work on the soul that will elevate and consecrate it, giving it an impulse forward in the way of grace and devotion, I firmly believe. It is one of my comforts to cherish the hope that such an experience has been my own. The poverty of a former life disappeared, the deadness and hollowness of mere profession vanished, and the wish to be more like the Saviour and more useful in my work, came as a power from on high. I accepted it as a gift of God. Above all gifts I ever received I value it, and if I succeed in being useful to any good cause or to any soul, I believe it must be because I was thus kindly remembered by the Father. And I am glad also to help you express your gratitude for a similar mercy. I know you would say this has been a part of your experience. The value of the soul has been enhanced, the joy of believing has been more than doubled, the meaning of true faith and devotion has been made new, and you realize in a way you did not before, how much there is in taking up the cross and following the Master. Earth's vanities under such an experience lose their attractions. Jesus is all and all. Of course such a visitation of mercy brings with it a sense of shame and humiliation. It makes us feel how small we are, how poor our lives are, and how deeply we are debtors to divine grace. Instead of making us bold, it fills us with holy shrinking; instead of inflating it humbles. And with a desire to go softly and calmly serve Him from whom we have received such wonderful mercies, we carry ourselves along the way that leads to the final triumph

and rest. That this blessed experience may still be yours, and that as the days go on you may find yourself more and more drawn near to Him who is the anchor of all our hopes, and the fountain of all our blessing, is my earnest wish and constant prayer.

“What a beautiful world we live in! Cowper was filled with the thought of it when he said, ‘My Father made them all’—referring to the attractions he had been describing. The hills this morning are so serious looking, and yet so happy, that they fill my mind with many pleasant thoughts and images. I sit many hours at this window and talk with the large one just opposite. It has so many moods and expresses itself in so many ways, but it is always true; it never deceives me. It is like a friend whom I ever trust as one who is fixed beyond all caprice and wavering, and upon whom it is my pleasure to invoke every blessing.”

What a beautiful spirit all this reveals! How it should inspire his friends to seek the sweetness of his character, and to come into such sympathies as he enjoyed with nature and nature’s God, and, above all, with the Saviour of men!

## CHAPTER XI.

### WITHIN THE SHADOW.

IN THE spring of 1888 Dr. Johnston began to discover some weakening of his powers. The mind moved heavily, and the body showed some unpleasant and alarming symptoms. Distressing headaches and swollen feet were the premonitions of the fatal disease, which was, perhaps, already fastening itself upon him. He began to do his work wearily, who for years had found it only a delight. About the time of the death of Dr. Kerr, in 1887, he first experienced any persistent trouble from insomnia, although for years the draft upon his nervous force had been extraordinary. He describes his constitution as having never been a robust one, although a healthy man, and at length it began to give way. The years of persistent toil without vacations brought their penalty. Physicians feared Bright's disease, and ultimately determined this to be his ailment. From the first he looked the matter squarely in the face, without allowing himself to be deceived by variable symptoms and differences of professional opinion, hoping for the best, and yet discerning the possibility of the worst. At the time of his quarter-centennial as pastor, the writer,

by his courtesy being present and enjoying his hospitality, was grieved to learn, as quietly told by himself, what the condition was. The swollen feet were mentioned and the imperative need of rest, together with the thoughtful kindness of the congregation in providing opportunity for it ; but there was the same buoyant, hopeful spirit, which minimized his own afflictions and magnified his duties to his guest. He did not say that the magnificent address upon the occasion of the anniversary had been written with difficulty, nor did he afterward write that the exercises, all of which were a joy to him, had completely robbed him of his small residuum of strength. Still it was so.

It was deemed advisable that he should seek recuperation away from home. Accordingly, arrangements were made, and, with Mrs. Johnston, a trip was taken along the St. Lawrence and into Canada, which was scarcely a benefit. Having settled, however, for a period at Chautauqua, he was able, in some degree, to recuperate, and most of the alarming symptoms of his disorder disappeared, allowing hope to spring afresh. Later in the season he went to Ocean Grove, expecting there to meet brethren of his acquaintance, and to profit by the tonic of the ocean. Here he lodged at the Le Chevalier Hotel, which had been the stopping place, as he writes, of Dr. David A. Wallace, who with Dr. J. T. Cooper, at this place, by the appointment of the General Assembly, prepared the pastoral letter to the Church upon the music question. He obtained a measure of invigoration from the sea, and toward the first of September returned to Washington. It was but a year before that he had gone down from the Assembly to Atlantic City and had called on Dr. D. R.

Kerr, who was then visiting the ocean on the same errand of health, and of which a little later he had written to his sister :

“And I was thinking, a while ago, of our meeting in the spring. You remember the Sabbath at Atlantic City. Saturday night Washington and I called on Dr. Kerr at his hotel. He was cheerful and interested in the Assembly. Next day we met at church twice. Now he has made his journey to the other shore. The rest of us live; and yet, then, so far as appearance went, he was strong enough to live on and on. But his disease was fatal, and yielded to no treatment. I was over Thursday, and called at the house, but did not see him. He was then low, but able to make himself understood, though with difficulty. There was no disturbance of his mental faculties. At the last he fell into a sleep and woke—on the other side. His death has caused a great sadness to come to me. He has been taken from close beside me.”

From a considerable number of letters of this period of decline a few extracts are inserted :

“*Dear Sister:* Two letters from you suggest that you have given us unusual thought, due, of course, to your sympathy with our anniversary and its ceremonies. This occasion came and passed, and we are already drifting on the tides that carry us outwards towards the future. As a memory it is very pleasant, and as an inspiration, it ought to do us good for a long while.”

“WASHINGTON, PA., June 18, 1888.

“*My Dear Sister:* Eight o'clock is far on these summer days. I find the robins in full chorus at four, their first notes starting much earlier than that. They do better than we people, going to bed early—verifying the old proverb, ‘Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.’ I have been watching a robin mother feeding her young. She lights on the lawn, digs among the roots, then flies to her nest. There she fills the mouths that open to her. Now and then she

makes a farther flight, and comes back with other food. I suspect she brings cherries, or perhaps a drink. The instinct of the little creatures is curious and interesting.

"Saturday I lay all day on a lounge, resting during the forenoon on the porch and later under an apple tree. The birds hopped about me, and I watched them at their work. Taken all in all, they have a pretty fine time. Their work is but play, they have many resting times; and a life of leisure, such as we poor mortals cheat ourselves out of, is their habitual experience. A delegate to Chicago rushing past on the train is a poor specimen compared with the average bird. You can hardly conceive how beautiful it is these delightful days, when one has nothing to do but to look, and meditate, and drink in, and doze and dream. All the day long, I gazed at the clouds, the peaceful hills, with their verdure, and contented cattle, the deep shadows under the trees, and other features on the landscapes. They all alike suggested plenty and tranquility. I verily believe that our avarice, ambition, artificiality, with other characteristics that we get from our "civilization," are perversions in so far as they drive us away from the calm serenity of nature. When Adam was put in the garden to dress and keep it, it was not meant that he should scurry around on a steam engine, doing all in a day, and grabbing at all the other gardens in his neighborhood.

"I did but little last week, but poke about. We had some pleasant visitors. I could not do much for them, but talked and rode some. I looked in at the commencements, without attending them. They had the usual gayety: now are over and all the pageants are faded out of sight. It is queer how these occasions come and go. How to a youth such a time arrives, affords its triumph, then disappears, and is lost save to memory.

"It was thus with our anniversary. But it was a delightful time. For me, it was worth living the twenty-five years of hard work to get such an ovation. The interest of the people, of the ministers, of the community, etc., all taken together, made up such a crowning of kindness, respect and appreciation, as but rarely falls to the lot of a minister. It was, to some extent, a revelation to me, as have been many of the incidents connected with it. I was glad, too, that I was able to so fully

meet all that was required of me in the entire performance. \* \* \* I wrote to the *United Presbyterian*, giving up the writing for a time."

"CHAUTAQUA, July 16, 1888.

"*My Dear Sister:* People settle themselves here according to their affinities. Hebraists find the Hebrew headquarters, Grecians the Greek, etc., and you see I have come across the typewriter. The young lady in charge is very kind, and permits me to write my letters, which, if it be pleasant for me, must be doubly so for you.

"It is cold this morning again. During most of the time since we have been here, it has been cold, and often disagreeable. The houses are built for summer, hence there is little provision for fires. The public buildings also, in which the services are held, are open, and we often suffer in our zeal to see and hear. The night meetings, especially, subject us to a good deal of discomfort. And it is so that when we are here and the meetings are going on, we like to get the benefit of them. And yet there is too much. I find it begins to pall. I ask myself, when some lecture is coming on, 'Is it worth while?'

"Saturday we had Sam Jones to lecture. Yesterday he preached. He is a sort of curiosity. Ignorant, egotistical, irreverent, impudent, and probably sincere—when that is said there is nothing more. I have never heard anyone attempt to preach with less knowledge of the gospel. Its first principles he is totally ignorant of. But he thinks he knows everything, and most of his discussion is devoted to telling the preachers how they ought to preach.

"It is a question whether such a man should be encouraged. It is certainly Sabbath-breaking to listen to him on the Sabbath. Yesterday he kept the audience in a constant laugh, or looking for a laugh, and it was not with real wit, that sometimes is good enough, but with coarse vulgarity, that anybody, if he would bring himself down to it, might imitate."

\* \* \* \* "I am feeling now almost, if not altogether as well as usual. The ankle puffiness comes back now and then, which suggests to me that that new flesh of which you speak has not yet been wholly realized. But my headaches seem to

have almost disappeared, and I hope are being driven off. It is hard for me to go about doing nothing, and yet doing nothing is what I am here for. A good book store in the place has tempted me. I bought a volume of Dr. Hitchcock's sermons, which have interested me greatly. They are reverent, intelligent, orthodox, profound, poetical—in every way attractive. It is queer to read one of them as a specimen of preaching, and then listen to another specimen in Sam Jones. And yet the thousands would hear Jones, while the other might have his dozens or scores.

"They have written me from home that I can have no chance of work there. That seems to hedge me up altogether, for I cannot well be there and do nothing. But it is kind, and I appreciate it. Dr. Reid, you see, has gone to Europe. I suspect that is what I should have done, though at the outstart I was not in condition for travel. But if there, one is cut off from thought of hurrying home."

"OCEAN GROVE, N. J., Aug. 27, 1888.

"*My Dear Sister:* How sorry I am that you have been sick. \* \* \* Many prayers have been offered for you all these years, and they, no doubt, have been your upholding. People are interested in us of whom we do not know. God alone knows how many apply to Him in our behalf. I met Mr. Pressly the other day, who said, 'O, very many more persons are interested in your recovery than you are aware of.' It was a pleasant word to say, and pleasant to hear.

"We are getting along here comfortably enough, and I am possibly making progress, though I hardly know how to measure my conditions. I feel as well as I have done for two years, and in some respects better, for my headaches, all but an occasional growl, have left me. It seems queer that I am not at work, or that I am not planning to do so in the immediate future. \* \* \* I hear Dr. W. L. Wallace is weak, very, but with no signs of immediate decease. This, he says, he is 'sorry for.' But soon he will 'depart,' and no wonder he desires."

Being at home again, he writes :

"I remained at home all the week—did not once appear on the street, except when riding we once or twice permitted the

public to get a glance of me. It was not necessary, but it was in keeping with my instructions, and was, I suspect, good policy. Some persons called, but I was not troubled by visitors. Many kindnesses have been shown me; fruits, flowers, etc., being carried and sent, and some of them from hands that make the attentions touching.

“Some days I have no reminder that I am sick, except from my monitors and guardians, and from the medicines that claim their frequent offices. I am without pain, have no visible sign of sickness, feel well, and get the praise of all who see me in the rejoicing that I look so much improved. My headaches have almost entirely left, a solitary throb now and then suggesting what might be. My feet have shrunk back to their normal state.

“E. D. has sent me two or three prescriptions, which I will use, having the feeling at the same time that some of them, at least, are not needed. He has also given me a bill of fare, so liberal, too, that following it will not require much, if any, self-denial. I tell him it is like the Lenten dietaries of which I read, whose luxurious provisions suggest more delicacies than I am used to even at the best. It is rest simply that I need, with such upbuilding as may come with a natural physical repair.”

Gradually improving, he returned, after some months, to the work of his parish and the labor upon the paper; but the recovery did not greatly increase. The gain was scarcely equal to the expenditure, even while he reported in a letter of Oct. 11, 1889, that he had been steadily growing better:

“Two years ago at this time I was struggling against the illness that, by gradual approaches, was taking away my strength. I was shivery, could not get warm, and had a sense of mental dullness that at times made work a torture. I remember how I rode, walked, courted good influences, etc., but failed to do the one thing, which of all others I should have done—give up my work and rest.

“During the summer now gone, I have almost steadily, I

think, improved. It is rarely that I have a touch even of headache, and I have had no bad one. My appetite is good. My brain also works easily and well. As for strength, it is not what it once was, but I am fifty-three years of age, and nature, leaving illness out of count, requires a step less intrepid than before.

“I live very simply, and really 'do exercise considerable care. I am not studying hard, preach short sermons, and with as little expenditure of force as possible. My food is mainly bread and butter, with apple sauce, and milk to drink. Of meat I take very little. Neither coffee nor tea. No sweetmeats, no pastry, and often not more than a single slice of bread at a meal. This I masticate in a Gladstonian way, and rarely am troubled with indigestion.

“In short, keeping myself on spare rations and not over-taxing my strength, I manage to get along without the least discomfort, and they tell me I look better than for a long time. But I realize that my lease of life cannot be a long one. Only a margin remains at best, and my expectation is that I have no right now—physical right—to believe it will stretch to the years of my fathers.

“Yesterday was a gloomy day for church. The people did not gather in the usual number. Even the children had found it too sober for them. But the faithful were there, and families by delegate.

“It happened to suit my subject: ‘For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.’ M. says the sermon was the ‘most beautiful’ one I ever preached. And I was glad if by any commendable quality it had made an impression on her.

“It is a solemn thought—that of our transient stay here. At any time, it ought to force itself on our reflection, but it is especially likely to do so just now, when the leaves are tumbling down around us. In all the brown and russet on the fields, the orange and gold in the forests, the withered heaps that gather in the yard and sweep around the house, there is the lesson of vanishing beauty and transient life.”

So the winter of 1889 wore by, but bringing toward the spring loss of vigor. La grippe laid hold on him, and he writes in May :

“We are well as usual—save that I do not recover from the grippe, or rather from the effects of it. My strength does not return to me. It is weakened ‘in the way,’ chiefly, and especially, going up-hill!

“I suspect the vernal season has called you to the out-doors. Even I have trimmed trees. As for gardening, it is almost a lost art with me. The spade I have laid reverently aside. My mattocks and hoes, to say nothing of lawn-mowers, rollers, etc., I commit to other hands.”

He notices with a smile another thing which was of a good deal of significance to him :

“I was remarking to-day upon the few letters that come to me. Because, you know, I write so few. My friendships have not diminished, but I am somewhat out of the line of correspondence. As to Church business, it has dropped out of hand. How easily we can be passed by! How fictitious, too, are our prominences! If we are to be known and recognized, we must lend a hand; better, we must make a noise. Silence is condemnation and oblivion.”

In June he was constrained to lay all labor aside. On the 23d he writes his sister :

“I am still a loiterer. My sleep has not yet become regular. Last night I fought for it till after midnight; then slumbered till morning. I wish to conquer the trouble without medicines if I can. Not much strength has yet returned to me. A very short walk wearies me. Real exertion I do not attempt. Happily, I suffer but little. Lying on my back at night, I am wholly free from discomfort. Turning to my sides gives me some pain—which is one of the troubles about getting sleep. Some pains, rheumatic, perhaps, flit about through my breast and sides. Perhaps I grow somewhat stronger, though, at the best, I may only expect relief, and not restoration.

"Two weeks ago, I was losing so rapidly and constantly that I thought there was nothing before me but the end. And so it must have been if the decline had not ceased. Now, I seem to react a little, and, if sleep become normal again, I may hope for further progress.

"I reflect much upon my many unspeakable blessings. There is literally nothing I can want in the way of home comfort, and care, and sympathy that is not given me. All my appointments are of the best. Couches, pillows, cots, porches, green grass, shade-trees, etc., await me on all sides. Friends send me delicacies to eat, flowers come in profusion, and all sorts of friendly messages. H. is so tender and unremitting in her care as to sacrifice all her own comfort.

"I am not gaining strength, though better, of course, than for a little while. My hold on life, I realize, is very slight. And I am trying to set my house in order, waiting whatever event Providence may direct. I used to wonder what the world would be like to me when you would go out of it; now I try to imagine what it will be to you when I have left it. \* \* \* \*  
My life has been a hard struggle, but God has been good. For myself, I need not care; if its battle is over I will have no further need of either the stores or the accoutrements. I have always had a shuddering fear, a morbid one, perhaps, of becoming old in the ministry and poor. To have a margin upon which to rest in the last days was my hope. Probably I shall not need much further God's temporal gifts. But who knows? Perhaps I may react again and begin to live upon a new lease. Whichever is sent me I will be content. To stay, to depart—God's will be done."

After his first illness he wrote to his brother :

"I trust we are all prepared to leave this world and enter the better. During the year past I had much reason to look the matter squarely in the face. I can hardly say how it affected me. My regret at the thought of leaving this world was not so keen as I expected it would be. As to the other, I had calm reflection, believing all would be well."

On August 18 he wrote one of the last letters to the dear sister, who had been through long years his faithful correspondent and friend. It contains the following half-jovial and half-serious sentiments :

“How true it is that when one member suffers others suffer with it. Here I am shut up upstairs, leaving the caligraph below in the library. This compels me to write with a pen, and you to suffer in the reading, away in Baltimore. \* \* \* I realize that I am very weak, and must move slowly. Friday evening I could barely walk. \* \* \* Possibly I may recover strength, probably not ; I can but wait and see.

“I was reminded of what you said in your last letter of sudden death by seeing in the paper a notice of the death of Dr. Watkins. He used to be here, a strong, robust man, pastor of the Methodist Church. He died almost without warning. In one sense such a death is startling ; in another, what a boon it is, and especially to those who are ready to go. They escape the long, painful, weary waiting of those who slowly wear themselves out by disease.”

To another friend he wrote :

“My extreme prostration led me to feel I was facing, near at hand, the reality of parting from life and its affairs. The experiences of such a situation were hardly such as I had expected. There was no fear, no rejoicing hope ; regret at the thought of leaving my dear ones ; humiliation, thinking life's work was only half done, and a total carelessness respecting all things of a purely earthly sort.”

And so the time wore on, bringing increased feebleness, and yet not disturbing the calm, quiet, peaceful trust in Him who “Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses.”

He grew into no ecstasies, he fell into no despair. He simply trusted God, in the consciousness of a blessed and triumphant salvation over sin and sickness and bodily

decay through the blood of His Son. He lived, as for many years, in gracious fellowship with his Saviour, and peacefully awaiting the time of the covenant to be carried over into his Father's house. He died Sept. 12, 1890.

A great concourse of the citizens of Washington and vicinity and friends from a distance assembled at his funeral, and amid blessings upon his memory and sorrow for his disappearance from among them, he was laid away to rest.

Many tributes of appreciation appeared in both the secular and religious press. As revealing the current estimate of the man, two of these are given :

*The Interior* :—“ Our contemporary, the *United Presbyterian*, has been sorely bereaved. The death of Dr. Kerr was a loss which seemed irreparable—and yet the loss of no man, however able and eminent, is quite so. Dr. Kerr's place has been filled by writers of great ability. But the last issue of our contemporary announces the death of Dr. Jeremiah Rankin Johnston, Dr. Kerr's associate and fellow-laborer. The search must be far and long before a successor to Dr. Johnston can be found. He was the paragraph writer who made that incomparably luminous first page of our contemporary. Paragraphs of mention or of comment can be written by any one, but a paragraph which is, in a few lines, a treatise, is the most difficult work which a writer can attempt. When a score of these must be prepared for each issue, each on a different subject—and this done every week for years without repetition of topic or treatment—the man who does it must have special natural qualifications for it, improved by training. There are very few such men—and of the few that there are, not all are willing to be responsible for a task so exacting and onerous ; and which, for the labor bestowed upon it, is so poorly requited. Dr. Johnston died at the age of fifty-four.”

*The Washington Reporter* :—“ The death of Dr. J. R. Johnston will bring deep regret to the hearts of many outside the sor-

rowing circle of his bereaved family and members of his congregation. To him the silver cord was loosed and the golden bowl broken at that period of his usefulness when he seemed to have reached the rare fruition of his life work in the service of his Master, and could look about him witnessing on every side the happy influences and abundant harvest resulting from a long period of years well spent. Although disease was sapping at his strength for two years before he succumbed to its insidious ravages, and he knew that he must hasten with his sowing of the seed which should only blossom after him, yet with cheerful Christian spirit he pursued his labors, and a powerful will forced the laxing energies of his body to sustain the tasks directed by a mind which retained its vigor until very near the end. A life of purity, and his consciousness of the right which made him inflexible to error and almost righteously intolerant of the wrong, caused him to be esteemed a man of marked character in the Church, and a respected leader among bright-minded ministers of his own and sister denominations, who looked up to him with respect, and heard his opinions with conviction of sincerity. In public work and private life his benign dignity added a rare charm to the character of his loves and friendships, and he was loved for his qualities of heart as well as respected for the mental ability which shone in pulpit and editorial utterances. His work did not stop in the environment of his location, nor his influence cease at the distance of his voice. An indetachable worker, when his tongue was silent in the interest of the truth, a facile pen sent forth words of concise and logical thought, from an active, strong, and well-stored mind. He was a great power and a leading influence in the United Presbyterian Church, the loss of which is not easily sustained, and, though thoroughly appreciated when at work, will, on that account, be the more missed since it is gone. Though the silver cord *is* loosed, the golden bowl *is* broken, and *man* goeth to his long home, Dr. Johnston's life and work have left behind a power and an influence which will long continue here."

This brief memorial may be fitly closed by an ancestral epitaph found recorded on a blank leaf of his Bible

with the following explanatory note: "The authorship of the lines below is attributed to father—I do not know whether correctly or not. They were taken from the tombstone on *his* father's grave at old Slate Hill."

"Death, thou hast conquered me :

I by thy darts am slain;

But Christ has conquered thee,

And I shall rise again.

Time hasten on the hour,

When I shall rise and sing :

'O Grave, where is thy victory !

O Death, where is thy sting !' "

# SERMONS AND PAPERS.

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## PREACHING THE GOSPEL.

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“Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.”—1 Cor. 9:16.

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It has occurred to me that a regularly settled congregation rarely hears a sermon on the work of preaching. The importance of prayer, praise, reading the Scriptures, benevolence, and other duties is often set forth, but rarely that of preaching the gospel. It is better so, on the whole; at least it is better that the error should be on that side rather than the other. Too much discussion of preaching by preachers would be belittling. More good comes from preaching than from talks about preaching. And yet we may be profited by devoting one study to the consideration of some of the simpler thoughts relating to its character and the conditions under which it is done.

As to its importance, we are amply informed of it in the Word of God. The old prophets were, first of all, God's preachers, sent with his messages of instruction, warning, rebuke, comfort, and hope. When Christ came he was a preacher. John the Baptist was a preacher. The disciples were, by their callings and places, preachers. “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel.” The

greatest of all the apostles was, before and above all things else, a preacher. "Woe unto me if I preach not the gospel." "It pleased God," he declares, "by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Wherever he went he was looking for an opportunity to preach. That was his mission ; that he wished to do ; that he would do if he did nothing else. We find him going from city to city, from country to country, in high places and low, with a few women by a river side, among classical scholars in Athens, in peaceful assemblies and tumultuous multitudes, always striving to preach Christ and him crucified. As if to speak of this as his pre-eminent duty, he said, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." The twelve, also, were filled with the like spirit. When some trouble arose over the matter of the distribution of charity, they found it interfered with their, as they believed it, real work. Hence they asked for the seven deacons, saying, "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables ; we will give ourselves to the ministry of the word." The whole tone of the Scriptures aims to impress this lesson. The preachers were clothed with authority. The Saviour himself promised to be with them to the end of the world. In those early days they were to have power over evil spirits. They were to stand fearlessly before kings. Their coming feet were to be esteemed beautiful. The heavens would open for them and the Holy Spirit descend like a dove to give them fitness for their work. And then, lest all this should be misconstrued, the truth was sedulously taught that the preachers were nothing ; the work, the cause, were all. The treasure was put in them as in earthen vessels, to show that the power was of God and not of men.

I read during the last year a book entitled, "The History of Preaching," by Dr. John Ker, of Edinburgh. It is fragmentary, but covers a large period, and is very interesting as well as learned and intelligent. It teaches this, among many other truths, that the character of religion in all periods, has depended largely upon the character of the preaching. It does not forget that the influence between preachers and people is mutual; that is, that as preachers influence the character of the people, so the people exert their influence upon the preachers. At the same time, the greater effect is ascribed to the preachers. If religion declined, it followed a decline in the ministry. If the Church grew barren and harsh, it was because the preaching had become dogmatic. If the Church was raised to new life, it was due to new life in the pulpits. Revivals came when the pure gospel was preached. The Church was active and strong when Christ and his atonement were the staple of the instructions. This is interesting as showing the importance of preaching; as proving, indeed, that the Church cannot get along without it, and, therefore, that it needs the best kind for the best results. It shows that it is not truth alone that is needed, but truth coming through living words, from living lips, informed and inspired by souls that know something of its power. It presents, of course, the dignity of the calling, and the responsibility belonging to it, and to all in it or purposing to begin it, suggests the trembling inquiry, "Who is sufficient for these things?" At the same time, to the faithful and true, it offers a matchless opportunity, and provides for that old, eloquent expression of gratitude, "I thank God that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry."

The author of whom I have spoken, referring to the Reformation, says, "It was the inspiring breath of God, and it made preaching the chief Christianizing power of modern civilization. Therefore, whether men took the side of the Reformation or not, it was necessary that they should preach; and evermore, in these days, the Church that cannot, and will not preach, and preach well, must go down."

Another extract, though long, I cannot help making :

"In a survey of the past we meet with what is most distinguished in the Christian Church; for while we have had thinkers, such as Melancthon, Pascal and Milton, whose work was done chiefly, or entirely by the pen, the great majority of Christian teachers have been men, who were drawn irresistibly to use the living voice and to use it in the great congregation. We have an array of instructors and orators, spread through the ages and over the countries, compared with whom the schools of Greece and Rome were but a small handful,—an exceeding great army of men, such as the prophet saw in his vision; the select and chosen of whom might be compared to the company which John saw in the Apocalypse, standing on Mount Zion with the Great Name written on their foreheads. No one will talk lightly or flippantly of preachers and sermons, who thinks upon the thousands upon thousands of men, who in all the countries of Europe and in all the churches, with the most varied ability, but many of them with the very highest, have devoted themselves to God's word in speaking for him to their fellow-men. What a different Europe this would have been, poor as in many respects it is, and what a different country ours would have been, but for the seeds of truth and freedom and devotion that, among many weeds, have been sown by these preachers of the Word."

These are earnest words, and true. We may repeat some of them and apply them to ourselves. What a different country ours would be, if it had not been blessed

with the preaching of the gospel. What a different community this would be, if there had been no churches and preachers in it. And what a different people we would be, if we had not been reared under the influences of the gospel. It was the preachers and the churches that gave New England its glory ; that supplied the great interior of the country with its moral power, and that has settled a large part of the great West with a prosperous people.

Since preaching is characteristic of Protestantism it will be interesting to see what Luther thought of it. In his own bold way, he said it was the most important part of the worship. It was even, in his view, superior to the Bible. What he meant was, that the gospel preached was greater, in God's economy, than the Bible simply read, the preaching being omitted. It thus " rises above the Bible," for it is the living soul taking the truth of the Bible and communicating it to other living souls as a spiritual witness of its power. Nor does he, when he teaches this, do more than we have all been taught, and are taught every day : " The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching of the word an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation."

The character of the preaching is indicated by the text : " The Gospel." That relates to the person, the character, the mission and work of Christ. The gospel tells of Christ, and tries to make men know, and reverence, and love Him. It desires to fit men for living here, and for properly entering the world to come. In short, the gospel has to do with the application of Christ, and his

truth and Spirit, to the wants of men, as they are beings of earth and are possessed of immortal spirits. "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel."

Now, to preach this gospel in a worthy way, is no easy matter. We may well imagine any one who undertakes it giving his life to the effort of making himself fit to do it as he ought. "Studying for the ministry," is therefore an expression of deep meaning. It suggests to us that the ministry is a work in which "study" has a prominent part:

This is always implied in our thought of it. A man who expects to preach is, usually, to be educated. We establish schools that shall give him the widest culture. Courses of study are prescribed for him. Presbytery takes him under its care as a student. Libraries and books are provided for him. A minister, too, engaged in his work has a place set apart for his professional use called a "study." The belief is that somehow he is in it, poring over his lexicons, commentaries, and manuscripts. He is ranked with the "students" of his neighborhood. The popular judgment is that he ought to study. Blame is attached to him if he do not. His dullness, crudeness, illiteracy, narrowness are rightly reprov'd by intelligent people. The opprobrium conveyed in the expression, "An ignorant minister," is the very severest.

I cannot stop now to give all the reasons why study is so important, much less to discuss them. Briefly, the man's mind needs it. It will not work well without it. It is needed, also, because thus facts are gathered—information secured and laid up for use. It is demanded, also, by the fact that without it judgment is likely to be poor, and hence the discussion of the gospel must be disproport-

tionate. Tone of soul also comes alone in this way. If a preacher of the gospel is to have, in right measure, a good spirit within him and a good atmosphere about him, he must be a man of reflection and acquaintance with books, and the kindred spirits that gather about his place of meditation and prayer.

I should like to speak more strongly here. These things are vital. I believe that, as a rule, people, anxious as they are for a reputable and useful ministry, fail to appreciate them. Saving the one, ever distinct matter, personal piety, the hope of the best influence lies right here. Not indeed that preachers all need to be scholars, but some of them do, and they all need the habit and faculty of wielding minds well equipped for their services.

A further word on this line. I think many persons mistake what study is in the work of a pastor. They think it is almost exclusively making sermons. He is, by calling, a sermon-maker. Therefore, naturally, they suppose he is always, if in his study, making sermons. A dressmaker is in her place making dresses. A shoemaker sits on his bench making shoes. A coatmaker is on his board making coats. A sermon-maker, therefore, is in his chair making sermons.

But these analogies, though having a truth in them, are misleading. Some others, perhaps, are more true. A lady is a bread-maker. A good part of her work is in getting ready for the actual work of baking her bread. She sends to the store for yeast. From the grocery, or mill, she orders flour. She goes hither and thither gathering other ingredients. Early in the morning, probably the night before, she gets her bread "laid up," as she calls it, and then waits for the fermentation and rising. After

a good while she is ready for the final processes, and the baking is only done when she is ready to "tidy up" for the afternoon.

Or a man is a house-maker, and is about to build a house. He sends to one place for stone, to another for brick, to another for wood, lime, sand, iron, and various other materials, or "stuff," as he denominates them. He has in operation horses and wagons, railway cars, express companies, messengers, etc., and he is drawing his supplies from many different quarters and distances. When he gets them on the ground he is ready to begin to build. And, taking all in all, the actual building will be less a work than making the preparations.

It is so with the study that results in sermons: at least, that makes, in their fullest character, the best preachers. Their study is their reading and investigating, and digesting; in many cases, the processes being remote from the final work of making a sermon. The real student for such work traverses a wide range of intellectual territory. History, poetry, philosophy, sentiment, travel, story, magazines, newspapers, to say nothing of the more specific, professional subjects, are necessities with him. Without these, he has not proper intelligence. He is more or less narrow-minded. His preaching must lack grasp and adaptation.

Some of the driest of preachers—and it must be admitted that sometimes there are dry ones—have made themselves so by the narrow range of their reading. They have not been idlers. They have been conscientious about giving to their people the "beaten oil." But it has been sermons, sermons. They have written nothing but sermons. They have read for sermons alone. With them to

study meant to make sermons Their lives have been, so far as they have made them literary, devoted to the perpetual grind of sermon-writing. Their minds cannot but be spoiled by such methods, and hence the aridity. People get to think of them as the Israelites did of that "great and terrible wilderness" which they traveled during forty years. Their only hope is in escaping over Jordan at last.

There are dangers, of course, in other directions; I allude to this one as being in the line of the present discussion. Nor do I refer to it for purposes of criticism, but only to suggest that sermon-making, taken by itself, may be a very injurious pursuit. It may be self-destroying. And as the object of this exercise is to suggest what may be best for the preachers, and, therefore, for the people for whom they preach, hence, for the Church and cause of religion, I present this objection to the idea that the work of making sermons is the one right kind of study for the preacher. Study is the reservoir, the sermon is the water that gushes out on the street or in the house. Study is the growth during the season from May till November; the sermon is the apple falling into the lap of him who wants it. Study is the plowing, sowing, reaping, gathering, threshing, grinding, sifting, baking; the sermon is the loaf which in one short hour comes from the oven.

Now, keeping in mind the statement that preaching is so important, let me mention a few things that, as conditions now are, make it difficult; at least, interfere with it. And one is the sentiment that sermons, to be of the proper sort, must be interesting. A large part of the church-going public agrees that they are good for nothing

if they do not entertain. They are only willing to listen to them if they produce the same effect as a popular lecture or concert.

