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THE MODEST VIOLET.

LEXINGTON MEMORABILIA.

DR. CHARLES DABNEY

TO THE SOUTHERN FARMER.

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OUR sweet-scented violet is a tiny flower peeping from under the brown leaves of its winter covering; but nature has been very good to it. The sky has given of its deepest blue, and rich purple tints that come through cloud-rifts from the far expanse are woven for its garment. And earth has given a perfume the most dainty from the deep cells of some mysterious alchemy. The botanists say there are at least one hundred species of the little stemless plant, and they have a home in many climes. In every land

"Out from its sunned and sheltered nooks
The blue eye of the violet looks."

The violet is loved by all for its modesty, and the absence of assertion. Its humility and lowly-minded ways appeal to our sympathy. Yet no queen is draped with the robes that wrap the violet's tender form, and no long-stemmed, aspiring flower of gaudiness has as sweet a breath. If of the gorgeous lily it was true, how much more of our gentle violet, that, "not Solomon in all his glory was arrayed like one of these."

Do you remember that it is the Apostle Peter who has most to say of humility? He who had been boastful and self-asserting found the lowly flower of Christian meekness in a painful discipline. In his later years he urged that we "be clothed with humility," and declared that "a meek and quiet spirit," "the hidden man of the heart," is "an ornament in the sight of God of great price." Another Apostle tells of the charity which is "an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God." The violet's beauty and perfume are the humility and the fragrance of a true Christian life.

The prayers of Israel found a beautiful symbol in the incense of sweet spices continually ascending from the altar. The high priest before the mercy seat swinging the golden censor, and the smoke ascending in sweet clouds, is a glorious picture of Christ, forever presenting the prayers of his people. When they are expressed from the lowly-minded heart, they are sweet and acceptable in the presence of God. "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense."

FOLLOWING Prof. W. M. Thornton's admirable address at Hampden Sidney on President J. M. P. Atkinson, we have Prof. Barringer's Charleston address on "The American Negro," of which we speak elsewhere. Into our Farm Department we have crowded the paper of President Charles W. Dabney, of Knoxville. It is a most timely letter of advice to the farmers of the South. Dr. Charles Dabney follows his great father, Dr. Robert L. Dabney, in a profound interest in our agricultural people, a wide observation of their condition, and a keen insight into their needs.

THE Evangelistic Committee of the Synod of Virginia, of which Dr. A. H. Hamilton, of Steele's Tavern, Va., is the secretary and treasurer, has been able to meet all obligations to the evangelists now in the field to April 1st. Dr. Henry M. White, now at Lewisburg, W. Va., accepts the work proposed to him in Patrick county. Dr. F. M. Woods, of Martinsburg, W. Va., has declined the appointment of evangelist, and will remain at his pastorate. The committee, we hope, will find some one fitted for this work, and prosecute it with vigor.

OUR church in North Carolina has lost a valuable minister by the death on Monday, April 2d, of the Rev. William A. Wood, D. D., pastor of the large church at Statesville. He was born in Rowan county, N. C., in 1831, so that he was sixty-nine years of age at his death. His college studies were at Davidson, and his theological training was secured at Princeton, Columbia, and Edinburgh. He has had useful pastorates at Washington and Asheville in his native State. Since 1869 he has held the important pastorate of Statesville, where his work has been efficient and fruitful. For several months past his health has declined. He will be greatly missed in his Presbytery and Synod, as well as by the people of his bereaved flock.

THE Agnes Scott Institute, the large female seminary of which Dr. F. H. Gaines is President, at Decatur, Ga., has been compelled to close for the year on account of the development of a few cases of scarlet fever. Each case was immediately isolated and a separate trained nurse put in charge, but when as many as three cases appeared the Board thought it best to close immediately, and send the boarding pupils home. It is a serious disappointment to teachers and scholars, as the end of the school year and commencement were coming into view. Agnes Scott expected to entertain at a reception the General Assembly to meet in Atlanta. With the patients in the infirmary remain the nurses and the officers of the institution. As soon as the sick are discharged the whole building will be thoroughly disinfected, and its sanitary condition be made satisfactory in every respect under the direction of the institute physician, and with the inspection of the sanitary officers of Atlanta.

THE First Congregational Church of Northampton, Mass., is to erect a memorial of Jonathan Edwards, who was once excluded from the pastorate of that church, after many years of faithful ministry. The memorial will be a bronze mural monument bearing a relief portrait of the great theologian and preacher. Jonathan Edwards is buried at Princeton, among the many great dead of the Princeton cemetery.

