

PRESENT TRUTH

I AM THE WAY. THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE. LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS.

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THE GOD OF THE POOR

(Luke ii. 8-20.)†

WHATEVER God does is done thoroughly. "He hath done all things well." When He speaks, He leaves no room for reasonable misunderstanding. So since "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," He has taken the greatest pains to make it very clear that He is no respecter of persons and that nobody is left out. Wealth and worldly position are no commendation with Him. The Gospel was, in its inception, addressed especially to the poor, the grand proof of the Messiahship of Jesus being that "the poor have the Gospel preached to them." Matt. xi. 5. The anointing of the Spirit of God is for the express purpose of enabling the receiver "to preach the Gospel to the poor." Luke iv. 18.

kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?" James ii. 5. If Christ had come preaching to the rich, the poor would have slunk away abashed, not

Christ Himself, who was rich, became poor, and so made it for ever impossible for anybody to doubt the sincerity of His call.

Even the rich must become poor; for none of this world's goods can ever be taken to heaven. "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out." So, as a matter of fact, God must love the poor if He loved anybody; for the richest are really poor, since they bring nothing more into the world than the poorest; and when the wealthy are required to become poor in order to gain the world to come, it is simply that they may recognise and acknowledge what they really are.

"The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God," and so the things of God are hidden from the wise and prudent, and are revealed unto babes. Thus all may understand; for the most unlettered have not to acquire something, before they can know God's salvation, and



"LOW LIES HIS HEAD,"

All the promises are to the poor, instead of to the rich. "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the

daring to present their needs; but when the door was opened so wide as to take in the very poorest, the lowest, and the most despised, it was very evident that all who would might be saved. Nay, more,

the philosophers have only to let go of their worldly wisdom. The inhabitants of this earth form a vast pyramid, the base being composed of all the poor; and by identifying Himself with the very lowest

† International Sunday-school Lesson for Dec. 21.

stratum, Christ showed that His Gospel comprehends all.

"We speak . . . not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to naught; but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory; which none of the princes of this world knew." 1 Cor. ii. 6-8. Thus it was that when the mystery was revealed,—God manifest in the flesh—the announcement was made, not to princes, but to peasants. "There were in the same country, shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." First to the poor shepherds, then to all the world. God chooses the humble and unknown as His ambassadors to the world, the messengers of His mercy. Those who can understand it best, naturally receive it first.

Moses was not called to lead the hosts of Israel from bondage to freedom while he was the prince in the court of Egypt, and heir to the thrones; but it was when he was a lonely shepherd in the wilderness that the glory of God was revealed to him.

Gideon was thrashing grain on his father's farm, when the angel of the Lord appeared to him, and sent him to deliver Israel from their Midianite oppressors.

David was called from the sheeppcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over the Lord's people.

Elisha was ploughing in the field with his father's hired servants, as one of them, when the mantle of Elijah was cast upon him, which was his call to be one of the greatest of Israel's prophets.

Amos when charged with being only a conspirator, and no prophet, did not plead his family position, but on the contrary said, "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit; and the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and said unto me, Go, prophesy unto My people Israel." Amos vii. 14, 15.

Samuel and Jeremiah were both little children when the word of the Lord was revealed to them. "Though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly."

With all the evidences of God's special attachment to the poor, why should anybody ever complain of the oppression of

the rich, or seek to defend themselves against injustice? The Lord thinks upon the poor and needy. Ps. xl. 17. "The needy shall not alway be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever." Ps. ix. 18. "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him," or "would ensnare him." Ps. xii. 5. "I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor." Ps. cxl. 12.

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" If we expect Him to give us eternal things, why can we not much more trust Him for all that we need of temporal things?

The Gospel contains the remedy for all ills, the deliverance from all afflictions. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come." Strikes and boycotts can never be mentioned as becoming saints, and no Christian will ever in any way whatever countenance any such doings; for it is by the power of the world to come that all wrongs are to be righted. The proclamation, "Peace on earth," will soon meet its fulfilment; for the Judge standeth at the door. Christ will soon come, and cause wars and oppression to cease unto the ends of the earth; and it is to this event that the angelic message directs us. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

OUR SAFETY.

THIS is a time of calamity. Every day, storms, accidents, disasters by land and by sea, are sweeping men and women from among the living. People do not feel safe anywhere. Companies multiply which offer protection to life and property; but is it protection after all?—No; it is no real, lasting help. It is simply what the human arm can afford.

God's Word directs us away from all this. The psalmist exclaims, "My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth." This scripture points out the great God who made the universe as the

only real help. His protection is valuable. "He will not suffer thy foot to be moved; He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." Constant guardianship! While you are unconscious in slumber, no cyclone, no disaster, can pass by His guard to you without permission. And whatever passes will be only for the good of His child.

"The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night." Some day power will be given to the sun to scorch men with fire. At such a time, a shade on one side would be as a life preserver. That shade the Lord has promised to be.

"The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil." What a glorious promise! No qualification—all evil. There are those who are truly praying, "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," and God hears the prayer. Then the remaining part of the promise reads, "He shall preserve thy soul." This passes exceedingly the power and skill of any earthly help. No one can be found who will insure your soul unto eternal life. That greatest of all values, compared with which the wealth of a world sinks into insignificance—the human soul—may be preserved to him who yields its interests into the loving care of Him who made it. Wonderful power! Wonderful God!

"The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in." That sure word takes in the humble, trusting child of God to-day, with all the dangers with which he is beset; for the promise was "from this time forth and even for evermore." Ps. cxxi. 1-8.

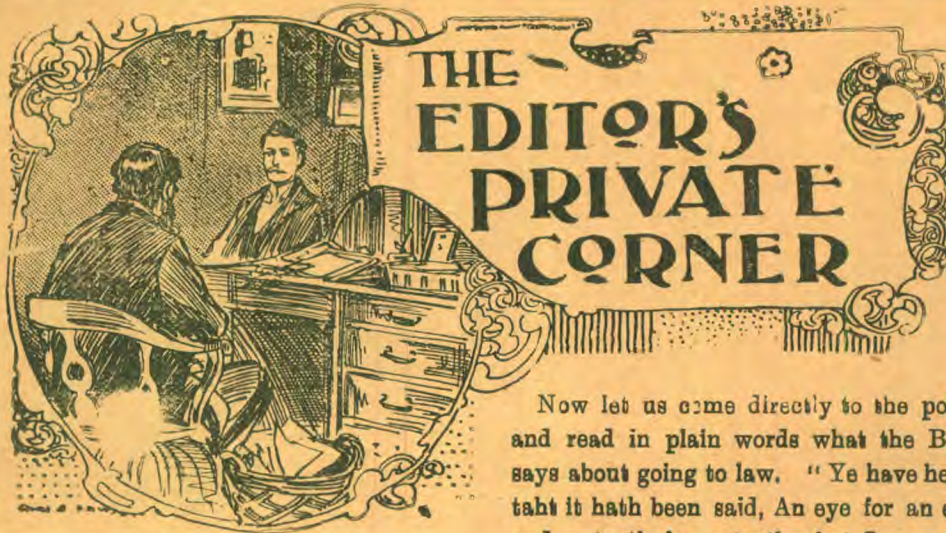
Are you insured? Is your very life, your soul, thus guarded by your God? Have you learned to trust Him in days of prosperity? or, must He permit some calamity to overtake you before you shall awake to the fact that He now is preserving you?

The only reason more calamities do not visit the earth is the protecting care of God. And that which is befalling others is permitted that those remaining shall take warning, and seek shelter in Christ, the only sure refuge provided for sinners. It is not that those upon whom these calamities fall are more wicked than others. Accidents occurred in the time of our Saviour. A tower in Jerusalem fell one day, killing eighteen persons. Jesus commenting upon it, asks: "Think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Let us look up to the God on high "from whence cometh our help."