This is due, in part, to the habits of the times, but also to the example set by sensationalists, pulpiteers, who live amidst sensational excitements. Perhaps more preachers than we know injure their work by their efforts to entertain and amuse. It is the only way, they think, to get a hearing. Or it is, at least, the way to secure popularity. Many of the strange subjects we read in the announcements on Saturdays, grow out of this feeling. They are efforts to catch the ear of the people who want to be, not instructed or edified, but entertained. But this requirement that sermons must be always entertaining is clerly an unreasonable one. In the first place, it is not their purpose to interest, but to instruct. They are lessons. They presuppose a disposition to learn on the part of the people. They have other aims, but this is a chief one. Now, what will become of our schools if we attempt to manage them upon the same plan? Who will be in the arithmetic class purely for the fun of it? How much Latin, Greek, German, to say nothing of physics and philosophy, will be learned as a recreation? Some, of course, but not enough to procure an education.

Furthermore, it must be out of the range of any but a prodigy to be consecutively interesting even with the best of themes, the everlasting gospel. Think : two sermons, other work, fresh thought, illustrations, etc. Nervous force. We have popular lecturers who come with lectures, into which they have put their best intelligence and skill, and yet they are barely tolerated. A course of lectures rarely satisfies. Even here is not sufficient entertainment.

Church-going, therefore, or sermon-hearing must depend on something else. If preaching is to be kept up people must agree to attend it out of a sense of duty, desiring to meet thus an obligation, and to get from the sermon and the worship, of which it is a part, such help as they require. There is no hope for it in any other way.

I readily recognize the fact that the most of you are here to-day under this kind of impulse. Your consciences have brought you. To go to church is a part of your responsibility to God, hence you have come. You have had some soul-longing for the place of prayer. Your thought has been that you would meet God in his holy place. You listen to the preaching, not because you expect anything new or striking, or remarkable, but because it is a part of the service, which, at the same time, you hope may in some way, by the blessing of God, do you good. I recognize fully the amount of conscientious regard you have for the worship, and frankly say that the hope of our usefulness, humanly speaking, consists in the thorough cultivation of that principle.

Perhaps, I ought to say, so as to complete the statement, that sermons are not hurt by being interesting. When people, moved by a sense of duty, and under the direction of a trained conscience, do appear at church, they have a right to hear that which is respectable. It is not fair to treat them with chaff. Certainly, neither their intelligence nor their judgments should be offended by ignorance and rudeness.

As another current hindrance I would mention short sermons. The popular judgment is that these should be in length, say a half hour, or perhaps, better still, twenty minutes. A long sermon of an hour is thought to be op-

pressive. This, of course, grows out of the idea mentioned above, and which, I said, was a mistaken one, that that alone is good which is entertaining. The usual sermon is not entertaining, therefore let it be brief. This feeling is often unconscious ; nevertheless, it is a feeling.

But in sermons so short it is not possible to have the best discussions of important subjects. In the minds, too, of those who preach them, there gets to be a feeling of carelessness that eventually spoils the habit and even the conscience of preparation. Not always, but often. The silent argument is, "This is so trifling a work that we need not spend much strength on it." This, no doubt, is generally unconscious, but it is none the less true. It is to a work which we feel to be great that we give our best efforts.

The Episcopal Church held a quadrennial convention during the autumn, at which one important labor, and the most important, was the revision of the Prayer-Book. Among the changes proposed was one relating to the ritual for the Sabbath services. The desire was for a shorter one. The reason was that as things stand at present, so much time is taken up with the ritual that there is no time for the sermon. The result has been that in that denomination the sermon has been, in most cases, reduced to nothing ; a further result has been that of all the churches, especially of the intelligent ones, it has grown to be the poorest in pulpit power. That is, of course, taking it as a whole ; many of its exceptions are strikingly of another character. It now wishes to regain the power thus lost, and begins by trying to reach a readjustment that will give more time, and hence, more care to the sermon.

Sermons, of course, can be too long. The present generation could not endure them of such length as those of years ago. Nor would they be for edification. But they can be too short. When restricted so much that common subjects have not room for discussion, they become trifling, and the effect is hurtful. Speaking, therefore, in the behalf of the sermons, or of preaching as the strength of the Church, I repeat that one of the hindrances of the day is the demand for short, and shorter, and shortest sermons.

As a third difficulty I mention the work that in these days accumulates upon the hands of pastors. And here it may be well to say that this relates chiefly to churches of the average sort; perhaps a church in such a place as Washington may be called so; different from the very large ones of the cities, and from the small ones of the country; different from the learned ones about a university, and from the plain ones of the frontier. The reference is to a church of good size and strength, and of considerable intelligence; where, also, there is such work to do as may gather about such a situation.

These times in which we live are intensely practical. We hope to accomplish results by effort. In days gone by, preaching was doctrinal, and churches were collected and held upon that basis and by means of discipline. Whether wholly for good or not—I only mention the fact without discussing it—that is changed, and now “church work” is the dependence, and discipline is only resorted to in extreme cases. There are more friendliness, brotherliness, charity, with the idea of love at the foundation. This affects the entire church life and system, pastors and people being put largely under a new *regime*.

I speak of it not to criticize, but commend it, for it is the hope of the cause at the present, and no church without it can expect to maintain its place. But our inquiry is as to some of its influences upon the work of preaching the gospel. These are often good, and very good, but are likely to become hindrances, and will be so if not kept under right control. You frequently hear of some minister, perhaps a youthful one, who is a "great worker," or a "good worker," and it is told of him that "he is doing a good work."

That sounds encouraging, but usually it means that he is with energy and zeal engaging in outside effort. He is on the streets, the roads, going here and there, seeing this one and that, attracting people by the enthusiasm he creates through his ubiquity and enthusiasm. It looks well, and it may be his mission, but it is at the expense of his study, and that intellectual growth which is, after all, the only hope of his best personal usefulness. His local beneficence must be transient, and he must squander time, and strength, and engraft habits that prevent his later efficiency.

I see many youthful pastors who are being duped by this deception—the deception of active, physical earnestness, with their intellectual habits neglected and sacrificed. They are generous, zealous, full of a good conscience, and deeply anxious to do good in serving the Lord. They are simply mistaking the way. They know no better, and the people, alike thoughtless, commend them instead of trying to influence them in an opposite direction. They are at all kinds of meetings. Temperance, the various reforms—all sorts of meetings are getting their feverish attention. They can be seen at all times on the street or

highway. They are on the road as much as a drover or wool-buyer. Not only are they kept from their books, but they lose facility in using them. That repose of mind that must accompany right study, they cannot command, and as the lady loses her skill when she neglects her music, so they part with their faculty of doing the one thing that they ought to do in preparing for their work.

I should mention here also the demand for what we call pastoral duties ; the duties of shepherding the flock, and looking after its outside interests. The requirements along this line are constantly increasing, as the scope of the work broadens, and the conceptions of religious necessities and obligations deepen. Looking after strangers, trying methods of local evangelization, watching and laboring at all points over this and that interest whether small or great—these, with other duties of a like connection foot up an amount of work that, done as it should be done, would require the sole time and devotion of a special worker.

I suspect, indeed I am sure, people have but a slight conception of the exactions of this department of a pastor's life. I do not speak of it as a burden. I only refer to it that we may have an intelligent idea of its effect upon the first great work of the Church, that of preaching the gospel. A pastor who is a true one, must depend for his usefulness largely upon his knowledge of his people, and his sympathy with them. This is secured by meeting with them, and especially by seeing them in the places where they are most themselves, in their homes. It must always be a gratification to him, too, to know that they want him, and are glad to see him.

All the poetry, rich and full of sympathy and idyllic

beauty, as it often is, of a pastoral experience, dies away with this part of it omitted. A pastor is a man to live among his people, not simply one to officially preach at them, or even to them. His inspiration, since he is a "settled" worker, must come from the sympathy that he gets coming up to him from the pews. It is the knowledge of the lives at which he looks, which, perhaps, also, he has studied, that directs, and softens, and emphasizes what he has to say. He must also be made, in the main, by the influence that is thus wrought upon him.

But if you were to meet several pastors, say of a town like this, and hear them talk, you would find that while agreeing with all this that I have said, they would confess that it burdens them to know how to do all the work and still prepare for their principal labor, as they insist on calling it, of preaching the gospel. In many of the busier churches, also, the pastoral work is, to a large extent, given up. The pastors say that beyond looking after the sick and such pressing cases, they cannot do it. It is a pity that it is so, but the drift is largely in that direction—to the loss, I suspect, both of the pastors and the people, unless special provision is made for guarding against it.

I have said that I think people generally have but a slight notion of the exactions which, even in ordinary cases, come with this duty. Perhaps a little illustration of it may make it more plain, and, if I may be pardoned for being personal, I will draw it from my own experience. By looking at my book of record, I find that during the autumn now closing, I have made of calls and visits, one hundred and forty, requiring, as you will readily perceive, an amount of riding, walking, time and strength, that al-

most makes up the management of a business itself. If we put these in along with other work, and adapt the suggestions they make to the subject in hand, their effect upon preaching, they at least afford us food for thought and reflection.

You will understand that I am making no point against them or what they cost. They were all pleasant, and it was a pleasure to make them, but they afford some data by which to estimate the force needed for them in connection with other things. For these "other things" are the important ones in such a connection. I need say nothing of ordinary study, the study that is professional, consisting mainly of the use of the Bible and its interpreters; they are all to be taken for granted. But the world is full of subjects and movements and doings that need to be studied, and that people need to know, and that need to be, either by direct statement or some other way, associated with the work of the pulpit.

A Catholic Congress meets, a centennial anniversary accompanying it, and every intelligent teacher should be able to talk about them, and in a discreet and sensible manner. It revives much history, and presents many problems for the future. An Episcopal Congress assembles; not only does it discuss its own affairs, but it brings to view the question of church union, and challenges the other churches to a consideration of it. The A. B. F. M. gathers, and some of the great questions relating to missions are discussed, together with theological topics that enter more or less into the thought of all the churches. One of the Presbyterian churches is talking of a revision of the Confession of Faith. It is a matter of general religious interest. It is especially a matter of interest to all Presbyterians.

These are samples. Time would fail to mention all the questions, religious, social, literary, etc., that ask the attention of all intelligent people—that claim the study of all teachers. And then, that reading along lines of current interest in books—how extensive it must be. There are books and books. A preacher cannot keep level with his day unless he tries—unless he lives with the books. Nor can he keep himself fresh and useful.

You have read sometimes, perhaps, of the preacher's "dead line." It is sometimes at fifty, sometimes at forty. The papers are often discussing it. It is the line beyond which the preacher has no call, no work. He is too old. Younger men are wanted. The churches ask for new blood!

Now, there is really no need of this "dead line." I suspect that if ministers keep freshened up by the right kind of reading, and proper sympathy with the life of the day, the line will not exist for them. It is when they fall behind that it appears. They have been workers, but not students. They have been active, but not reflective. They have fished, but never mended their nets. They have hoed potatoes, rocked the cradle, taken tea, made speeches, but they have not saved their forenoons for reading, writing, and the general culture of their minds and spirits.

Taking up now a church that demands, or would profit by intelligent preaching, and a preacher who is studious or can be made so, how can we get them to work well together? In many instances the resort is to associate pastors. These, however, are usually in metropolitan places, and in situations of exceptional character. But they are not always so. Sometimes special workers, not pastors or associates, are employed. A large variety of expedients is adopted, and the idea is gaining new favor.

Perhaps, in the ordinary congregation, nothing so official as any of these could be profitably worked. And yet an approach might be made to it. Why would not a Bible reader be useful? Could not a theological student, during part of his vacation, or all of it, devote himself to such service? It would be better for him than a term at school. Could not some member of the Church undertake it? His piety would fit him for it, his business would permit it. There are offices such persons could perform that would be well rewarded.

I suspect, however, that the main reliance must be put in the people constituting the congregation. The work must be a general one, in which all, as far as possible, shall take a part. The elders, of course, as being the chief officers, should be foremost in it. The deacons should not be far behind. Every other one then, according to his ability, should accept his share. By being thus workers, and workers together, they can carry forward their cause. They can, also, throw over upon the pastor the responsibility of using his opportunities for making himself able to do his best at preaching the gospel.

In this matter we are making rapid progress. I am sometimes surprised at the amount of work some persons in this congregation are willing to do, and are doing. Their Sabbaths are occupied throughout. They attend several week-day services. They look after the church business. All its interests rest keenly on their minds. They are thoughtful, judicious, earnest, putting all they have of strength and faculty into the work. I believe they do all they can do.

I take it for granted that you are all equally willing, but that you have not all yet found your opportunity. Or

perhaps the Spirit has not yet guided you into the right path. You say, "Lord, here am I, send me," but you are yet in doubt about the voice of the Sender. Listen for him and you shall not be mistaken. His vineyard gate is open for you, and you can enter in.

A good work it is to preach the gospel. A rare privilege it is to be accepted as a teacher and guide by our fellow-men. All kinds of rich sympathy invest a harmonious and working pastorate. No man needs a better situation in this life than one of that character. Anyone in it should do his best, and make the most of it for the good of the kingdom.

I recur at the close to the thought—more than once presented—that it ought to be the duty of the Church to keep up the preaching abilities of its pastors. When these go down the cause goes down. Their rise is its rise. The pulpit is the throne. Society must be ruled by it. The cause of God has power, as it is equal to its day and work.

It is probable that some one has listened to me to-day who has in prospect the work of the gospel ministry. He is to be congratulated. To him I should say, specifically, that his aim ought to be to be a preacher worthy of his opportunity. Let him be a student. Let him read widely, wisely. His sphere is intellectual, and he should dwell in it. Above all things he is to be a preacher.

In conclusion let me express the hope that I have not even appeared to put intellectual culture above, or in the place of, or even on a level with, the cultivation of the soul. It would pain me if any of you should have such an impression. First of all, for him who represents his Master, must be the Master's Spirit. A heart of piety, of

love, of devotion, of compassion—in short, a soul filled with that which comes from God's indwelling, is the beginning and the end of all right work for God and men. On everyone must be the Tongue of Fire. Whether learned or unlearned, the baptism of heaven is needed by all. Without it there must be dearth, failure, desolation.

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### DOING GOOD.

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“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”—Gal. 6 : 10.

The duty of active benevolence is one pressing on us all. No man is approved unless he is doing good. This material world in which we live claims the thought of our minds and the work of our hands ; and if we can think of ourselves as dissociated from the rest of our kind, still we can take the text of the gospel and say : “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might ; for there is no work, nor knowledge, nor device, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.” Adam in the garden, with no human being in the world but himself, was directed to dress the garden and keep it. Every shrub, and bush, and tree within its limits was to be the object of his unselfish care. And, living as we do, so thoroughly connected with things of the world, we are to consider, not only our dependence on them, but our responsibility to them. A vine is given us that we may gather its fruit, sit in its shade, and admire its growth. But also that we prune and train it, adding thus to its beauty, its fruitfulness and increase. The flower is ours to cultivate and improve,

that enjoying it we may be adding to its excellence, so that in a material, as well as in a figurative sense, we are to make the "wilderness to rejoice and blossom as the rose." But then we are connected with that which appeals to us still more strongly, because the tie that binds us to it is more intimate, and because the demand is that of fear, weakness, pain, suffering, and the possibility of death and life. The Psalmist, in telling of the dignity of man, says: "Thou madest him to have dominion over the work of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet; all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air and the fish of the sea; and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea." But our dominion is not to be that of tyranny and despotism, but of benevolence, so that we are called to do good to the irrational creatures with which we are bound in the union of animal life. Thus the Scriptures give us the test of character in the treatment of a brute in the expression, "The righteous man regardeth the life of his beast"; and thus we see, also, that Christianity is signalizing its growth and influence by erecting its societies for the "prevention of cruelty to animals," and by making it a crime to abuse the lowest of the beasts, even in so high an interest as that of the physical welfare of man. But the obligation is still stronger upon us as we find the object of our benevolence to be of a higher kind, and in this we have the lesson of the text: "As ye have opportunity do good unto all men, especially to them who are of the household of faith." It was a truth taught from the earliest history of the race that we are our "brother's keeper"; that he is more or less in our charge, and that we are responsible for his happiness and safety. Each man is the guardian

of his brother man. In whatever point his brother may touch him, or in whatever way he may reach his brother by his influence, he has laid upon him the burden of doing him good, and in proportion as he conscientiously, wisely and earnestly discharges his trusts, will he be in favor with the Master. This requires, of course, that he shall appreciate the character of humanity. Realizing what man is ; that he is a being of heart, of hope and fears, of sensibilities, of immortal soul, and knowing that he is capable of being made, either an heir of life or a victim of eternal death, he will thus be prepared to bestow on him the pains of his philanthropy. We may admire the rose, we may cherish for it a warm regard, and give it a care that is prompted by a species of affection ; but we will not permit it to require of us sacrifice or the expenditure of blood and life. In the same way we may be attached to a horse or dog, but lacking the immortal soul they fail to claim the full devotion of our lives. But man, because he is man, beseeches our lovingkindness. He is sinning, suffering, perishing. His life is full of crime and he is going on to a destiny of disaster. Without help, the faculties with which he is endowed, and which make it possible for him to wear the royalty of heaven, will only drag him to perdition and intensify the agony of his ruin. It was this that inspired the work of the great Master when he came into the world as Saviour. He loved men because they were men. It was not organizations, societies, clubs, denominations of men that brought him to the earth, but separate sinners, with their individual sins, pains, and fearful looking for of judgment. The Jewish Sanhedrim was nothing to him. A procession of priests, pompous in title, dress, and sacerdotal

parade, made no appeal to his heart, but he wept at the grave of Lazarus and took a little child up into his arms to bless it. It is the thought of the value of the immortal soul that will fill the Church with missionary enthusiasm. Christ came to save the soul—he felt its worth. And when we feel as he did, we will be ready to do good to all men, we will want to send the gospel, not simply to our intimate friends and familiar acquaintances, but far abroad to the heathen ; and not to a few isolated spots in heathendom, but to all men everywhere—to continents of darkness and the islands of the sea, till “one shall not need to say to another, know the Lord, for all shall know him from the least even to the greatest.” And growing up in the humane feeling born of the spirit of Christ within us, we will feel the sweetness of doing good, and cry, as the poet teaches us, “A brother to relieve, how exquisite the bliss!”

Of course, the chief good we can do anyone is that which relates to his soul. There are other ways of being benevolent. “Preach the word,”—that is no more an injunction of the Scriptures than, “Feed the hungry,” “Clothe the naked.” The charity that seeks to ameliorate the condition of those who are in physical suffering, is specially commended, not only as a human instinct, but as a Christian grace, which, catalogued along with other evidences of saintship, shall also be entitled to eternal reward. But the good of which we speak at present is that which is due to the soul. The want of the soul in its natural condition is described in the Scriptures by many wonderful and fearful expressions. It is lost. It is under condemnation. It is devoted to sin. It is at war with God. It cannot think a good thought. It is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. It is vile and

polluted like a cage of unclean birds. Out of it proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses, blasphemies—the things that defile the man. It is poor and wretched, and miserable and blind, and naked. It is dead in trespasses and sins. The benevolence that shall relieve this fallen soul, restore it to the favor of God, and bring it into harmony and communion with Him, is the benevolence of the gospel, and to this we are called when told, as we are here, to do good to all men as we have opportunity. There could not be a nobler work nor a better use of our lives. The present effect of it will be to destroy the rule of sin, to break the power of Satan, to hinder vice and wash away uncleanness, to reconcile God and man, to install virtue, to introduce peace, love and joy, to transform the life and throw over the whole existence the warmth of the love of Jesus. It is like giving liberty, solace, success, all in one. It is the introduction of a new life, with a new path discovered, with a new destiny secured. We read that in the Eastern cities benevolent persons present a charity in the shape of a fund to be used in taking poor children out on pleasant excursions to the country. Unable of themselves to find the open world, they are taken charge of under this arrangement; and, loaded up in cars and boats, they are conveyed to some suitable place where they can spend a sweet summer day among the trees. Imagine, if you can, the eager spirit of childhood, and of childhood in these circumstances, and you will not be surprised when told that these little ones, who have never seen a green field nor set foot on the sward, finding themselves in a pleasant shade, tumbling about on the grass and drinking in all the beauty of the open country, are literally ec-

static with joy. They shout in the exuberance of a passion they have never felt before. They are in a new world, a world of which they have dimly dreamed, but which they had no hope of ever seeing, and the boundless enthusiasm of their little natures tells the blessing they are receiving, and gives a full reward to their kind benefactors. Blessings on the man everywhere who will contribute to the pure joy of childhood! But their pleasure closes with the setting sun, when they go back to their sad haunts, and save as they shall have a pleasant memory of vanished sweetness, or a faint ambition after something of which they received a taste, the joy is at an end. When the gospel saves a soul through the ministry of them who are doing good, it brings that soul into a new life. It is made to dwell in the sweet favor of God. Old things with it have passed away, and all things have become new. The feet are placed upon the eternal rock, and he lives in the glad light of a day that shall know no setting sun nor gathering night, and start on a path that, being the path of the just, shall be as a shining light, and that shall shine more and more unto the perfect day.

But, wonderful as this new life may be, it is but the beginning of that which is utterly beyond our description or conception. It is but the blossom of a glorious fruitage. By our doing good we have saved a soul. We have plucked a brand from the burning; we have brought one from the deep pit and miry clay; we have secured him against the weeping and gnashing of teeth. It is a tremendous thought, that by our effort we can stop the condemnation that is sending an immortal being to hell—a condemnation pronounced by God himself according to a law as old as eternity and as inflexible as truth,

outwitting, at the same time, and defeating the great arch enemy and disappointing all the plans of the pit. And not only this, but we make that soul eligible to the favor of God, and to a place as a member of his house and a citizen of his kingdom, an heir of God, a joint heir with Christ, one of the number that shall wear the crown of righteousness that the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give at that day. There is no other such result to human zeal and enterprise. All that men do in invention and discovery, all that they achieve in diplomacy and war, all that they accomplish in business and industry, is, when compared with this, but the merest trifle that might employ the time and amuse the spirit of a child. David's palaces were structures of a day, but the souls he saved by his psalms are going on in glory. The proud temples of Solomon have disappeared amid the ruins of the curse. But the spiritual children gathered by his reproofs and warnings are beyond all decay. These are their imperishable monuments. When, therefore, we are doing good to men, we are doing that which is most worth doing. We are building for eternity. And as we know the terrors of hell and the joys of heaven, so far as they are described to us in the Scriptures, and so far as we can judge of them from our knowledge of the human soul, thus far can we estimate the importance of that to which we are called.

This responsibility rests on men as they exert a Christian influence. "Let your light so shine that others seeing your good works may glorify your Father which is in heaven." Some of the most eloquent Christians say nothing. They are giving themselves to holiness, patience, submission, zeal for the glory of God, faith, hope, and all

the graces of the Spirit, but they are almost voiceless. The very air seems purer by their presence, and the fragrance of their lives is like the aroma of freshest flowers. Nobody comes near them without feeling better of the contact. Beside them pride is humbled and vanity put to shame. Profanity, worldliness, Sabbath breaking, formality, avarice, are all made to blush by the sight of them. Far and near they radiate a Christian light and are doing good to all men, making themselves the benefactors of their day. As the Psalmist says of the day and night, so may it be said of them :

“No language utter they, nor speech ;  
No voice of theirs is heard,  
Yet through the world their line goes forth,  
To ends of earth their word.”

The mark of God's grace is on them, and as dumb heralds they tell the love of Christ and the beauty of holiness.

In one of those remarkable books, “Strange Tales from Humble Life,” by John Ashworth, there is a story of a sick girl called Mary—the single name making the narrative all the more impressive—which strikingly illustrates what may be done for Christ by the cultivation of a heart right with God. He says: “A part of her happiness consists in recognizing the hand of God in everything, in being calm and cheerful, never idle, doing all the good she can by caring for others. Though utterly unable to move her body, she often employs her mind and hands in writing, reading, sewing, knitting and working useful articles. I was much pleased with the neat and orderly arrangement of Mary's sick chamber, and saw how attention to a few little matters contributed to her comfort. Her canary, singing his

sweet songs, going in and out of his cage at pleasure, often alighting on her finger to get a crumb of bread, had been her cheerful companion for eight years. She had small flower pots with choice plants, a little mahogany and glazed library of well-selected books so close to her bed that she could reach the volume she wanted ; and a small writing case, containing all she required for recording her thoughts or conducting her correspondence. But what surprised me most was her book stall. On a stand beside her bed was a square box with a glass cover. In this box she had several shillings worth of small religious works, ranging in price from three pence to ten pence. These she had bought at the wholesale price, and was selling them to visitors at retail, and all the profits went to relieve a poor afflicted creature residing in the neighborhood. Mary had heard of her sad condition, and, wishing to send her a little help, had established her book stall to provide her with the means, for which the poor creature was very thankful. When I first saw this book stall, and learned the purpose for which it was opened, I thought that Mary, in her weakness and helpless affliction, was doing more on her sick bed for the glory of God and the poor and needy, than thousands who were blessed with unbroken health and ample means. It is now thirty years since Mary sickened and lay down in her bed, from which she has never been able to rise. During those thirty years dear relatives and friends have passed away. A kind and affectionate servant, who has been long in the family, is all that now remains of a once numerous household. If the honest doubter respecting the truth of Christianity wishes to be convinced ; if the formalist in religion wishes to see the real power of saving

grace; if the timid Christian desires to know if strength will be given according to the day; if the long-tried child of God mournfully asks, 'Can and will he sustain me in these heavy sorrows?' and if the minister of the gospel wants powerful evidence of what faith in Christ can do in upholding, cheering, blessing and sustaining through thirty years of bereavements, affliction and pain, let them see this monument of triumph and victory. I now take leave of Mary, more firmly than ever persuaded that religion is the pearl of great price, the one thing needful." What John Ashworth thus says of this Mary may be said of hundreds of others, in all situations of life, and their strong testimony is to prove that Christian piety is itself one of the strongest recommendations of religion, and persuasives to its acknowledgment and profession. When will men learn that they can bless the world more by what they are than by what they teach?

Then, again, we will do good to all men by our indirect influence. A man digs a race—a mill race, and brings water down a hill to a spot where he wishes to start his mill. The mill is for grinding grain for the purpose of supplying the people with food, and the effort of the man is to make it run. He is only thinking of commercial utility. Water power and grists are on his mind. The problem he is trying to work out is that of getting this machinery into operation so that he, the proprietor, may secure so much in the way of material result that he will be paid for his labor and investment. That is the hard business way of it, but that is the way of the world. And after a little the mill is going under a full head of water, and people are coming and going with their grists, and the community is reaping the advantage of the mill;

but all along that long race there is the benevolence of his work. Flowers and grass are growing beautifully on its banks; willows begin to trail their limbs in its water, and there in the springtime the cresses pioneer the vernal beauty. There the cattle come to drink, there the children have their laugh and song, there the artist catches his conceptions of cloud form and skyey peace, and the noise of the mill, with its tumbling water, is a sweet music, waking up old associations and holy memories, and with its energy filling some mind with thoughts of an active life. All this is its indirect power—power that was not thought of in its construction. Our indirect power should not be underestimated. We will do good in ways we know not of when we do it in ways we do know of. Going along our way in life, trying to live to the glory of God, speaking and acting with reference to what is highest in human conduct, we are literally planting the pathway which we tread with flowers, to be gathered by those who succeed us. A man complained that he had to ride six miles to church. "O," said some to whom he spoke, "you ought to be very thankful, for you are thus preaching two sermons six miles long."

But passing this. We are to do good to all men by our active effort. The unconscious influence is good—happy is the man who wields it well. The indirect influence is good—happy is he who so lives as to provide it. But we are to do good by active, direct effort. There must be a putting forth of the strength, and an exercise of the mind and will with special reference to something which we undertake and determine to perform. It is not enough to happen to save somebody, and if a man's money accidentally helps send a missionary to India, it is

all very well, but it is nothing to the credit or the blessing of the man. I have always thought there is a wonderful strength in those words of the Apostle where he says, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. 5 : 8.) There is something more in that than mere haphazard, furtive well doing, such as one may accomplish thoughtlessly, tossing off his hasty blessing as he flies past in the pursuit of gain or pleasure. There is an invitation to profound thought and deep meditation. There is an appeal, made in the name of that which is holiest and most solemn in all the teaching of the Scriptures. There is the call to the consideration of the truth that we are bought with a price; and that, therefore, we are to glorify God with our bodies and our spirits, which are his. There is an appeal to holy consecration, to that devout giving of ourselves up to Christ which shall make us say we cannot forbear to speak the things we have seen and heard, and which, with its crushing, burdening power shall cause us exclaim, "For necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is me if I preach not the gospel." Like the Great Master, we are to go about doing good. And we are to "go about" till, either by our own missionary enterprise or by means of others through whom we work, we have traversed the world and left no human being under the sun without a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. And need I tell you this is a work for all? Do good to all. Let all do this good. It is not for all ministers, for church officers, members of boards, missionaries; it is the work of the Church of Christ in all its organization, and in all its members. Every man, every woman,

every child is included in this divine instruction. By your words, by your prayers, your writings, your work, your money, and everything you are and have, you are to assist in doing good. This is what you were made for. If this is not done the ends of your creation are not met, and you are a fraud and failure. God has then a right, according to his own declaration, to come to you and say, "Cut it down ; why cumbereth it the ground?" What is your plan for it? How much have you thought and arranged in regard to it? What proportion of time and care have you given to the work of fixing a method by which you can glorify God by blessing humanity? Whose advice have you asked, whose counsel have you taken, and how often have you changed your plans of life to accommodate the wish to make yourself, not more rich, or popular, or influential—but more useful—more able to do good to all men?

Now, this good is to be done to all. I suspect this may fairly mean all kinds of men, all classes, conditions, races. The field is the world. In Paul's day there was a world to be saved outside of Jewry. The gospel contemplates men as men, and not as Europeans, Asiatics, or Africans. It is not exclusively for the rich, the poor, the learned, the ignorant, the high, the low—it is for all. It is alike for the cultivated heathen of Boston and the gross pagan of Canton. There does arise sometimes the question of adaptation—not the adaptation of truth itself, but of the method of presenting it. And hence, for example, arises the argument for and against ritualism, it being claimed by some that there are persons of such cast of mind that the gospel can do them no good unless it is brought to them in the most sensuous style,

making an appeal to their taste for show and ceremony. Hence the robes, altar, crucifixes, candles, etc., all found within the pale of Protestantism, and used even sometimes, as is asserted, for the purpose of defeating Rome with her own weapons. It is also claimed, and no doubt truly, that a people of impulsive natures, and quick, sensitive dispositions, are likely to be most readily affected by that which is demonstrative, where splendid color and rich upholstery are combined with the pomp of a vain show and fantastic exhibition. And we thus often find extremes meeting—meeting, perhaps, in different costumes, yet as impelled by the same spirit; the poor freedman of the Carolinas and the millionaire of the metropolis being one in devotion to posture and genuflection. It is, therefore, said by some that our United Presbyterianism, as being a religion that is astute, staid, methodical, and that asks thought and conscience rather than emotion and demonstration, is not suited to the freedmen of the South, and that we, the long friends of that people, should give up attempts to educate and save them, and leave the work in the hands of those who throw more of passion into their worship, and who depend upon animal excitement for their results. This leads others to say that if the gospel of United Presbyterianism is not suited to the freedmen it is not the gospel of Christ. Perhaps there is no difference in the opinion of those who talk so. It is certainly true that they who go South and preach to the negroes in the wild style of primitive Methodism will produce more immediate effect. They will “rouse up” the sinners, as it is said, and start the saints to indescribable shouting. They will have innumerable baptisms, and will glory in lists of “conversions”

that throw all others into the shade. Yet I heard a very intelligent colored man from South Carolina say recently, in a public speech, that the Presbyterians were the really useful workers among this class of people, since they strive to repress the noise and introduce sense and decorum in its stead. In this case, as in others like it, what is wanted are results that shall be permanent. The froth and foam of a religious excitement will soon pass away, but the truth fixed in the mind of a soul will be a lasting benefit and a permanent possession.

It is one of the glories of the Christian religion that it thus comes to all men with its mercies. When Christ appeared and introduced the new order of things it was thought strange, as it was beneficent, that the poor had the gospel preached to them. Christ was not the Saviour of a class. He came to all alike. His sweet ministry, like the night dews, fell on all ; and as the lowly plant by the roadway catches more of the silent baptism than the oak that towers above it, so the humble souls that crowded about him received of his grace, while the Pharisees were hardened in their sins. The Publicans and the harlots went into the kingdom rather than they. In this respect, as in many others, the gospel of Christ shows itself infinitely superior to these associations that are sometimes set up as its rivals, and which so largely absorb the attention, not only of the men of the world, but of professing Christians. They refuse all but the able-bodied. The maimed, the halt, the lame, the blind, they drive away. They pervert the Scriptures in defending their inhumanity, and with a pagan disregard alike of the Christian religion and the culture of modern civilization, they make themselves a clan of selfishness instead of a

brotherhood of charity. It is very astonishing that so many who are reared in the Christian Church and profess to have the vows of Christianity on them, will permit themselves to be numbered among those who make such a travesty of the gospel; and it is more astonishing that even ministers of the gospel, educated men, and men committed by double vows to the great work of honoring Christ, will so far forget the solemnity of their mission and the dignity of their office as to be seen in such disreputable company. "Unto *all* men," says the Bible, and most of all to those who need it most.