ON Monday last a letter from the Rev. Dr. A. C. McGiffert was presented to the Presbytery of New York at its regular semi-annual session, requesting that his name be dropped from the roll of the Presbytery. The request was granted, and so far as he is directly concerned the case is ended. Dr. Hillis has done right in asking that he be demitted, and giving the Chicago Presbytery no farther trouble. The fact is he should have withdrawn when he left Chicago to be the successor of Dr. Lyman Abbott.

THERE is a profound pathos in a Christian congregation's leaving an old church and closing its doors forever. On Sunday, April 1st, the congregation of the Kent Street Church, Winchester, Va., for the last time gathered in the venerable church, made sacred by the memory of their fathers, by many precious seasons of revival, and by the unmeasured blessing of every Sabbath's worship through so many years. The faithful and beloved pastor, Dr. Graham, recounted the story of the church, and recalled its memories of God's goodness and grace, and then gathered his people around the communion table. It must have been a time of very tender feeling, of gratitude, and of earnest prayer for God's presence and favor in the period of church life on which they now enter. For their attachment for the old church, it must be that the Loudoun Street people, with whom they are now united, will but honor and love them more.

Dr. Graham's historical sketch will be read with great interest, and is worthy of preservation. It must have been in the old stone church on the hill, now in ruins, built, Dr. Graham says, in 1790, that in that year the Synod of Virginia held its third meeting. The great-grandfather of the editor of the CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN, Dr. Joseph Smith, came from western Pennsylvania, over the Alleghanies on horseback, and was made the Moderator. The Synod continued to meet there for several years, in 1791, 1793, 1795, 1796, 1797, 1798, and 1801. This was because the Synod included then the Presbytery of Redstone in western Pennsylvania, and Winchester was the most convenient meeting place of the widely separated forces.

The editor has a precious memory of his own of old Kent Street, as it was there before the pulpit, that in his youth he stood up to make confession of Christ. And in Kent Street his mother worshipped from her childhood, and many of his most loved kindred.

that every minister of the gospel should treasure them as Michtam Rules:

"Nothing can be unimportant that pertains to the service of God. The minutest parts of the garments of the priests of old were prescribed; the smallest thing connected with worship under the nobler dispensation is worthy of thought and prayer. Let those who address themselves to their fellowmen about the common affairs of life be careless if they choose; they are but fellow worms. But thou, O man of God, offer nothing in God's house that is not the very best that your poor service can present. What a noble profession is yours, my young friend, of which the merest ceremonial is important. Gold is so precious that its minutest dust is to be gathered up."

When persons read this brochure they no longer wonder how it came that his sons, Thomas Lewis and John Alexander, were model preachers. When I finished its perusal it was with a somewhat regretful feeling that I had been born too soon to be specially benefited by its very excellent and timely teachings. Our younger preachers are to be felicitated that they now have it in their power to see themselves as one of the wisest of modern gospel hearers regarded preachers, and should they heed his counsels there is no estimating the good results that may be looked for in due season.

In drawing this article to a conclusion I would say to my readers that I have given but a tithe of what wells up in my memory. This has been written that they may know in part what manner of person Col. J. T. L. Preston was as I saw him and unite with me in due veneration of his memory; share with me the heart improving and the sweetly uplifting influences such a character sheds forth when thoughtfully cherished and contemplated.

"For the bright memories of the holy dead;
The blessed ones departed, shine on us
Like the pure splendors of some clear, large star
Which pilgrims, travelling onward, at their back
Leave, and at every moment see not now;
Yet whensoever they list, may pause and turn,
And with its glories gild their faces still."

Marlinton, W. Va.

"Thou God Seest Me."

GENESIS xvi. 13.

If we could fully realize and always remember that the eyes of a holy and omniscient God are ever upon us, not only noting our every word and action, but discerning the very thoughts and intents of our minds, how careful we would be to watch "our hearts with all diligence, since out of them are the issues of life," to "keep our tongues from evil and our lips from speaking guile," and in all our conduct to do justice and show mercy!