"The men who love and fear Thy name
Shall see their hopes fulfilled;
The mighty God will compass them
With favour as a shield."

T. E. BOWEN.



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E. J. WAGGONER, Editor.

GOING TO LAW.

"WHAT course should a Christian take towards one who is in debt to him? Is it proper to go to law to recover a debt?"

WHAT saith the Scripture? "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" We know well enough what course the world takes in such a case; and if the Word of God has nothing to say about it, then we can do as the world does; but if God has spoken, then we as Christians can do nothing else than what He says, no matter how widely it may differ from the way of the world.

Before taking up what the Bible says about going to law, let me repeat what I have before said in this Corner about debt, so that there can be no possible ground for the idea that I am apologising for debt, or taking the side of the debtor, against the creditor. "The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again." Ps. xxxvii. 21. That fixes the standing of the man who does not pay his debts, and especially of the man who contracts a debt which he has no prospect of paying. The well-instructed, sincere Christian never does such a thing.

"The borrower is servant to the lender." Prov. xxii. 7. But God's people are all free; He is the Deliverer, and He does not rule over slaves. God's subjects are all rulers. He says that His people shall lend to many nations, and not borrow. It is evident, therefore, that no one who really understands and values the liberty wherewith Christ makes us free will voluntarily subject himself to the bondage of debt.

Now let us come directly to the point, and read in plain words what the Bible says about going to law. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." Matt. v. 38-40. What could be plainer? "If any man will sue thee,"—if any man is about to sue you for your coat, let him have your cloak rather than go into court. Surely this would effectually cut you off from suing your brother.

But there is other scripture equally direct and strong. "Dare any of you, having a matter against his neighbour, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Or know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world is judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? If then ye have to judge things pertaining to this life, do ye set them to judge who are of no account in the church? I say this to move you to shame. Is it so, that there cannot be found among you one wise man, who shall be able to decide between his brethren, but brother goeth to law with brother, and that before unbelievers? Nay, already it is altogether a defect in you, that ye have lawsuits one with another. Why not rather take wrong? why not rather be defrauded?" 1 Cor. vi. 1-7.

You had better read this Scripture several times, before you hastily conclude that it sanctions going to law, but not before unbelievers. If a Christian did go to law, but not before unbelievers, he would have to go to law before the church, and that would show that the church had usurped the functions of the civil power. But let us study the text closely. Note the first word. *Dare* any of you go to law? It is certainly no light matter, or the word "dare" would not be used. The Greek

word signifies, *to have the boldness, the effrontery.* According to this it is great presumption for a Christian to go to law.

The saints are to judge the world and angels; certainly, then, they ought to be able to decide matters pertaining to this life. Who ought to be able to decide? Why, everybody who is to have a share in judging angels. Do you not see that this shuts out even arbitration in the church? for if all the saints (and all in the church are supposed to be, and ought to be, saints) are capable of judging in the affairs of their neighbours, they are certainly able to settle their own affairs, without bringing them before anybody else. For one to demand a trial before his brethren, to settle a question, whether by arbitration or any other means, is to stand self-confessed as unfit for the world to come; and in that case one certainly has a greater and more important duty than trying to secure one's "rights."

Christ has left us an example in this respect. He not only committed His own case "to Him that judgeth righteously," but He refused to interfere in strife. When on one occasion "one of the company said unto Him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me," Jesus replied, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" And then, in order, to discourage such sordid pursuits as striving after gain, and seeking to get one's due, He added, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Luke xii. 13-16. Christ refused to be a judge in worldly affairs, because His kingdom is not of this world. When He comes in His kingdom, He will sit on the throne judging righteously, and then the saints will be called to their work of judging. So as He refused to judge earthly affairs when on earth, we are exhorted to "judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come." 1 Cor. iv. 5. So if there is a dispute between two brethren in the church, and the dispute is referred to another person, or to the church, the duty of that other person, or of the church, is not to interfere in the case, and decide the question at issue, but to help the disputants to get converted, so that they will have the Spirit of Christ to settle all difficulties, or rather, to prevent them. The dispute which would demand arbitration indicates such a defect in the character of the ones demanding it as should lead them seriously to consider their prospects for the next world, rather

than press their claims for the things of this world.

This is just what the text says. "It is altogether a defect in you, that ye have lawsuits one with another." The word here rendered "lawsuits" means not only the actual suit, but the case to be decided. It means a *question, a matter for judgment*. The "defect," and this is also a strong term,—the weakness, the lack,—is that there are judgments in the church—that brethren ever have any cases for arbitration. But it may be asked, "What if one in the church is really dishonest, and will not pay his just debts?" Of course that is a grave fault; but the defect becomes equal if the other brother begins an action against him to recover the debt. "Why not rather take wrong? why not rather be defrauded?"

And this reminds me of the advice given by Commissioner Kerr, one of the leading London magistrates, who died a few days ago at the age of eighty-one. It is said that "he had fewer judgments reversed than any other judge in the metropolis," so it is evident that when he gave an opinion he knew what he was talking about. And here is his advice about going to law: "Never go to law under any consideration. You had much better lose your money than go to law." Thus it appears that there is sound legal wisdom in the Scripture admonition against going to law. There is more money lost than gained by it. More money is put into courts by litigants than is taken away by them.

That perfect justice cannot possibly be obtained in any human court, is plainly indicated in the statement concerning Christ. He shall be, by the seven-fold Spirit on Him, "of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of His ears; but with righteousness shall He judge the poor." Isa. xi. 3, 4. Men have no means of judging except by the hearing of the ears and the sight of the eyes; therefore their judgment, even at the best, cannot be according to righteousness. It is necessary to have judges on this earth for a certain class of persons; but God's people will commit their cases "to Him that judgeth righteously."

"But it is not a personal matter with me," you say; "if it were, it would be easily disposed of; but the work in which I am engaged is a branch of the Lord's work, and it seems as though His cause ought to have all that is due it." Now let

me tell you that the Lord is as able to take care of His own money as He is to care for yours. All the money in the world is His anyhow, no matter in whose hands it is. Do not think that the Lord will require you to do for Him that which He has forbidden you to do for yourself. If He were now in your place, carrying on His own work personally, do you think He would go to law to recover a debt? Would He violate His own precepts? You know that He would not, and therefore you may know that He will not ask you to do for Him what He would not do for Himself.

"But did not God Himself command that judges should be appointed for ancient Israel, who were to decide the small cases, and bring the difficult ones to Moses, for him to settle?" He certainly did, and many other things He had done because of the hardness of their hearts. Israel was God's church, "called out" of Egypt, that each person might be a king and priest for the rest of the world, by virtue of His Spirit in them. The necessity for judges among them, therefore, indicated the "defect" of which the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians, a lack of connection with God, in reality, a falling away, an apostasy.

That which was said of old, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," was said to the judges, as a guide to them in their decisions. See Deut. xix. 16-21. And here we see a provision to minimise the evil results of the working of perverse human nature. The *natural impulse* when one is struck is to strike back, to give "as good as is sent;" but the appointment of judges took this out of the hands of private individuals. Thus the courts were largely in those days what they are now—a public means for the gratification of private revenge. Even Christians, who would not think of resenting an injury, by personal violence, seem to think that this is all right if they pay somebody to inflict punishment, who has been appointed for that purpose.