And then this Christian good is to all men through all the world. This is according to the commission—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." This is according to the end and intention of the Scriptures, which teach us to look for the time when there shall be none who do not know the Lord, when Christ's kingdom shall reach from sea to sea, when he shall be acknowledged as the universal Lord and King, "when the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the tops of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." Our ambition is only a poor and cramped one when it is any less than this. If we find scope for our saintly desire within our own saintly churches, or country even, or if we find ourselves satisfied with results achieved under our eye, we have not realized the spiritual enlargement that is the proper part of a Christian heritage. Some are contented with almost nothing. Some are satisfied with what is done in their own congregations—done, too, by others rather than themselves. Some believe they have done well when they have thought well of home institutions, or when they have

given a pittance to support the gospel where perhaps it has least need of their care. Some have a pet scheme here, another there, which they use as a safety-valve for their conscience—as a convenient plan for easing a little their sense of responsibility. But the true ambition is that which will look over the world and see its sins and sorrows, thinking of its darkness and death, reflecting on the destruction resting on the fallen race, and of the service of which Jesus Christ is cheated by human sin—will weep over it as Jesus did over Jerusalem, and then strive to do something for the relief of those who are sinking under the awful load. In this country there is a centennial effort being made on the part of the Bible Society, and the wish is to have a copy of the Bible brought into every family. The fitting object of its Christian zeal is thus to have Jesus as the Saviour brought into every house, yea, and if it may be, into every soul. It was this wish that sent Paul on his wonderful journeys and that impelled him to such self-sacrificing labors; it was this that started Hans Egede in his little vessel, the “Hope,” to the snows of Greenland; it was this that moved Brainerd to commit his life to the savages; it was this that encouraged Livingstone as he traveled through the heart of Africa, saying as he trudged through the sand, “The sweat of one’s brow is no longer a curse when one works for God”; it is this that has sent out dozens, scores, hundreds of those who have consecrated their lives to Christ for the great work of winning souls to Christ. They are in many lands to-day, they ask our prayers, our Christian sympathy and aid, and in proportion to the zeal they display in their chosen work, commit us to the task of doing good to all men as we have opportunity. It is the gospel through

them, and through us with them, that is to bless the world. It will light up the darkness, it will supplant the habitations of cruelty by temples of Christian mercy; it will start life and peace and joy in the very heart of heathendom, which, working outward and around, will disseminate the sweet comforts of salvation.

In the narrative of Dr. E. K. Kane we are told that away at the Pole there is an open sea. He came on it as on a vision of Paradise, and he described it, saying: "Seals were sporting and water fowl feeding in this open sea. Its waves came rolling and dashing with measured tread, like the majestic billows of old ocean against the shore. Solitude, the cold, boundless expanse and the mysterious heavings of its green waters, lent their charm to the scene." This was the open sea, and all around it sad, silent, awful, were the eternal hills of ice. Except upon it and beside it the rigorous cold made life impossible, and the "Land of Desolation" was a fit name to give a place of such appalling solitude. But what made it? Physical Geography tells us of the Gulf Stream in the Atlantic and the Kuroshiwo in the Pacific, rivers in the ocean, which in their northward flow are carrying a warm current along the shores of the countries which they touch. They start away down in the tropics, and, mightier than the Amazon or the Mississippi, flow along with a majestic current such as can nowhere else be seen. The winds, catching up the warm vapors, hurry them off and lodge them among the icebergs, and the streams flowing on, mingle their waters near the pole, where, with the energy of heat carried from the sunny climate where they started, they carve for themselves this open sea, and there life is found as if saved by the strange miracle of Providence! And

thus starting where the Sun of Righteousness shines the brightest, the gospel—the stream that is to make glad the city of our God—shall flow abroad to form the beautiful seas of love in the wild wilderness of heathendom. There it pours its gentle waters, surrounded by mountains of superstition and hills of desolation that have grown through the centuries, and there it erects its altars and sings its songs of praise. Alas! that it is not a great gulf stream like that of the ocean, instead of the slender one it is! But we have faith that it shall grow, and in that faith we exclaim :

“Waft, waft, ye winds, the story,  
And you, ye waters, roll,  
Till like a sea of glory,  
It spreads from pole to pole.”

But I should not forget here to say that in doing good to all men, we must remember those who are already Christians. A very pious lady remarked the other day that if she were to start out to do public religious work she would go first to the members of the church. Her remark was prompted by the belief that they, while professing to be Christians, give but little evidence of it and need missionaries among them, if not to save their souls, at least to reinstate their piety. Always thankful, as we ought to be for the bright examples we have of pious zeal in the cause of Christ, we may well deplore the fact that the prevalent tone of saintly lives is not such as to promise largely in the way of real Christian effort, or to very deeply impress the world. Missionary zeal is born where there is a stirring enthusiasm for the cause of the cross of the Saviour. It is but the overflowing of the ardent soul. As Dr. Arnot remarks, “Piety, when it is true,

can no more help manifesting itself in mission work than can the waters help running down hill when the fountain overflows." When men are saying, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," and when they are possessed with the spirit that shall make them say, "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," then they will be warm with respect to the wants of the world; and if this meeting shall make us more full of the spirit of real consecration, and shall fill us with more of the holiness of real sainthood, it shall then help us to feel and do for those who are in need, and save us from withholding good to those to whom it is due when it is in the power of our hands to do it.

With our Christianity of to-day, bright, cheery, and pleasant, I know of no reason why we should want to get back to the style of piety of which we read in history, and which is portrayed to us in the lives of good men of the past—say one hundred years ago. It was doubtless good for its day. In the harsh times when they lived and acted, because they met the necessities of those times, they were valuable beyond what we can tell. The places they filled in the religious and political history of their times were filled well, so that they stand bold and luminous, like crags jutting out of the sea, radiant with a dash of the rising or a gleam of the setting sun. But no one who reads the memoirs of Thomas Boston, for instance, will wish himself like that holy man any more than he will wish he had lived during his exacting times. It is with deep pleasure we read the letters of Rutherford, and we get a

high sense of his devout piety from his hearty expressions of love ; yet the autumn spirit that broods over his utterances is not such as we desire, nor is it such as we need to do the work of to-day. In the same way we admire the old Puritan spirit, as strongly and inflexibly obedient and requiring obedience in others, but we may be happy to live under another dispensation, in which, amid its sunshine and beauty, we have a genial joy of which the grim forefathers had no experience. Their way of doing good to men contemplated a vast amount of severity. They never hated a child by sparing the rod. Upon their faces, pervading all their lives, shadowing all their acts and institutions, there was an austere asceticism of law. Though it is true, if there was not enough of juicy joy about them, there was none of the flippant levity of which we see so much to-day. Our re-action has carried us so far that cross-bearing is almost left out of sight. We live to study the beauty of religion and regale ourselves amid its sweets, without sufficiently accepting its tasks and bearing its burdens. Our aim is largely in the direction of taste and embellishment, and "How will it look?" is more of an inquiry than "how it will agree with the Scriptures and assist in saving the world." Worship has about it a holiday air, gay almost, with festive scenes and ornamental tapestry, and in the laugh and song we sit down at ease in Zion, or walk amid rainbows that canopy us in the spray of a life that has forgotten the "hole of the pit whence it was digged." And then, to compensate for what may be lacking in religious fervor, we attempt to do by wholesale, and in spectacular display what ought to be accomplished by self-denial and consecration. We provide huge hippodromes, and all go to see them. We crowd a week of prayer with intense

devotion, and spend the summer in a sweet narcotism of oriental luxury. I would not wish to say a word against the work, and the great work, done by those most celebrated evangelists of to-day, in England and Scotland, or to hint at any opposition to that which they will attempt to do in this country during the coming winter. Their meetings were wonderful. The crowds that gathered, the readiness with which the gospel was heard, the fervor that was shown, the decorum that was exhibited, the money that was raised and spent—all this and more was worthy of the highest praise. One cannot speak too highly of the zeal and energy displayed by the evangelists themselves, or of the cautious way in which they kept themselves free from the least charge of self-seeking or money-getting—particular temptations of the age. It should be not only the hope, but the prayer of all Christian people, that what was done by them may be made permanent through the abundant blessing of God, and that not only England and Scotland, but all Christendom may feel the benefit of their extraordinary labors, and that, as a result of them, the heathen world may be made to rejoice in the greater light introduced among the nations. But, in so far as all such movements have the tendency to vitiate the disposition to individual effort, they will work an injury, cultivating a taste for public hurrah, putting excitement in the place of personal consecration and active holiness, and the pride of ambitious statistics where modesty should try to keep the left hand from knowing what the right hand is doing, and teaching men to rely more on a season of public assemblies than on closet wrestlings and back street itineracy—as they do this, which they may do and will do, unless guarded by Christian conscience, their effect will not be beneficent.

I look out on the fields this pleasant autumn day and see the corn standing strong and majestic, slightly tinted with golden colors, pendant with huge ears that tell of rich soil and careful husbandry. And I remember that it was not planted by a mass meeting ; it was not cultivated under the direction of foreign workmen, accompanied by the beating of drums and tooting of trumpets. It has no reporters to tell of it, and has given no impulse to newspaper circulation or journalistic enterprise. But a man, day after day, went along the rows, counted out the seeds, put them in their places, and covered them with soil. Every grain passed between his fingers, he measured the spot for every hill, every stalk received his touch during the summer, and back and forth, with patient, quiet care, he went with his hoe and plow, encouraging the growth, and begging for a harvest. In the field of God there must needs be the same kind of husbandry. It requires patience, earnestness, energy, self-denial, reasonable outlay of strength, and a trust in Providence for the slow outgrowth of his own will. This is, after all, the true way to convert the world. It is thus we will reach all men. We hear a great deal about "reaching the masses"—reaching, as if men were to be converted by convention and baptized with a hose ; whereas, it is the quiet work like that of the Master himself, which, as a rule, will accomplish the desired end. Hence, in doing good to all men, and bringing the world under the power of the gospel, we should not forget, as Christians, that we may fill them with more of this feeling of personal responsibility, and get them to live more according to the law of the Master, which says, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and

follow me." And out of this feeling shall be born that enthusiasm which it is part of our duty here to-day to promote, and which will, when once in living exercise, carry the gospel to the ends of the world. We do not need asceticism. There is no place in our economy for penance. Austerity in tone, in speech, in action—these are not Christian, and hence are not needed by Christianity. Kindness, brotherliness and cheeriness—these are part of the heritage of the Church. But we need to blend the beautiful, the ornamental, the strong, that we may have the hills to which we shall lift up our eyes of faith, as well as the rose and lily that shall gratify our taste—the mountains to stand around Jerusalem to encourage our heroism, as well as the milk and honey that shall satiate our appetites. Thinking of the sweet gentleness of the Saviour, we are not to forget the holy penury that made him a man who had "not where to lay his head."

Now we are to say something, if time will permit, on the obligation, "as we have opportunity." I have said so much on the former part of the subject that but little can be added here. But this means that we are to take opportunities as they come. A man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho was beset by thieves and stripped of all his clothing, and almost killed. A priest and Levite were going that way, and they had a fine opportunity for doing that man a kindness. But they shied off to the other side and went on. A Samaritan came by, and he, seeing the man, regarded it as an opportunity for the exercise of his charity, and forthwith went to the man and gave him a blessed ministry. It was his opportunity—he embraced it. Each person in his daily life will find some

of these opportunities. They meet him at every turn of the road. They are in the house of joy and gladness, in places of business and pleasure, and wherever men may meet. They come in the most unexpected times, and in the most unlikely places. In the days of our late war when the Union army was making a march northward to repel invasion, it passed through one of the cities in the eastern part of this State. The weather was very warm and the roads very dusty. It was hurrying along as fast as the strength of the soldiers would permit, and, passing through this city, did not stop for a moment. A little girl, seeing the panting men, ran with a bucket of water and a tin cup, and, as man after man passed along, handed each a drink, and, with others bringing her fresh supply, she stood there for an hour doing good as she had opportunity. It was her opportunity, and she embraced it; she could not go into the ranks to fight; she had no place as nurse, but she could give a drink of cold water, and she did it. Her name lives as written in the history of the great conflict—lives like that of the woman who gave two mites from her poverty. And thus we even have our opportunities. They are thrust upon us, and all we have to do is to accept and employ them. When a child is born into the world it is born amid opportunities more than I can tell. He has all around him the means of doing good. Here is a Sabbath school, here are good books, here are the ordinances of worship, here are societies, agencies, boards, all waiting his industry. The missionary going abroad is an opportunity to all who know of it, for he is opening up to them a way for communicating with the world. These opportunities are every day increasing. They grow with the advancing intelligence.

Every ship that cleaves the sea is one of them. The railroad, printing office, telegraphs, the opening up of national doorways, and the world by all these means growing into one, announce Christian opportunity, and deepen religious responsibility. "As ye have opportunity"—and there is no end to the great list of them ready made and always at hand.

But this means also that we must seek opportunities. Suppose they do not come—we are to look for them. Go out into the streets and lanes of the cities and compel them to come in. Go into all the world and preach the gospel. Go into city and country, stopping at this house and that, and asking for the privilege of doing something for Christ. John Ashworth went out to the streets of Rochdale, meaning to make himself useful, and his stories of "The Dark Night" and "Niff and His Dogs," will always remain to tell of his fidelity and success. I read the other day of a little missionary tour made by Drs. Beveridge and Hanna to Canada, more than forty years ago, in which they literally hunted up people in the northern forests, and, after many years, the Presbytery of Stamford existed as the result of their labors. Not many days ago the centennial exercises of a neighboring church were held, when it was told that Dr. Mac-Millan traveled out to this country with a heart full of wish to preach the gospel and save the growing country for Christ, and churches and a school of learning were the results of his enterprise. And in this church where we meet to-day, the centennial air around us reminds us of the Rev. Matthew Henderson, who, when the country was a wilderness, came here to preach the gospel. On the hillside where the old church stood he used to preach to

large congregations gathered from miles around, and in various neighboring places; he had his rude houses where he dispensed the bread of life. The seed he sowed took root. It is growing and bearing fruit through all this region. The United Presbyterianism of Washington county, strong in intelligence and wealth, and which contributes so largely to the operations of the Church, is the product of his piety, as is also much that is not now known by our denominational name, and in the great West and far foreign countries there are the trophies of his benevolence; and to-day we come to bid a Godspeed to one nurtured amid the influences he propagated as he goes back to tell, by the Ganges, the story of Jesus and his love.\* And standing here, we may well sing,

“Of corn a handful in the earth,  
On tops of mountains cast,  
Shall wave with fruits like Lebanon,  
When shaken with the blast.”

This feeling, if felt by all the people, would change all the manner of our services. There would be no more begging and appeal. There would be no planning except as to the use of contributed means. Men would go to the boards of the Church asking, Where can I pay this money for Christ? and with hearts throbbing under the impulse of love to the Saviour, they would cry on every hand, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” But this means, also, that we shall *make opportunities*. This I pass.

Now, this presents to us the way in which we ought to go about our work. It is not as appealed to. It is not as driven. “As ye have opportunity.” Your work and your money are obtained, if obtained at all, by

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\*Preached upon the occasion of the return to India of the Rev. J. S. Barr.

entreaty, by spasm, and sometimes by guile ; but the rule is, as we have opportunity. This, I say again, would change the whole Christian practice, if lived up to. I find men sometimes who change their places of residence, and when they do so, they begin to tell of what they have done in the places from which they came. If there is a church building, they have expended their gifts on one some place else. If there is one repairing, their liberality is painted in the fresco of the one they left behind them ; or they are only transient citizens and hence must wait till they get settled before they remember God. The thought that God has set them down to a work awaiting them, only makes them grip their money the more tightly, and go on with their little game of hide and go seek with their Maker. When Haman was planning to destroy all the Jews, in the days of Queen Esther, Mordecai insisted that she should do something to save them. She hesitated. Her uncle, from out the amazement of his sack-cloth and rent clothing, sent her an urgent appeal, closing with the words, "Who knoweth whether thou hast come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" It was her opportunity ; she was brought to her place by the hand of God ; she did her duty, and the people were saved. When you have a place to do good, do not begin to shuffle off the responsibility, and holding up a list of what you have done, file it as an excuse for not doing more, but rather say, "God has given me another opportunity ; thank him, thank him, for the open doors."

Now, what incentives have we to obey his commands ?

We have one in the Church itself ; for through the work of men for Christ it is to grow up, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

We have one in the work for sinners—"Let him know that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

We have one in the effect upon the world—"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given it and the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God."

We have it in the blessing on ourselves—"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

Opportunity! We have it here to-day. We are met to unite our hearts in the consecration of ourselves to God. We will link ourselves with Brother Barr, now about to start off to his toil, and giving him our hearts, we will make of him an opportunity, and he shall be the representative of our devotion. May the great God go with him and be with him in his work, and may great grace be on us to-day and during this convention, that it may be for the glory of God and the good of that Church that has been bought by the precious blood of Christ.

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### HUMILITY BEFORE GOD.

He forgetteth not the cry of the humble. Ps. 9:12.

We are called together to-day by proclamation of the president of the United States.\* It is significant

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\*President Arthur.

that one of the first papers he read after entering upon his duties, was this one, appealing to the religious sentiment of the country, and seeking to invoke upon the land, and, we may believe, upon himself and his administration, the blessings of Heaven. His proclamation is not authoritative; it is only a request. But, recognizing him as the minister of God for good, we are glad to respond to his suggestion, and worship along with the rest of our countrymen.

The call comes to us at a peculiar time and in peculiar circumstances. The shadow of a great grief is over the nation. Just one week ago, physicians and others were watching at the bedside of the dying president, seeking to alleviate pains they could no longer hope to cure, and to prolong a life they had confessed themselves unable to save. All over the country men and women were waiting in anxiety to get the news, expecting an announcement of death rather than of life, yet still recognizing the man of whom they thought as the one ruler of the land. That night he died, and almost before the first offices of care were performed to his lifeless body, his legal successor was sworn into his vacant place. Since then we have heard of pathetic religious services being performed at Long Branch, watched the train of mourners slowly moving to Washington, seen the pageant that gathered in the capitol, seen the cortege as it swept along on its way to the Forest City, and rested with it in thought as it halted at the place of its destination. The Sabbath has intervened, with its sacredness and quiet, with its memorial songs and sermons, and now, with the casket of the fallen ruler beside them, his friends are paying a final tribute to his name before giving him back to the dust

whence he came. It is fitting that we should meet and join our prayers with theirs at such a time—with the millions more, also, that are going up all over the land. They will be answered, if they are true, and our own spirits will be chastened as we offer them.

The call of the president is to humiliation and prayer. These are always proper, both for the individual and the nation. The tendency is towards pride. Each of us knows how hard it is to keep down the vanity of our spirits, how we have to fight against the sin that banished the angels from heaven. What is true of the individual is true in a larger sense of the nation ; it is probably peculiarly true of ours. We boast of our free institutions, that give so much privilege to all the citizens ; of our equitable laws, which secure to great and small their rights ; of our vast expanse of territory ; of our rapid development ; of our resources ; the far-reaching character of our enterprises ; our potent influence among the nations ; and the grandeur that seems to be our inevitable destiny. We outdo Hezekiah in seeking to show every stranger our wealth and exhibit our prospects, and we display no little of the Nebuchadnezzar spirit in telling of what we have done in conquering the wilderness and building up the palaces and monuments of our civilization. When thus nourishing such thoughts in our hearts, God comes to tell us of our sin and danger. He would turn us away back to Jerusalem—magnificent under the reign of Solomon, but desolate in the days of its overthrow ; he would take us to look at Tyre when its ships were whitening the sea and its traffic crowning the highways of many provinces, and when again it was but a rock on which the fisherman spread his net ; he would call us to

look, but look in vain, for the graves of men who were once the proudest of their day, and who filled the world with their renown ; he would ask us to find the monuments that for years were the wonder of all who saw them. We will only be doing our duty and using our privileges if we hear his voice and heed his call.

But what thoughts will help us reach this humility we seek ? What do we see about us to teach us the present lesson and give us appropriate reflections and devout services under the call of the president ?

I think the frailty of the hold we have upon objects to which we are devoted, should deeply impress us. How slight is the tenure by which we grasp the possessions we regard most valuable, and which, indeed, we know to be essential to our comfort. We have an illustration of this in the drought that sets us to bewailing the fruitlessness of the fields. God sent no violence to disturb us. There was neither hail nor tornado. The skies were as serene as ever smiled upon a landscape, the winds breathed upon us as gently as any that ever fanned our cheeks. But the clouds deserted us, the rains refused to fall, and under the August and September suns we saw the pastures lose their freshness, the gardens fail of their products, and a half desolation spread itself upon the hills. We have another illustration, and one that more nearly concerns us to-day, in the loss of life we have so much deplored. We lifted to the presidency a man who was a model of physical vigor. Nature seemed almost to have set him forth as a sample of her skill. His fine physique was the admiration of all who saw him, and whether in his hay field at home, upon a platform before a public audience, in the halls of Congress, or in the executive chair, he looked the

man whose physical promise of life was equal to its hereditary claim. But, in a moment, quick as thought, this strong man was laid low, and lay helpless as a child. The nation will resort to any care to bring him back to life. Its wealth, its intelligence, its professional skill, all it possesses is used with lavish hands, but all is unavailing against the providence that has decreed his death. Science does its utmost, affection surpasses all its former kindness, piety combines in the prayers of millions, the nations try to cheer him up; yet still he dies. Beside his bed of pain, when looking at his changed countenance and withered hands, standing beside his coffin and bending over his grave, we hear God reading us his lesson: "Glory not in the strength of the strong man." He says, "Be humble." "O why should the spirit of mortal be proud!"

In a similarly striking way we are taught the same virtue by the easy disruption of our plans. Planning is a part of the exercise of life. We plan for to-day, for to-morrow, for next year, for all the future. We plan singly and in combination with our friends. If all our plans were written out or existed in diagrams, they would soon overstock our premises, as they would also reprove our shortsightedness, and remind us of our blighted hopes. Happily enough, the most of them have never been traced in writing, and, after their failure, we have no record to tell that they were ever even formed. Our Babel towers are leveled with the dust—their sites cannot be found; and when our ships are broken at Ezion-Geber, the tides bear the fragments out to scatter them on the sea. The thought, however, of the ease with which the best of them can be frustrated, is enough of itself to cover us with shame.

We do not forget to-day the plans connected with the administration that began on the fourth of last March. There is the announcement of a policy that is to guide the executive in the discharge of his duty. There is the appointment of a cabinet, whose choice had occupied several previous months, and which was made with reference to many great interests of the public. The whole land was mapped with economical care, and every citizen felt there was some invisible line about him, which, according to the plan of the government, defined his duties and his privileges. And, filled with hope, and moved by a spirit of patriotic prevision, there were those who predicted two terms for the president, who so gallantly began the labor of his place. But all these things have been set aside. The head that inspired them all is being laid in his grave, and the feeling everywhere prevails that the hopes of the earlier year, if not utterly blighted, are yet robbed of their brightness. Gone in a day—all our wisdom proven to be folly. We may well sit down in humility, cover ourselves with ashes and our faces with shame.

We have a philosophy that the world is advancing, and that humanity, tending upwards, is losing its grossness, and growing more into the likeness of God. I believe this is true. If we doubt it, we have but to read history to be taught our mistake. But it must be humiliating to us that even yet, when we have escaped from barbarism and gathered about us so much of civilization, that passion, and bad passion, too, can so greatly control us. For part of the elevation of our humanity consists in the increased power of self-control, and that disposition of mind that will put us above the mere waywardness of the

ruder life. Looked at from the point of view of our intellectual development, of our commercial and social growth, and, above all, of our religious prominence, we might expect nothing but the completest mastery of all the faculties. There is, however, but little of this realized. Political passion is as violent and bitter as it ever was before. Acrimony, defamation, scurrility—these mark the debates even of our senators, while popular discussions at times become but the arenas of disgraceful personal altercation. If you read the public press in times of political excitement, you will be shocked by its excesses. The poorer portion of it stops at no extravagance of statement, if it may thereby carry a point in favor of a patron or against an adversary. The best of men are denied the commonest virtue, while good men of ordinary frailty have their faults enlarged into crimes that show them to be the basest of felons. One of the lessons we should learn in this time of national calamity is that of curbing our disposition of bitterness, and cultivating a better spirit in our party contests. Earnestness is right and a duty; principles should be discussed closely and exhaustively; the political faults or heresies of candidates should be rigidly exposed, but the personal assaults that are made, and especially the slanderous attacks that are planned and executed, are unworthy the citizens of any country. Let us humble ourselves under the thought that so much of this is possible.

But we are here to-day acknowledging God's judgments, and we naturally ask why they are necessary. Should we not be beyond the necessity for such dealing, living under the prosperity that comes from his approving smile? Is not every stroke of his a suggestion to us that

we are untrue to our privileges, recreant to our trusts, false to our obligations? For when the judgment comes it comes as a reproof of sin, and "sin is a reproach to any people." To any people? If to any, most of all to us, to whom have been granted so many favors of the Lord. We read our early history, and remember that some of the men who came here as first settlers did so that they might worship God. Their first acts upon the shore were those of devotion. They consecrated the land and gave their homes to the Lord. The start they made, the impulse they gave, was in the direction of the establishment of the gospel—"they counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ." The nation, too, was founded in prayer. Its genius was according to the spirit of the gospel of the Master, and in its establishment and conduct it was to illustrate the principles of the Word of God. We see how Christian sentiment has pervaded it. The churches stand thick in its cities. The spire rises in every village and hamlet. Among the hills, out on the prairies, on the mountain tops—everywhere there is the house of God. Bibles are scattered like leaves of the forest. Religious literature, of every shade of opinion and degree of interest, is strewn along every highway and in every private situation. The very fences are tablets containing lessons of the word of God. And yet, with all this, there is need of God's judgment. There is still a necessity for his rod and penalties. Sin is still rife. In the shadow of the church is the saloon or the table of the gamester. Whole streets are given up to vice. There are bloodshed and social anarchy. There is dishonesty in trade, theft, bribery, with many nameless vices that insult the majesty of the law and the purity of the people.

The sight of our sins, and the sight of God's judgment coming in their punishment—these should make us humble. Just to think: After the beginning of the land under auspices so happy, after all the instruction and training in religion and religious truth, after all the discipline of God's providences, after all the boundlessness of his goodness, here we are to-day, scourged, and scourged with a heavy hand, because we have forgotten God. The very thought of it should make us hide in shame, since every stroke is a sign of our disgrace, as well as a mark of the fidelity of God.

But this is also a day of prayer. The condition is to be that of humility, the performance is to be that of petition. And the two go very properly together. Are we humble, bowed down under thoughts that have weighed upon our spirits? What is more natural then, at least what is more proper, than that we should lift up our voices in prayer? Do we pray? Is it not a simple matter of consciousness as well as instruction of the gospel, that we should do it humbly, and out of a spirit "crushed for sin"? We read in the Scriptures of a man, a king of Israel, who lived a wicked life, abusing his great position by committing many crimes, and turning the people away from God. God visited him with judgment. He sent the Assyrian to conquer him, and the king, in his captivity, learned the lesson of humility that he refused to receive at home, then, calling on God, he heard his prayer, and gave him back to his place and his throne. We read of a prophet who disobeyed the Lord, refusing to execute his purpose, but carried, as he expressed it, to the "belly of hell," to the "bottom of the mountains," where the "weeds were wrapped about his head," he

learned to be humble, and, praying there, God rescued him. The same lesson is taught us everywhere : if we will be heard let us be humble. " He forgetteth not the cry of the humble." But what do we pray for ?

First, I think we should ask for forgiveness. This is the starting point, embracing, as it does, confession and repentance. We look up to God as to one whom we have offended, whose law we have broken, whose honor we have contemned, and, in our humility, ask that, for his name's sake, our sins may be blotted out. If you look into the Bible, you will find that very often the people were confessing their sins, and you will see, also, how deep, under the direct instruction of God, their confession was. " We lie down in shame, and our confusion covereth us ; for we have sinned against the Lord our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God." " The crown is fallen from our heads : woe unto us for we have sinned." " For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us ; for our transgressions are with us, and as for our sins, we know them ; in transgression and lying against the Lord, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood." When Nehemiah heard of the broken walls of Jerusalem and the reproach cast upon the people there, he said : " Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee ; both I and my father's house have sinned. We have dealt very corruptly with

thee, and have not kept thy commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments which thou commandest thy servant Moses. Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandest thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations, but if ye turn unto me and keep my commandments, and do them, then, though there were of you cast out into the uttermost part of heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and I will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there. Now these are thy people and thy servants, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power and thy strong hand. O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants who desire to praise thy name; and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cup-bearer." And Daniel, in his prayer for the people, used language equally distinct: "We have sinned and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even departing from thy precepts and judgments. Neither have we hearkened to thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes and our fathers, and to all the people of the land." When the spies gave an evil report of the land they went to visit, the people began to murmur, to talk of stoning, to meditate revolt and rebellion. God threatened to blot out the name of Israel. But Moses appeared to intercede, and listen how he pleaded: "And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying, The Lord is of long suffering and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty; visiting the iniquity

of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people, according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people even until now." And when Solomon dedicated the temple we have another example of the same kind. Many more are scattered all through the Scriptures. They enter into its warp and woof.

In reading them we will be struck by the likeness between the sins of those days and our own. The manifestation of our transgression is different, but the groundwork, the basis of the sin is the same. We speak falsely, just as they did, only ours is on a larger scale—through millions of newspaper sheets, that go to the ends of the earth. We defraud, as that was part of their iniquity, but beside the star route and kindred iniquities, their speculations were the merest trifles. The sin is the same. There should be the same confession, the same repentance, the same pleading for pardon. On this day of humiliation, when we see our sins in the light of a great affliction that has overtaken us, let us try to be contrite, make full acknowledgment of them, and seek the forgiveness of him whom we have offended. Our sorrow over the man we honor has been sincere, deep, prolonged; let now the grief over the sins that caused his death be equally earnest. Then may we expect our darkness to be turned to light; our banners will trail no more in the dust. We will be a God-fearing and a God-honoring nation, and the blessing of heaven will rest upon us in perpetual benediction. How beautiful to know that the bright skies suggest a placated God above them—to feel that the sunshine that gladdens and enriches the earth is

the expression of a Father who loves us. We may then sing, both as prayer and thanksgiving, the song :

“That as the plants our sons may be,  
In youth grown up, that are ;  
Our daughters, like to corner stones,  
Carved like a palace fair.

“That to afford all kinds of store,  
Our garner may be filled ;  
That our sheep, thousands in our streets,  
Ten thousands they may yield.

“That strong our oxen be for work,  
That no in-breaking be,  
Nor going out ; and that our streets,  
May from complaints be free.

“O blest the people, who are found,  
In such a state as this ;  
Yea, greatly blest, those people are,  
Whose God Jehovah is.”—*Ps. 144.*

The nation is subject to God, yet it is in the hands of man for management and administration. He makes, or permits, a man to be his representative, a “minister of God for good.” I think, therefore, on a day of prayer, with such reminders as we have about us, we should not fail to learn to pray for good men to be at the head of our national affairs. We pray for ministers who are to fill our pulpits and preach the gospel. We ask that God will raise them up, point them out, qualify them for their duties, and install them in their places. We pray for missionaries who are to go abroad to preach the kingdom in foreign countries ; and why shall we not learn to pray for the right kind of men to appear as legislators, governors, judges, presidents? We need to have such “raised up,” as we express it, and adapted and fitted to their places

and work. They should be men of honesty, above bribery and corruption, true to all their trusts. They should be patriotic, setting their country above all consideration of party or self. They should be able men, capable of taking hold of all questions coming up for discussion and decision, and to enhance the dignity of their places by a right discharge of their responsibilities. They should be men of God, acknowledging him as the sovereign, the ruler, the arbiter, the final court of appeal. If we wish such men, should we not pray that they may be sent us, and not wait to see them rise by chance, or struggle up to their places in spite of the indifference of the Christian citizens?

And just here, it may be proper to say, that we should take a view not too pessimistic respecting the men who are in our public situations. We see them denounced in the newspapers as if they were bad, and only that; and we get the impression, that because some are notoriously wicked, they must be all so. The popular judgment is, that real virtue is incompatible with high position, and that when one is credited with the fact of being a political hero, it must be in spite of the misfortune that he is without moral character. I believe that many of our public men are leaders in vice. They prostitute their high places to the worst practices, and represent, in the most unseemly behavior, the rudeness and violence of many of those who give them their honors. But I believe also, that there are others just as distinctly upright, and who, in all their relations, bear names that are not soiled with dishonor. They are men concerned for their country's good, and, being capable in their places, commend themselves to the gratitude of their countrymen. We have

had an illustration of this during the late sad months of national trial. The head of the cabinet, of the government, the commander-in-chief of the army, lay sick, and so sick as to be unable to even think of the affairs of the country. But his cabinet stood honestly, faithfully and efficiently in their places. No complaint has been uttered against them, but everywhere, in all localities, and by all people, there has been a ready disposition to give them praise. Two of them, I venture to say, no matter what their future may be, will always receive the thanks of the people, for their considerate care of the president, the patient of the nation.

Saying this, let me repeat, that one thing we need to do, is to pray for good men, who shall be prepared for places of public honor.

Let me say further, that we have not so good a conception of the ideal public servant as we should have. We need to have it elevated. Our politics should have carried into them more of the educated life, which it is the privilege, as it is also within the power, of the country to produce. Legal attainments are good, a wide acquaintance with public questions is valuable, and when there is added to these a strict moral character, there is a style of fitness that is highly commendable. Even this, however—so much less than it should be—is above the average of that which is usually looked for. The successful politician—I use that word in its poorer sense—the successful politician, is often esteemed the typical man, beyond whom there is nothing to expect or desire. He is some great “boss,” who by means of patronage he controls and henchmen whom he commands, rules like a nabob; a Czar and an Ishmael, all in one. And this man, with but

few qualities of the real statesman, and with personal traits that are disagreeable, and even revolting, catches the popular eye, and is enthroned in its mind as the man who represents its best ambition. We should try to improve upon this ideal. There is something better than this, and it is when citizens rightly apprehend it, that they will know how to labor and pray in its behalf.