But we continually forget this. Many who would on no account inflict bodily injury on another, yet suffer uncharitable thoughts and vindictive feelings to fester in their minds till they break out in angry and censorious words, forgetting that the law of God requires to be kept not only in the letter but in the spirit, and that anger and malice do not differ in kind, but only in degree from murder. And some who would not utter an out and out falsehood, do not hesitate, when it suits their convenience, to act a lie, or to equivocate and prevaricate, not remembering that they are lying to the God of truth, whose all-searching eye sees into the deepest recesses of their souls.

How many are there who would be shocked at the thought of committing a burglary or picking a pocket, yet when an opportunity offers of doing so in safety, take an unfair advantage in trade, forgetting that whoever gets anything from another—except as a gift—without rendering for it a fair equivalent, is in fact and in the eyes of God a thief and a robber.

In the matter of Sabbath observance especially, how much desecration comes under the eye of God that is not seen by the world! Men who could not be induced to take a plow into their fields or to be heard hammering in their shops on Sunday, yet out of sight of the world, perform or have performed various labors which are by no means works of necessity or mercy! How many business and professional men, who would think it a monstrous sin to throw open their offices and counting-houses on God's holy day, yet in these same places behind closed doors, or in the privacy of their homes, write up their business correspondence, inspect their ledgers or copy their briefs! How many women who would be horrified at the suggestion that they should sit down to the sewing machine and sew several hours on the Sabbath, yet in the management, or rather mismanagement, of their households do, or require their servants to do, hours of unnecessary labor! And how many are there of both sexes who would never think of attending the theatre or opera on Sunday, yet in their chambers and parlors pursue amuse-

ments as secular and as hurtful to spirituality as the theatre and opera!

Alas! though we are assured in Holy Writ that "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh upon the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh upon the heart," yet multitudes pay far more regard to the eyes and the opinions of their fellowmen than to the pure eyes and righteous judgments of the omnipotent and omniscient God. And alas! that the seeking of the favor of men and the ignoring of the favor of God should be carried into the very act of worship.

A man prominent in both business circles and in the church, instructed his cashier to put aside a dollar note for him every Saturday. This was done during several months, till one Saturday there was not a dollar note in the drawer, and the cashier had not time to go out to get one. So when the proprietor called for his note, the young man handed him a silver dollar. "Pshaw!" he exclaimed, "this will not do at all. The money is for the church collection. Now everybody knows that I am a rich man, and so I am expected to give liberally. If I lay a folded note on the plate they naturally conclude that it is a five or ten; but if I put in this coin, they see at once that it is but one dollar."

Not many so openly confess their hypocrisy; yet how many are there whose good works are done to be seen of men, who "love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets," whose public charities are far greater than their private beneficence, who "love the praise of men more than the praise of God!"

Realizing from the sins and shortcomings of our fellowmen, which we so plainly see, how "deceitful above all things and how desperately wicked is the human heart," should teach us the urgency of giving a careful and impartial scrutiny to our own heart and conduct. We cannot too often and too fervently pray, "Cleanse thou me from secret sins."

"Search thine own heart, what paineth thee
In others, in thyself may be;
All dust is frail, all flesh is weak;
Be thou the true man thou dost seek."

Christ and the Golden Rule.

BY THE REV. JAMES A. QUARLES, D. D.

The principle of the Golden is found distinctly taught by Moses, Solomon, the author of Tobit, and Hillel, among the Jews; by Plato, Aristotle, and Isocrates, among the Greeks; by Buddha, Confucius, and Lao-tsze of the Orient; by Mohammed; by Shakespeare and other non-inspired writers in Christendom; and by James, Peter, John, and Paul, in the New Testament.

Moses: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Solomon: "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink." Tobit: "Do that to no man which thou hatest." Hillel: "What is hateful to thee do not to another." Plato: "To do injustice is worse than to suffer injustice." Aristotle: "Do to others as we should wish them to behave towards us." Isocrates: "What you are angry at when inflicted on you by others, this do not do to others." Buddha's whole system of ethics was based on self-denial for others. Confucius: "What you do not wish done to yourself do not do to others." Lao-tsze: "Recompense injury with kindness." Mohammed: "One Mussulman should wish for to another what he wishes for to himself." Shakespeare: "Love thyself last." James: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Peter: "Love as brethren; not rendering evil for evil, but contrawise blessing." John: "If a man say I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar." Paul: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Jesus, the Master, inculcates love to one's neighbor in many ways; attention will be called to the two forms in which he gives the Golden Rule. The first of these we have found first in Leviticus, and repeated by James and Paul. It is given by our Lord on two occasions. To the rich ruler, wishing to know what good thing he must do to inherit eternal life, Jesus says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"; and he repeats the words to the lawyer, a Pharisee, who asked which was the great commandment in the law; declaring this to be the second, the first being supreme love to God.