I am not decriing the existence of courts of law. They are an absolute necessity in this evil world. As long as people wish that anybody who has injured them shall be punished, and as long as people are intent on securing their "rights," so long will courts be a necessity. It is better that "justice" be administered by a disinterested party than by the aggrieved one. But when we Christians attempt to justify ourselves in making use of courts of law, on the ground that they are a

necessity in the present state of the world, we identify ourselves with the world's present state, which is not at all flattering to our Christianity. It is astonishing how much Christians to-day are inclined to take advantage of provisions made long ago as a *concession* to the hardness of the hearts of a people just come from heathenism. It shows the hold that heathenism still has on the Christian world.

Of course the objection will be raised, "If it were known that we would not defend ourselves, nor assert our rights, people would take advantage of us, and we should lose everything we have." Well, there is the word of the Lord, and if we should present our objections to Him, He would doubtless say, "What is that to thee? follow thou Me." Love, which is the fulfilling of the law, "seeketh not her own." But "seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Our sole business in this world is to obey God, and to glorify Him; He has charged Himself with the responsibility of supplying all our need; and He has riches enough in glory with which to do it. God's precepts are for us, and not against us. He has not forbidden us to go to law, in order to make our way difficult, but in order to save us trouble. The question resolves itself into this: Shall we defend ourselves? or shall we leave our defence with God? Shall we appeal to man for help? or shall we seek help from God alone, who made heaven and earth, and to whom the earth belongs? Which shall it be?

THE WINGS OF FAITH.

THERE is a bird, not unlike a pigeon, to be found in Samoa, and though it has perfectly formed wings, until recently it had never used them. It was content to live on the ground, because there were no natural foes to be found in its island home. As Samoa became more civilised, cats, rats, and other enemies of bird-life appeared, and then it was that the pigeons, in self-defence, learned to make use of their wings. Not only so, but to-day they have also changed their mode of living, and build their nests in the trees in order to save their young from destruction. God permitted enemies to bar the way of the Israelites in order that they should use the powers they possessed; and as they obeyed the Word of the Lord, so did the walls of Jericho fall down flat, that the people went up into the city. Obstacles in our path should strengthen our wings of faith; as we rely on our God-given power we shall rise to a nobler life.—*The Christian*.



JESUS, THE BURDEN-BEARER.

How full of pain that aching brow;
 But I, the Lord, am near thee now,
 No other hand can give release,
 No other love can whisper peace,
 No other heart thy grief can bear;
 Then let me, loved one, take thy care.
 Thy way is all marked out by Me,
 From purposes of love to thee;
 A way of suffering it is true,
 But nothing else will do for you;
 I knew, if you would love me much,
 My plan of training must be such.
 The deeper sorrows which I send,
 Bring sweeter blessings in the end;
 The child of My peculiar love,
 May weep on earth,—shall sing above.
 Now lean thy head upon My breast,
 Thou weary one; I'll give thee rest,
 I feel thy sighs; I see thy fears;
 I know thy wish; I note thy tears,
 Nothing can ever thee befall,
 Without my knowing, ord'ring all;
 Only this love I seek in thee—
 This wish—"Thy will be done in me."

* * *

THE TRUE STANDARD OF MANHOOD.

THE true man is the one who is willing to sacrifice his own interests for the good of others, who forgets himself in binding up the wounds of the broken-hearted. But many fail of understanding the true object of life. Under the influence of cherished errors, they sacrifice all in life that is really valuable.

Nero and Cæsar were acknowledged by the world as great men; but did God so regard them? No! They were not connected by unselfish love with the great Heart of humanity. They were Satanic in their cruelty. Wherever they went, bloodshed and destruction marked their path. They were lauded while living; but when they died, the world rejoiced. How wide the contrast between the lives of these men and the life of Martin Luther. He was not born a prince; he wore no royal crown. It was from a cloistered cell that his voice was heard and his influence felt. But he had a noble, generous heart, and a vigorous intellect, and all his powers were exercised for the good of humanity. He stood bravely for the right, and breasted the world's opposition, in order to benefit his fellow-men.

Intellect is mightier than wealth or physical power. If sanctified and controlled by the Spirit of God, it exerts a

strong influence for good. But intellect alone does not give true manhood. When great intellect is made to minister to vice, it is a curse to its possessor and to all who come within the sphere of its influence.

One's claim to manhood is determined by the use he makes of the powers that God has given him. The members of the human family are entitled to the name of men and women only as they employ their talents for the good of others. It is when ministering to others that man is most closely allied to God. He who is true to his God-given manhood will not only promote the happiness of his fellow-beings in this life, but will aid them to secure the reward of the life to come.

Before human beings, God has set a high standard. Christ's word to us is, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." It should be our life-work to press forward continually toward perfection of character, ever striving for conformity to the will of God.

Man is required to love God supremely, with his might, mind, and strength; and his neighbour as himself. This he cannot possibly do unless he denies himself. To deny self means to rule the spirit when passion is striving for the mastery; to resist the temptation to censure and to speak words of fault-finding; to have patience with the child that is dull, and whose conduct is grievous and trying; to stand at the post of duty even though others may fail; to lift responsibilities wherever and whenever duty requires, not to gain applause, not for policy, but for the sake of the Master, who has given each of His followers a work that is to be done with unwavering fidelity. To deny self means to do good when inclination would lead us to serve and please ourselves. It means to work patiently and cheerfully for the good of others, even though our efforts may not seem to be appreciated.

Those who are partakers of Christ's love have no right to think that there is a limit to their influence and work in trying to benefit humanity. Christ is our example. He did not become weary in His efforts to save fallen men. And angels are engaged day and night for the uplifting of humanity, in accordance with the plan of salvation. Our work is to be continuous and persevering. Until the Master bids us lay our armour at His feet, we are to fight manfully for Him. We are to work and wait, submissive to God's will, ready and willing to spring to duty at every call.

Fellow-Christians, search carefully and see whether the Word of God is indeed the rule of your life. Do you take Christ with you when you leave the place of prayer? Does your religion stand guard at the door of your lips? Is your heart drawn out in interest and sympathy for those in need of help? Are you seeking earnestly for a clearer understanding of God's will, that you may let your light

shine forth to others? Is your speech seasoned with grace? Does your demeanour show Christian nobility? "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive a crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to those that love Him." Remember that you need to be braced by constant watchfulness and prayer. So long as you look to Christ, you are safe; but the moment you trust in yourself, you are in great peril. He who is in harmony with God will continually depend on Him for help.

It is difficult for human beings to give attention to the lesser matters of life while the mind is engaged in business of seemingly greater importance. But should this be? Do not become so engrossed with business cares that you neglect to give your children the instruction they need. Do not look upon your home work as a lesser duty. This work lies at the foundation of the well-being of society. The happiness of families and of churches depends upon home influence. The world is not so much in need of great minds as of good men, men who are a blessing in their homes.

MRS. E. G. WHITE.

THE ALL-SEEING EYE.

MARVELS OF THE HUMAN EYE.

"He that formed the eye, shall He not see?"
 Ps. xciv. 9.

THE imperial organ of the human system is the eye. All up and down the Bible, God honours it, extols it, illustrates it, or arraigns it. Five hundred and thirty-four times it is mentioned in the Bible. Omnipresence—"the eyes of the Lord are in every place." Divine care—"as the apple of the eye." The clouds—"the eyelids of the morning." Irreverence—"the eye that mocketh at its father." Pride—"O, how lofty are their eyes!" Inattention—"the fool's eyes in the ends of the earth." Divine inspection—"wheels full of eyes." Suddenness—"in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." Olivetic sermon—"the light of the body is the eye." The surgeons, the doctors, the anatomists, and the physiologists understand much of the glories of the two great lights of the human face; but the vast multitudes go on from cradle to grave without any appreciation of the two great masterpieces of the Lord God Almighty. We wander through the earth trying to see wonderful sights, but the most wonderful sight that we ever see is not so wonderful as the instruments through which we see it.