It is for this reason the example of our president is so valuable. He was showing us the type of patriotism and statesmanship of which we have but little. There was that in him which met the old Roman standard of civic skill combined with military prowess. It was not enough to be an able commander; it was too little to be simply an orator and legislator; but when there was success in leading the legions in the field and winning the ear of hearers on the forum, there was the model citizen. He was also our Gladstone in politics, having his same simple habits, his broad, comprehensive grasp of political knowledge, his well balanced judgment, his profound spirit of reverence, his refinement of scholarship and literary skill. It was this that made him suited to any place and to any occasion. Great crises found him able to meet them. If courageous contests for principle were needed, he was ready to enter them. If graceful sentiment were required, he had it in full store. His image before the people to-day is that of a man who was known only by his virtue—a statesman who served his country well. It is worth our while to pray for such men, and to ask also that the public mind may grow up in an appreciation of their value. It is for the Christian Church to be leader in this kind of education. Our popular suffrage puts power largely in the hands of those who care nothing or

know nothing of these higher considerations by which we are to be governed. The ignorant and base people who crowd our cities, like one of themselves to be their representative. The freedmen population, in large part, care nothing for culture, for intelligence, and very little for morality, in the man for whom they vote. All through the country there is a preponderance of citizens who are unable to look beyond the commonest traits as desirable in a public officer. Our churches, schools and colleges, our educated men and women, our religious newspapers, and others that may be depended on, should lend their aid in the work of lifting up the thought of the country in this respect, and stimulating it to better purposes and nobler practices. And for this reason it is a privilege for us to hold up the example of one who went ahead of his generation in an exalted and illustrious career.

But we also, in the same spirit of humility, when looking at what is past, consider what is to come, and hence pray for the new president and the new administration. Past memories are very precious, and thoughts of good men gone are parts of a blessed heritage; but we cannot depend on them for the future—we must look our practical life in the face, and prepare for its conflicts and duties. The new president comes to his place in a time and a way of great embarrassment. He is conscious of the fact that he was little in the minds of the people when nominated at Chicago. He knows that the country voted for his superior, and for him because accident attached his name to the ticket. He realizes that while the people are thankful to have him come forward in a legal way to his seat, they can only look at him to be disappointed that their first great choice has been set aside. He also

understands that he takes up the business of the administration when it is in many respects opposed to his theories, while it is at the same time in accord with the will of the great body of his constituents. Looked at from any point of view we please, we see the man in a trying situation, commended to our pity as well as to our loyalty and allegiance.

Christian friends, this is our president. Let us pray for him. Let us ask God to guide him, to lift him above the level of a partisan ; to keep down in him the spirit of faction, and fill him with great, broad, noble impulses, as he enters upon and tries to do his duty. He needs the encouragement of his subordinates. He needs the true hearts of a true people. Let us, as the first great kindness we can do, commend him to God, and trust that our believing prayer will be answered.

It is to the credit of the American people that they accept so readily the condition into which they come. Every unworthy feeling they have laid aside. They are filled with hope. They believe there is blessing yet, and that they shall have it. And I think this thought we should nurture more carefully than we sometimes do : it will help us in a day of prayer like this. The nation, notwithstanding all its sins, has a real foundation of reverence for and trust in God. We have seen it in the last weeks as we never saw it before. Thrown back upon itself, it found there was no strength there, and turned to God, as by a hearty impulse, to find its help in him. The skeptic is writing in newspapers, magazines, and even in books ; he is talking in conventions and before popular audiences ; he is discussing in clubs, on the streets, and in railway cars ; he is trying to overthrow the faith, to teach

distrust in God, to bring the Bible into contempt, and to poison the minds of the young. Worldliness and carnality have their orgies and carnivals. The Sabbath is dishonored, lawlessness roams the country, and wrong howls in the streets. It is dreadful that it is so, and we cannot think of it without adoring the long-suffering of God, who bears with it so patiently. But, after all this, it is still true that the heart of the nation is religious. The preponderance of its feeling is on the side of reverence. It has homage for the great Sovereign who is above us, and to him, and not to the skeptics and infidels, it turns in its day of trial. And the spectacle presented during the last weeks should not be forgotten. Men were praying—praying everywhere. If the bulletin announced depression, there was an immediate utterance of appeal. If it told of improvement, there was hearty gratitude. The beat of one man's pulse determined the pulse of Christian reverence in millions of watchers. The change of a fraction in the temperature, a breath more or less in a minute of a wasting patient, gave fervor, in exaltation or in pain, to the praying spirits of a land that stretches across a continent.

But it is time our services were concluded. We do not forget that just now, in the Forest City, the funeral exercises for the nation are being conducted, previous to the burial. Dark and sober is that gayest city of the land, as it is draped in signs of sorrow for the dead. Sad is the music that is offered, both a praise to God and a requiem for the departed. Slow, solemn, tearful will be the procession to the grave, the world's heart beating with it by the way. But while this is so, let us not omit to say: "He forgetteth not the prayer of the humble." "For be-

hold the Lord, the Lord of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem, the stay, and the staff, and the whole stay of bread and the whole stay of water, the mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, the captain of fifty and the honorable man, and the counselor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator. And I will give children to be their priests, and babes shall rule over them."

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### COMMUNION.

Matt. 26 : 26-30.\*

Our lives are strangely mixed. Even as we see them, they are full of contradictions. They are much more so as hidden from our sight. Often the smiling face is closely related to a sorrowing spirit. In the assembly that seems all peaceful and happy, there is suppressed tumult and pain. You look to-day, as if of one experience, and yet your feelings are as different as you are individually distinct.

We look at the meeting here, depicted of the Saviour and the twelve. At one glance it appears very simple, and yet under the light of the record, how complex it is. There is a strange mingling of feeling, of experience, of sensation. In each person there is confused agitation. No two of them are precisely alike. Between the extremes of them—between John and Judas—there is a difference as wide as eternity. In the short hour they sit there, also, they have diversities of thought that reach over the entire range of their capacity.

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\*Sabbath morning, January 20, 1889, communion day.—I threw away, at nine o'clock this morning, the notes I had prepared and write this hastily, leaving the typewriter for the pulpit.—J. R. J.

It is strange, too, that the Great Being, who is the center of them all, the master of the feast, is exciting in them these deep and variable, and sometimes contradictory feelings. In some, hearts are burning. They are fired with devotion and enthusiasm. In one, malice, perfidy, and the deepest malignity are rising to their maturity. The sun warms into life the most beautiful flower, but rising from beside it, under the same influence, are miasma and disease. Jesus, full of light and love, heals some, but others are offended, and evil passion disfigures them.

In our meeting to-day, Jesus is present. He finds us very different. His presence will awaken many diversities of thought and sensation. Let us pray that in none will his light and warmth either awaken or develop aught else than that which will make our hearts burn within us, as he talks with us by the way. Then will the word be to us a savor of life unto life, and not a savor of death unto death.

Suppose we look a moment at these contrasts as presented here. They sit down to the Passover. And that recalls to them the past. Their minds were busy with other days. Being Jews, they thought back to the time of Moses, and the night when the Egyptian children were falling about them in relentless death, while they, peacefully and gladly, on the eve of their deliverance, ate their paschal meal. Their minds were busy recalling other days, other times, other conditions—the fathers who had passed away, as indeed, many of us do—probably all of us do, more or less. We are looking back. Old memories crowd on us. A pathos rises up in our hearts, as we think of scenes past, and times and occasions that

are departed, "departed never to return." Involuntarily we say, "The fathers, where are they, and the prophets, do they live forever?"

But better than this, we recall what is gone as a part, and a chief part, of what we do. Says Christ: "Do this in remembrance of me." The occasion is a memorial one. We meet that we may review. Retrospect is part of our object. If these disciples thought of Christ as he called them, taught them, soothed, comforted, healed and ennobled them, we think of even better than that. We say to ourselves, "He died for me." He hung upon the cross. He shed his blood that our sins might be washed away. And we gaze back through dim ages, seeming to see that sad face, full of agony, and yet of triumph, as it toiled in the work of redemption on Calvary.

But then the occasion is full of that which is precisely the opposite. The festival has an outlook. The eyes of the guests are turned towards the future. "Do this in remembrance of me," but also, "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." Yes, there is a future. It is as great and momentous as the past. The day comes when Jesus shall come back. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first."

We who are here, have our thoughts of the future. There is a future, long or short, on the earth. There is a better one beyond. We drink our wine to-day, but we think of drinking the new wine hereafter in the heavenly Father's kingdom. For if he come, he will receive us to himself, that we may be with him.

“ In such an hour as ye think not,  
 His Word says he will come,  
 Clad in the robes of his glory,  
 To take his loved ones home.

“And as I sit here in the gloaming  
 Of the dying Autumn day,  
 I wonder if, in such an hour,  
 He'll call his flock away.”

But they are here in sorrow. Of himself we know what grief was in his soul. The weight of human sin was on him. The burden of betrayal and crime was paining him. Of the disciples it is said, they were exceeding sorrowful. Hanging over them, too, as uttered by the Saviour himself, was the awful woe: “Woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed!” The atmosphere about them was dense with sober, bursting passion.

I think it is a trait in our communions that a feeling of sadness pervades them, and properly, too. As anniversary occasions, they lead us to consider events and happenings that trouble us. I know, therefore, how to-day, in your minds, there are these feelings of half pain, or even pronounced suffering. As on tender occasions our souls tend toward tender sentiments, and thus our sorrows come into view.

I see among you the badge of mourning: you have carried a friend to the grave. Sickness, infirmity, a world's unkindness, a wayward child—all these weigh on you. The thought of sins committed calls up your grief. The sad face of the Man of Sorrows seems to be gazing at you, and “you look upon him whom you have pierced, and mourn for him as one mourneth for an only son; and are in bitterness for him as one is in bitterness for his

first-born." The communion would not be complete without a tear. A sob may rightly be a part of its ritual. And if it break down into a Bochim—a valley of tears—it will only be appearing in its proper character.

But then, right against this, is the fact of joy. We call it the Eucharist—thanksgiving. It is the Lord's Supper. There are guests, and fellowship, and feasting. It is a time of congratulation. Souls are saying,

" He took me from a fearful pit,  
And from the miry clay ;  
Upon a rock he set my feet,  
Establishing my way.

" He put a new song in my mouth,  
Our God to magnify ;  
Many shall see it and shall fear,  
And on the Lord rely."

A curious thing it was—curious as we casually look at it—that, going out to the Mount of Olives after the feast, the Saviour and his disciples "sang a hymn." And what was the hymn? Some minor song? Some Psalm of pain? A *de profundis*? Some *Stabat Mater Dolorosa*? But no! It was a song of gratitude and triumph. "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, because his mercy endureth forever. . . . This is the day the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it."\*

Let us not forget this as a day of gladness. Why shall it not be? It reminds us of the triumphs of the cross. Sins forgiven, washed away, hearts made new, death overcome, the grave conquered, heaven opened—we cannot but rejoice. And we will call upon our souls to be glad in God.

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\*Psalm 118: 1, 24.

But let us look again. Here is solitude. In the Saviour's soul, what a cavern of solitariness. None of us can even imagine that awful loneliness. And in the disciples there was a measure of it. They were cut off from the surrounding life. It seemed to them, too, that, the Master leaving them, they would be totally destitute. Their hearts were echoing with old griefs and bleeding with new ones. "O for a touch of a vanished hand!" O for the kind ministry of friends gone away, or estranged!

You all know something of this feeling at frequent times, but especially on occasions such as this. You are alone. Conscious of company, yet you are by yourself. You are looking at life as it has to do with you as an individual. You are thinking over the things you have never told any mortal, the things you cannot tell, that you never shall tell. Coursing through your mind are troops of reflections that the world knows not of; they are yours. Were it not for God, you would be utterly alone, separate, desolate. You say to yourself, "The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not with its joy." Happy is it if these included meditations are not rankling ones. Blessed if they are musical, sweet, cheering. Beautiful if they ally us with the angels above, not with the spirits beneath.

But, then, this is pre-eminently a time of fellowship. Christ and his twelve. A supper. All gathered at one table. Alone for that purpose. Here is the good cheer of friendship, the confidence of fraternity, the rest of Christian love. They are together in the breaking of bread. Disciples are feeling the joy of their meeting. Old grudges and ambitions and rivalries are gone. Now they are one. And they all have fellowship together

with Him who is the Head. Out of his great heart are flowing all the riches of his loving nature. They all open their hearts to receive them. All but one. Treachery, there is none. Love rules the hour.

And this, for us, is a day of fellowship. All ye are brethren—brethren in the Lord. You have one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one hope of your calling.

“Behold, how good a thing it is,  
And how becoming well,  
Together, such as brethren are,  
In unity to dwell.”

Let our eyes be fixed on Jesus. Let us see him in his own ordinance. Take the bread—his body. Take the wine—his blood. And God forbid that he should have to say, “Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.”

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### TEMPERANCE.

Look not upon the wine when it is red. Prov. 23: 31.

Verse 29 contains a description of some very foolish and disreputable people. “Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow?” Or, as the Hebrew has it, “Who has ah? Who hath alas?” They are people full of misery, groaning and crying out for pain. They are also quarrelsome, and given to contention. Solomon had seen family discords, street brawls, and probably social disgraces, like that of the Centennial ball in New York. They are babbling people, too, garrulous, maudlin, simpering idiots. On their heads and faces are the marks of their strifes; bruises, lacerations, swollen cheeks, and broken noses. And their eyes, red, inflamed, full of wild fire and hot

passion, are a constant proof of their besotted habits. Who are these strange people? To what class do they belong? They are such as tarry long at the wine; such as go to seek mixed wine. Practiced guzzlers, steady drinkers, confirmed inebriates, drunkards, the social dead beats of their communities. They are found about drinking places, or in accustomed haunts of debauchery; they gather about political headquarters, and turn up here and there in such social meetings as will entertain and tolerate them. As separate factors they distribute themselves through the streets, staggering on the pavements, and starting off to despairing homes in carriages and on horseback, reeling, shouting, swearing, always the same rum-cursed victims of their uncurbed appetites. What they were 3,000 years ago they are to day, and the description of one age does for every other one, and for all.

With this description in mind, what counsel does the wise man give the "son" whom he addresses?

It is in language vivid and strong, as if spoken under the impressions of some recent spectacle of public or private disgrace. "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright." It is the language of figure, of course. Translated into plain terms it means, "Do not permit yourself to be tempted by seductive drink; let not its attractions betray you, but set yourself against it; turn away from it, and make yourself safe by avoiding what may ruin you."

But the description, by its use of terms, is meant to make more striking the counsel. Not by the taste alone, but by the eye, the youth may be led into indulgence and surrender. The sparkle, the dancing, gliding movement,

the beautiful color, all appeal, through the eye, to the susceptible appetite. "Eve *saw* the apple that it was good for food." The apostle tells of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the *eye*, and the pride of life. Very wonderful is the eye in its excellent uses, and yet it may be made the minister of evil. It needs to be often shut. Open for everything, it leads into all kinds of wrongdoing.

The purveyors of drink make use of this, and tempt their victims, not alone through the taste, by music, through the hearing, but also through the eye. Their decanters are beautiful as works of art. Furniture, windows, chandeliers, are all provided to give effect to their arrangement of bottles, demijohns, glasses and other appurtenances of their place of business. By the educated drinkers these things are not needed. Any hovel or ruin; any doggerly or back street cellar, or stable or sty; any filthy, befouled and steaming premises will draw the wretched slave of drink; his eye asks nothing but the sign which tells him that within is that which will satisfy the craving of his appetite. But for beginners there must be something to please. They need the help of art, and they are given it. Whatever is beautiful is employed to lure them on to ruin.

The best thing to do, therefore, is to shut the eyes and keep away. For you will notice that while the drink is so bad, the responsibility is on him who uses it. First of all, the drinker is the guilty person. The man who wants it, or is willing to use it, or can be tempted to defilement by it, is the one to be blamed and punished. With a work going on, such as society is now attempting, we naturally, almost inevitably, fall into more or less confusion. We transfer the odium and crime from him who

first of all deserves them, to another, whose wickedness grows out of the weakness or immorality on which he lives and flourishes. The seller of drink is in a devilish business. Nothing but a curse can rest on a saloon. And yet "don't drink" is a precept which makes all guilty who do. If 100 saloons, bright with all attractions, line your streets, you must still answer, and without excuse, for your own debauchery. It is the man's duty to walk past them, to refuse to look at them, if they tempt him, and to be sober with drink flowing all about him. There is no credit in being sober under prohibition; the honor belongs to those who, with all temptations about them, rule their own spirits and prove their power of self-restraint. This is the evangelical teaching—respecting drink and all else. The gospel is: "Do not yield to weakness; save yourself by gaining a victory." And when society forgets this, and trusts all to law, and depends mainly on legislation, it is reversing the right order, and making a hindrance of that which it esteems its salvation.

A text like this may be quoted as containing biblical advice as to total abstinence. Put away from you that which, yielded to, may master you. The moderate drinking may end in sottishness. Perhaps that may be a long way off, but it is liable to be reached. "*At last*"—sooner or later, it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.

This has special force, too, as related to one disposed to drink. He has an inherited taste; has formed one; is nervously needing a stimulant; is thrown into dangerous social relations; has convivial tastes; is ambitious to please intemperate classes—to him, and such as he, the

counsel is, Be on your guard, taste not! "Look not" upon that which threatens to ruin you. To many a one the sparkling liquor brings suggestions of which the most of us know nothing. The sight of it is inflaming. The glass of it, within reach, needing only a dime, or perhaps not even that, and a hand reached out to take it, sets all his veins on fire. In that there is for him exhilaration, happiness, buried sorrow, buried pain, facilitated work, and all that is needed to make the hour delightful. The adder's sting seems too far away to be dreaded. Or it is forgotten, while the starry visions of bliss twinkle and flash before his excited imagination. He is the man to whom God says, "Look not" on this which so infatuates, so deceives, so lures you, but turn the other way; look up to God, and the sobriety and virtue of his glorious gospel. "Look unto me and be ye saved, for I am God, and beside me there is no saviour." "Wine is a mocker, and strong drink is raging, but I am true, and in me there is everlasting peace."

And thus we are taught by the moral precept. At the present, this aspect not being forgotten nor belittled, we are called to consider the question of legal suppression, as submitted to the people in the proposition, stated as follows :

"ARTICLE XIX. The manufacture, sale, or keeping for sale, of intoxicating liquor, to be used as a beverage, is hereby prohibited, and any violation of this prohibition shall be a misdemeanor, punishable as shall be provided by law.

"The manufacture, sale, or keeping for sale, of intoxicating liquor, for other purposes than as a beverage, may be allowed in such manner only as may be prescribed by law. The General Assembly shall, at the first session succeeding the adoption of this article of the constitution, enact laws with adequate penalties for its enforcement."

Upon this the people of the commonwealth are asked to vote on the coming 18th of June, and the result of that vote will determine, for the time, what their will is respecting the propriety of prohibiting the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquor to be used as a beverage.

As a matter of current interest ; as one of importance, related closely to the welfare of the people, it is right for us to give it a place in these religious services. And yet, perhaps, this is unnecessary. I take it for granted that every voter here will favor it. Even if some are not sure of its wisdom or efficiency, they will favor it as a measure worth trying. They will regard it as a move in the right general direction. Since it does not belong to that which is fundamental, but is only a matter of expediency, to be used, first of all, for trial or experiment, temperance believers of differing opinions can unite on it, and thus be helpers one of another in a cause to which they are all equally devoted.

I do not forget here, or affect to conceal the fact, that some of the most urgent and ablest temperance advocates have objections to it. Some of them, too, may object so strongly that they will feel constrained, not, perhaps, to oppose it, but at least to decline furthering it. There are good men who believe that, under the gospel, prohibition is inexpedient—is even wrong. Others prefer statutory, rather than constitutional, action. Some regard local option as that alone which will secure the end aimed at. Their opinions are honest, and, whether right or wrong, are entitled to respect. The difference between them and those who insist on the measure now before us is one, not of morals, but of method. As to that, nobody is infallible. No way has yet been proven to be, in all situa-

tions and circumstances, the best way. We are all looking around, feeling about, trying this and that, hoping and believing that we shall arrive at last at a point which will give deliverance from the gigantic iniquity that confronts us. What is now asked is that prohibition by constitutional amendment shall have a trial. A consensus of a large number of the citizens, and citizens of the best class, is in favor of that experiment.

One other word is needed here. It is, that the proposed movement is in no sense a religious one. The State is not seeking to save men from the *sin* of drinking and drunkenness. Whether debauchery sends them to eternal death or not, it does not inquire. The evangelical side of temperance does not directly appear. Religious people, of course, may rightly help in it, because, in their belief, it will assist in the work of saving the lost and cultivating godliness. Pastors and people may work for it as a measure which, if adopted, will make less arduous their fight with immorality and sin. At the same time it is, as a measure, purely civil. It is proposed for civil reasons. In and by itself it has no more religious character than a proposition to charter a bank or vote on the tariff. Even as to morals, it is only pressed upon the ground that morals, like intelligence and industry, are necessary to civil safety and the good of the people. It is the State of Pennsylvania asking the people whether or not they believe its interests, in the line of industry, economy, business, health, purity, good homes and happy communities, will be promoted by the banishment of that which, in the judgment of so many, is, in respect to all these things, a hindrance and a curse. And it is upon the question thus presented that you are asked to vote on the coming 18th of June.

It is interesting to notice that this point has been reached as the result of steady, gradual growth. The saloon is more offensive than it used to be, not solely because it is worse, but because society has grown better. As our tastes improve, deformities become more repulsive. As our judgments advance, that which is hurtful grows less tolerable. During the years past, there has been a growth in moral sentiment, in dislike, also, of the degradation of the saloon, and in the conviction that it is evil, and an evil so great that it should be put away. The consciences of the people have developed greater antagonism. They look at the waste going on, of men and material ; at the idleness and poverty that prevail ; at the thousands of people unfitted for work ; at the wretchedness brought to individuals, homes and communities ; at the vileness inhering in and growing out of intemperance, and their souls rise up against that which is so largely responsible for producing them. A saloon disgusts as it did not use to do. In the public eye, the man dealing out drinks is a different being from him of fifty years ago. The sign, "Choice Liquors," reads to the best people like a scandal. The "well stocked" bar begins to drive off, rather than invite, the most desirable patronage. Distilleries and breweries are pointed to as headquarters of iniquities. In a community like this, the man who would thrust upon the streets a place for the public sale of liquor, would be classed, by a great majority of those who give the neighborhood its good character, with highwaymen and other moral and social outlaws. Can the state live, it is asked, with the corruption of the saloon going unchecked, or even permitted to exist at all ?

And so, the moral sense of the people having so de-

veloped, the outrage of the liquor traffic becomes less and less endurable. Things that formerly were winked at—that were practiced with no thought of criticism—would not now be tolerated, or even attempted. Less than a month ago, every lip was uttering the praises of Gen. Washington, whom we call the father of his country. But, even he sent off a refractory slave to the West Indies and had him exchanged for a few barrels of rum. The first restrictive liquor law passed in this country was enacted in Rhode Island, and read as follows: "Every saloon keeper who sells more than a gallon of liquor to a minor, shall be fined one dollar and costs." The first temperance pledge circulated in New England was thus worded: "I solemnly swear to abstain from the use of intoxicating liquors on all occasions, except on training days, wedding days, and other great occasions." Not a great many years ago, some theological students in New Haven, under the advice of their teachers, proposed to unite in a pledge of temperance. It was the beginning of the work now so common, and was the day of small things. Their pledge, to which they gave themselves, with more or less of hesitation, no doubt, read as follows: "We hereby pledge ourselves to not use more intoxicating liquor than we conscientiously believe will be good for us." During the last generation, a minister preached in northern New York whose character, personal and ministerial, was the admiration of everybody. Not long since a volume of his sermons was printed. In one of these he says, "The temperance agitation, now going on, brings disgrace on the church, and strikes at the foundation of all true religion." (I quote from memory.) Nor were these exceptional opinions.

Out of a general sentiment like this grew the temperance life such as we see to-day. Along with it, as a public measure, came the early regulation, under the form of license. It was adopted, because drinking and drink selling were regarded as unwholesome, and the public judgment was that they should be put under a ban of condemnation ; and also that the liquor business, tending to injure rather than help, should be made to pay for the harm it was doing. The license was low, of course. But it was good as a first step. Afterwards the fee was increased. Lately, as we all know, we have reached what is called high license. Each step has been a good and better one. They all tend towards the ultimate aim of prohibition, or the severest regulation. The seeds of suppression, so far as we have it, whether here by local option, or in Iowa and other States by general legislation, were all wrapped up in those first 'steps in public license. As the leaf on the trees, as the fruit on the vine, have all developed from buds prepared last summer, so the statute which makes it possible for Washington County to prohibit saloons from entering its territory, has grown from the first tax, under the name of license, put upon the traffic in strong drink.

But the saloon has become more offensive, not solely because of improved moral sense in the people, but on account of its own increased impudence and power of evil. The number of saloons in the cities must always be a cause of amazement. And yet, that mere fact we may not, perhaps, so severely condemn. The men who keep them up, do so as a means of livelihood. They are thick, just as derricks are thick, in certain communities. The wonder is that they get a paying patronage. The sorrow

is that so many men are so degraded as to carry them on, and that so many more men and women, and even children, help support them.

It is known, however, that the saloons, partly for their own sakes, and partly because of that love of control that belongs to all conditions, have been growing in impertinence, so that everything—everything opposed to them and everything they can hope to manage—have been challenged by them. They not only talk of their rights, but are audacious enough to claim that they are benefactors in society. Society, they allege, might get along without churches, and even schools, but it must perish without the saloon. The saloon, they are proud to say, is an institution upon which society rests as one of its foundations. It ought to be the pleasure of the rich and the solace of the poor.

In the view of such people, the dirtiest doggery of the filthiest back street, is the most necessary institution of society. The beautiful church, built at great cost—believed by many to be an architectural lesson and example—what is that? A monument of pride; a place for making hypocrites, and the rich are taught to despise the poor. What are colleges and universities—seminaries and institutes—the religious press and depositories of religious literature? All burdens to society, and hindrances to its prosperity. But the saloon—it is a place where people meet on the same level, and act according to the liberty that nature has given them. The customers who gather about its bar are happy compared with the people who suffer in schools and masquerade at communion tables; and the pimpled, bloated, swaggering proprietor esteems himself the gentleman, the benefactor, the social

reformer, beside whom the teacher of philosophy and doctor of divinity are nobodies. And his wife, a true yoke-fellow in his occupation, is his elect lady, the charming idol of his imagination.

Therefore, we see it establishing itself wherever it can get a location. It is on the best streets, and in the most public places. It goes wherever there is human life to be blasted by it. It is provided with all sorts of gaudy attractions, music for those who love it, flowers, lunch, and oftentimes the charms of female society. Nothing pleases it more than to entice youth to become its customers. The more prominent they are the more it wants them. It is proud to say that the son of such a senator, such a judge, merchant, teacher, minister, the son of such a widow, mother, sister, staggers off from its bar as one of its victims. "More youth!" is its cry as older patrons decay and die. "Wanted, that noble boy who now is kissing his mother good-night, to make him a rowdy, an outlaw, and a sot," is its advertisement. Is it any wonder that such impudence, instinct with diabolism, should call forth the protest and condemnation, the antagonism, of those who love their country?

But the insolence goes further still. The saloon assumes to become the manager of all public affairs. In the great cities it dictates nominations, and decides elections. It not only tries to be, but is, the government. It is the centre of political influence. About it gather the bosses who guide parties and live by them. The men it wants it helps. Those it does not want it dismisses. The measures it approves it makes successful, those it dislikes it destroys. Aldermen and mayors are its creatures. Legislatures register its will. Governors execute its pur-

poses. With a spirit compared with which that of the French king was modesty itself, it says, "I am the State," and then proceeds to make good its declaration. Against this the great public is rising up with an indignation that will not stop till such insolence is adequately punished.

This last is a phase of the great question which formerly did not appear. It is one of the most important of them all. Illustrations of its working may not be expedient here, but you can read them in the better classes of the public prints. The old stories of desolated homes, of bereaved wives and mothers, of want and wretchedness, still have their place. But bad as they are, the temperance question, as presented in the action of the legislature, leads to arguments stronger than those. It makes us feel, if we study it rightly, that the very life of the people—the people as the state—is threatened, and that if we would continue to exist, it must be by the overthrow of this great enemy.

It is an enemy leagued and organized, audacious, without conscience or scruple; an enemy without moral purpose, which knows no church, nor Sabbath school, nor prayer-meeting, nor family worship; which traduces all the magnificent history of past moral achievement, ridicules teachers, reformers, and martyrs, and laughs at the gospel and the cross of Jesus Christ. I believe that, almost without exception, the truly religious, patriotic citizens of this great State of Pennsylvania, with a love of virtue and social order in their hearts, will on the 18th day of June, vote that this agnostic, scoffing foe to its prosperity and permanence, shall be defeated. And may God help them so to do.

I return one moment to the inculcation of the text,

and urge, that which is first—on which all the rest hinges and turns—obedience to the word of the gospel that says, “Look not upon the wine when it is red,” etc. “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” There is no temperance sentiment so strong as that of the gospel. There is no temperance society so valuable as the Church. No temperance teaching is so important as that of the Christian pulpits. No temperance meeting is so helpful as the regular services of the house of God. Stay close by the holy altars. Hold fast to the sacred oracles. They teach you how to think, how to live, how to act. From them proceed all the streams that, flowing through parallel or diverging channels, distribute good influences for the salvation of society.

There have been eloquent and powerful temperance orators—Father Matthew, Gough, Wilberforce, heading the lists. There are good temperance societies, national and local, officered by good men and women, and wielding a great influence. There is much good temperance literature. It is in newspapers, tracts, pamphlets and books. But all of these have grown out of the Church. Their usefulness has arisen from the fact that they employed the spirit of the gospel. Take away the churches, and they will have nothing on which to rest—they will fail of influence, and perish from among the beneficent forces of society. And if this amendment, of which we speak to-day, be adopted, it will be because it has the Bible and churches to support it; and if, after its adop-

tion, it is operative and produce the effects desired of it, it will be because of the conscience of the people, taught in that Zion which God has made his dwelling-place.

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### THE STUDENT OF THEOLOGY.\*

I purpose a familiar discussion of the student of theology. In any public assembly of Christians, this would be an appropriate subject, but it must be peculiarly so here and this evening, in a city which is distinguished for its devotion to theological study, and at a time when we are planning for its promotion. I am sure, therefore, of your sympathy at the outstart, if not with what I shall speak, at least with what I shall speak about, and am thus relieved from the necessity of craving your interest in the occasion, or of asking your prayers for blessing upon the services.

Any one who studies the Bible thoughtfully is a student of theology. We may, therefore, use the designation with equal propriety when applying it either to the private believer, who reads for his personal profit, or to the public instructor, who expounds in the name of his faculty.

A child receiving its first lessons in the lap of its mother, believing all, because it has never been taught to doubt anything; the youth conning his lesson papers and searching his catechisms; the saint refreshing his soul by a study of the Word; the professor formulating doctrines and fashioning creeds; the infidel scrutinizing the pages whose truths he hates and wishes to destroy—all these,

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also, may properly have the same classification. They are students of theology. But the expression, in its technical meaning, refers to those who are under official instruction and training, as they seek preparation for assuming the positions and performing the functions of the gospel ministry. And in this exclusive use, it is chosen simply for want of a better. For theology as a science, though vastly important, is not the highest object of the student's devotion, and only represents a little of that which demands his industry and energy. It is but the core, while within it, unseen, and yet a part of it, are the seeds of life, and around it are the juicy pulps and fiber, whose fragrance and sweetness give refreshment and strength to all who will use them.

The student is usually a youth. He is yet in his teens, perhaps, and has recently graduated with his class in college. The range of his information is not large, though, besides his class books, he has read some in general literature. He is poor in the general experience of life. With business he has but slight acquaintance. His contact with men has been mostly that of a pupil with his instructors. He knows but little of pain, and has never been disciplined by the struggles that try men's souls. He has quick religious sensibilities, and responds easily and emotionally to appeals from his friends and the mother's letter from home. He reads his Bible, prays, studies, sings, laughs and prophesies. His convictions are strong enough, perhaps, and yet they are often but opinions that will change under differing influences. And, as to a knowledge of the truth, he is in so formative a state, that what he will be hereafter must depend upon his instructors and associates. The days hang over him joy-

fully. Bending above him are skies that never cloud, and which, even in his twilight, with starry voices, tell him of the world of light. The old man on the verge of life, looks away across to the better country, and says, "There shall be no night there"; his junior of a decade, limits his vision, and repeats, "At the evening time it shall be light." The doubtful one of forty listens soothingly to the song—

"Then don't be sorrowful, darling,  
Don't be sorrowful, pray ;  
For taking the year together, my dear,  
There isn't more night than day."

But the youth sleeps through all the darkness, and connecting the sun-risings and sun-settings, lives in the sweet illusion that the day is never ending.