As the Golden Rule is more popularly known, it was spoken by Christ in the course of the Sermon on the Mount, as given by Luke, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." The Master gave his approval to the principle of this rule unquestionably, and more than once. Nevertheless he did not unqualifiedly endorse it as the full and final law on the duties of which it treats. It was somewhat similar to the toleration given by the Old Testament to slavery and polygamy, although more decided and unequivocal.

That our divine Lord could not have uncondition-

ally approved the Golden Rule is clear from the fact that it is an *imperfect law*, because based upon a *fallible standard*. This is manifest from the fact that it measures our duty to others by *our* performance to ourselves, and we often love ourselves improperly; too much, too little, not in the right way. The standard is human and fallible.

That the Master did not establish the Golden Rule as his final law is seen in the fact that he has supplanted it by another. He says, John xiii. 34, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." Our love to self is no longer the measure of our love to others; it must equal Christ's love to us; we must love as Christ loves. The human, fallible standard is removed; the divine, infallible takes its place. We are called and stimulated and strengthened to a perfect life.

Lexington, Va.

Democracy in China.

BY HAMPDEN C. DUBOSE, D. D.

It is very difficult to obtain trustworthy evidence in Oriental lands, but the fact is pretty well established that the Empress Dowager, just before China New Year, deposed the Emperor and placed upon the "Dragon throne" a little boy of six years of age. Her plan was to delete the name of Kwangsii from the imperial register, and to consider the child as a successor to the previous Emperor. This raised "a hue and cry" through the land. Over one thousand of the resident mandarins and gentry in Shanghai signed a petition to the Empress Dowager to restore Kwangsii to power. At Hangchow the officials gave the reason that Kwangsii had for three years worn mourning for Tungchi, which constituted him the legal successor, and his rights could not be set aside. Telegrams poured into the foreign office from all parts of the empire and the "old lady backed down." Her proclamation offering taels 100,000 for the heads of two of the Reformers was recently issued in the Emperor's name. The people, as a whole, usually take little interest in government matters, but at this time they are disgusted with the state of affairs at the capital, and should the progressive party again come into power the spirit of change from the old to the new will develop with unparalleled rapidity. Vices of the first water are ascribed to the Empress Dowager, and her downfall would be hailed with pleasure by millions of her subjects. We can only express our gratitude to Almighty God for giving a peaceful solution to the recent threatening attitude at Peking.

THE S. P. M. ON THE EBB TIDE.

For several years our China mission moved steadily forward, increasing constantly in numbers and pressing to the front in the occupation of new fields. The last three years the tide has flowed steadily towards the sea. Two or three cities where the Southern Presbyterians unfolded the gospel banner have been abandoned to the darkness of heathenism. Only one minister has been sent out in three years, and several have returned home, some of these to come no more. Three years ago we had on the field twenty-three evangelists—and hoped by this time to have had thirty-three—but alas! now (not including a brother who has his passage engaged) we have only eighteen, and one of these leaves in the spring. Two missions with seventeen preachers for the four hundred millions!

This leaves us two stations with three ministers each; three with two each, and five with one each. This appalling state of affairs should awaken our church to continued prayer to the Lord of the harvest, and earnest effort to furnish the means to send out messengers of the churches and the glory of Christ.

What better investment than in young ministers! They are the ascension gift of him who is the resurrection and the life to a blood-bought church! They are called by the Holy Ghost to proclaim salvation throughout the earth! They are trained in the schools of the prophets for the ministry of the word! They have high and holy views of Zion, the light of the world!

Almost without exception they are married men, and this gives them exceptional advantages. The Rev. J. A. Silsby has carefully analyzed the statistics of the work of the Presbyterian Board in China for sixty years. He says the figures give about twice the length of service to married missionaries as to single. So let a group of our Ladies' Societies, instead of each desiring to support a native helper, follow the example of the Alexandrian ladies and send out a minister! Let the Sabbath-schools of a Presbytery, instead of separately supporting a girl or boy in a mission school, unite their gifts to pay the salary of a young preacher of the gospel.

Both prophet and apostle unite in saying, How beautiful are the feet of them that parade the gospel of peace; that bring glad tidings of good things!