See how God honoured the eyes when He made a roof for them, so that the sweat of toil should not smart them, the eyebrows not bending over the eye, but reaching to the right and to the left, so that the rain and the sweat should be compelled to drop

upon the cheek, instead of falling into this divinely protected human eyesight. See how God honoured the eye in the fact presented by anatomists and physiologists that there are 800 contrivances in every eye. For window shutters, the eyelids opening and closing 30,000 times a day. The eyelashes so constructed that they have their selections as to what shall be admitted, saying to the dust, "Stay out," and saying to the light, "Come in." For inside curtains the iris, or pupil of the eye, according as the light is greater or less, contracting or dilating. The eye of the owl is blind in the daytime; the eyes of some creatures are blind at night; but the human eye, so marvellously constructed, can see both by day and by night.

What an anthem of praise to God is the human eye! Have you not seen it flash with indignation, or kindle with enthusiasm, or expand with devotion, or melt with sympathy, or stare with fright, or leer with villainy, or droop with sadness, or pale with envy, or fire with revenge, or twinkle with mirth, or beam with love? It is tragedy and comedy and pastoral and lyric in turn. Have you not seen its uplifted brow of surprise, or its frown of wrath, or its contraction of pain? If the eye says one thing and the lips say another thing, you believe the eye rather than the lips. George Whitefield enthralled great assemblages with his eyes, though they were crippled with strabismus. Many a military chieftain has with a look hurled a regiment to victory or to death. Martin Luther turned his great eye on an assassin who came to take his life, and the villain fled. Under the glance of the human eye, the tiger, with five times a man's strength, snarls back into the African jungle.

In my imperfect way, I have only hinted at the splendours, the glories, the wonders, the divine revelations, the apocalypses of the human eye, and I stagger back from the awful portals of the physiological miracle, to cry out in your ears the words of my text, "He that formed the eye, shall He not see?" Shall Herschel not know as much as his telescope? Shall Fraunhofer not know as much as his spectroscope? Shall Swammerdan not know as much as his microscope? Shall Dr. Hooke not know as much as his micrometer? Shall the thing formed know more than its master? "He that formed the eye shall He not see?"

The recoil of this question is tremendous. We stand at the centre of a vast circumference of observation. No privacy. On us, eyes of cherubim, eyes of seraphim, eyes of archangel, eyes of God. We may not be able to see the inhabitants of other worlds, but they may be able to see us. But human inspection, and angelic inspection, and lunar inspection, and solar inspection, are tame compared with the thought of divine inspection.

O, the eye of God! It sees our sorrows

to assuage them, sees our perplexities to disentangle them, sees our wants to sympathise with them. If we fight Him back, the eye of an antagonist. If we ask His grace, the eye of an everlasting friend. You of en find in a book or manuscript a star calling your attention to a footnote, or explanation. That star the printer calls an asterisk. But all the stars of the night are asterisks calling your attention to God, an all-observing God. Our every nerve, a divine hand-writing. Our every muscle, a pulley divinely swung. Our every bone sculptured with divine suggestion. Our every eye, a reflection of the divine eye. God above us, and God beneath us, and God before us, and God behind us, and God within us. What a stupendous thing to live! No such thing as hidden transgression.

A legend of St. Protobert is that his mother was blind, and he was so sorely pitiful for the misfortune that one day in sympathy he kissed her eyes, and by miracle she saw everything. But it is not a legend when I tell you that all the blind eyes of the Christian dead under the kiss of the resurrection morn shall gloriously open. O, what a day will that be for those who went groping through this world under perpetual obscuratation, or were dependent on the hand of a friend, or with an uncertain staff felt their way, and for the aged of dim sight, about whom it may be said that "they which look out of the windows are darkened,"—when eternal daybreak comes in!—*T. De Witt Talmage*

THE GIFT OF GOD.

THE plan of salvation originated in a gift.

"God so loved the world, that He GAVE His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Without God's gift of His own dear Son to the human family, salvation for any man would be utterly impossible. Without Christ's gift of His own life to fallen men and women, there could be no hope of an endless life of joy beyond the grave.

Of all the Scriptures no words are better known than the simple sentence which composes the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of the Gospel of John. There are hundreds, yea, thousands, of texts in Bible story that are unknown to the great majority of men and women. But of sinner and saint alike it is true that almost all are familiar with this, the gift verse of the Bible. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Mark it! God did not *lend* Jesus Christ to the human family. The Father did not *lend* the Son to sinners simply for a few

brief years of sojourn here on earth. Nor did the Almighty merely *lease* His only beloved Son to the world for use during their experiment of sin.

No, no! There was neither loan nor lease, but a gift. Christ was a free gift from the Eternal to the human. The world's Redeemer was not given to be the Son of God. He was given to become the Son of man. He was not only given to man: far greater was the sacrifice of God.—He was given to be a man. He was given to be a man in order that He might redeem man. He was a "free gift"—not for three and thirty years; not for the short period of this world's history; but for ever, and for evermore.

God's gift of His own dear Son to fallen man was a real, not a make-believe, gift. God did really give away His only begotten Son. Christ was the only one of His kind in the universe. To be sure, the angels were all sons of God, but Christ was the only begotten Son of the Father. When God gave Him to the human family, He made a real sacrifice. The Father not only gave His son to man, but He gave Him to be a man; and through all eternity Christ will never be what He was before the fall of man,—before His own and His Father's voluntary gift of Himself. He is and ever will be Divine; His divinity remains unchanged and unchangeable. But every human being who will know in his own life the blest experience of the gift of giving must first know and recognise that gift as a divine reality in the very life and experience of God and of God's dear Son.

Through all eternity Christ will never be again what He was before He "gave Himself." He will not be less good, He will not be less pure, He will not be less glorious; but so long as the ceaseless ages roll, He will be the Son of *man*, a member of the lost, the redeemed, the human family. He gave Himself to become a member of the family of man, that He might cause the children of earth to become the sons and daughters of heaven.

"In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages, He is linked with us. 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son.' He gave Him not only to bear our sins, but to die as our sacrifice; He gave Him to the fallen race. To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only begotten Son to become one of the human family, for ever to retain His human nature."

Hearken to the words of Isaiah the seer: "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder." A Child was to be born to the human family. A Son was to be given to mankind. This Child was Christ; this Son was the Saviour. And it is upon His shoulder that the government is to be. Christ will share the throne of

the universe with His Father; but He shares it as the Son of man.

How well may every human lip break forth in tones of holiest joy: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." In the glorious world to come we shall stand more closely related to Christ the King than do the angels who have never sinned; for Christ, the King of all the world, the Lord of all the beings in all the worlds, is a member of the human family. P. T. MAGAN.

EVIL ASSOCIATIONS.

IT is said that the celebrated artist, Sir Peter Lely, would never allow himself to look at a bad picture, having found by experience that whenever he did so, he unconsciously transferred some of its faults to his own canvas.

Is there not a lesson here for those who think they can mingle with evil, and yet escape contamination? The Scriptures say that evil communications are corrupting; but many a young Christian starts out with such confidence that he thinks he may be excepted from heeding this warning. The fact is, and it is true of old and young, that we grow into the likeness of the things we look at, or into a likeness of the things that the mind dwells on. It is not safe to go into bad company, or to read bad books, or to allow the fancies to wander to forbidden objects for any reason; for if we do, our surroundings and mental occupations will be reflected in our characters.