The pupils of our seminaries are mostly furnished by country neighborhoods. A large majority of them are the sons of farmers. The cities, contributing one now and then, usually send their boys to the stores or secular professions. The larger towns do the same. It is left for the rural neighborhoods to keep up the ranks of the clergy, which they do by sending their most promising young men to college on their way to the pulpit. It is wisely ordered that this is so. Habits of industry and frugality, well-developed muscle, a familiarity with nature, are all naturally gained when following the plow. Besides, nearly all young men will find their settlements and work in country places, and will find it more easy and pleasant because of an early bucolic experience. It is something to be able to harness a horse and drive a carriage, and many a pastor realizes it to be a solid practical advantage to understand the tillage of the glebe. And,

at all events, it is easier, in case the necessity comes, for the country youth to adapt himself to the town conditions than for one reared in the city to succeed in those of the country. Of our student it may therefore be said, that he has come from among the fields of the country. In after years he will remember, that

“Between broad fields of shocks of corn,  
Is the lonely house, where I was born.”

All his boyhood has been familiar with the mountains, the streams, the fountains, seed-time and harvest ; and, devoting himself to a student's career, he carries with him the freshness of the hills. It is not to the disparagement of Elisha that the prophet, his master, found him plowing with twelve yoke of oxen, but it is greatly to his credit that he was willing to leave them all behind him in responding to a higher call. And I think nearly all of us read the prophecies of Amos with deeper feeling, as we remember he was a “herdman of Tekoa,” and that God took him “from behind his flocks” to give him prophetic position.

The inexperienced youth, rightly comprehending his situation, is directing his efforts toward a noble aim. Briefly stated, he is preparing to preach Jesus, or as it will be told him when he is licensed, “to preach the everlasting gospel.” He is getting ready to do more than this, but this is the main work, to which all other is to be subordinated and related. If we say of one, that his occupation is that of a shepherd, we do not restrict his industry to a simple tending and feeding of his flock. We mean that he will build fences about his fields, and fertilize the soil ; he will help the fountains flow, and give direction to the water courses, gather in his harvest, and do

his share in the business of the neighborhood. All this, however, is but helping him in his calling as a keeper of sheep. If it is the duty of one to preach the gospel, it is his duty to do whatever is needed to enable him to succeed in his calling, and literally nothing else. I think this is a point that ought to be more than simply stated. The student looking forward to the ministry is apt to have his mind solicited by other aims than those belonging to the pulpit and pastorate. He sees the Church full of boards, societies, and institutions of learning. They offer positions of influence and dignity. He sees delegates going to synods and assemblies with captivating speeches on Christian fraternity, or traveling off as conferees in some case of negotiations for union. Dozen of ministers he knows as agents, members of committees, delegates, etc., of whom he knows nothing as ministers of Jesus, preaching the Word. The president, the secretary, the ecclesiastic, the delegate, is the striking figure in his eye; the ambassador of Christ is hidden from his view. I do not say this to cast any reflection on these other duties. They are all legitimate and important. But I suggest that they should not be permitted to mislead the candidate for the office of the ministry, by drawing away his thought from the real object of his preparation. He is getting ready, not to be a committeeman or secretary, but a minister. He is offering himself as one who will teach Jesus, not as one who will shine in embassies and ecclesiasticism. And, looking forward to his work, he should study it as he expects to be employed, where the Master appoints him as pastor of a congregation, seeking the conversion of sinners, and building up saints in the most holy faith. To a man filled with a proper conviction of

his duty, there is more real joy in leading sinners to the cross than in all the positional influence an ecclesiastical machinery can offer.

And it is in this view of his expected work that the student will contemplate the dignity of his aim. If he do it in any other, he is pressing forward to the wrong mark. A bauble glittering on the surface is leading him away from the gold hidden in the rock, for which God has set him to work and dig. It is remarkable in studying the life of Paul, to notice how few were his external triumphs. He fills so large a place in the early church history, and he is so thoroughly in our minds as the chief apostle, that, until we think of it, we imagine him suffering indeed, yet conquering and glorying; or we measure him by our current observation and are disposed to say, Surely he was living in popular apotheosis. But, as his history shows, he was utterly without success, save as he won souls to his Master, and in the most private way founded and fostered the infant churches. He had no fame as manager, or in presbyterial manipulation and ecclesiastical diplomacy. It is not told us he was an able parliamentarian or skillful tactician. We look back at him, not to admire a chairman, or president, or secretary, or commissioner at large; but he rises before us simply as a preacher of the gospel, who, counting all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, presses on men the Word of Life. We see him with his heart full, his face beaming with emotion, his hands beseeching; we hear him in language that is overflowing with holy passion, entreating that Jew and Gentile will believe and be saved. This beautiful picture of his holy life would be marred and spoiled forever by one

trace of self-seeking or diotrephean ambition. Now the dignity which the ministry offers to one who desires it, is that of doing a service. It does not consist in pleasant locations or happy surroundings. It is in doing the work of God, where God calls. The student who appreciates it will ask, in choosing a place of settlement, not about the money, the society, the position, but as to the opportunity of doing good. He will prayerfully seek to know if there is an open door. His soul will be set on doing the will of God, whether that lead him to a smiling situation of prominence and plenty, or to one that frowns under the lowliness of poverty and sin. So true is this, that if the youth be found spying out what he calls favorable situations, and calculating the business and money prospects of his calling, rather than in looking forward to work where work is needed, he may be set down as a fraud and pretender. His mercenary spirit fits him for a fishmonger or a huckster, but not for an ambassador of Jesus, preaching a gospel of grace and mercy.

And it is this alone which will fill a student's mind with a true sense of his responsibility. We often hear of the responsibility of ministers—we seldom think of that which belongs to those who are preparing to be ministers. As the foundation is, so will the building be; as the student is, so must be the resultant pastor and preacher. There is a way in which the student, even if he have not thought of it before, is made to feel responsible as he enters the seminary. He finds his situation in a school of theological training gives men a right to expect of him what has never been expected of him before. They require that he shall engage in public prayer, exhort, lecture, conduct meetings, attend mission schools, and assume a

leadership in all subordinate local movements of worship and evangelism. But there ought to be something higher than this—the sense of obligation in the conscience arising from the fact that he is looking forward to the work of beseeching men as Christ's ambassador, and in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God. When this feeling takes possession of him and hangs over him, and enwraps him like a cloud, that is the dwelling place of divinity, he will be properly inspired with the student's devotion. And it is this that will act as the mainspring of his industry. There is something in disposition, something in training, something in health, but no student who has this kind of grace about him will be left to commit the crimes of thriftlessness and laziness. It will reverse an unhappy constitution and overcome all defects, in teaching him how to redeem the time, and use days and hours, and minutes even, in the service of his Master. It will make him thoughtful, meditative, patient, and persevering. It will send him to bookstores and libraries, and set him with earnest purpose and studious habit to the work of informing his mind and training his faculties. It will teach him to traverse the domain of his institutional requirement, but as Hamilton, not neglecting his divinity lessons, made himself a proficient in botany, natural history, and chemistry, so it will impel him to seek other fields from which to glean the stores for his future. It will introduce him to poets, philosophers, historians, travelers, and the great and good of the present and past wherever it can find them. He will become a questioner of the whole world whenever he can get its ear. He will ask of the stars shining down from heaven, of the flower looking up from the clod, of the purple clouds which sweep transiently

over his head, and of the solid rock upon which he places his feet. He will interrogate friends and strangers, events, providences, and he will make every object within his reach become a witness which he will examine and cross-examine to compel it to tell him something of God and duty.

All this and much more that is related to it, will cause him to grow up able for his work. He will thus feel himself, so far as human strength can go, prepared for reasonable demands, and he will be saved, when he enters upon his duties, the shame and mortification of begging the brains, energies, and skill of his friends; and save society the sight of that forlornest of all objects—a minister of the gospel itinerating a neighborhood in perspiring zeal, not to ask sinners to believe in Jesus, but to beseech some other minister to do it in his stead.

It is this, also, that will cause him to seek the consecration, without which there can be no true exercise of the ministry. There is a danger that the student will fall into the habit of thinking of his profession simply as an ordinary life calling. He will put it in rivalry with the law and medicine. He will calculate its offers of honor, and ease, and emolument, in comparison with those of politics, business, or literature, and the survey which he will make of the world upon which he is about officially to enter, will be one of selfish ambition as he seeks to learn where he can use his endowments and attainments most to his own advantage. All this, of course, is hostile to the first idea of the Christian ministry. The student, when tried with such a temptation, is called to a heroic fight to overcome it. He is consecrated to the Lord's cause and work, and must keep himself free from earthly

embarrassments, always waiting the Lord's way and time for using him. There need be no comparison between the different professions and occupations. As simple human employments; they all stand on nearly the same level.

There is a sense in which every lawful engagement is higher than the man who undertakes it. "Who is sufficient for these things?" might be spoken by the humblest worker of the world, if he would properly estimate the responsibility of his calling and influence. But the pupils of our schools of law and medicine are not aiming to be philanthropists, but practical men of the world. The clerk and apprentice are preparing themselves for making a living, amassing wealth, and succeeding in the strife of life. The cadets in a military or naval academy, however, inspired with patriotism, are yet thinking more of glory in the future than of benevolence and charity. All these, and others like them, look forward to the future as offering the money, position, homage, and whatever it is in the power of material success to secure. But with him who desires the office of a bishop it is altogether different. His forecastings are not of competition in simple worldly secular employments, with their gains and emoluments, but of doing the work of the Master, looking for his reward in the approval that shall be given him from heaven. In fulfilling his mission, love and affection may meet him with their smile, and the shadowing hand may also be one of munificent generosity, but living gratefully amid these satisfying gifts, he is to regard them, not merely as the fulfillments even of "exceeding great and precious promises," but as the expression of a love that does for him "far above all he is able to ask or think." And under

this devotement he simply places himself at the disposal of Him whose he is, and whom he is to serve. The implement which is made in the factory is placed on the shelf with others like it, without a designation, and is yet devoted to a special use, awaiting the call which shall give it exercise. Some time the foreordained hand will take it down, and forthwith make it one of the world's helpers, but it may be either in building a palace to accommodate the wealth of royalty, or in erecting a cottage to shelter the want of penury. For either work it is equally fitted, and wielded by the proper strength and skill, it will do one as well as the other, and he who is consecrated to his Master's work will stand ready for his Master's call. "Here am I, send me." "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." There is a place for him, there is a door opening through which he shall pass, and if he but watch and wait the Lord will find the place and help him cross the offering threshold.

That exceptional young man, as I hope he is, who spends his late months of study looking up comfortable livings and good situations, and who talks of salary and money, and solaces himself with visions of dignified repose and sacred sinecures, determining to make life a matter of bargain and sale—he has not yet realized the first principles of responsibility. "If any man will be my disciple, let him take up the cross daily and follow me." He ought to be sent, with loving reproof and affectionate chastisement, to spell out his elementary lesson among the children of his father's house.

It is this consecration which will impel the student to seek that high spiritual life which is the glory of the ministry. I speak not now of conversion or of the mere

fact of piety ; it is taken for granted that he who presents himself as a candidate is a Christian with the grace of God in his soul. I speak of the degree of piety, of the amount of spiritual vitality which shall pulse in the student's soul, and give glow and force to his life and activity. There is no success for the preacher or pastor if he do not strive after personal holiness. If he do the work of a holy God, he must be a holy man. It is good for the student to study his future carefully in this respect, so that, using his means and opportunities of instruction and training, he may direct their influence to this essential end. His work is to be one of saving souls. He is to speak the great truths of the gospel. He is to use the holiest instrumentalities in the most sacred situations and relations. His life is to be among saintly people, where he shall cultivate in himself the graces that shall, while ennobling his own soul, contribute to the blessing of those with whom he acts. And it may be accepted as a truth applicable to all church experience, that the force of piety in the church will be in proportion to the earnest warmth of the pastor. Learning is good, and nobody can have too much of it ; eloquence is good, and one cannot exaggerate its value, and all embellishment that comes from culture in all its varied forms is greatly to be desired, yet, after all, these are but painted nothings if there be not personal holiness. Now, this is something that grows, and it ought to be begun in early life. It ought to be the student's most earnest search. Whatever else he fail in he ought not to fail in this. Granted that it may come in subsequent years, it should, nevertheless, be largely realized at the outstart, and especially as there is danger,

that instead of coming as we may hope, it may be lost through the overgrowth of selfishness, worldliness, ecclesiasticism, or some other form of clerical prostitution.

The pastor who has developed into the shrewdest financier of his neighborhood, who knows more about horses and cattle and stocks than the souls of his people; the pastor who loves money, speculation, politics, and business, better than his ministerial duties, is probably one who started out with a poor cultivation of soul, hoping, no doubt, and intending to grow up into a glowing saint as the years would pass, but who found his spirit overmastered by the influences he was powerless to resist. And even if it be realized in after life, it is so much of a loss till it come. Thomas Scott was thankful that he gained an experience of fervor after years of perfunctory service, but never ceased to bewail the loss of time given to his unconsecrated ministry. Dr. Chalmers rejoiced in the grace that made him impetuous in pleading for Jesus, but wept his bitterest tears when remembering the years spent in producing the painted brilliancies of a Christless gospel. That negative, easy-going, half-and-half devotion, which lacks the inspiration coming from a nearness to Christ, is a loss to him who practices it, and a dead weight to the Church.

The possession of an early blessing is not unattainable. Patrick Hamilton, David Brainerd, and Henry Martyn, all died in early life, but the flame of their piety will never be extinguished. Robert Pollok, Summerfield, McCheyne, Robertson, all went to youthful graves, and we live warmed by the heat of their religious enthusiasm. Whatever we may admire resulting from their talents and intellectual acquisitions, it is the light of their radiant

holiness sweeping down upon us that tells the greatness of their grace and the usefulness of their lives. Young men, students of theology, there is a higher life! We need not talk of second conversion, perfect love, and entire sanctification, and the other expressions belonging to the formulæ of those who claim unassailable spiritual exaltation; but we ought to seek the growing power of the Spirit that will lift us above current experience and introduce us into the fullness of spiritual blessing. And this school of theology, in whose interest we are met to-night, whatever it may teach of history, dogmatics, exegetics, and the other branches of curriculum instruction, should, most of all, be a school of holiness, where young men will be taught prayer, humility, self-sacrifice, earnestness, and the pathos and passion that come from a closer walk with God.

I have been presenting suggestions, rather than arguments and illustrations, but the time forbids that I should pursue them further. Let us ask respecting some of the influences and agencies which bear upon the student in furnishing him for his calling. And, first, I would mention, *familiarity with nature*. The young life is largely a life out of doors. The boy recluse is a kind of monstrosity, and it is not among youth that we look for those who are chained to desks and imprisoned in libraries. The youthful spirit is always calling for nature, and nature is always calling for the youthful spirit. It is deep calling unto deep. No man has a right to shut his eyes to the beauties that are strewn around him in the world, but, most of all, is this true of the ministry. The churl and the boor may be excused if they walk under the stars and never call them beautiful; and the rude people of

every denomination, in whom the grossness of materialism has extinguished the refinement that shows susceptibility to the art of God, are not expected to think much of, or to feel the loveliness belonging to the handiwork of the Creator. But when one is seeking to be the servant of him who has made everything beautiful in its season, and who is striving to become an artist who shall adorn the human soul, and embellish society, and fit men for entering, faultlessly and unchallengeably, the holy city and the house not made with hands, he should be sensitive to the lessons that come to him in the sunshine and the wind, the calm sky and the heavens black with clouds, the gray morning and the rosy evening, the forests, streams, mountains, hills, trees, and flowers. These are wonderful teachers, and they teach wonderful lessons.

None of us will ever be able to estimate how much the gospel owes to scenery. The accident of the place where men have been born and reared has had much to do with determining the character of their influence. Bethlehem and Nazareth were utterly without distinction, and "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" was a deserved reflection upon a place that attempted to kill its most illustrious citizen. But good came from the hills, valleys, and streams that surrounded them, which, with the vines, olives, and flowers that studded the neighboring slopes and fringed their crests, moulded the tastes and qualities of Him who spoke the most picturesque language the world has ever listened to. The old prophets were the men the Bible tells us they were, because they lived in such near communion with the works of God. The jagged knobs of Lebanon, the storms that swept Gennesareth, the caverns that echoed the voices among Judean hills,

the tumbling cataracts and foaming cascades of Jordan, were all at work making the disciples who founded the infant Christian Church.

As much as we may esteem the work done for our predecessors in Scotland by the venerable institutions where they studied, we will be but speaking the truth if we say, that without Scotland's scenery, it would have been a failure. The University of St. Andrews never made Thomas Chalmers ; he was the child of his native heath. And Hugh Miller, though he was not a minister, and though he carried no diploma from college or seminary, was yet a greater man than Chalmers, because he graduated from Cromarty and the sea. And if we study the lives and works of the men who have lived in Scotland during the last one hundred years, the last of whom are just going over to the majority, we will find they all lived in intense sympathy with nature. Hamilton would travel half a day on foot in search of a botanical specimen. Guthrie could never preach a sermon or make an address without bringing into it the great variety of beauty gleaned from the wealth of the fields. It was said by the distinguished philosopher mentioned above, that of all the interpreters of nature, William Wordsworth was the greatest and the best; and it is pleasant, therefore, to see young Norman Macleod tossing aside his text-books and saying to his companions, "Come on, let's take a turn with Billy," for it informs us of the soul that afterwards made all Scotland indebted to it for its philanthropy. The utterance of William Arnot is no longer heard in Glasgow and Edinburgh, but his voice still echoes in our hearts. When a student he counted a long walk amply compensated by the privilege of getting, as he says, "as many

flowers as I like to carry away. I put them in my umbrella and never want a splendid flower on my table." And our student of theology will miss grand opportunities if he fail to put himself into close communion with the spirit that breathes for him in the natural world. Let him lift up his eyes around about and see. Let him listen to every voice and feel every throb. And let him fill himself, along with the other attainments and emotions, with the experiences that used to inspire the old Hebrews, as, seeing vanity in all that is the work of man, they shouted their tribute to "Our God who made the heavens and the earth!" And I would mention it, not as a criticism, but as a suspicion, that our average theological seminary gets too far away from these influences that give flexibility to the soul, and fill it with reverence. Turretin, Markii Medulla, the fathers, are all good beyond human praise, and yet I fear they are oftener built into prisons where the Obadiah prophets are fed on bread and water, than erected into observatories, whence they can see the land that floweth with milk and honey. There are so many thousands of beautiful things outside these venerable lids that they ought to be permitted to see them. Bad theology is all bound up in volumes and contained in addled minds; there is none of it in the field or meadow. The rocks and shrubs and flowers are all orthodox, and there is no taint of heresy in the heavens above, or in the earth beneath, nor in the waters under the earth. There is no contradiction of the five points by even the frailest foliage, and the thorn and thistle will maintain their distinctives without the shadow of a compromise. The false teachers who pervert the gospel and seduce the souls of men, do not come from the colleges of the hills. Away in the land of the setting

sun, Brigham Young lived and lied and taught deceit, but the Great Salt Lake and the mountains that stand around it, are always true, and shame the wickedness that is enacted beside them. We should learn the lessons and try ourselves by the tests of nature. As a living author has elegantly said: "If you agree with me, or if Locke or Montesquieu agree, I may yet be wrong; but if the elm tree thinks the same thing, if running water, if burning coal, if crystals, if alkalies, in their several fashions, say what I say, it must be true."

2. Another influence and help will be the sympathy of friends. And I do not, in saying this, refer to help that shall be granted the student as a beneficiary, for often he does not need this; but to the common assistance that comes from right recognition and the offices of brotherhood. There is a craving in his soul for this experience, and he is lost without it. He is a youth, and has all the spongy simplicity of that period for absorbing generosity. He is not long from the old home, where there were father, mother, brothers and sisters, with their unequalled ministry. He has not yet learned to find in books and work the solace he is needing, while his position forbids that he shall try to conquer for himself the humanities upon which he must thrive. He is, therefore, in this respect, something of a dependent—a pensioner upon Christian bounty and courtesy. I think the student will find the pastors more than willing to give him their sympathy and fostering care. They remember their own school days, and the difficulties they fought and surmounted, and they are interested in those who, through like experiences, are coming forward to take their places in the work of the kingdom. Their office indicates, or

ought to do so, their readiness to talk, counsel, pray with their rising brethren ; and they have no lament, perhaps, which is more constant than that they are not more frequently permitted to exhibit their friendliness.

But, towards the Christian society into which he is thrown, the student stands in a different relation. He must wait till he is recognized, and, in modest shrinking, be satisfied to remain unsolicited rather than to intrude upon proprieties, to cultivate and conserve which is to be a part of his mission. The community in which a seminary is located ought to have a care over its welfare. It owes it money, management, and good will ; but there are better gifts even than these, which I acknowledge is a bold expression in the face of slender endowments and stinted incomes. And, bold though it be, it is nevertheless true, for there are heart benefits which a Christian can always give, and be all the richer for his charity, which money can never purchase. The community has a home life which yields influences of delicate nature and sweet repose, and, while the student cannot expect to be an equal sharer in its privileges, he ought to know of its existence by feeling its tenderness. It has a social life in which there are refreshment and invigoration, and where there are æsthetical training and culture, and he ought to realize, so far as he enjoys its contact, that it will help fit him for the gentlemanly offices he is to bear in life. Society is not omnipotent, but it is a great fashioner. It can polish the rudest stone into the finest statue. The tree stands in the soil where it has been planted, but depends, afterwards, not simply on the soil, but upon the influences that shall gather to it from above and around. It is caressed by the sunshine, and admitted to commun-

ion with the gentle winds ; it is shaken by the storm, and baptized by the dew of many a starry night ; and, living under all the processes that are about it, it grows up into beauty and strength. Its mossy trunk, and beaten, crippled branches, tell whence the tempests have come to buffet it, just as its full foliage and undeformed symmetry tell where the smiles of the summer and the mercy of the winter have rested. In the same way will the student live and grow under the influence of society. And, therefore, I say, it is responsible for him as his guardian. He is one of its wards. Let it study his wants, both as he is a person and a Christian, and as he is a student in training for a holy mission, and let it supply them in intelligent appreciation of its privilege. If he be of a manly spirit, he wants no coddling, as he indeed will permit none, because he would think it a reflection on the dignity of his character and mission. He certainly does not need balls, parties, dances, cards. These will kill out the life of a better Christian than he is. He needs no frigid punctilio or trailing fashion, in which there is nothing but the egotism of hospitality and the invented pretence of friendship ; but that easy, unpretending, natural courtesy which is provided by the apostolical counsel, which says, " Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice : and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

I do not forget, in making these remarks, that obligations are mutual, and that the student must live as under the old and irrevocable law, that, " He who would have friends must show himself friendly." If society is

expected to act courteously towards those whose positions and employments commend them to its nurture, it has a right to look for a practical recognition of its thoughtfulness. In writing to the Corinthians, Paul presented claims and a principle which, in various styles of language, he has insisted upon in his other writings, and expressed it as follows: "If we have sown to you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things?" And yet he said he was not moved to what he did by hopes of remuneration, "For necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is me if I preach not the gospel." The rule will have converse application: If Christian people extend their kindness to those who aspire to the office of the ministry, they have a right to claim from them that which their situation enables and entitles them to give. Christian decorum is one thing; this, of course, not because they are ministers, but because they are Christians. But there are offices which they can perform, and which, in religious communities, are always waiting for qualified persons to undertake and execute. There are Sabbath schools to teach, prayer-meetings to attend and help manage, social meetings to save from worldliness and dissipation, Bible classes to conduct—these and other opportunities are afforded in all communities. The properly-disposed student will be ready and eager to embrace them. Without being forward or intrusive, he can find a place of work where he will make himself useful, and, developing his own capacity and training his talents, he will assist in worthy enterprise, and earn and receive the respect and gratitude of all who know him. When one was asked when he knew he was a Christian, he replied, "It was when I discovered myself to be doing my duty, not as a

drudgery, but as enjoyment." And the answer was a good one. The student should prove the reality of his profession by joyfully taking part in the Lord's work. Amid his best intentions he may find himself stumbling, staggering and even falling, but for this he will be easily pardoned, and with the pardon he will receive a sympathy that will crystallize into interest and positive assistance. But if he shirk his duty, and stand apart from the places he ought to fill, he will be rightly regarded as a time-server, seeking the priest's office for its piece of bread, and abusing the generosity that offers to educate and train him for the holy ministry.

3. A third help is that of the presbytery. A presbytery is the student's right and authoritative guardian. It ranks society, parents, the seminary, and all but God. It passes upon his fitness for undertaking the work and beginning the study. It considers his credentials, scrutinizes his intelligence, and even probes his heart. But to it is also given the duty of fostering the spirit that has been lodged in its care, and of giving direction to its impulses and resolutions, by praise, counsel, criticism, and rebuke. A presbytery, like a person, is a character that is formed from a combination of the elements that compose it, and it is this character acting upon the student influentially and as an invisible power that will help shape him into the pillar that is to support the temple of God. Words are simply spoken, and they disappear like the sigh of the wind; resolutions are often but feeble signs of a languid purpose; and the papers, reports, the all and sundry of the written declarations are but the leaves, golden or crisped, which the tree shakes off because it knows another season will bring it as many more. But there is

a tone and a character which inhere in the life, and which are, therefore, permanent in their existence and influence, and the better and higher this tone and character are, through strength of nature and the energy of the Spirit, the greater and the more beneficent will be the results.

It is, perhaps, not complimentary to the average presbytery to say that it gives the student too little attention. It is greatly disposed to take him for granted. It is busy with other matters, and will not stop to take time to inquire whether he is needing care and help, or to ask about his progress, and, beyond hearing him once a year delivering a lecture or sermon, it knows but little about his employments or attainments. It is almost willing that the seminary, which is its servant in the work, should assume to tell it what to do, and thus to surrender its power and bury its responsibility. The seminary makes no demands of this kind, and has the capitulation thrust upon it by courts that are too gentle to endure the suspicion of authority. And if, as between presbyteries, there is aught of competition, it is merely that of speed. Each one, apparently, strives to make the most ministers in the shortest time, and with the least material. The champion one among them all will simply cast its mantle over a plowman, and then expect him to stand invincible between the Lord and Israel. Alas! too often it is not a mantle that can smite Jordan and divide its waters. But, as a result of this, the student becomes filled with the infection of haste, and sometimes seeks the presbytery which has the best reputation for this kind of exercise. He asks where it will be easiest, quickest; and, disdainful of the policy that will fit him for becoming a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, he hurries off to the situa-

tion where the time will be shortest and the tests lightest. I think it would be good if these courts of Christ's house would call back something of the gravity with which, perhaps, they have parted. They can do so without becoming harsh or rigid, and the student, finding them faithful, will also find them generous and charitable. But it ought not to be thought exacting to ask a youth who wishes to preach the gospel, if he *thinks* he is a Christian, and if he can spell in two syllables.

4. I mention as a fourth help, that of the theological seminary. As it is about this institution that we meet here to-night, it would seem proper that I should speak principally of it and its work. But time is left for but a few reflections. The student finds the seminary erected for the one purpose of instructing and training him with reference to his work. It is of no other use. If it do this, it has done all that is required of it. If it fail to do this, it is not answering the end of its creation. With this in mind he will expect, upon entering it, to find it a holy place, not made so simply by the history of noble lives that successively lived under its care, but by the fact that it is devoted to a noble work. There are holy men who have lived near their God, and who are under vows of consecration to his truth, giving the results of their education, observation and experience, to those seeking the noblest office of the world. Here youth are being prepared for acting as the custodians of God's truth, for preaching Jesus who was crucified, for dealing in faithfulness with souls struggling between life and death. Their future is in the sacred desk, as they ask men to come to the Saviour, and warn them to flee from the wrath to come; at the bedside of the sick and dying:

soothing anxieties, calming fears, stimulating hopes, commending the blood of cleansing, and, with hearts yearning and longing for souls, showing themselves instant in season and out of season in the great work of human salvation. O, the seminary ought to be a holy place! It should be brooded over by a spirit of sanctity. The man who walks through it should go softly. The burning bush is in every apartment, the shechinah flames through its halls and doorways, and the voice of God is heard there from the mercy seat.

I say nothing of what the student shall study as belonging to the technical course of the seminary ; but a word aside from this may be indulged in as expressing the conviction growing up in the Christian conscience, that probably the Bible does not receive the amount of relative attention that is its due. It is read, of course, and is treated with all the reverence due it as the word of God. It receives, also, extended critical and exegetical examination. The theology that is taught is from the Bible, or of the Bible, and may with propriety be called biblical study. After all, these are mainly class exercises, and act upon the intellect more than upon the soul. They have contributed something to skill in exposition and to the knowledge of the truth as a system; and they have extended the range of the student's information. As the professional reader, expositor, and teacher, he is now in a fair way towards facility and success, but is he fed on the truth itself, and has he learned to love it as the living Word, which, acting as a light to his feet, and a lamp to his path, is also sweeter to his taste than honey from the comb? And has he learned it as that which, while he studies it for others, is all the time enriching his own

heart, and making him more adaptable and helpful as one who is to carry messages of love and faith and hope to weary souls? A distinguished minister has recently said, that while there is enough of studying *about* the Bible there is far too little study *of* the Bible. It is the life coming from the great instrumental source that will make the minister of the future, if he be a man who, "full of faith and the Holy Ghost," shall succeed in doing a work that will entitle him to the Master's gracious commendation, "Well done." Dogmatics, homiletics, exegetics, history—these all have their places, but they never yet made a preacher. They make exegetes, historians, bibliographers, apocalyptical calculators, surveyors of Gog and Magog, but not the men who say, "We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard," and who pray and labor in weariness and tears as they commend the Saviour and strive to save men from the everlasting burnings.

It remains but to say in conclusion, that if one will pursue his theological studies under such influences as I have indicated, he may start off to his work filled with hopes of usefulness and happiness. He has the promise, and has it surrounded with favoring conditions. It is the misfortune of many a student that he enters the field with distorted notions of what is to be expected. He has been reared under a pastor who has taught him to feel that a minister's life is one of poorly-paid work, of dull worry and care, of half appreciation, and that it has no good side to it, except that which is to be revealed to good and faithful servants in a better country. He has read, also, that Christians are penurious and exacting, driving hard bargains, and condemning to penury the man

who, in love and goodness, seeks their welfare. Or he has lived in a church where brotherly love has been extinguished, and where, among scenes of strife and other disgraces, he has seen a pastor as the habitual victim of nagging and malediction. It is not to be wondered at that, with all these influences about him, he takes his place as one who feels he must fight his way, gaining his rewards, not as the triumphs of love, but as the spoils of a heartless victory. But it is a great mistake. He should go out with his heart full of love and tenderness, with an unflinching trust in God, and with a hearty faith in humanity. In Christian communities, such as that in which he is likely to labor, he will not fail of opportunity to meet the Christian in whom imperfect piety has left unextinguished much that is worst of the natural man; but he will also meet more than he can expect of goodwill, unselfish kindness, and genial generosity. Let a man consecrate himself wholly to the Lord, doing with his might what his hands find to do, not forgetting his Master's counsel, to be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove, and he will find the ministry a profession which, even on account of its earthly compensations, is the noblest and pleasantest the world can offer.

It is deserving of, and it will not disappoint, youth's highest enthusiasm; but it demands the enthusiasm, and makes no promises without it as one of its stipulations. To the self-seeker it offers nothing but a life of growing waste. To the grumbler, who feels called to nothing higher than peevishness, and to the cynic, who thinks he has no mission but to growl, it holds out no inducements, as from him it asks nothing, except that he should seek a renovated nature and a sweetened spirit. You remember

the beautiful legend told of the Venerable Bede, the pious and learned divine of Saxon England. In his old age, and when his sight was gone, one of his students, taking advantage of his infirmity, led him to a heap of stones and told him they were human beings. The thought of his opportunity stirred his soul and fired his zeal. In burning words he poured forth the gospel to his imaginary listeners, calling on them to repent, and commending the love of Him who died to save the people from their sins. And when he concluded with his usual formula, "To whom be glory through all the ages," a voice came from the heap of stones and said, "Amen, Venerable Bede." His heart had moved and inspired the hearts of stone! It is but a step from the ancient legend to the present fact. If the student will but fill his soul with a right appreciation of his calling, and go forth to his work in the name of Him who has said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world," he will find a response to his acts and utterances. Hearts will open to receive him. God will smile down upon his pathway. He will be in league with the stones of the field. His life will be a loud, sweet call to gratitude, and blessed with sacred satisfaction, as he shall also be filled with holy hopes, he will adore the grace that called him to the ministry, and praise the providence that started him on his way by making him a student of theology.

## THE PASTOR AS A LITERARY MAN.\*

*Young Gentlemen* :—I propose to offer you a few thoughts on the subject as stated, "The Pastor as a Literary man." Yet, in thinking it over, it appears so extensive as to confuse me with its offer of scope and material; and were I to write all that crowds on my brief, you might grow weary in listening. In that case, however, it might afford me opportunity of making a practical protest against the modern degeneracy which preaches and demands short sermons—sermons so short as to be only the make-believes of respectable and substantial discourses.

The young man who is preparing for the gospel ministry is making himself ready for a work which embraces a variety of pursuits. He is to be an organizer, a manager, executor, administrator, preacher, teacher; a man of expedients, of tactics, an inventive man, of good resolution and discretion, with an ability to do much, and a will to do everything. He has a character to keep up as a social man, as a man of economy and thrift, as a scholar, as one of wide information, and an intelligence that is constantly increasing through study and research. All this, and more, is demanded of him, and we hardly see the vastness of his work in the usual statement that he is to be pastor and preacher. Very few, determining to devote their lives to the ministry, realize the responsibilities they are about to assume, and perhaps it is well they do not. We learn to battle the deep waters by contact with the

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\*An address delivered, as a "Lecture on Pastoral Theology," to the students of the Theological Seminary at Allegheny City, October 26th, 1870. Some of the students, through a committee, have asked that it be published in the *Evangelical Repository*, and I willingly comply with this request, in the hope that while gratifying them, I may also convey a worthy suggestion to some one else. After consideration, I prefer to publish it in its original form, instead of reducing it to the essay style, as was at first intended.