You cannot dally with evil, even though with innocent motives, and not suffer from it. You cannot take coals into your bosom and not be burned. You cannot walk through a filthy street without soiling your shoes. Some hold the foolish theory that the young are benefited by engaging in questionable amusements, or by going to places of doubtful repute occasionally, that, by seeing sin in its worst phases, they may learn to abhor it the more. This is sometimes called getting world-wise. Such "wisdom" is to be seriously questioned. Pope's familiar verse is a pointed refutation of such a theory:—

"Vice is a monster, of so frightful mien
As to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet, seen too oft, familiar with its face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

No one needs to take special pains to see the vices of our day. They are crowded upon our sight all too often. The danger is of our becoming too familiar with vice, and thus ceasing to be shocked by it; yes, even moulded by its influence.

The only safe way is to keep ourselves, so far as possible, away from sin, and the doers of iniquity, except as we may go to them to carry the Gospel message. "Abstain from all appearance of evil,"

keep out of evil companionships, away from the loafing places of those who serve Satan, away from every place where impurity, and ungodliness may be paraded before our eyes. We shall all know enough of sin before we leave this world without putting ourselves in the way of it, and we may count ourselves happy if, after every precaution, we escape its contaminating influence.—*The Evangel.*

TRUSTING.

STILL will we trust, though earth seem dark and dreary,

And the heart faint beneath the chastening rod;
Though rough and steep our pathway, worn and weary,

Still will we trust in God.

Our eyes see dimly, till by faith anointed,

And our blind choice oft brings us grief and pain;

Through Him alone who hath our way appointed,
Can we find peace again.

Choose for us, Lord, nor let our weak preferring

Cheat our poor souls of good thou hast designed;

Choose for us, Lord; Thy wisdom is unerring,

And we, like Israel, blind.

So from our sky may night unfurl her shadows,

And day pour gladness through the golden gates;

Our rough path leads to God's eternal meadows,
Where joy our coming waits.

Let us press on, in patient self-denial,

Accept the hardship, shrinking not from loss;

Our path will reach beyond the hour of trial,

Our crown, beyond the cross.

—Selected.

SCIENCE IN PRISON.

WHILE Siemens, the great German scientist, was stationed, in 1840, at Wittenberg, he became interested in the discovery, then recently made by Jacobi, of the precipitation of metallic copper from the sulphate by means of the galvanic current. He repeated the experiments successfully, and applied the process, so far as his means would permit, to other metals. His studies were interrupted by his arrest and imprisonment for connection as second with a duel between two of his brother officers. Not relishing the idea of spending an indefinite period in idleness, he managed on his way to the citadel to make arrangements to have the material required in his electroplating researches smuggled in to him. He set up a small laboratory in his cell, and made himself contented there. Recollecting, from the experiments he had made in the Daguerrean process, that hyposulphite of soda would dissolve the insoluble salts of gold and silver, he applied the principle of electrolysis with astonishing success; and he

believed, he says, that it was one of the greatest joys of his life when a newly-silvered teaspoon which he had immersed at the zinc pole of a Daniell cell into a cup filled with a hyposulphite gold solution, while the copper pole was connected with a louis d'or as an anode, "was converted in a few minutes into a gilded spoon of the most beautiful, purest golden lustre." Galvano plating was then new in Germany, and his discovery made much talk. To a jeweller of Magdeburg, visiting him in prison to examine into its merits, he sold the right to use it for forty louis, and thus obtained means of continuing his experiments. He counted upon enjoying still several months of captivity, and the unmolested prosecution of his researches, when the unwelcome message came to him of a royal pardon, and he was obliged to leave the citadel at once, without house or other spot in which to set up his apparatus. He asked leave from the commandant to stay a little longer, but was denied, accused of being ungrateful for the royal clemency, and was hurried out at midnight.—*Popular Science Monthly.*

SECURE THE TREASURE PROMPTLY.

THE man in the parable who stumbled on the treasure made up his mind at once; straight off he went, there and then, and for the joy thereof he sold all that he had to get hold of that field and its treasure. We must act with the same ready decision. It must be action which is taken—action of some kind that pledges us to the truth of what has been disclosed; for when once we have seen and know, then we may never go back to our former levels, on which we once so lightly lingered. No; all that is gone from us now, and therefore we must take some step practically decisive, by which we must get hold on the treasure. Something we must do that will bind us to go on—to go on when the light fails, and the earth looks drab and dull. For our treasure is hid in earthen vessels, hidden in the field, and we must prepare to find, now and again, that the earthen vessel or the field is all we can see of it. Be sure that such times will come over and over again, when once more we shall see nothing. Therefore be ready for those times beforehand. Act on your belief as it is when it is strongest and most clear-sighted.—*Canon Scott Holland.*

THE HIGHER ARITHMETIC.

"IN arithmetic twice one is two, I suppose, always two. In morals and in spiritualities, I suppose twice one is never two. It may approach to nothing, if the two pull in opposite directions. It may be anything short of infinity if they pull in the same."



HOW TO LIVE.

He liveth long who liveth well !
All other life is short and vain ;
He liveth longest who can tell
Of living most for heavenly gain.

He liveth long who liveth well !
All else is being flung away ;
He liveth longest who can tell
Of true things truly done each day.

Waste not thy being ; back to Him
Who freely gave it, freely give ;
Else is that being but a dream ;
'Tis but to be, and not to live.

Fill up each hour with what will last ;
Buy up the moments as they go ;
The life above when this is past,
Is the ripe fruit of life below.

Sow truth, if thou the truth wouldst reap ;
Who sows the false shall reap the vain ;
Erect and sound thy conscience keep ;
From hollow words and deeds refrain.

Sow love, and taste its fruitage pure ;
Sow peace, and reap its harvests bright ;
Sow sunbeams on the rock and moor,
And find a harvest-home of light.

—*Horatius Bonar.*

THE EDUCATION OF A CHINESE BOY.

IT is not unusual to find in China three or more generations living under the same roof. The head of the household is the aged grandfather, who is never so happy as when he gathers round him his children and grandchildren, and receives from them the various tributes of affection. He is, indeed, an object of envy to all who know him ; for to be blessed with a large family is regarded as a sign of Divine favour. Mencius, one of the ancient sages of China, says that of the offences against filial piety the greatest is failure of issue to continue the line of succession. Thus it is the desire of every Chinese to have children, and sons in particular.

The tie which binds a son to his parent is different from that which binds a daughter. A girl, as soon as she is married, transfers practically all her interests to another family. A boy cannot do this. He cannot leave his father and mother, even after he is grown up and married. He must take care of them through life. There is no way in which he can shift the responsibility. This is well expressed in

the Chinese proverb : "Lay up grain against a famine ; bring up sons against old age."

It will be seen that the bringing up of a boy is a matter of primary importance in China. The work naturally begins at home. Many a great man owes more to his mother than is generally known. This is as true in China as elsewhere. The most conspicuous examples are Confucius and Mencius, whose names are now household words throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Confucius lost his father when he was only three years old. But he had a good mother, who early implanted in him the principles of rectitude and propriety which afterward bore such good fruit in his teachings.

Mencius owed no less to his mother. He, too, was left fatherless at a tender age. But his mother was equal to the responsibility of training him up in the way he should go. It is said that she moved three times in order to find a neighbourhood fit for her boy to grow up in. Such instances of motherly watchfulness and devotion are by no means confined to the ancients.

But the father, as a rule, takes charge of the training of the boys, for he is usually the head of the family. A family in China is the unit of Chinese society. Its head is responsible for its internal discipline and order. Under such circumstances the younger members are naturally not allowed to run wild. Indeed, some families keep up their traditions and discipline from generation to generation, and take particular pride in so doing.

The Tseng family, for example, from which the first Marquis Tseng sprang, and which has given to China so many eminent statesmen, soldiers and diplomats, is noted for the excellent training it gives to those growing up under its wings. There is a certain sturdiness of character in them all.

It is impossible to estimate the influence of family surroundings upon a Chinese boy. With every breath he draws he takes in something that tends to the formation of his character. The lessons he learns in this way are those which he is not apt to forget through life.