J. R. J.

waves, and are educated to enjoy the rigors of January, by slowly approaching them through the mild frosts of October and sturdy blasts and storms of November and December. The minister becomes superior to his work and trials, by attempting them, and grows into the "workman that needeth not to be ashamed," by slow, steady, laborious practice.

The ministry is one of the learned professions. Society calls the minister a literary man. He is supposed to take rank among literary people, to find his friends and enjoyments there, and to follow literature as his chosen and loved pursuit. Indeed, if I were to say he is placed at the head of literary influences and forces, it would not be too much, for such a distinction is usually accorded him. Colleges seek ministers for presidents, while seminaries, academies, and high schools often have them for principals. Nearly all college boards contain a majority of clergymen: the professors are largely of the same class, and around the university, the college, the seminary, or academy, there is usually a clerical atmosphere, in which all about it live, move, and have their being. So, over literary institutions of every sort, is found more or less of the same influence. Public libraries in great cities have their ministerial patrons and managers; the circulating or stockholders' library of the village depends on pulpit and pastoral commendation and aid; and in rural districts, the common school and every literary suggestion in the neighborhood gets its inspiration from, and conveys its honors to the study of the parsonage. So we might say of newspapers, magazines, reviews, and other periodicals; hardly one of them fails to ask the aid of the culture that is expected of, and often found with the ministry. And

if the ministry does not deserve all the distinction it gets in this way, and if there is a disposition to fail and fall behind, it is because it has forgotten to be zealous in the strife necessary to the maintenance of so honorable an ascendancy. It is to stimulate you, young gentlemen, to a proper thoughtfulness in regard to what is lawfully expected of you in this direction, that I offer my suggestions to-day; and, doing so, I hope to at least obtain from you the acknowledgment that is due my theme. Indeed, so important does this matter appear to me, that I could almost persuade myself to take up the subject in detail, and beg repeated audiences from you in its behalf.

The hour allotted us this afternoon, however, we will devote to some thoughts regarding your literary productions—the *character* of them, the *demand* for them, and their *accomplishment*. And for the sake of freedom and comprehensiveness, I will not attempt to distinguish between what you may send from the pulpit and the press, taking it for granted that, as is usually the case, they will mainly agree in literary value. It is but rarely that he who is elegant in the pulpit will be gross in print, or *vice versa*. The honest public speaker is he who says mainly in public what he has determined in private to say; or at least his study discipline is so controlling that through very habit he is the literary man in the pulpit and on the platform, that he is beside his lamp or gas-light. He who thinks and writes good grammar at home, will not speak defiance at Murray and Bullions when abroad. He who is rhetorical in his thoughts, meditations and composition at his desk, will incur no serious blame of Blair and Quackenbos when he acts the orator of the day. This is true as a rule. It has its exceptions. And it ought fur-

ther be said, that hardly any one is likely to be so acutely exact in speaking, at least in hurried, excited speaking, as he is in deliberate thinking and preparation. But the rule stands invincibly, that the devoted student will not be a blundering performer.

In the literature which you are expected to furnish the world, young gentlemen, let me say that, first of all, you will be required to give it *strength*. There is none excellent without it. It must be able to stand alone, nay more: to walk, run, fight its way to toleration and success. No weakling literature is fit to be employed in the great gospel cause. The flabby, vaccid prose or poetry that may obtain a currency in some departments of life, will not be permitted where strength is looked for and demanded. The stale, decrepit products of lazy pens must fail and perish. The froth and foam, the fustian and stuff of chaffy pretenders, noisy and pretentious as it may all appear, is powerless for good, and is wasted almost as soon as produced. It is immortal truth that is to be circulated; not feathery, cottony truth, but weighty truth, which God compares to the rock itself. You cannot transport it in a flimsy literary vehicle, any more than you can carry paving stones in a lady's veil. No number of exclamation points, or parade of ghastly capitals can save such literature from its necessary perdition. It is said, sometimes, that, since truth is so full of energy, it will accomplish its own mission. And many men, careless about their responsibility, quote the sayings, "Truth is mighty and must prevail," and

"Truth crushed to earth will rise again,  
The eternal years of God are hers,"

and shelter themselves behind the hedge they are sup-

posed to cast around thriftlessness and incompetency. Truth *is* mighty, and it will prevail, but only as it is made operative by the machinery that puts it in motion. God will make it prevail by his instrumentalities, and he requires his instrumentalities to do their utmost. If the Prussians wished to throw heavy balls against Metz and Strasbourg, they chose heavy guns and heavy charges of powder with which to do it. The clear sky may furnish you a zephyr, and the smallest rill may ripple you a quiet song, but if God wants to teach a mighty lesson in storm, he makes the heavens black with clouds, and wakes the thunder of the sea.

The men who have marked the world have all written strongly. The great rocky sayings of Luther, the iron logic of Calvin, the inflexible philosophy of Melancthon—these, and such as these, have made their abiding impression, while the hesitating and apocryphal teachings of the Erasmuses have failed. Yet let it not be felt that strength consists in rudeness. You will not succeed just in proportion as you use the harsh adjectives and thundering combinations of speech, laying aside the tenderer and sweeter. You can be strong in denunciation, reproof, rebuke, but also in praise, in sympathy, in love. There is a strong way of saying the tenderest things. It may require all the more of art and study, yet, when done, it is the most beautiful and effective. And, as one important part, if not the chief part, of the pastor's work is to soothe and sweeten perturbed and embittered life, this is a very necessary feature of his culture. A peacemaker, a messenger of love, a prophet of that divine philosophy which teaches that it is "good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity," he needs to be master of words, that,

by their gentle force, will warm and weld the hearts of his hearers. There is need, at times, for austere logic and brazen rhetoric; nor is the vehemence of august passion and withering invective always out of place; but the experience of all preachers in ordinary times will teach them that what they most need to cultivate in literature, is the impassioned power that appeals to what is gentlest and best in their hearers. In the Bible you will notice the strongest things are the very sweetest. Matchless in majesty, and towering sublimity as many of the statements are, the world is far more controlled by the sweet undertone of its softer music. You read the twenty-ninth Psalm, and wonder at its terrific power, as in our New Version it says,

“The voice of Jehovah comes over the waters,  
His voice o'er the vast and deep ocean is heard;  
The God of all glory is speaking in thunder:  
How mighty, how awful the voice of the Lord!”

Yet its impression is not abiding. But you read the twenty-third Psalm, and its tender power takes hold of all your nature, and the charming witchery of its sentiment and utterances makes you its captive forever. Hence, while the one is sung now and then in particular places, and with spasmodic praise, the other is a song that is going up from palace and hovel, from the abode of joy and the chamber of death, from the lips of old and young, amid the clash of war, and in the repose of peace, blending its music in one continuous harmony that reaches around the world.

The same thing may be said of many other portions of the Scriptures. Read the Sermon on the Mount, and as you say over, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they

shall see God," and its kindred passages, you are astonished at the silent momentum of their philosophy and language. You imagine the indignation that mantled the face of Christ as he said, "Woe unto you, Scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites," and are delighted with the trenchant way in which he disposes of their knavish pretences ; but while one person is quoting these expressions, ten thousand are saying over and over again, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest"; "In my Father's house are many mansions, . . . I go to prepare a place for you."

Connected with strength is *beauty*. Mere beauty without strength is puerile and useless ; but so strength without ornament loses much power. So far is beauty from impairing strength, that it increases it and helps it in its achievements. Butler's Analogy is a strong work, but the world will never know how much it has lost through the literary awkwardness of its author. Thousands of books of history, philosophy, morality, and religion go to oblivion in every age, not because they fail in sentiment, in logic, in strength ; but because they are too dry to be palatable to the world of readers. In the same way, thousands of sermons fail. They are evangelical, logical, wholesome, but crisp and inane. In the audience are young people who like bouquets and nosegays, people of æsthetic tastes, people of imagination and fancy, and they can find nothing to admire in such arid theology. The boy yawns, and watches for the Bible to shut, or the "Finally" to come ; the young lady looks out the window at emerald fields or forests clad in October gorgousness ; while the deacon and elder compose themselves to sleep, dreaming mayhap of a bright gospel in a brighter

country. I have sympathy for some sleepers. They sleep under great provocation. It is not the devil that tempts them, but the narcotism of a style of preaching from which beauty is outlawed. No class of public speakers is likely to fall so easily into this blighting fault as the ministry—the reasons we will not stop to notice. Hence, be careful to keep up the ornamental part of your literature. First seeking strength, next seek a beauty which will make it forcible. God makes the rock strong, but does not forget to carpet it with moss and trail and fringe it with vines and shrubs. He makes the oak strong, but builds it in beautiful symmetry, paints decalcomania pictures on its trunk, and clusters every branch with foliage. Your literature may as well be a beautiful fernery, with its plants and flowers breathing cleanliness and moisture, like a fragrant sanitarium, as the rough stone heap, which is a fortress for vermin, and a lodging-place for dust and debris. The right use of words will give your speech polish and variety. The proper choice of illustration, of figure, of all rhetorical material, will make it elegant and attractive. And while some of your doctrinal pills might produce nausea if administered in black nakedness, sweeten them with a little poetical covering, and they will be swallowed pleasantly and greedily.

One other thing—good clerical literature will be of current character. What was good two hundred years ago, would be very poor now. What was brilliant once, would be stupid now. What was refined and facile once, would be common and clumsy now. Besides, it must always be, if not saturated, at least tintured with the phenomena of the day in which it was written or spoken. Christ talked of the fig trees, of dwellers on the house-tops, of women

grinding at a mill. Paul spoke of Olympian games, and all the manners and customs of his age. Chrysostom, Augustine, and Ambrose wrote according to the style of their day. If you and I were to begin a sermon or lecture as Rutherford began his "Trial and Triumph of Faith," we would be outlawed, and properly so. The old, snuffing style of the Cameronians was the kind that suited them, and their age, and Erskine's style suited his period ; but all that has passed away. To-day the literature of the pulpit must be shaped according to the prevailing tastes.

It must be very hard for a man who is thoroughly alive, to write or deliver a sermon, without letting it represent his week-day thoughts. He has read all week of the phenomena of life that is transacting on our nineteenth century theatres, and his mind is full of them. How shall he tamely talk every Sabbath of saving faith, or perseverance, unmoved by that of which he has spent six days in studying? He has read, he has talked with his wife, he has taught his children, he has discussed in social gatherings, the world's movements, and speaking, a living man to living men, he will want to speak living truths. What kind of a man is he, who can preach Sabbath after Sabbath, and say nothing of the Ecumenical Council, the Infallibility of the Pope, the Italian Plebiscite, the overthrow of the temporal power, the Franco-Prussian war, and a host of other subjects which claim the attention of the world? Is he a man, or only a machine? These are familiar, all-engrossing things. It may not be hard for the city pastor who studies in a dingy room, with no outlook but that of a dirty alley or street of squalor, to omit a reference to the country scenery, but can a man who is sensitive to beauty and sublimity, live among the clover,

the snowflakes, the falling leaves, and not introduce them to his pages? When I sit in my study and look away over the house-tops at the October woods—at the maples enrobed in golden wrappings, at the hickories, the oaks, the elms, all gorgeous in their autumn glory, it is impossible to tolerate a theology that refuses their friendship and communion.

The autumns are mainly alike, and what is written for 1870 may do for 1885 ; but this is not true of the world's transactions. The surrender of Sedan and Napoleon belong to this year. Farragut, Dickens, and Lee will not die for you annually, and the infallibility dogma will not be enacted again in the history of Christendom. Each coming year will be marked by events which will fix its epochal character. The telegraph will make their occurrence and philosophy yours, while they are fresh and of living interest. The Waterloos and Gettysburgs of the future await the rising generations, with their scenic romance, their tragic reality, and inestimable results. The heroes and statesmen of history will be reproduced, and made to act on theatres yet to be erected, and "that which has been, shall be," in ramified constructions and multiplied influences. Therefore, old sermons, as a rule, are a nuisance. They are the old clothes, cut according to the style of past years, and which, worn out of season, are only ludicrous and disgusting. They are made up of stale thought and sentiment which have lost flavor and force, and are only valuable as relics and mementoes of other days.

The whole race of clerical hucksters who go around vending their rancid commodities, is practicing an irony on the holy profession of preaching the fresh, living gospel

of Jesus. Hence, young gentlemen, if you find yourselves tempted to resign your charge some day, so that you may get a new one in which to use old sermons, regard it as a temptation of the devil, and resist. If some good friend, pitying your toil, advise you to reverse your barrel and begin at the bottom, tell him, "Get thee behind me, Satan." If it be possible, living among men at this age, with all the world's lessons around you, you are unable to make new sermons as they are demanded of you, you had better wisely conclude that God did not intend you for a minister. But in so shaping your literature, a few will not like it. Many an old lady and gentleman will long for the sermons they heard in girlhood and boyhood, and lament the degeneracy of the times, as seen especially in enervated and emasculated pulpits. You need not be ruthless towards their prejudices. They must, however, agree to endure. The Church cannot afford to refuse a change, either in the dialect of its language, or in the versification of its psalmody, when the progress of the age demands it. So let the literature of the pulpit be in sympathy with that which is current elsewhere. The essay, the forensic, the editorial styles may differ from each other, yet all conform to the usages of the day. That of the pulpit may differ from them all, yet agree with them in general character.

I think the Church of this country owes a debt of gratitude to Mr. H. W. Beecher for liberating the pulpit, in a great measure, from the trammels of its old and clumsy rhetoric. He has preached in current language. Old forms, old stereotyped expressions and technical phrases have been discarded. In fresh language, language living, strong, and dripping with the sweat of every-day

use, he has preached the gospel to the millions. We need not say much for his theology. We need not criticise too closely his logic ; but for having dared to strip off the old idiomatic uniform of the pulpit, and put on the dress of to-day, he deserves unlimited thanks. He has dislodged cant with common sense, and supplanted the whine and drivel of a mock seriousness with the strong, vigorous language of independent thought. Hence, young gentlemen, make your literature seasonably correct. Do not be seduced into a love for the "Bible twang," but talk and write on a level with the best masters of literary criticism. In your prayers, pray as of this generation, not of the past. Ask for all things with awful reverence, but recollect that reverence does not consist in the lugubrious utterance of old ropy phrases, your grandfathers imported from Ireland.

I am to say something of the demand made of the minister in the way of literary culture. And let me say *first*, Your own minds require it of you that you strive to produce the best. They are given you to cultivate and use. What they do that is worthy acts reflexively, and they receive the benefit. The artist who has striven to draw a straight line, has not only made the line, but taught his eye and hand. The musician who has tried to sing the clearest and purest tones, has not only pleased the ear of an audience, but added to the strength and beauty of her voice. And when you think in good language, when you write and speak, striving to have some worthy trait in what you produce, your intellect has been to school. As you are to work most with your minds, make as much of them as possible. He is untrue to himself, who is content with poverty of speech. If you get a

workman to do some work for you, he will want to do it as well as he can, because it his advertisement to tell of his skill and ability. If it have blemishes, they tell against him ; if it have excellencies, they get him praise and patronage. If you buy an article from a druggist, he will box it for you, label it, wrap it in paper, and tie it with a string, and all in handsome style. Tell him it is no difference, that you can carry it without wrapping, he will say he is not satisfied to see goods go away poorly done up. He is true to his training. If a man is true to his intellect, he will have it to do work worthy of it, and from his faults and failures will learn to do better afterwards. If he can produce grapes yet only bring forth wild grapes, he is the slothful servant who buries his talent in the earth.

Again, your profession demands it. I have already said that our profession is named among the learned ones, and also that it takes high rank, if not the highest, in that connection. True enough, the chief commendation the minister gives his calling among good people, is by his being like Jesus, in a walk and conversation that becometh the gospel. The holy man, the man of faith, never fails to magnify his office. But as literary producers, preachers are in competition with the literati of the world in all departments of learning. With the historian, the essayist, the poet, the novelist, the writer on philosophy, science, or art, he is engaged in a generous strife for intellectual mastery—at least, equality. And all this, not as a matter concerning only himself, but as affecting the ministerial calling, and the gospel cause. Our bad grammar, faulty rhetoric, blundering, bungling speech, give others, of more culture, the opportunity of ridiculing the profession that tolerates such incapacity. It is a glorious thing when

preachers can so write and speak, that all others can learn from their scholarly language—that the old man will wish he had chosen the ministry for the work of his life, and that the young will learn to occupy a place that will give much scope to his genius.

Besides, the minister makes his appeals to the best of men, and to the best in men. He deals with whatever is noblest, highest, and most godlike. He is teaching them to love and practice what is best, and hate and shun what is worst. As an amateur, as well as professional peacemaker, he is asking estranged mortals to be reconciled to God, and trying to associate in the experience of each soul the joy of conversion with the benediction of a blessed life. He tries to teach human character to so develop, that the spiritual may have its proper sovereignty over the animal, and that the temporal may be subordinate and contributory to the eternal. His are worthy themes, and must be worthily discussed. No mean language is fit to set forth the character of God, the love of Jesus, the habitation of the redeemed—to portray the beauty of the human affections, and instill into the minds of men the principles of divine virtue. The writer who will stand by Niagara, and write coldly of its majesty ; who will watch the awful sea, and listen to its roar, and then speak of it in flippant commonplace ; who will gaze upon the growing storm and write carelessly of its grandeur ; who will perpetrate chaffy platitudes, talking of stars and flowers—such a one profanes the sanctity of the writer's art, and wields the pen as an Arab wields the sword—against whatever is best and beautiful. No better is he who, chosen to represent a profession devoted to

the cross of Christ, yet travesties the eloquence of him who spake as never man spake, by rehearsing his gospel in language made feeble by neglect or idleness.

And it should be kept in mind that this profession has been honored in the past—No! I will not say that; but it has honored in the past men whose genius and learning were without contemporaneous rivalry. At the head of the long list stands Jesus himself, alike consecrating the calling and his followers. You find it in the literature of Paul and John. It has given the world the writings of Chrysostom and Augustine. Luther and Calvin sent from it their imperishable productions. The greatest minds of modern times were trained in its schools, and achieved their literary triumphs in its practice. To-day some of the foremost men of the world are in it, and it wields a literary power that is felt in all the intellectual circulation of the earth. All this being so, shall not the student think of his responsibility in keeping up the good name of that which has had such champions and supporters? If men have looked up to it, let it be so elevated, that they shall look up to it still. If philosophy, science, art, law, poetry, fiction, make progress, and build for themselves pinnacles of greatness, let the ministry keep still ahead, that exercising a conceded sovereignty, it may dictate suffrage and citizenship in the world of letters.

And again, your audience demands it. By audience, I mean all those whom you reach by literary influence. The time was when learning was nearly all in the pulpit. Schools were shut against the laity, and all they got of information was such as priests pleased to dole out to them from the pulpit. Up to the time of the twelfth century, the clergy were the chief depositories of all learn-

ing. What was written, they wrote. If there was eloquence, poetry, logic, they got the credit of it all. The books, the paper and pen were for them, as the sword and spear were for the soldier, and the plough and spade for the farmer. To say a man was literary, was the same as to say he was of the clergy. They thus dwell in an exalted isolation, compelling the respect and dependence of the illiterate masses who groveled beneath them. And having an imperial sway over man and society, they moulded all the thought of the age, promoting what they pleased, and, with equal ease, driving off every suggestion they thought either intellectually or morally contraband. Every social movement was subject to their management, all the politics were under their control, legislation and diplomacy alike consulted their authority, and wars failed or succeeded as blasted with their curse, or inspired by their benediction. All that has passed away. It has struggled hard for life. It died no coward's death, though the figure it has cut at the last, was necessarily as ridiculous as its spirit and practice were formerly intolerant. It was in vain for Pius Ninth to strive with God's decree. Science, he felt, were undermining his power, but he was powerless to stop science. It was as stubborn as the comet his predecessor excommunicated from the fellowship of stars. Every whistle of the locomotive, every click of the telegraph, every new invention that told of the mind and quickened the business of the world, was telling him that he, like the Colosseum, shattered and mouldering in the shadow of his Vatican, was to be henceforth but the decaying memorial of what was once the fame of the world.

When you and I, young gentlemen, witnessed the

result of the plebiscitum in Italy, which made Rome its capital, and the consequent robbing the Pope of his temporal power, we saw the culmination of the influence that makes the demand upon the intellect of the preacher a thousand times as difficult as in the past. We have to act upon an intellectual level with a power that has been sufficient to batter down a throne that once could *make* thrones and kings, and destroy them at its pleasure. And now the occupant of the pew may be as learned as the man who addresses him. Knowledge, if it has not left the pulpit, has gone to the laity with equal liberality, so that almost any minister may find men and women in his congregation, who in some department of intellectual culture are his peers, if not his superiors. The ignorant man of to-day is he who would have been called a master formerly. Even common schools give an education that makes critics of the pupils. The false syntax is detected by the boy fresh from his Bullions and Pinneo ; the bad pronunciation grates harshly on the ear of the girl who reads with Webster's Unabridged beside her ; nor is any literary fault without its critic and censor. He who attempts to deceive by false statements or inferences, by improper estimates of character or interpretation of events, by dishonest appeals to history and the authorities of the past ; or who tries to gull his hearers by parading the show of a learning he does not possess, is only spreading a net for his own capture. The fathers before him were once at a college, and the mothers graduated at some seminary. The artisans have been trained in the schools of scientific labor, and are daily readers of scientific journals ; the merchants have carried off diplomas from commercial colleges, and are deeply read in the mysteries and

wonders of modern trade ; the farmers have gone through academies and colleges, the laboring man and servant girl have gleaned an education from their contact with their literary superiors, the youth are diving into all philosophy, and making themselves adepts in the accomplishments of music and painting, while all are read deeply and thoroughly in the news of the day. The newspaper, the magazine, the illustrated weekly, is in the hands of all. What is doing at Rome, at Constantinople, at Paris or St. Petersburg, is as familiar as the occurrences of a contiguous neighborhood. Hume, Gibbon, Macaulay, Motley, Prescott, stand with Milton, Scott, Longfellow, Tennyson, and others in nearly every household. Ruskin has been read in his gorgeous descriptions of clouds, skies, and scenery. Dickens has been studied in his delineations of the lower life of England, and nearly every style of writing has been consulted and weighed by the communities, which begin to find a library as much of a necessity in a household as a cook-stove or feather-bed. And hence, young gentlemen, when you speak to such intelligence, you must speak intelligently. No second or third rate effort will fit you for such a work. No rehash of other men's thought will be suitable food for those who are accustomed to better fare. No dry discussions of past affairs will be palatable. You must speak sense, and current, common sense. Preach few eulogies on the dead, but many homilies to the living. Do not doubtfully discuss the licentiousness before the flood, but analyze and condemn the evils of your day. Do not stand chopping at the putrid Agags of a thousand years ago, but hew to pieces before the Lord those that crowd around you. Intelligence, life, and power look up at you from the pews,

asking intelligence, life, and power in a gospel that is an appeal to their manhood, and an admonition and promise to their immortality.

Besides, you want to live down the tendency of to-day to disparage the sermon in worship, in comparison with what is formulary and ritualistic. The church that, of all others, preaches the dullest, stupidest sermons, is the one that most resorts to tricks and sacerdotal gymnastics to secure a carnal patronage. Good intellectual and religious power in it would act as an iconoclasm equal to that of Oliver Cromwell in the cathedrals of England. You must admire the pulpits of Beecher, of Cuyler, of Hall, who, by intellect and heart, draw their thousands of listeners, whom they enchant while they instruct by their words of wisdom ; or, most of all, of Spurgeon, who, with a more than wizard's power, attracts and holds an audience of twenty thousand by the magic of his tongue.

If you, young gentlemen, wish to prove to the skeptical world that the gospel is worth being listened to more than twenty minutes once a week, preach that gospel in such a style as to make it irresistible. You cannot hold your congregations by dogmatism either of creed or profession, as was once possible. Men think freely now. Their denominational locations are not fixed by the old iron process of discipline, conducted by power and inspired by penalty. Doctrinal notions are not as rigid and controlling as they used to be, nor, may-be, as they ought to be. The reverence for fathers and past memories is perishing. Denominational lineage has but little influence, and the hereditary descent of a church connection is but little cared for. If your pulpit lacks literary

power, your hearers will forsake you. Intelligent men will not listen to your babbling, trashy orthodoxy, while your neighbor discourses in pleasing and solid literature, even though his views may not be so desirable. Do not flatter yourself for a moment that you can maintain your pastoral standing by singing David's Psalms, even the dear old version itself, while you only indulge in the frothy rant of the upstart, or the tame, dry, sapless rehearsals of imbecility or laziness.

I am next to say something about the *accomplishment* of your literary results. And here let me make a remark by way of guarding against a possible mistake or misunderstanding. Pleading for a cultured and elegant literature, do not understand that I am asking for that nice, dilettante kind of writing that has no excellence but its exquisite finish, *that* itself becoming in the end a blemish. Nor am I saying aught in favor of what passes under the name of metaphysical writing, consisting of mysteries, sublimations, and transcendentalisms. Neither the foppery nor the pedantry of a sermon or essay can be anything else than disgusting. What I wish to praise is cultivated and trained natural force, used in the best way to promote what is best for humanity and the world. The dilettante and complicated will please, but not help the weak and fastidious: it takes the educated strong to bless and build. The little yard, closely shaven with a knife and adorned with a tiny shrub, may please the eye a moment, but its suggestions are not forcible. The extensive grounds of men of wealth and taste, well laid out with avenues and drives, and planted with all that is rare and curious in arboriculture, is also pleasant as the luxury of a home. But what delights us most and teaches us

best, is the grand landscape as God has made it, dressed by the sun and wind in golden and green, and studded with the marks of the industry of man. It has strength with its beauty. And in your productions, let there be a varied, even rugged surface—slopes climbing into hills, and clambering up to mountain tops—declivities sliding down to plains, and sinking amid the shadows of ravines. Over all let there be the bloom and beauty that tell of “a field the Lord hath blessed.”

But to *accomplish* your designed success, *be literary*. A literary life must be the life of one who expects to reach even respectable mediocrity in literature. He must live among books. His work must be with letters. Thus, by practice, the mind accumulates its stores, and requires a facility in dispensing them, as well as in creating new thought and material for others. There is much force in the direction to the minister, that he must “give himself wholly to the work,” for, while a diversion and withdrawal of time and labor may at times be necessary, it is only yielded to at a sacrifice. The minister needs, for his own sake, for his mind’s sake, to do something else than preach and write sermons. The man who studies only theology and writes only sermons, will sink into ruts that will spoil all his life and labor. But let his separate work be collateral and sympathizing, not opposite and antagonistic. If you attempt to manage both a farm and congregation, the one will only succeed at the expense of the other. If you make a good farmer, you will dwarf into a seedy preacher. Devoted to wheat, corn, and oats, planning, scheming, toiling to extort wealth from the soil, you will forget the culture of books and your study. Raising cattle and swine is clearly incompatible with intellectual

advancement. Your soul will drain off into the oxen and pigs if you live among them, and your utterance in the sacred desk, of a stupid bawl and grunt, will tell of a reciprocal transmigration. Farming, grazing, trading, are all good in their place, and may ennoble the natures that pursue them properly; but they do not belong to the functions of the preacher, and he only follows them to his hurt. I heard a man laugh at the literary character of a production by a minister, not long since, and the same day heard another say, and one who knew nothing about his scholarship, "He has a perfect mania for land." His literary respectability was sacrificed to his greed for real estate. Elisha did the wisest possible thing on the day of his consecration, when he left his oxen and plough behind him.

But there are opportunities for literary exercise, aside from the mere pastoral and ministerial work, which need not and ought not to be neglected. A man will preach all the better, who will keep his mind fresh with a variety of work. If his thoughts are turned in the direction of something artistic, scientific or social, and properly cultured there, he will find the benefit of it in his sermons. They will be richer, sweeter, stronger, and more effective. It is the beauty of theology that it combines so naturally with every worthy thought and sentiment of earth. God has put the stars, the skies, the rocks, the seas, and this great mystery of human life in sympathy with himself, and he who studies them all is on the track which, when properly pursued, leads up to the great Author. Of course, this presupposes that the soul is in such a state of culture that these will be assimilated and turned to proper moral account. It is necessary, to preserve the moral

equilibrium, to guard against such a use of secularities as to vitiate the purity of faith, or lessen the depth of religious affection. The body absorbs, through a thousand avenues, air, water gasses, but all for the body's use. It is made stronger by them. The sunlight, the rain, the air, all help to give it elasticity and vigor. It is the same body still. Ten thousand rivers and creeks are pouring into the ocean. The pure, limpid streams from the mountains, the fountains bubbling from a million hills, the great rivers that traverse a continent, empty their aggregated flood into the Atlantic; but it is still the same great, booming, salty sea. It receives and uses them all, maintaining itself on their contributions, but the ages see no change in its character or countenance. Your minds can take in all nature, and use it. Turn them to all proper secular study, and let your pen be busy in the wide field of every-day thought, and it will only make you fresher, brighter, stronger, provided that, like the Atlantic, you make them repair the waste of time, and conform them to the use of your being. I think Mr. Beecher said he wrote his Star papers to the *Ledger*, because he wanted diversion for his mind. They were a tonic for him. If you write an essay on geology, vegetation, art, philosophy; on fashion, taste, etiquette, or any small every-day subject, you will preach all the better for it the next Sabbath. You are sharpened, whetted, stimulated, and the sleepest deacon in the church will be compelled to listen to your spicy, juicy theology. In this day you have peculiar facilities for this kind of training. You need not write for mere exercise, leaving your manuscript for future bonfires and kindling. The newspaper and magazine have a column and page for every kind of honorable

thought. You can discuss any subject in the whole range of study, and find a place to print it. You can write of the cricket that chirps in the hearth, and the dog sleeping by the kitchen fire, and there is many a child to read it. You can describe the hyssop springing from the wall, and the cedar that is in Lebanon; write of the great, flowery, blooming, rejoicing, sorrowing world, and there is a heart everywhere to be touched, or a mind to be stimulated. There is hardly a limit to your opportunity for good in this way; and then, after all, this makes you, on the coming Sabbaths an abler preacher of "the unsearchable riches of Christ." There is a mental dyspepsia as well as a physical one. The world suffers as much from mental indigestion as from any physical stagnation. The morbid, gloomy theology, sung and whined from so many pulpits, casts a blight upon the hearts of thousands, and palsies hands that ought to be busy, in cheerful industry, building up the kingdom. The superfine flour of the gospel is very good, but you need the graham bread of secular thought to help digest it. Very sweet to the taste are the words of truth—Bible truth; but some of the acidulous food of ordinary life will help to give them power. Fortunately, the Bible recognizes this mental necessity. It invites us to study a world of beauty, of joy and sorrow. It takes us to the fields among the flocks and pastures, to the still waters and sylvan shadows. It directs us to the sky, the clouds, the whole celestial and sublunary world; to the pleasures, business, trade of every-day life; to the government of states, the management of courts, the march of armies, and their battles of victory or defeat. It has us sailing over seas in sun, in storm, watching the play of fire or dance of stars upon

the mountain tops, gazing at the thundering storm, or listening to the swash and roar of the restless sea. But follow its suggestion, and you may write high and low in enthusiasm and pathos, and, like David himself, be always fresh and vigorous.

Again, *Be original and independent*. In other words, first be yourselves. For many preachers set themselves aside, and try to be somebody else, and usually they only add, in such attempts, what is disagreeable in their models to what is most objectionable of their own. Every man has his own style of walking, talking, laughing, or singing, and when he lays it aside to adopt that of some self-conceived model, he only makes himself ridiculous. The world laughs behind him, and repeats the old saying :

“O wad some power the giftie gi’e us,  
To see oursel’s as ithers see us,  
It wad frae monie a blunder free us,  
And foolish notion :  
What airs in dress and gait wad lea’e us,  
And ev’n devotion !”

It is the same way in thinking and writing. He who will ignore his own tastes, talents, and natural forms of thought and expression, in order to follow some one set up to be a sample of all that is good, will make a mummy of himself, and society will store him away in some closet cabinet as an ugly curiosity. He will deserve it. The young man who has no more spirit than to set his speech and train his thought through any influence, according to the habit of another, ought to be mummified. The sooner the world is rid of such a race, the better. He only deserves toleration, who, studying all he can of other men, improving by their excellencies and warned by their faults,

goes forth, consecrating his own gifts in their freshness to the cause of his Master. I have seen young men who would try to use the pulpit style of a teacher. The introductions would be the same, the divisions the same, the track of discussion the same, the style of discourse the same, and the benedictions a fac-simile of the same venerated original. They read the psalm and prayed like him; and, in ignorant conceit and toadying servility, adopted even his mistakes and blemishes! Others have taken an admired preacher and trained themselves according to him. Others have tried the stale imitation of an author. But there is no one way of introducing sermons. There is no one way of dividing sermons. Personal taste, style, talent, scope of discourse, the audience and occasion, and a dozen other things will decide in favor of a wide diversity.

Yet saying this is not advocating oddity or eccentricity—the strangeness of vagary or the wildness of chimera! Discreet originality may be blamed with oddity, but it will only be by prosy dullness or fossiled sloth, and these the man of life and power can well afford to pass unnoticed. The same thing is true with respect to independence. He who practices trimming will spoil efforts otherwise the best, and will train his mind so that the habit of good writing or speaking will be impossible. The fashioning and fitting, trimming, twisting, and contorting to suit the necessities of a creed, the sentiment of a community, or the opinions of a congregation will stifle the freedom of any intellect and spoil its capacity. Hence, while not setting yourselves up for reformers, always depend upon straightforward assertion of your carefully studied views on all subjects, and let your literature be

the crystallization that gathers around thoughts that embody your own personality. Then you may expect it to be worthy. The non-committal men will always use straight-jacketed language. Politic men will write and speak in gutta-percha, that will stretch right, left, and around to suit them. Indecision and cowardice will disfigure any manuscript and deform any speech. Be neither impertinent nor reckless; but be manly, frank and transparent. If you want to commend a virtue, do so strictly and candidly. If you wish to denounce a wrong, do it in strong, plain Anglo-Saxon, "whether men will hear or whether they will forbear." Do not hesitate to brand the whisky trade because some hearer or reader is manager of a distillery. If you want to say that tobacco chewing is filthy and abominable, let not the fact that some prominent pew-holder is devoted to the weed frighten you either into silence or circumlocution. It is most pitiable pusillanimity that is conquered by a quid of fine-cut or a curl of smoke.

If you look around you, you may find reams of literary flatulence that have been produced by timid authors who have trained themselves into feebleness by excessive prudence. Indeed, Disraeli seems to have failed in his last literary venture, simply through the absurdity of attempting to accomplish difficult results by inoffensive means. His *Lothair* would have been a different creation—would have been a strong, manly son of Britain, if Disraeli had thrown away his Jewish guile, and written from a heart that had thoroughly expelled the Pharisee. Let the mind have its swing, and then you may hope for worthy productions.

And again, *use imagination*. If God has given you

a good imagination, do not despise, but improve it. It is one of his best gifts and choicest blessings. It is as valuable as any other faculty, and, rightly wielded, is a power that has, through all ages, been moving the world. God has made all things beautiful. His productions are filled with beauty. Poetry is mingled with all this vast creation. The sky, the clouds, the earth, the sea, alike breathe and speak it. It is a pictorial world hanging above and below like a gorgeous gallery of art, with its gems of beauty and grandeur. How the sky gleams with glory! How the mountain glows with gold, and wraps itself in blue mists that claim kindred with the sky! How all the earth blushes with flowers, and waves over every hill and valley its banners of gayety and splendor! Nor is this all, for the merest worm of God's creation is made unspeakably beautiful. Its ornament is beyond human rivalry, and burrowing in the earth, or crawling through slime itself, it is dressed in a beautiful costume, that Solomon in all his glory was not permitted to excel. And hence when the poet exclaims—

“Who can paint like Nature?

Can Imagination boast, amid its gay creations, hues like hers?”

he may refer as much to the lizard glaring from the rock, or the beetle clicking on the hearth, or the worm wriggling in the dust, as to the buds of opening spring, the rainbow of the summer evening, or the glory that gathers about the autumn sunsets. And the Bible approves all we may do to keep in harmony with this great model. Ruskin tells artists to imitate nature. He praises Turner because he, most of all, catches the spirit of nature, and makes it breathe and speak in his paintings; and, of the poets, sets Wordsworth above all the rest, because he

best understands the unequalled elegancies of the material world. How sumptuously ornate is Holy Writ! Its word-painting is exquisite. It has figure after figure, trope after trope, and sometimes is just a wilderness of rich and aromatic verbiage. Moses aimed at being ornate, when detailing the history of the early world, and Curtis himself has not said as beautiful things of Judea as was said by the first lawgiver, who never saw the goodly mountain and Lebanon, save as by strained vision from a wilderness observatory. And Paul, dealing in hard logic, putting up syllogisms with which to confound his antagonists, hung them all over with a floral tapestry of speech which has made them the admiration of the world. So, when you are producing your literature, do not forget the ornament and beauty. You want the flowers of rhetoric. Through and through you want the rosy, bright, genial, joyous suggestions of the great world God made. You want it so that when you turn page after page, you will find something to correspond with all nature—a word to suit the rock, the height, the vale, the meadow, the stream, the sea, or whatever is good and beautiful in the whole creation. Men say, be plain. That is right; be plain instead of being garish and meretricious. They say, be simple. That is right, in opposition to being affected and stilted. But when any teach plainness and simplicity, meaning by that dryness, crispness, and grizzled rigidity, they give the fool's advice, which should never be heeded. The oak is plain and simple when dead, when bare, when stark and stiff in leafless decay, but so it is also plain and simple when grand in the tasselled richness of its foliage. And, in attempting the figurative and ornate, it may not be to rival Guthrie, for he is one by himself. It ought

not be to imitate Hervey, for, to readers of this age, his style is tiresomely turgid. But you will find the literature that is quickening the world and carrying blessings to human souls, to be all more or less decorated with the paintings of imagination. A distinguished author and preacher says he "thinks in figures," and when he speaks a whole conservatory may pass in review, in the course of a single sermon. F. W. Robertson, gloomy and sad as he was, yet made his sermons attractive by poetic grace and finish. Read Spurgeon, and you will find he embellishes almost every sentence with æsthetical language. And the great Hamilton, whose beautiful words come to us so sweetly, treasured his imagination as a talent given him of God, for the use of which he was responsible. Hence, speaking to young men, I would say emphatically, be ornate, be flowery, be exuberant. Let the flowers hang in festoons of beauty about all your creations, themselves a part of your work, upon which you ask the blessing of the Master. Living amid the beauty, absorb it, then show it forth. Get the light of the gay creation within you, then shine it out.

And this suggests the thought that all this should be so employed that it will grow into a habit. We say machine poetry is very poor, and so is machine or mechanical song, or painting, or oratory. But, educating the mind in the art of word-painting, its productions will not be liable to such a characterization. It is not effort that makes the educated man speak good grammar—his mind is trained to it. And intelligent or spontaneous sweetness in speech is equally possible.

The great charm you find about the literary excellence of the Bible is, that it is all unattempted. The

dress, the costume of the thought, is subordinate. The delivery of the great truths is the main consideration ; but God, who knows best how truths will succeed, has caused them to be sent to men in good, in elegant style. His precious gems he has sent in jeweled caskets. The writers were not trying to say fine things, but, feeling all the importance of the truths they were uttering, they spoke them from their hearts in a gush of beauty. But you are not inspired. You must get by cultivation what they got by the breathing of the Almighty Spirit. Yet, after you have toiled to make the best of what is in you, you will find a worthy thought spontaneously attiring itself in a costume that will make it presentable. This is a glory of speech or composition—to say good things well and beautifully without trying.

Hence, do not be too much influenced by what you have read against “floridity,” “bombast,” “sophomoric,” and “gusty” speech. From good old fathers you will get the advice to tone down, cut down your speech. They will tell you you are absurdly flowery and ornate. Before the board and elsewhere, they will find amazing fault with your poetry and decoration. Treat all these sage and reverend fathers with the utmost respect ; but to their advice, in this particular, pay no attention. Go on with your adjectives, your tropes, your blossoming beauty, for the world has far too little of it, and nowhere suffers more from the lack of it than among the ministry.

Yet, I would not give this advice if through all your lives, you would retain the exuberance of sappy youth. It is because I know the tendency is to drop, year by year, all disposition to be poetical and tasty, that I wish you to start under good headway. Cover yourselves all over

with flowers and shrubbery at the starting, letting the vines trail about your feet ; for day by day, as you proceed, a leaf and flower will wither and drop, one here and another there, till in later years there will be but enough left to orament the wisdom of maturing thought. The young man who starts in bareness will be dry and inefficient all through life. An almost wild exuberance is necessary in youth, to last till the time of gray hairs. The late James Hamilton, whose praise is in all the churches, says in his diary, " The figurative language I was once so fond of, I have nearly lost all liking for, and if I were following my own bent, in preaching, it would be sober, explanatory, unimpassioned." He mentioned this loss of taste for the figurative as one of the indications of age and its infirmities, and placed it beside the necessity for the use of spectacles and a walking-stick. The world knows how much of a blessing his imagination has been, not to him only, but to it, and the cause of Christ. And keep it in mind that the cause is not suffering half so much from the bombast of beginners, as from the dull, prosy, seasoned talk of the experienced and old. The old are wiser, abler, more learned, but the world will not relish their unleavened bread. Nor need they blame the world. It is but human nature in it ; nor is it a bad phase of it either. If the speakers and writers, who so often pronounce against the tropical tastes of the young, would try to be like them in ornate style, their wisdom would have a better circulation and a greater power. You will all get dry soon enough ; do not try to force it. In studying your lessons you can adopt the language of Jean Ingelow, as we find it in one of her sweetest poems :

“ I grant to the wise his meed,  
But his yoke I will not brook,  
For God taught me to read—  
He lent me the world for a book.”

And indeed a rich nature must produce such growths as I have indicated, till it is deteriorated and wasted by the cropping of years. The best soil produces the strongest and most beautiful vegetation. It will not grow in the desert. Beside the streamlets the flowers blush, and drifted on the waves are the odors of plants that have trailed in their waters. The very richest gardens will yield the best specimens of rose, pink, lily, verbena, or gladiolus. They are all lowly, may be, yet the soil that grows them best, is that which is capable of nourishing the ash or elm. Where maples grow, and oaks great enough to be the mast for an admiral, there the primrose blinks amid the shadows, and the violets peep among the grasses. That which makes the greatness, causes also the beauty. So with mind. It is a sign of its fertility, when the roses and pinks appear among its productions. The sterile intellect may yield the short, crisp, jagged, and scrubby hedge of thorns. The fruitful one carpets itself with grass, and loads itself with the gay millinery of summer. The sweetest of living poets has said :

“ In all places, then, and in all seasons,  
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings,  
Teaching us by most persuasive reasons,  
How akin they are to human things.”

In conclusion, let me say, young gentlemen, that they who write against you, are producing some of the best styles of literature of the day. Nor does it follow that since the early apostles were able to overcome the heathen

philosophies, themselves being unlettered, you had better be careless as to your culture and training. You are of to-day, they were of their day. The current infidelity and skepticism are not written in vulgar English. The assaults on Christianity, on Jesus as God, on the Sabbath, on all evangelical faith and worship, are not made by men who are ignorant of the mother tongue.

Some of the ablest writers of the age employ their pens against what you are to try to establish. Very beautiful is the literature of many who see no loveliness in Zion, and who of Christ can perpetually say, "There is no beauty in him, that we should desire him." The magazine that has the largest hold on the artistic public, is one that has no objections to printing the broadest denials of the faith of Christ. And besides, all this detestable heresy of faith is linked with much that is commendable in morals and progressive in science—that is good in citizenship, and radical in some of the first movements of reform. You will find much with which you will agree in a New England sceptic. A United Presbyterian and W. L. Garrison are of the same faith in all except religion. There is no reason why the skeptics shall have a monopoly of good literature. John Wesley made a good remark when he said he did not want the devil to have all the good singing. Let us not permit him to have all the good preaching. And saying this, it is in the belief that the pulpit can provide excellence in this way as well as the mere study, the editorial sanctum, or the platform.

I know a pastor is crowded with labor. His hours are burdened with responsibilities, and doing his work well, he will always find much to do. The man of wealth and leisure may pursue his studies at will, and fashion his

taste, style, and habit, without the interruption of care and professional demands. His time furnishes him with every opportunity to thoroughly improve. Still, you can so arrange your studies as to make, as we have shown, even secular, literary pursuits, helps to religious facility and power. The pulpit can, with all its engrossing cares upon the pastor, grow into a greatness that will rival the ablest of other professions. The past tells of its achievements and triumphs. The present presents its goodness and greatness. And in the future, by the blessing of God upon the faithful ministry of the churches, it will demonstrate the divinity of its mission, while repeating the distinctions of its history.

Please do not forget that now, far more than formerly, the pastor has need to be literary. It is a sharper, keener age than any of the preceding. It is a time when criticism is more incisive, more general, more thorough. It is a day when your sayings and writings go on paper, and fly in a day over half a nation, going into the studies and libraries of the learned and cultured, to be deliberately studied by their firesides. Whatever defects may be unnoticed in public speech, they cannot be hidden in the reported and printed sermon or lecture, and the unrelenting public, which goes to school and is educated, will hold the offending speaker to a fearful accountability. Rude speech will do for rude people, but not for others. The old style of preachers that had so much popularity in this country, is passing away with the shadows of the forests. As the log cabin, with its thatched roof and lath chimney disappear and give place to the brick mansion, built in taste and filled with luxury, so the rough-and-ready preachers, with their bad grammar and wild, eccentric

declamation are retiring, their places being filled with men who have studied Demosthenes and Cicero, Burke and Chatham, Webster, Clay, and Prentiss. Here and there is one remaining, but he is only a suggestion of an age that is gone, as a lone Indian, gazing amid crowding throngs, at the palaces and temples of our great cities, is a reminder of the days of Pocahontas and Tecumseh. No denomination labors more zealously to build up schools, colleges, and seminaries than the Methodist. No papers praise intellectual culture more than theirs. No church courts legislate more freely in the interests of intelligence, nor do any circulate more widely their literature. Every verb a Methodist parses, every problem he solves, and every proposition he demonstrates is a strong and doubly strong assertion that the ministry of to-day need intellectual culture. Hoping that your literature will be as good as your Church is unquestionably evangelical, I would commend to your love and zeal the profession of your choice—the noblest in the world—the gospel ministry.

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#### HOW MAY PASTORAL INQUIRY INTO THE PERSONAL RELIGIOUS LIFE AND HABITS OF THE PEOPLE BE BEST CONDUCTED?

A full reply to this question would require the discussion of a day, rather than that of the few minutes that are allotted me under this appointment. To properly define the expression, "religious life and habits of the people," would, of itself, demand extended description and analysis, which would, also, in turn, involve the necessity of commending a plan of "pastoral inquiry" ample enough

to suit it. I pass this, however, and attempt such a brief discussion as time will permit, and as will, also, open the way for the further remarks of the brethren.

It is taken for granted that inquiry into the personal religious life and habits of the people is a part of ministerial or pastoral duty. This is altogether proper. For while we are appointed, first of all, to preach the gospel, authoritatively declaring it in the name of the Master, we are, also, to seek the use of private and familiar ways to make the public proclamation of it effectively a blessing. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel"; "preach the Word"—this is what we are to keep first in mind, as it is the first and great duty of everyone who is called to be an ambassador of Christ. The duty of pastoral inquiry, important as it is, is a subordinate one, to be acknowledged and performed when it does not interfere with, and, most of all, when it helps the greater and more imperative claims and obligations. Saying this, it would be unfair not to observe that the pastoral inquiry, while subordinate, has yet a right to demand that methods of preaching may be modified so as to be adapted to its acknowledgment and practice. How far this is true, must be determined by each pastor for himself, as he measures his capacity for his work, and the circumstances of his ministry. It is something above and beyond all law. Given conscience, a capable judgment, and, above all, an earnest devotion to the Master and the souls of men, and this and all kindred things will provide for their own adjustment.

Accepting the implication of the question, that pastoral inquiry inheres in the office of the settled ministry, I would yet limit its application by the suggestion that

there are cases when specific inquiry is not needed. The aim of it is to so learn the spiritual condition of individuals, that they may be helped in their difficulties and progress. They have their trials and trammelings. Faith is weak, love is cold. Temptation is strong in one, besetting sin is worrying in another. One has a trial in a child, another in a husband or wife, a third in a brother or friend. Within the small community of an ordinary congregation the whole world of pain is conducting its dreary empire, and, as every heart knows its own bitterness, so every heart, at some time or other, needs solace and strengthening. It matters not where the pain comes from, its effect must always tell upon the soul. The least thorn in the flesh requires the sufficient grace and the perfect strength, the realization of which it is the office of the pastor to help secure. And, as he is to help people out of their difficulties when they are felt, and especially when they act detrimentally upon the spiritual life, so is he to give such assistance as will promote its growth and development. Pastoral inquiry is justified by the fact that souls ought to be made to grow in grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. To stand still is, to say the least, unsatisfactory; it is, indeed, sinful and dangerous, and "Why is not this soul advancing?" ought to be the earnest question of him who is largely responsible for its progress.

This aim is good and practical, and I mention it because there is a temptation to "inquire" simply through curiosity, and from a desire to obtain data for family records, or a more public biography. Even about deathbeds this hideous farce is sometimes enacted, when souls needing peace, solace, strength, as they battle with the last enemy and breast the waves of the dark river, are pelted

with questions which have no higher motive than to see how well they bear out the promise of a past experience. It is the cruelest example of official stupidity the world ever sees. When our divine Master was enduring the struggle that preceded his apprehension and crucifixion, he needed comfort and assistance ; and an angel appeared unto him, not to get statistics for an obituary, but to strengthen him for his wonderful conflict. And the messenger whom he sends to preside in the death hour of an immortal, is only true to his appointment when he acts in a spirit that is in harmony with the awful sublimity of his situation.

Now, the aim being to help, I proceed to say there are cases when inquiry is not needed. The pain is not, for the time being, being experienced. There is no sigh of want. The life habits are flourishing and beyond reproach. All evidences indicate that rest pervades the spirit, and that growth is the rule of the life. Why make inquiry, particularly, when scriptural fruits testify to the gracious experience? The physician does not feel the pulse, measure the temperature, and prescribe medicine when he sees no sign, and apprehends no danger of disease. The life, vigor and industry tell him his services are not needed. It is the debilitated and diseased one who requires his skill and assistance. The tree that, under the sunshine and genial breath of spring, puts forth its foliage seasonably and luxuriantly, tells of its robust life, and invites no treatment. Its leaves, green and rich, as they muffle about the branches and tuft every twig with tassels, and its blossoms, which transform it into a fragrant pyramid of beauty, all suggest a health that needs nothing but protection, and asks nothing but admiration and

gratitude, together with, perhaps, a little training and guidance. The other one that blossoms slowly, its foliage taking on a yellow tint, and presenting an appearance of sickly hesitation, needs care and help. The abounding Christian life regularly exhibiting itself in devotion to the Sabbath worship, the sanctification of the Lord's day, the practice of a discreet liberality, an apparent entire consecration to the Lord's cause ; which is also intelligent, earnest, devout, cheerful, and making progress day by day and year by year in the performance of duty and the exemplification of piety, needs no inquiry. It may be studied as a lesson in grace and goodness, and it may be sought and enjoyed for purposes of mutual fellowship and profit, but it is not properly a subject of that pastoral solicitude and solicitation which it is the object of this meeting to discuss. The Apostle John understood this. Perhaps I should not speak so when mentioning an inspired apostle, but rather say, he acted upon this principle ; and when he had occasion to write to Gaius, he affectionately salutes him as the "well beloved," and says : "Beloved, I pray, above all things, that thou mayest prosper, and be in health even as thy soul prospers."

But as to the way of pastoral inquiry, I would suggest,

*I. It should be done privately.* I make this remark as one that is true almost without exception. Public inquiry into a thing that is itself so intimately private amounts to an essential rudeness, the only result of which must be injury. I heard a pastor say that no work of the kind is rightly done till the pastor has taken each member of the church apart by himself and herself and carefully examined them in detail as to their faith and practice. This is not, however, the method that is likely

to produce the best effect. It conflicts, also, with what I have already advocated, and with something of what I wish to say hereafter. It assumes that everybody needs the investigation, and it proceeds upon the assumption that the work of pastoral inquiry must be so strict as to be technical and rigorous. It is a plan that suggests taking testimony rather than receiving confidential and affectionate disclosures. It would grow, if practiced extensively, into a kind of exaction, and would ultimately reach the precision of an official statement and the solemnity of an affidavit. Dismissing this as something, at least, impracticable, I still say that the idea of privacy is one that must be insisted on. Religion and things of the soul are held by people as among the interior matters, which they do not wish to parade before the public. They feel them to be sacred. The man who tries to expose them, they feel to be indelicate and unfeeling. Their hopes, fears, struggles, weaknesses, temptations, and all that goes to make up their experiences, they do not care to tell except in the rarest confidence. To expect them to reveal, even in the presence of ordinary friends, these matters that they so shrinkingly lock away from the public observation, is expecting something that no one has a right to realize. This requires me to say that the old "diet" system of the fathers was fatally ineffective. True enough, it was not intended primarily for spiritual communication so much as for religious instruction and experiment; but it stood in the place of what was called family visitation, and supplied whatever there was of inquiry into the religious life. Formal, grim, and didactic, "diets" were of use in their day, but they helped but little to promote the spiritual enrichment which gives glow and

pathos to the soul, and they evoked but poorly an expression of whatever there was in the spirit of want and blessing.

*II. It should be done familiarly.* I would make this statement guardedly. There is a familiarity that is rude, and that exists in the sphere of that which is hurtful rather than helpful. It is familiarity in the kitchen, about the stable, and in the lounging places of the streets. In order to realize it, the pastor lays aside his dignity and becomes the hail-fellow well-met with those who appreciate neither the refinement of the cultivated mind nor the spirituality of the sanctified soul. This is a style of familiarity that sacrifices the higher qualities of ministerial character, while it acts as a blight upon objects which it is the duty of him who holds the pastoral office to cherish and vitalize.

But there is an intimacy better than this. It is simply courteous freedom and sympathy showing themselves in the willing offices of a spiritual guide and helper. The inquiry that is conducted by an inquisitor will never reach the heart. And when one goes to a house with the avowed understanding that he is about to take an inventory of its spiritual effects, he is sure to find them locked away beyond the reach of his skill and scrutiny. It is the friend who must be seen in the man to whom souls respond, and all efforts are unavailing until the fact that he is a friend has been established. And, as I was led to say a word against the old system of "diets," so I am constrained to withhold my approval from what has been known in the past generation as family visitation. I refer to the method of announcing from the pulpit certain families to be visited on certain days, and to the kind of

exercise that was ordinarily conducted under that arrangement. It was usually a formal proceeding, in which there was but little life or feeling, and which stood in the way of that real and constant communion that ought to exist between all associated Christians, and especially between pastor and people. And, in addition to this, it cultivated the feeling that a meeting once a year, with a few questions and a prayer, was all that was to be expected, or feared, from a spiritual director; and that whatever other intercourse might take place between them, could of right be commonplace and insignificant. We are permitted to be thankful that this plan of communication has passed away, if we are able to introduce and follow what is more attractive and profitable. And we do introduce that which is more attractive and profitable, when we fill all our relations with the aroma of piety, honoring Jesus by the reverential mention of his name, as well in common conversation as in stated religious services, and exhibiting the spirit of his gospel in our everyday acknowledgment of his truth and kingdom.

Thus far I have spoken of pastoral inquiry as being conducted by the pastor in person. *III. I would suggest that it may be done by proxy: that is, through the instrumentality of other persons.* And, in this connection, the eldership, of course, come first into notice, having the right to be associated with the pastor in all his duties and privileges as connected with the spiritual life of the people. Indeed, I should give it its acknowledgment as being endowed with real pastoral functions; but I pass that at present with the mere mention, preferring to discuss the help good elders may be in discovering the habits of those whom they are appointed to serve. It is a common

thought that elders are only useful for ritual duties. They help legislate in cases of ecclesiastical routine and discipline; they carry around the bread and wine on communion days, and they represent the congregation in presbyteries and synods. These are the main uses to which the popular thought devotes them. It is a misfortune that it is so, and the fact that it is so, suggests that the Church is not properly availing itself of the service that is placed at its disposal. But though these servants of the church can do good to the people by a direct ministry, it is through the pastor they are mainly to be felt. They afford a link of communication and fellowship which has no other existence; and, having a local and familiar oversight of families and their members, they often know of spiritual wants and conditions which it would puzzle the minister to discover. In addition to these, why may not the Sabbath school superintendent be another helper? Why may not inquiry be made by Sabbath school teachers? Why shall not judicious men and women give their assistance, as, taught by the Spirit of God, they practically love their neighbors as themselves? Why, indeed, may not a whole church be a kind of society of religious inquiry, in which, bearing each others' burdens, the members shall also make themselves mutually acquainted with prevailing wants and conditions, and thus assist the pastor in a knowledge of what is necessary for his work? Perhaps this is suggesting an ideal situation rather than a possible one; and yet the gospel, having its proper influence through its right presentation, and the blessing of the Spirit on it in answer to prayer, this unselfish and benevolent oneness ought to be a realization. As conditions actually exist, however, I should not leave such counsel

without inculcating the use of a prudence that would provide against mistakes and misfortunes. Too much inquiry by persons of poor spiritual attainments and defective judgments would be productive of irreparable mischief.

I might now dismiss the subject, but feel disposed to pursue it further in one direction, mentioning some things that are necessary to prepare the pastor for doing that to which, in this relation, he is called. And, in doing this, I pass pastoral theology, as it is taught in the schools and in books, referring to some other matters not always discussed.

1. *In trying to learn the personal religious life and habits of the people, the pastor ought to study delicacy.* It must be kept in mind that this is the most delicate work a man ever undertakes. Everything else is rudeness in comparison. Whether we consider it as related to that which is interior in the feelings, and which is, hence, cherished sensitively, or as that which is connected with the other life, with its tremendous results of pain or blessing, we realize at once that it is of infinite delicacy. A mistake must be productive of harm beyond calculation. The man who engages in it is reckless and daring if he do not make careful preparation. This suggests a whole course of personal training. It demands that the pastor shall study even physical grace, that he may not intrude upon a refined spirit or tender sensibility. It requires schooling of the temper, the tongue, the susceptibilities, the voice, the touch, and whatever goes to make up the workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, in one of the most trying situations of the world. For proper and successful inquiry can only be made through conciliation and the counsel that is addressed to the finer

susceptibilities. The inquiry that is a dread is useless. Learning, kindness, piety even, are all thwarted by a gawky grossness that stuns and startles the sensibilities it would win and benefit. It is gentleness that opens the hearts of either man or woman, and as for little children, the rude teacher can only offend and drive them away by his clumsiness. This, again, I can only mention, without giving it expansion and illustration.

2. *He ought to have a knowledge of human nature.*

In other words, he ought to be able to exercise discrimination and discretion in the variety of his approaches. It has been urged by some prominent minister that a thorough study of phrenology is a great necessity for any pastor who would be successful. It enables him to judge of character by the physiognomy. By the shape of the head, color of the hair, expression of the eyes, height of the forehead, shape of the nose, and general appearance of the features, he will know the dispositions, and, hence, will be able to make his approaches with complete intelligence. There is an element of truth in the theory which need not be cast aside in discarding its exaggerations. But pastors soon get to know their people by other means than by the bumps and depressions of the cranium. Even a brief intercourse with them in the work of the church reveals what they are in disposition, and enables the teacher to know upon what sides they are accessible. Temperaments vastly differ. What is pleasing to one is distasteful to another. The method adopted to stir one to gratitude may fill another with disgust. The same mind also, will have its differing moods. To-day bright, tender, with its gates all open, to-morrow it may be dark, gloomy, with its portals locked against every visitor.

Life, too, is modified by circumstances and conditions ; by health and disease, by adversity and prosperity, and by all the thousand and one influences that checker and mold it into its prevailing form. Age wishes another touch than that which is enjoyed by youth ; the advanced Christian, who knows the secret of the Lord, needs other treatment than the one just learning the things of the kingdom. If it is interesting to study all this diversity in the interest of common intelligence, it is vastly more so when it is done in its relation to the cause of Jesus, and the developing of the souls of his people. And he who, as an ambassador of Christ, would inquire into the life and habits of his parishioners, can only do it wisely as he recognizes all these modifying conditions, and adapts his efforts to their improvement.

3. *Another means of preparation is a faithful preaching of the gospel.* We are only able to inquire into the habits of other people when we are careful of our own, and as preaching the gospel is the duty of our lives, we must be able to say we preach it faithfully before we can be critical with those to whom we preach. A lazy preacher, one who neglects the duties of his office, who spends his time frivolously, who abuses his trust by trading off his opportunities for selfish gratification—one who is in any way unfaithful, is not the man to ask about the souls of other Christians. Faithful himself in studying, praying, and preaching, and in cultivating the ministerial graces which his position requires, he has a right to look into the habits of those for whom he is responsible. It is then, and then alone, that he will properly understand them. Then he can reprove, exhort, entreat, soothe, and otherwise help. Then he can plead his clear conscience in

every word he utters ; but, burdened by the thought that he has trifled with the awful trusts with which he is charged, he must work against a feeling that is stifling and distressing. Recreation is good, and time devoted to rest from work is often time most worthily employed. The industrious man, who labors up to his strength, has a clear conscience when enjoying the respite of a day devoted to relaxation. We do not think any the less of Ralph Erskine that he eased his mind by playing on the violin. Charles Kingsley does not suffer in our estimation because he fished and hunted, for we know how consuming were his labors. Norman Macleod, we feel, was fairly entitled to his trips and recreations. I hesitate to say, however, that much of what is now practiced in the way of pastoral recreation has a right to our endorsement. \* \* \* \* It is the faithful preaching of the gospel that prepares the hearts of the people for receiving the minister. His lessons, steeped in prayer and communion with God, will be like the sun which expands the rose and lets loose its fragrance to the winds. His power is in the fact that he is faithful as a messenger. He is welcomed because the objects of his care can say, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace ; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth."

4. *Another qualification to be sought is fullness of spiritual life.* This I may mention as the great necessity. The impulse for soul inquiry comes from the power within. Many forms of activity in clerical work may have another origin. A minister may love to study and preach because he loves the intellectual exercise or popular

effect. He may be able in government, and excel in executive management, because he has ambition to control and build up a cause. He may even, if poorly sanctified, strive selfishly for success, because he is dependent on it for his living. But the wish to enter into spiritual fellowship and act within and upon the spiritual life, and to gain a knowledge of religious heart-habits, must spring from another source. It is this which makes him feel he *must* go and speak. It is this which drives him as by an irresistible power, against all his former habits, against his natural disposition, against his earlier prepossessions, and against the traditions of his situation, to encourage, remonstrate, exhort, and comfort, as the Spirit gives him direction. He sees a soul he thinks is lying in darkness, and the yearning of his spirit is towards giving it light. He sees another he believes to be full of pain, and struggling against adverse circumstances in the way of duty, and he says he must give assistance. He knows of the joy of nearness to God, of the sorrow of spiritual desertion, of the power of grace to console and strengthen, of the peace resulting from communion with Jesus, and he seeks to make his way to hearts to tell them his invaluable secrets.

All this being so—and I can only say a word where I would like to write a page—he alone is able to rightly make inquiry into the personal religious life of the people, who has a deep religious life of his own. It is the overflow of his spirit that gives him alike his enterprise and his success. In this department of our work we are the veriest quacks in existence, till we have sought, by prayer, study of God's word, humility, and the cross-bearing of the gospel—until we have thus sought and ob-

tained the spirit that shall transform the life from its native selfishness into the benevolence of Jesus, and that will make us say, "We cannot forbear to tell the things we have both seen and heard." In filling him with a longing for communion, in giving him a yearning for hearts, in stimulating all his spiritual faculties, this fulness of spirit makes the man of God the one who can best go on this mission of heavenly inquiry. O that we all had more of it, and that out of the abundance of the heart we could speak always a word in season to him that is weary !

And under this power there will not be a mere zeal, an impetuosity, acting impulsively like a fever of romance or zealotry. The Spirit is a Spirit of wisdom to direct. It teaches, moulds, gives poise to the judgment, and even tells the soul its duty. No man is sent out without an aim. Each and all have their mission distinctly marked. "And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise and go toward the South, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert." He went, and his mission was not a fruitless journey, but was blessed with the triumph of grace in the case of the Ethiopian, who sat in his chariot reading the words of the prophet. Paul walked out to the river-side, where prayer was wont to be made, and the Lord was directing him to the heart of a woman which was to be blessed by his ministry. And the reason why so many good Christians so wonderfully succeed in their appeals to souls, is not simply because they are discreet and urgent, and have studied psychology and the metaphysics of the gospel. That may be true of them, but the great reason is, that they live filled with the Spirit, and the Spirit gives them direction as to where they shall go, and what they shall

say. The reason why we so often fail is that we try to do heart work by intellectual and physical methods. We think we can live a poor spiritual life, and then, depending on the Spirit, who promises to accomplish his own purposes, do our work as well as they who are day by day full of faith and the Holy Ghost. We are not sent to all persons. One needs us, another does not. We are not sent to so many a day; possibly one or two may be our mission for a week or a month. We are to be always ready. We are to watch and wait. God's time, place, way, and aim—let us seek to know these, and then we shall be safe.