THE FIRST LESSON.

What are some of these lessons? The first and most important is dutifulness to parents. To a Chinese son, his father's

and mother's word is law. He no more thinks of disobeying his parents than a soldier of disobeying his superiors. The path of the undutiful son in China does not lie in pleasant places. He is put, as it were, under a social ban. He is as much shunned by all who know him as a mad dog. It is fully expected that he will come to a dreadful end, and that he will some day be struck by a thunderbolt.

It is not a small offence to speak disrespectfully to one's father and mother. Any attempt of the kind is sure to meet with a severe rebuke at home or elsewhere. Such disrespectful terms as "governor" and "old man," applied to one's father, are never heard in China. Indeed, the greatest insult you can possibly offer to a man is to rake his progenitors over the coals.

Every boy is taught to show respect to elders and to be polite to all. To answer questions properly is one of the essential requirements of good breeding. This may seem a small matter. But there is a right way and a wrong way of doing such a simple thing. Everybody is made to understand that it is not his place to volunteer information. He must wait to be asked. Again, in the presence of an elder or superior, he is expected to remain standing unless asked to be seated.

To fling himself into a chair in a room in the presence of any older person who is standing would be such a gross breach of propriety as to call forth the severest reprimand. Travellers in China are often struck with the grave demeanour and quiet manners of the youths they meet. This is due mainly to Chinese family training. It is a severe reflection upon a father to have his boy called ill-bred.

ONLY ONE PROFESSION.

A promising boy, as a general thing, is sent to school as soon as he is old enough. The object is twofold—to teach him reading and writing, and to prepare him for future advancement.

There is only one profession worthy of the consideration of an ambitious boy in China. He has no choice. He has to become a man of letters if he wishes to rise in the world. It is true that as a merchant he may amass great wealth. As a physician he may make his name famous throughout the land. He may become a celebrated artist. He may be noted as an experienced agriculturist.

But in all these walks of life there is something lacking. The road to social distinction lies through official honours. It is the man of letters who is recognised as a leader of men, and is in a position to mould public opinion. The Chinese have a saying that he who can wield a pen need not be dependent wherever he goes. Indeed, the pen is mightier than the sword in China. With a pen in his hand, the humblest scholar can make his voice heard. With a pen in his hand, he can fight his

way to the highest post in the gift of the emperor.

"Statesmen and generals do not come from an exclusive stock," is a Chinese proverb. This is another way of saying that men are not born to great distinction. The late viceroy, Li Hung Chang, the Grand Old Man of China, is a good example. He raised himself, by his own exertions, from the level of the people to the highest position in the empire next to that of emperor. What the great viceroy did, every Chinese boy may do.

TO PASS THE EXAMINATIONS.

The competitive examinations furnish the key to public life. To pass the examinations successfully requires years of patient study. There is no royal road to knowledge, least of all to a knowledge of the Chinese language and literature. But the prize held out has proved sufficient inducement to students to undergo severe privations and to make great sacrifices.

Many stories are told of the expedients used by hard students of former days to acquire a knowledge of books. It is related of an ambitious youth that, being so poor that he could not afford to burn midnight oil, he provided himself with light by bagging a sufficient number of fireflies. The story is told of another who tried to study by the light reflected from the snow. There must be something in a system of promotion which can make people devote so much time and energy to study with such singleness of purpose.

To master reading and writing in China is by no means child's play. It is steady, up-hill work. Now in English you have an alphabet, and each letter has a certain sound or sounds. By learning the twenty-six letters, a boy has practically the key to all the English books. It can be said that the Chinese language has no alphabet. It is composed of characters, so-called. Each character is a word in itself.

Moreover, there is no way of telling the sound of a character except by learning it from the mouth of a teacher. This is the work a Chinese boy sets about doing as soon as he goes to school. He has to learn to recognise thousands of characters at sight, and call them by their right sounds according to the local dialect. It is an absolute necessity to study aloud under the circumstances. You can imagine what a hubbub it must be in a school with all the scholars yelling out their lessons together at the top of their voices.

A Chinese school is not, as a usual thing, divided into classes. Each pupil has his own daily lesson, which consists of a given number of lines from some Chinese classic, to be committed to memory. When the lesson is learned, he takes his books to the teacher's desk, and turning his back both to the teacher and to the book, rattles off what he has got by heart. All the books of Confucius and Mencius and the

so-called "Five Classics" are gone through in this way.

During the whole process, speaking generally, the scholar does not understand a word of what he repeats so glibly. The aim is to get the correct sound of words. Their meanings are not explained until some time afterward.

To write Chinese well is an indispensable accomplishment of a Chinese scholar. The Chinese pen is a brush something like that used by painters. China ink comes in cakes, which have to be ground with a little water on a smooth stone for immediate use. Chinese writing paper is unglazed, and the ink must be rather thick in order to prevent it from spreading.

A CHINESE COPY-BOOK.

Supplied with these writing materials, the beginner is ready to go to work. The leaves of his copy-book are double, like those of a Chinese book. The characters that are to be copied are written on a separate slip, and placed between the double leaves. The paper is so thin that the characters of the copy readily show through, and can be traced by the beginner. It is then a mere matter of practice. After awhile, the copy-slip becomes unnecessary when the scholar becomes familiar with the strokes of which each character is composed.

Half the battle is won after learning how to read and write. The other half of the battle consists of practice. This takes the student many years of hard study before he can be intelligently and thoroughly conversant with all the classics, and be able to compose essays with ease and fluency. Familiarity with the classics, good penmanship, and readiness in writing essays and poems enable a Chinese youth to compete with success at the competitive examinations, and give him the key that opens the door to an official career. The desire on the part of every Chinese parent to see his children rise to eminence in public life is a very strong incentive to bring them up to be scholars.

A youth thus brought up is necessarily limited in his range of knowledge. He knows nothing about the various branches of science, or about any other language than his own. But he is deeply versed in the ancient lore of his country. He has all the wisdom of Confucius at his tongue's end.

How many theologians in this country can repeat from memory the whole Bible from beginning to end? It is safe to say that there are none. But the number of schoolboys in China who can repeat from memory all the ancient classics of China may be numbered by the thousands, yes, tens of thousands. It is to be observed that what they lack, they lack woefully, and what they know, they know thoroughly.

AN EXAGGERATED VALUE.

As might be expected, the study of the Chinese language and literature has acquired an exaggerated educational value among the Chinese people. This, however, is not without a parallel in Western countries. The position which Latin and Greek held not many years ago in the curricula of American and European colleges and universities is somewhat similar. This much can be said in favour of the Chinese language: It is still a living language, while Latin and Greek are dead.

In the bringing up of a typical Chinese youth, physical culture has no place. Baseball, football, boating and other athletic sports do not enter into the life of a Chinese schoolboy. He is entirely ignorant of such amusements, and indeed, has no time to take part in them. His study hours are long. From morning until night he is steadily kept at his desk, with intermissions long enough only for him to eat his meals.

There is not even one day in seven to break the monotony of his daily routine. Even summer does not give him a vacation. The holidays in the Chinese calendar are few and far between. In the spring of the year a day is observed on which whole cities and villages turn out to visit the graves of their ancestral dead. There is also a day in the autumn on which the young and the old flock to fields and mountains to fly kites.

Naturally, these are the days to which all schoolboys look forward with pleasant anticipations. But the longest vacation they have comes just before the Chinese New Year. Then it is that they have about a month of play without a bit of work. Then it is that they can let off fire-crackers to their hearts' content.

THE INTRODUCTION OF WESTERN STUDIES.