I have lately read the following story in the narrative of the life of that remarkable French woman, Madame Guyon. She had gone to attend some religious services at the celebrated church of Notre Dame, and, as the weather was inviting, she walked instead of riding, as was her custom. Just as she had passed one of the bridges erected over the river Seine, a person appeared at her side and entered into conversation with her—a man religiously solemn and instructive in his appearance and intercourse, but so poor and almost repulsive in his attire, that, at their first meeting, thinking him an object of charity, she offered him alms. "This man spoke to me," she says, "in a wonderful manner, of God and divine things. His remarks on the Holy Trinity were more instructive and sublime than I had heard on any other occasion, or from any other person. But his conversation was chiefly personal. I know not how it was, but he seemed to have acquired a wonderful knowledge of my character. He professed to regard me as a Christian, and spoke especially of my love to God, and of my numerous

charities to the poor. And while he recognized all that was good and Christian-like in me, he felt it to be his duty to speak plainly to me of my faults. He told me I was too fond of my personal attractions; and enumerated, one after another, the various faults and imperfections which characterized this part of my life. And then, assuming a higher tone of religious precept, he gave me to understand that God required, not merely a heart of which it could only be said it is forgiven, but a heart which could properly, and in some real sense, be designated as *holy*; that it was not sufficient to escape hell, but that he demanded, also, the subjection of our natures and the utmost purity and height of Christian attainment. The circumstance of his wearing the dress of a mendicant did not prevent him speaking like one having authority. There was something in him incapable of being concealed by the poverty of his outward appearance, which commanded my silence and profound respect. The Spirit of God bore witness to what he said. The words of this remarkable man, whom I never saw before, and whom I have never seen since, penetrated my very soul. Deeply affected by what he had said, I had no sooner reached the church than I fainted away." This occurred at a time which was a crisis in her spiritual experience. She now gave herself to God with renewed devotion, and began in an especial way to receive those remarkable blessings which, we know, made her a burning and shining light for France and the world. The incident illustrates the way in which God sends out his ministers to those whom they are to instruct and assist, and, also, the manner in which he meets in this behalf, the wants of souls that are struggling up towards his holiness. In after life, Madame Guyon

was renowned for the ministry she performed for those who needed her help, and the introduction she received to communities and persons, was always through the fame of her all-abounding piety. Her piety preceded her. The light of her soul was projected far in advance of her coming. The glow of her religion warmed needy souls before her presence was realized; and waiting God's direction, standing always ready for his appointment, she found souls desiring her counsel, and yearning for the blessing of her goodness.

Brethren, I might almost obliterate all I said in the beginning of this essay, and answer the whole inquiry by saying: The best way to conduct personal religious inquiry into the life and habits of the people, and the only way, is to live near the Lord Jesus Christ, and let the radiance of our piety find the hearts that await it, as the seeds of this spring day expect and respond to the warmth and nurture of the sun.

I can only, in conclusion, refer to two considerations:

(1) *These thoughts teach us the responsibility resting on those who are ministers.* They are engaged in a holy work. If it requires all of human prudence and skill, it also demands that this be under sanctified direction, and that hearts divinely invigorated, give it power through the reign of promised grace. It is a great honor put upon the ministry that they have committed to their care souls that have been bought with the precious blood of Christ. No other trust of earth is equal to it. It is even an honor that men and women will agree to trust them with interests that are so sacred and precious. But this being so, their responsibility becomes the greater, and the overwhelming thought of obligation and weakness settles like

a mountain on the soul. How it should send us to the Infinite Strength, beseeching the grace and help of the gospel, and how it should stimulate our efforts, that, using all opportunities and instrumentalities, we may discharge the duties of our holy calling.

(2) *It teaches us the necessity of the spiritual life.*

We only succeed when we have the life of Christ. We read freely in the newspapers of the muscular Christianity, and of the power there is in brawny strength ; and certainly, a sound mind in a sound body is the natural and effective condition of human life. But muscle alone is poor material with which to manipulate the soul. It needs to be touched with gentler instruments, and it is when its keys are played upon by the invisible fingers of a sanctified and sympathizing heart that it responds with music that is heard in heaven. McCheyne was able to know the hearts of the people of St. Peter's, because he had the key to their affections in his own ardent spirit. Hewitson, a man of like faith and spirit, knew the spiritual condition of each member of his congregation as intimately as that of the persons composing his own family. Adelaide Newton could read the secrets of souls to whom she was divinely sent, because she had realized them all in her own experience. We see Anna Shipton quietly resting in a hostelry on the mountain or in a cottage by a lake. She waits the Lord's guidance and watches the intimations of his will. When his providences teach her, she starts out, not always knowing whither she goes, but it is to some soul to whom she is a minister ; and resting in faith upon the promised grace, she finds herself at home at length among the embraces and rejoicings of one who calls her sent of God.

Let us seek this abounding life. Let us pray for it, work for it. And when we receive it, let us go resolutely to our labor. It is God's work. But let us go reverentially, humbly, softly. The places where we stand are holy. We are approaching and seeking to enter the temples of the living God. Here and now, if ever in all our lives, we ought to make sure we can claim for ourselves the blessed assurance that "the steps of the good man are ordered by the Lord."

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### THE COUNTRY CHURCH.

It is part of my happiness to enjoy the personal friendship of your pastor.\* And it is to this circumstance that I owe the privilege of taking part in these ceremonies. There is no other explanation of my being here. I am not a native of this region. My early life was not in any sense identified with the history of this church or community. And I even came from a part of the Church that was not in fullest ecclesiastical sympathy with that which exercises supervision and control over Mount Lebanon. Perhaps, however, this is saying too much. There are other bonds than these. For, members together in Christ, we are near each other by ties that are stronger than those of physical relationship or neighborhood interests, and have mutual claims of assistance and courtesy that far outweigh all those of even denominational brotherhood. I, therefore, bring my salutation, not as a stranger and foreigner, but as one who desires to be received as a fellow-citizen with the saints and of the household of God,

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\*The Rev. J. C. Boyd, D. D.

who here commemorate the goodness of the Master as they recall the blessings of the past and the virtues of their ancestors.

The thought occurs that this early organization was formed in the country, and also, I suppose, in the woods. It is the country yet. The great city which carries on its many industries near and below it, has never been able to push its way up the hill. And serene and quiet, amid rural peace and plenty, the fathers and children have been permitted to sit under their own vines and fig trees, with none to molest or make them afraid.

The Church owes much to the cities. They are centers of influence, not only local, but widespread; and the wealth that accumulates in metropolitan churches, is often lavishly contributed to needy congregations on the frontier, and to the spread of the gospel in foreign countries. The most liberal benefactions, also, that are made to institutions of learning, or the more strictly benevolent causes that so distinguish our civilization, come also from the cities. They are, indeed, the great hearts of the bodies to which they belong, and put out, by means of the press and other agencies they employ, as by so many channels of influence, the spirit and sentiment that, in a large measure, give tone and vigor to those whom they reach. Nor should we forget that the cities furnish us with some of the noblest examples of Christian faith and practice. I think Dr. Guthrie was not exaggerating when he said, "Cities have been the lamps of light along the pathway of humanity and religion. Within them science has given birth to her noblest discoveries. Behind their walls freedom has fought her noblest battles. They have stood on the surface of the earth like great breakwaters, rolling

back or turning aside the swelling tide of oppression. Cities have, indeed, been the cradles of human liberty. They have been the radiating, active centers of almost all Church and State reformation." Speaking, also, of the kind of religious life developed in the cities, he says, "Christians are like trees ; they grow tall when they stand together ; running no chance, like the solitary tree, of becoming dwarfed, stunted, gnarled, or bark bound. You never saw, yet, a tall and tapering mast, which, catching the winds of heaven in its outspread wings, impelled the gallant ship over the sea, and over the rolling billows, but its home had been in the forests ; there, with its foot planted on the Norwegian rock, it grew amid neighbors that drew each other up towards the skies. So is it with piety. The Christian power that is moving the sluggish world on, the Christian benevolence and energy that have changed the face of society, the Christian zeal that has gone forth, burning to win kingdoms and nations for Jesus, have, in most instances, been born and nursed in the cities. To the active life and constant intercourse which belong to them, religion has owed its highest polish, and that freedom from peculiarities and corners, which the stones of the sea beach acquire by being rolled against each other in the swell and surf of the daily tides."

We may agree with all this, and yet be thankful for the country. It has its own charms, and produces its own blessings. And I think the average piety of the country church is, at least, equal to that of its municipal neighbor or acquaintance ; and that, though it may not have the "mast"—like specimens such as Dr. Guthrie describes, it has yet a distributed character which is of equal value under the divine measurement.

If we indulge a disposition to sentiment, we will not fail to congratulate the country church upon many of its features and conditions, which are exceptionally agreeable. They belong to it, and to it alone. It stands, usually, in some situation that is in keeping with its character and uses, and the natural influences that gather about it become but parts of itself. Sometimes it is on an elevation or height, as is this one of Mount Lebanon, suggesting to us the thought of the city set on a hill which cannot be hid. Again it is in a valley, beautifully retired from the more open thoroughfares and the traffic of business life. It is once set down at the end of a quiet lane, which is, indeed, but a part of itself—its entrance aisle. And again it is lodged on the brow of a hill, overhung with forest trees and vines, older and more reverent than itself. Wherever it is, it creates for itself an air of grace and sanctity. Its very appearance is religious. And the traveler who passes it on the week-day, when its blinds are closed and its doors are shut, although he hears no voice and sees no sign of life, yet feels that the sequestered building is preaching to him a gospel of peace, and singing to his spirit a song of silent psalmody. And he must be poorly imbued with the spirit of the biblical sentiment, if he do not find himself involuntarily saying, "Mount Zion stands most beautiful, the joy of all the land."

I think the people who in after life refer with most pathos to their early places of worship, are reared in the nurture of the country church. Whatever its sacredness may be, there is but little romance connected with the church of the city. It seems to partake of the spirit that surrounds it. The drays and omnibuses, the shouting drivers and hucksters, the jar and jargon of the street,

drive away its gentler associations, and people it with other harsher ones in their stead. Great events transpiring within or about it may invest it with a historic interest, and cause it thus to become a heritage to be cherished by after generations, as, for example, we affectionately revere the old Greyfriars, or thoughtfully admire Westminster Abbey; but there must be wanting towards them that personal attachment which is felt for the more retired and less conspicuous meeting-house on the hill-side. No one thinks of being poetic as he remembers the tabernacle on Fifth Avenue, or Wall Street. It is the recollection of the "village church," or the "meeting-house by the spring," or of some other rustic seat of conventicle, that awakes the tenderest enthusiasm of his heart, and fills him with the magic spell of its pathos. The mention of a green grocery or a marble front, which as a boy he passed and repassed when he was going to church, will cause a man but little emotion. But let him hear of the rural path over which he walked with his mother, the fountain from which he drank, and the oak under which he sat during the "intermission," and his soul will at once be filled with feeling. The thought of these will sweeten, for a moment at least, a life that has, perhaps, been deeply charged with bitterness, and point to a rest and peace in the world to come.

And this suggests the thought that there is likely to be a stability about the country church which helps to make it thus delightful, and to perpetuate its influence. Its patrons, who are also its beneficiaries, are people not given much to change. They have their homes, and stay with them. The farmer who is well settled on his homestead is usually there for life. He has a comfortable place,

and an abundance of the Father's gifts ; he is within easy reach of the school house, whither his children go to school; to the markets where he carries his produce, and makes his purchases; and above all to the church; and, wise man that he is, he encourages no disposition to cut loose from so desirable an anchorage. As a result of conditions such as these, the church is likely to be permanent and to exist with but little variation through many generations, other than that of growth in spirit as it receives additional grace and adapts itself to the improved relations of society. It has no temptation to "move up town," or seek a more fashionable situation, nor is it likely to see its members scatter away under the influence of some change of local habits. If it have no remarkable gains, neither is it likely to have disastrous losses. If it do not have experiences of rapid growth, it will have the blessing of holding its own; and to do this where it is master of the situation is to live amid the joy of perpetual triumph. Its youth takes the place of fathers who pass away, the surplus of them going off to pioneer in other fields, or to teach and work and preach in such other situations as Providence may open to them.

All this must help promote that habit of thoughtfulness which is part of a true Christian character. We sometimes say the meditative or contemplative part of our religion is being sacrificed to our spirit of hurry and work; and that a less robust and fruitful life is the unhappy consequence. But if meditation is to live any place, it must be among the grass and under the trees. It is not possible that we shall live under such influences as the peacefulness and tranquility that reign on the hills, without feeling their power. They naturally move us to sober contem-

plation. But when the mind is thus acted on from without, its disposition to reflection is stronger in proportion as it is accustomed to think of God, and the inner and higher world of spirit and immortality. The great truths of the gospel associate themselves with the facts of the material world, and the two together become the power which fills the soul with earnest thought and profound reflection. If the "undevout astronomer is mad," so the habitually thoughtless disciple of the woods and field is no less wanting in reverence. It so happens, also, that the instruction in such places is of a kind that increases the thoughtful spirit. It is itself thoughtful. It comes from a mind which is in the habit of comparing, adjusting, ruminating upon the facts of which it is possessed, and is therefore prepared for producing right impressions. I suspect no boy or girl is more likely to know the catechism than one who is reared in a rural home. No applicant for admission into membership in the church is likely to exhibit more intelligence respecting distinctive principles or fundamental faith than they. And if we wished to find persons well read in affairs pertaining to the church, we would go to the homes outside the cities and the busy centers of population. There they read of the covenants. Their minds are full of Confessions and Testimonies; and not of these alone, but of the Word of God, and the power of its gospel. They are on intimate terms with Hamilton and Knox, and the long line of worthies who fought for conscience and liberty in the lands of our fathers; and they are equally at home in reciting the names and situations of the ministers and other leaders of their own day and religious association. I need but appeal to the fathers and mothers of Mount Lebanon to get the

response that what I say is true. They, I am sure, are not so taken up with the secular newspapers that they forget the more solid and substantial mental and moral food that is offered them in the current religious literature of the day, in the creeds and confessions of the fathers, and above all in the holy Word of God.

It is worthy of note that nearly all our martyr stories are connected with a people either pastoral or agricultural. The persecuted people of Scotland are associated in our minds with its glens and moors and mountains; and there is hardly a spot in some parts of that land of "grey heath and shaggy wood," that is not connected, in memory or chronicle, with some deed of tragedy and holy heroism. We see the quiet church charged upon by the dragoons; the thatched manse of the minister ravaged by the cavaliers and swordsmen. The old shepherd sat by the ingleside talking of the goodness of a covenant God, engaged, at the same time, in knitting a supply of garments for the winter, when his house was assaulted by the soldiers, and he was dragged away from his family. The widow prayed on the heath for mercy, but saw her children perish at her side, and was shot by Claverhouse. And in the mountain ravines, and out on the moors, stood the homes and churches where God's witnesses were trained for their testimony, and where they nobly gave it in the strength of their Master. And, in language slightly accommodated so as to embrace many instead of one, we may say:

"The Avon to the Severn runs,  
The Severn to the sea;  
And the martyr's dust is carried off  
Wide as their waters be."

And I think, indeed, that this day on this hill of Zion has brought to all of us a sober spirit which we might have sought for in vain in scenes less serene and tranquil. Nature is speaking to us in its season of maturity, when every tone is touched with its own sad spirit. We cannot refuse its gentle eloquence. We cannot elude its dreamy spell. The clouds that lean down to us so confidingly, themselves up against the sky, the sunshine which falls with its benedictions on the hills, the silent glory that rests on the woods, even the crisp leaves which rustle with every footfall, all seem to sound down into the depths of our being, and appeal to our profoundest sensibility. The tender grace of the seventy-five years we review and commemorate seems to have condensed in the atmosphere, and shed its baptism in the house of God. Our hearts listen to music that thoughtless ears are not permitted to hear, and drink from fountains whose sweet waters are as much a holy mystery as a spiritual refreshment and heavenly solace.

Nor must it be forgotten that the country is constantly making its contributions to the city, and oftentimes of the very best of its material. It is true that there are hundreds who go from happy homes among the hills and are lost amid the corruptions of the overcrowded streets. The stories of the boys and girls, who, attracted by the glitter and glare of the metropolis, have been quickly wrecked and swept away as part of its gathering garbage, are stories that will never cease to be related. And yet many of the noblest and best of those who, in private and public life, give to the cities and churches their force and character, were reared under just such conditions as we to-day commemorate. Do you

see that lady out on her mission of lowly charity? She goes to the homes of the poor and suffering, carrying food and cordials and the better bread of everlasting life. Dark garrets and dim cellars are alike acquainted with her steps, and the sick and dying hearken to her voice almost as if an angel were speaking to them with a message direct from heaven. In hospitals, infirmaries, relief societies, with the ragged and starving gathered about her, and in the more spiritual work of the church she is expending her energy, and distributing her good cheer, and her praise goes from lip to lip, and is carried and sent to distant places by those who have received her ministry. Ministers, physicians, and men of every calling unite to tell of her services, and their thanks mingle with those who have received of her care, as they together thank the Father for this self-denying child. Where was her early home? It was away off by the mountain stream. She sang her childhood's song with the larks of dewy meadows. Plucking the daisy by the roadway, and the beechnut by the spring; rambling over the hills, and strolling along the mountain paths, she never dreamed of the life that should call her to any other sphere. But God taught her by the gurgle of the water, by the majesty of the mountain storm, by the gentle dews, by the affections of a rustic home, by the service of the village church. When the world is glad for her work and example, let it remember whence she sprang.

And if you stand on Coal Hill or Mount Washington, and look down into Pittsburgh—if, perchance, you may be able to do so—you will not fail to remember that nearly all the United Presbyterian churches, filled, as they are, with able ministers of the gospel, are indebted for

them to regions strictly rural. The farms sent them to college and the seminary ; they were literally called from the plow and from feeding sheep to stand upon the watchtowers, to keep the doors of the house of the Lord, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. And Dr. Guthrie, writing as he did of the city, yet, no doubt, remembered that he was a child of the fields, catching their inspiration to make him the matchless orator he became ; and that Hugh Miller, the ablest elder of St. John's, the real leader in the cause of the Disruption, and the greatest man Scotland ever produced, was cradled among the rocks of Cromarty, and sung to sleep by the songs of the sea.

But we do not need to go so far as Scotland for our illustrations. We are here to-day celebrating the anniversary of the settlement of the Rev. Joseph Kerr, D. D., as pastor of this congregation of St. Clair. And it would be worth doing if we were to speak simply of the work he did here, and the influence he left behind him. But this country seat prepared and sent him off to other labors. As the historians have told us, in 1825 he went to become pastor of a church in Pittsburgh, and professor of theology in Allegheny, and a great part of the city is still willing to bless the day that gave it his services. But the records tell us also of the Rev. Joseph Reynolds Kerr, who was born in St. Clair on the 8th of January, 1807, who also conducted a ministry in the city in the pulpit made vacant by the death of his father—a ministry of rare earnestness and power. And still further the annals record that, on the 30th of June, 1811, was born at St. Clair the Rev. Moses Kerr, who also preached in Allegheny, taught as Professor of Languages in the Western University, and of Biblical Literature and Criticism in

Allegheny Seminary. We learn, also, that at a still later date, there was born David R. Kerr, who in due time became a minister, and devoted himself to preaching the gospel. He—as was the case with his father and brother—was called to the First church, Pittsburgh, which position, however, Providence did not permit him to occupy. But the city still claimed and received him, and, as editor of the *Preacher*, and now the *United Presbyterian*, and as Professor of Church History and Government in the Theological Seminary, he has for many years been identified with its religious interests. No man is known more familiarly on its streets to-day, nor is there anyone who receives more deservedly the respect and confidence of its citizens. The older brothers have been carried home; he is with us to-day to take part in these memorial services, doing honor alike to his position and work, as also to the name you are so glad to recall and revere.

And who will say Pittsburgh is not indebted to St. Clair? There are statistics, no doubt, to tell how much produce is carried each week, or month, or year to the city from these farms or orchards, and quite recently a railroad has been constructed to assist in carrying its milk and beef and potatoes to the market. And there is many a good citizen, living there amid the smoke, who thinks gratefully that right up here there are sources of supply which are an unchanging dependence. After all, St. Clair's noblest contributions have been of men she has sent to preach the gospel in her churches, to build up in the streets the congregations of Christians which are to-day her pride and strength. And let it always be remembered that this church, and churches like it, standing quietly in bucolic situations, are an important part of the

religious force and influence which are helping forward the gospel, and keeping back the progress of vice and crime.

I might say much more, but time forbids. It ought to be added, however, that in connection with this, there is affecting testimony to the value of the country church in the city which it gathers about it—the sad, silent city of its dead. If we go there we will find the record of many lives that were nobly lived and triumphantly ended, and which, leaving works to follow them, have carried up to the higher sanctuary the spirit of praise they learned so well below. “Our fathers, where are they?” If the graves and tablets answer, they suggest, as well, the sons and daughters who have gone abroad to the work of life, and who have upheld, or are upholding, the cross in many parts of our own country, and in lands beyond the sea. And from the prairie, the mountain, the far Pacific slope, and the Golden Gate, from hamlet, and village, and city, the thought comes back of men and women who remember Mount Lebanon, and similar places, as the sacred schools of their childhood years, and the resting places of their beloved dead.

I will now be pardoned if, simply saying that to everything good there is more or less drawback, I do not attempt to describe what may be called the other side of the country church. A word or two respecting the work it may do, is all I will have time to add. Of their great work—that of preaching the gospel, securing the salvation of souls, and their nurture in the faith, I need say nothing at all. It is for this they are established and maintained, so that when we speak of them we recognize their mission, and have before our minds the preacher in his pulpit, the congregation gathered in its place for worship, and the

round of services and devotion which belong to the house of God. Let us think for a moment of some other influences which it is part of its mission to exert, and which, perhaps, it may sometimes forget.

There is a ministry of good taste which deserves to be remembered, as an accompaniment, or rather as a product of the gospel. I do not know where it more properly has its home than in the country. Nowhere else are there so many examples of it. And nowhere else is there so much real stimulation to its cultivation. Mr. Cowper has been severely criticized for saying, "God made the country, and man made the town," and yet there is a way of understanding the remark which protects it from every charge of irreverence. The touch of God is more surely on the hills than on the municipal halls and monuments. And after all we say of art, as seen in its best productions, we remember it is but second-hand ; a poor copy of the great original. And I think they who worship amid the beauty which God has made in the sky and fields, should get from it a lesson of personal culture, and seek to make themselves harmonize with what is so divinely becoming in their surroundings. The Christian home should not offend the culture which comes from communion with Him who has made all things beautiful in his season. And radiating from the worship and work, there should go, as from centers of living power, a healthy stream of influence to start up verdure and flowers, and awake the songs and gladness of a renovated life.

But religion is a reasonable thing, appealing to our intelligence and the use of our rational faculties. It is intended to make men think, as well as believe. We all know its general influence in this direction, and how

schools and colleges take their rise and receive their support from its nurture. What is true of it in general, has its special illustrations, and we are accustomed to think of the churches as helps to the development of a higher exhibition of intellectual life. The preaching of a pastor, while addressing the heart and conscience, must first be delivered to the reason, and it will be exceptionally poor, if it do not add at least one new thought to some inquiring faculty. The Sabbath school has its intellectual as well as its religious uses, and in other arrangements about the church, there is more or less of that which calls the people to a thought of a higher life of mind and rational character. The church ought to bring its papers, magazines, and books, and should assist in turning the attention of its youth to the pleasure and profit to be derived from literary study. I do not know why it is not the province of the minister of the gospel to recommend good books and other literature, and to stir up in the minds of those whom he wishes to teach, a wish to be acquainted with poetry, history, good and great men, and the life of the world we live in. And I believe our religion will have made a great gain, when in every congregation we shall have congregational libraries, well filled with choice books, for study and entertainment, and so under the control of the pastor that it shall be a means of grace, as well as of æsthetic and more general culture. This will require of the pastor, of course, that he shall know something of books himself, and it will require of the people that they shall be willing to expend a little money to be used in providing for themselves these priceless treasures. The church that thus stands and acts becomes a burning light.

It is an oasis, fresh with living verdure, and bubbling up its pure bright waters for the drink of the thirsty and the cleansing of the defiled.

On this day of reminiscence and review, Mount Lebanon will naturally be asking itself how far it has succeeded in accomplishing the objects contemplated by its founders and successors—in other words, how well it has achieved the work of its mission as a congregation of Christians. The weightier matters it will think of most, but I suggest these lighter, subordinate ones as also worthy of consideration, and if our services to-day shall so associate the past and present as to make us more fruitful of good in the future, they will deserve, at least, to be cherished as among our more agreeable experiences, and to have a place among the memorabilia which shall be read by your children.

I should not forget the romance of being on Mount Lebanon. The poet's description will not quite suit it :

Now upon Syria's land of roses,  
Softly the light of eve reposes,  
And, like a glory, the broad sun  
Hangs over sainted Lebanon ;  
Whose head in wintry grandeur towers,  
And whitens with eternal sleet,  
While summer in a veil of flowers  
Is sleeping rosy at her feet.

And yet the fact of the name should not fail to remind us of the great original, so celebrated in song and story. But where are the cedars ? We see them not, yet something like them. Better growths than they, for,

Like the palm tree flourishing, shall be the righteous one,  
He shall, like to the cedar grow, that is on Lebanon ;  
And in old age, when others fade, he fruit still forth shall bring,  
He shall be fat and full of sap, and always flourishing.

## NECESSARY RULERS.

Deuteronomy 1:13.

The original account of this is found in Exodus 18 :  
21. Let us read it there :

Moreover, thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.

We have recently elected, ordained, and installed elders in this church. It may be useful, therefore, to study, briefly, while these events are fresh in our minds, some of the principles and facts which they bring to us. Because the time is brief, I will speak of elders alone; some other day it will be proper to discuss the deacons as well.

How are elders appointed? We have practically answered that question by what we have done. They are appointed by the people of a congregation, who choose from among themselves those whom they wish to represent them in that capacity. In other words, they are selected by vote. Our system is essentially democratic. Accordingly, the exercise of the suffrage determines such matters as these; but the appointment is not completed until, as provided for by the rules of the Church, the chosen are ordained and installed.

What kind of men are elders to be? Not perfect men, of course. Of these we have none, and if we had even one, he would be unsuitable. In such an office there is a fitness in having "like passions with ourselves." Not men of any particular business, trade or calling. Not men of similar tastes, dispositions, or habits. Diversity in these respects is an advantage, which, however, need not be sought for, since enough of it will appear in any set of men who may be chosen. Men may be extremely unlike in common ways, and yet be equally good elders. The qualities that mark them as fit are mainly fundamental in their nature.

First of all, it need hardly be said they must be men of piety. In New Testament phrase they would be called "good men," "men full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." "Take you wise men," the text says. In this wisdom is included, as its first and main quality, that of which we speak, sincere and earnest piety. This is something more than a simple profession of faith. It is greatly more, also, than that negative excellence which consists in being free from open sin, or, as it is ecclesiastically called, public scandal. It is more, too, than mere inoffensiveness. Piety is a positive thing. It is a force. It must be felt. The pious man is a man of momentum. He is not the mist that lies harmlessly in the valleys: he is the steam that is pushing on the business of the world. He is one of heart. There is burning within him a flame of love that has been kindled by the Holy Spirit himself.

The elder is a man of practical interest in the church. This includes an interest in the truth, or doctrines, upon which the church is founded. Students of the Bible, therefore, the elders are to be. Such students, too, as

study it not solely for personal edification, but for use in behalf of others. They become representatives of a system of doctrine and usages that give distinct character to a church, and need, therefore, a line of study suitable to what is expected of them.

No course of preparation is prescribed for elders. There are no seminaries for them. It is not supposed they need them. They carry no diplomas. It is but right, however, that one being an officer of so important character, should direct his reading and thoughts along the lines which his position opens up to him. He may properly be expected, as he can afford it, to add some new books to his library. His range of reading may be extended. The character of it may be diversified.

This will not be a hardship at all ; on the other hand, it will be one of the advantages of his situation. It gives him a prompting, but also a practical opportunity, to increase his stock of knowledge, provide himself a new education, and fit himself for the performance of special duties.

But further, the usefulness of one any place depends on the interest he takes in what is given him to do. An elder, therefore, should have an interest in the practical affairs of the church. This, perhaps, is only description in our case: it is not instruction. Nevertheless, it is important as a principle, and should, therefore, be kept in mind. Two men are employed as clerks in a store. They put in the same number of hours, and are as regular in their places, and, to a casual observer, are equally useful; but one of them, because he has greater interest in the business, will sell twice as many goods, and secure twice as much patronage. Two men are engaged to work

on a farm. They begin their work at the same time, and continue as late in the evening, but one of them, because he is interested in the farm, stock, crops, will be twice as valuable as the other who works only for his pay. The elder, if he be a true one, must have an interest, warm and hearty, in the cause of which he becomes a representative.

This will lead him to think of the religious services of the church. He will be anxious to see them well attended, and of an edifying character. With prayer-meetings and Sabbath schools he will have warm sympathy. He will carefully watch the benevolent work of the church, knowing it is closely allied to the growth in grace of the people. He will seek, also, its development and increase. His query at all times will be, "What can I do by plan, suggestion, personal effort, to make this church prosper? How can I foster its peace? How can I increase its social dispositions? What is needed to give it larger influence in the community? Is there aught required to make it a greater power in building up and purifying society? Is there a way to give it larger place in the denomination?"

With these ends in view, he will keep himself well informed as to its spirit, and will try to fill himself with the dispositions that are foremost in pushing it on towards success. Interest! It will cause the work of Christ, and especially the part of it with which he is associated, to rest in his mind as constant company, to enter into all his thoughts, to modify and improve his character, and give bent and direction to all his practical life. What large scope is given him! What wide doors and effectual

are opened to him ! A servant of Christ, let him drink in Christ's spirit. All attainments are possible to him who rules well.

An elder should be a man of discretion. Perhaps the more plain expression will be the stronger : he should have common sense. No remarkable quality can be put in the place of this primary endowment. Learning and genius go for nothing when this is lacking.

But, having this, it will teach him prudence, furnish him with tact, make him a man of expedients, and save him from recklessness, and folly, and practical stupidity. It will enable him to manage his tongue ; that is to use it when he needs to do so, and to keep it quiet when its employment is unnecessary. An elder who blabs is a constant offence and injury. Gossip is bad any place, but it is at its worst in the high places.

And so this discretion will rule in all his life. It will make him thoughtful, affable, considerate ; teach him to rule his spirit, rightly employ his gifts, and invest his entire character with that which will make him trusted and honored among his brethren and associates

I might present this other matter, which, though not a fundamental one, is yet important enough to deserve consideration—an elder may rightly be expected to give some care to his personal habits. These have much to do with efficiency and comfort in the discharge of any duty, in the performance of which one acts with and upon another, and, therefore, of such duties as belong to a ruler in the Church. Official position carries with it certain requirements in this direction which, if they are not always insisted on, are yet recognized, and their observance is looked for by those who know their value. Politeness

is not to be ranked with orthodoxy. A gentlemanly demeanor is less essential than uprightness. We need never discount a man's usefulness to ourselves by the fact that he lacks in the proprieties. Nevertheless, his general influence must be enhanced when these are not unnecessarily violated. Courtesy is due from one to another, and he who is put in a position of influence should make it a study in the interest of the work that is given him to do. As between two men of similar excellence, the one who has a politeness the other lacks has a decided advantage. There is a premium put upon the gentleman. His decorum wins, and he finds a way to the hearts he seeks by means of the attractions of his personal intercourse.

This is not a commendation of dramatic manners, or that behavior which marks the man of affected character; nor is it an admission that the fop may be eligible to sacred functions, or that aught that is sensational in personal conduct is a proper trait in a public officer. But it is a suggestion of urbanity, cheerfulness, kindness, a spirit of accommodation, Christian meekness, with a due regard to those minor matters that relate to personal, domestic, and social life, as befitting a church officer. These are the small change that we so much need in the currency of life, without which, however valuable our investments may be, we find it difficult to enjoy a desirable circulation.

The time is not far past when men, in the ministry as well as elsewhere—perhaps there especially—thought that they might intrude upon the amenities without prejudice to their calling and work. In some cases, indeed, they acted as though they felt their positions gave them a right to disregard the restraints resting upon others.

The harsh manner, the dogmatic assertion, the indignant rebuke, even when these were not needed, when they were wholly out of the way, were part of their common behavior in dealing with their friends. Those friends seemed to think it was a privilege belonging to their offices against which they might not protest, and of which, even, they should not complain.

But those days, sometimes called "the good old days," have passed, and the better ones have taken their places. Intolerant rudeness is out of date, and the servant of Jesus Christ is known, not by lordly ways and assumptions of priestly rigor, but meekness, charity, and that spirit of goodness which befits the servant of him whose life showed fitting courtesy to all.

The elder, also, should be a man of broad views, who is able to look at things in their relations, and without being in bondage to a spirit of pettiness. This is not suggesting that he is to have loose views, or that he should neglect attention to details. The opposite is the fact. But it means that he should construe widely, group broadly, exercise a catholic spirit, and study, not alone the little lines that run along his pathway, but the general trend of affairs that marks the character of the religious life of his day.

Much more might be said here, but this is enough to show that the office of the elder is a dignified one, and that it is also an exceedingly practical one ; and that if it be properly held, it requires of its incumbent that he put himself in training as to his beliefs, habits, temper, practices, and even to the smallest items of his every day behavior.

I should not omit to say that he is to do the Lord's work, which, of course, must be a good work. It may well claim all his faculty. After he has given his utmost, he will not reach the utmost of that which it offers him. But it will impose upon him duties, sometimes delicate, often difficult, and many a time disagreeable. A part of his duty is that of ruling, and this requires discipline, in the administration of which there is that from which he would instinctively flee away. To sit in judgment on a brother, when his character is concerned, and his relation to the Church is to be determined—his standing, even, in the outside community—always causes a strain that is heavy to endure. It may well be called one of the burdens of the office.

To condemn one also, and inflict upon him the censure of the church, can only be done at a decided cost of feeling. It is the one time of all others, when the sensitive officer may feel a temptation to desert his post. And yet the duty of exercising discipline is as plain and peremptory as any other. The purity of the church demands it, and its honor before the world ; while it is also a means of grace to a transgressor, by which it is expected he will profit. Other trying duties are to be met. But there is grace for them all, and it will not be withheld from him who asks it. As thy day is, so shall thy strength be.