The introduction of Western studies is destined to work a great change in the school life of Chinese youths. In all the treaty ports in China, schools in which English is taught have sprung up in considerable numbers. The question of making Western sciences and languages required subjects for the competitive examination has long been under consideration by the Chinese government.

No doubt, such necessary modifications in the public examination system will be made in the near future. It is needless to say that changes of so momentous a nature will have a far-reaching effect. Happy will be the youths of China when they are able to reap the benefits growing out of the new order of things—*Wu Ting Fang, in in Youths' Companion.*

ONE day is worth three to him who doeth everything in order.



FOR THE CHRIST-CHILD.

WE can fancy how He lay
In her arms in baby way.
Tiny, dimpled fingers curled
Like the velvet petals furled
In a rosebud tinted pink.
Ah, what did the mother think
When she cradled, soft and warm,
In her arms His little form?
Sweetest eyes the world has known
Gazing back into her own,
Must have made them over-brim,—
She to have the care of Him!

Still we read, and read again,
How those wise, expectant men
Came, star-guided, to the place
Brightened by that young child-face.
"Ah! dear little Christ," we say,
"Had our feet been shown the way
To your resting-place, we too
Would have brought fair gifts to you."

Then the Lord Christ smiles, we know,
Glad that we should love Him so.
"Bring your little gifts to me;
I have need of them," saith He.
"I would make my birthday fair
For the children everywhere.
If there be some oversad,
Search them out, and make them glad.
Change their tears to smiles; 'twill be
Just the same as done to me."

—Selected.

THE CALL OF MOSES.

WHILE Moses was caring for Jethro's flocks, he was out among the mountains, seeing the works of God in the beautiful scenes of nature. This must have brought fresh to his mind the early lessons that he learnt from his mother's lips about the Creator of the heavens and the earth. For forty years he lived the peaceful life of a shepherd, learning of God

the truths which he wrote out in the Book of Genesis, to teach the world in all coming time. The tender care that he had to give to the sheep of his flock also taught him many lessons, and prepared him to lead God's people like a flock through that same wilderness.

It was because Moses studied the works of God in nature that he was so quick to notice a strange sight, and to try to find out the cause of it. It was when God "saw that he turned aside to see," that He spoke to him out of the midst of the bush.

God is everywhere, filling all things with His life. In many ways the glory of that hidden life shines forth and shows to all who have eyes to see, that God is there. In the glory of the sun, moon, and stars; in all things bright and beautiful; in every common bush and shrub and tree, God is revealing His glory to attract our attention, so that He may talk with us. But many have no eyes to see the "great sight;" they pass all the glory by unheeded, so they never learn the message that God has for them.

God wants us to "behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple." We have learned that the whole earth is His temple—His dwelling-place—and in all His works He is showing us His ways. In the study of His works we are enquiring in His temple, but what we find out depends upon how we come to learn.

It was not enough for Moses to "turn aside to see." Before God could talk with him, he must learn that he was on holy ground; he must take off his shoes,—come in a humble, reverent spirit. And so it is with all who come to enquire in God's great temple. They must learn that God's presence and life makes it a holy place. Many study the works of God as Moses might have studied the burning bush, thinking it a strange and wonderful sight,

but never hearing the voice of God. This is because they do not know that God is there; so they do not enquire of Him, and are not taught by His Holy Spirit.

God was going to lead His people out of Egypt away from all the false gods they had worshipped, to bring them to Himself. But "he that cometh to God must believe that *He is*." So the first message that God sent the people was, "I AM."

All the false gods of the nations are nothing; they seem to be something but they are not. (Read Ps. 115.) Therefore they are a lie. "But the Lord is the true God." His name is "I AM;" and He is the only one who really is. I AM is present tense, or present time; it means *now*; yet this is God's name for ever. This shows us that He always was and that He ever will be. Jesus said that He is the One "which is, and which was, and which is to come." I AM is present; this is God's name for ever; therefore He is ever present, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

But He says also, I Am that I Am,—I AM that which, or what, I AM. So the name of God shows us what He is; it is to teach us His character. Every one of God's works is to show us something of *what He is*; so all things are declaring the everlasting name of the Creator. "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth." What a grand, glorious, almighty name is this everlasting name of our God and Saviour! And from everything that He has made He is declaring it to us, just as truly as He did to Moses out of the midst of the bush.

God wanted the children of Israel to know Him, so that they would trust Him and let Him lead them through the wilderness, as the sheep follow the kind and gentle shepherd they have learnt to know. And so He declared His name to them, for "they that know Thy name shall put their trust in Thee."

The One who appeared to Moses in the flame of fire was Jesus Christ the Saviour, who had come down to deliver His people from bondage. He subdued His glory so that Moses might look upon it and live, and took a common bush, a lowly shrub, no different from any other, in which to appear. In this He was showing in a figure how He was to veil His glory, and come to dwell in the form of man, just like any other man, in order to deliver His people from the terrible bondage of sin.

"DEAR Jesus, ever at my side,
How loving must Thou be,
To leave Thy home in heaven to guide
A little child like me."

A LOST CHILD.

A LARGE children's meeting was being held, one day, in a great hall in Philadelphia, when a gentleman walked quickly up the aisle, and said to the leader: "Oh, sir! I am in great distress. I was coming to this meeting with my little girl, but somehow she got separated from me in the crowd outside, and I cannot think where she is!"

"I am very sorry," said the superintendent, "but how can I help you?"

"Well," replied the agitated father, "she may have found her way in here, and I should be so glad if you would ask. Her name is Mary Wilson." So the leader, having called for silence, said in a loud voice: "Is there a little lost girl here, named Mary Wilson? If so will she stand up?"

A great many children, and some grown-up people, stood up and looked at each other, but no one answered, so once more the leader said: "If Mary Wilson, who is lost, is here, will she stand up?" This time nearly a hundred children stood up to look for the little missing girl, but with no better result than before. So the leader said: "I am very sorry, sir, but apparently she is not here; and I think we must get on with the meeting now;" and the poor anxious father left the hall in great distress to give information to the police.

At the close of the meeting, when most of the children had trooped off home, a little girl was seen sitting on a corner seat.

"What are you waiting for?" asked a teacher. "I'm waiting for my papa or someone to take me home," was the artless reply. "What is your name?" "Mary Wilson." "Mary Wilson!" exclaimed the astonished teacher, "did you not hear Mr. A—say that if a little girl named Mary Wilson who was lost was here she was to stand up? Why didn't you do so?"

"Oh," replied the child, "I wasn't lost; I was here!"

Thus she had not been found at the right time because she did not know she was lost; and there are many older and wiser people than little Mary who make a similar mistake. They are never saved, because they do not know that they are lost. Jesus said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Thus the Good Shepherd found the sheep upon the mountain, and carried it home in His bosom. Thus He will save you, if you will acknowledge that you have "erred and strayed from His ways like lost sheep," and accept the pardon which He gave His life to secure.

When you are found you will no longer be lost; but you will always be lost until you are found.—*The Christian.*

FOR YOU.

I HAVE some good advice for you,
My merry little man;
'Tis this: Where'er your lot is cast,
Do just the best you can;
Look for the good in everything,
No matter what or where,
And don't be always looking for
The hardest thing to bear.

O do not stand with idle hands,
Waiting for something grand,
While precious moments slip away
Like grains of shining sand!
But do the duty nearest you,
And do it faithfully;
For stepping-stones to greater things
These little deeds shall be.

—Selected.

THE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY.

THE wood-box is empty!" called mamma, suggestively.

"Oh, bother! There's always something to do!" and Willie fretfully laid down his knife with which he was making a Jack-o'-lantern out of a round, yellow pumpkin. "Nobody has so much to do as I—its work, work, work, the whole time!"

"And no play at all?" asked grandma, quietly, from her sunshiny corner by the window.

"Sometimes," assented Willie, "but it's wood, water, chips, and—and everything, mostly!"

"Let me see," and grandma laid down her knitting within the bright-coloured Indian basket. "Yesterday, a little boy I know spent the afternoon with Harold Bent, fishing. After the errands were done, this same little boy rode to the village with his grandpa to hear a band concert. This morning he was allowed to run over to his Uncle Sam's to get two golden pumpkins—not to be made into delicious pies, but—"

Just then Willie remembered the empty wood-box, and so grandma didn't finish her sentence.

When he came back, in better spirits, grandma had gone. Presently she returned with a small, brown-covered note-book.

"I have a plan, dear," said grandma, as she drew her chintz-covered rocker up to the table, where Willie was operating on the Jack-o'-lantern's eyes.

Willie laid down his knife and looked up curiously.

"Now," resumed grandma, "I want you and mamma to form a Co-operative Society."

"O grandma, I?" interrupted Willie, amazed at the long names.

"Yes; a Co-operative Society, of which mamma will be president and you the secretary. I'll be the auditor."

"What shall I do?" asked Willie.

"Your duty will be to keep the records."

"And mine?" laughed mamma.

"Oh, to be general overseer," replied grandma, smiling. "As the name implies,

you will work together—that is, you will work for each other to advance a common interest—a cheerful, happy home."

"I'm ready!" exclaimed Willie, thoroughly interested. "And you, mamma?"

"Certainly; 'tis a delightful plan," said she.

"Of course you will do what is necessary for each other's comfort," continued grandma, "and Willie will keep the record of each day's doings. At night we will balance accounts. Devote one page to what mamma does for you," explained grandma, "and the opposite page to what you do for her. Do you see?"

Willie nodded and took the book, while grandma went back to her knitting.

Soon Willie needed a candle for his lantern.

"This will do for both if you divide it," said mamma, giving Willie an extra fine taper.

"Thank you. One item for mamma's account," he added.

'Twas long after dinner before he had one single entry on his own page—while mamma's was half full!

"I didn't think she did so much for me," said Willie, rather soberly, to himself.

"When the sitting-room lamp was lighted, grandma thought it would be a good time to examine the accounts of the Co-operative Society.

Willie produced the account-book. Then he and the president drew up their chairs on either side of the auditor.

The secretary coloured a little as grandma (rather, the auditor) turned to the first page. She read it just as it was recorded:—

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY RECORD.

President's Account.

President furnished me, no, the secretary, with two candles for Jack-o'-lanterns.

Made secretary's bed.

Got dinner and boiled an extra egg for said secretary.

Mended stockings for secretary.

Patched pants for same.

Helped him write a letter to papa.

Ironed secretary's collars.

Cleaned secretary's best coat.

Took splinter out of secretary's finger.

Secretary's Account.

Got president one pail of water. (Used for secretary's dinner!)

Got wood. P.S. Don't suppose secretary's collars could have been ironed without fire!

Helped carry away the dishes.

WILLIE CONANT, Sec'ty.

The next page showed a like result.

"I declare, the president seems to have the most credit!" said grandma.

"The secretary may have omitted to make entries on his own page," suggested mamma.

"No mamma," said Willie, honestly, forgetting her official title, "you do ten times more for me every day than I do for you, but I shouldn't have known it if it hadn't been for grandma!"—*Youth's Companion.*



THE AMUSEMENTS OF BIRDS.

SOME modern writers would have us believe that the life of a bird is a life of constant fear; that not only is it all work and no play, but that it is passed in deadly terror. To a bird lover this idea is intolerable, and if accepted would take away all pleasure in making their acquaintance. But happily this view is not confirmed by facts (says a writer in *The Leisure Hour*). One who has time, patience, and ability to watch birds, sees enough to convince him that although always alert, quick to perceive danger, and instantly to avoid it, birds do not pass their lives in dread and fear. On the contrary, there is plenty of evidence to show that our feathered brethren have sports into which they enter with the enthusiasm of youth.

One of the whimsical ways in which birds enjoy themselves is by the swing, which seems very droll in the possessors of wings. There is a whole family—the titmice—common in Europe and America, who simply revel in this amusement. Sometimes singly and sometimes in parties these little birds seize the tip ends of long branches, and hanging head up or head down swing back and forth in the wind, the more violent the more fun apparently, calling to one another in the merriest way. The same trick is played by others who perch on a weather-vane, swaying in a veritable wind, and showing their enjoyment by singing with glee as they bend this way and that to preserve their balance.

Birds are often quick to avail themselves of new conditions, and the pleasure of being carried swiftly through the air, which we understand and appreciate ourselves, evidently actuated a party of auks in the far North, who improvised a coasting-ground on the roof of a tent put up by explorers. The birds spent a great deal of time and became somewhat troublesome by laboriously and noisily scrambling up one side of the tent to the ridge-pole, and coasting down the other. Doubtless the fun of the slide paid for the labour of the climb, as in the case with a boy in the same sport.

A great deal of the enjoyment of play comes undoubtedly from the delight in movement, but much is also due to the fact of accomplishing something, like catch-

ing some object. This bears the same relation to the simpler plays that the various games of ball do in human life. Birds in captivity show this plainly. Parrots and cockatoos are fond of varying the monotony of their lives with playthings, bits of chain, glittering objects, a feather, a key; almost anything indeed they will amuse themselves with for hours, and show a strong sense of ownership by resenting any other use of the objects they consider their own.

HUMMING-BIRDS

HUMMING-BIRDS are of many kinds. One is known as the ruby-throated humming-bird, because of a splendid red throat-patch worn by the male. To speak more exactly, the patch is red only in some lights. You see it one instant as black as a coal, and the next instant it flashes like a coal on fire. This ornament,—a real jewel,—with the lovely shining green of the bird's back, makes him an object of great beauty.

Every one knows him, or would do so only that some people confuse him with bright-coloured, long-tongued humming-bird moths that are seen hovering, mostly in the early evening, over the flowers of the garden.

Many persons seem to imagine that the hummer lives on the wing. They have never seen one sitting still, they say. But the truth is that humming-birds pass but a small part of the time in the air. They are so very small, however, that they are easily overlooked on a branch of a tree, and the average person never notices them except when the hum of their wings attracts his attention to them.

One of the prettiest sights in the world is a humming-bird hovering before a blossom, his wings vibrating so fast as to make a mist about him, and his long needle of a bill probing the flower with quick, eager thrusts. All his movements are of lightning-like rapidity, and even while your eyes are on him he is gone like a flash, you cannot say whither.

The humming-bird's nest is built on a branch of a tree,—saddled on it,—and is not very hard to find after you have once seen one, and so have learned precisely what to look for. Generally it is placed well out toward the end of the limb. I have

found it on pitch-pines, in the woods, on roadside maples,—shadetrees,—and especially in apple and pear orchards. The mother bird is very apt to betray its whereabouts by buzzing about the head of any one who comes near it.

The nest is a tiny thing, looking for size and shape like a cup out of a child's toy tea-set. Its walls are thick, and on the outside are covered—shingled, we may say—with bits of grey lichens, which help to make the nest look like nothing more than a knot. Whether they are put on for that purpose, or by way of ornament, is more than I can tell.

The bird always lays two white eggs, about as large as peas. The young ones stay in the nest for three weeks, more or less, till they are fully grown and fledged, and perfectly well able to fly. I once saw one take his first flight, and a great venture it seemed. All these three weeks, and for another week afterward, the mother—no father is present—has her hands full to supply the little things with food, which she gives them from her crop, thrusting her long, sharp bill clean down their throats in the process, in a way to make a looker-on shiver. The only note I have ever heard from the ruby-throat is a squeak, which seems to be an expression of nervousness or annoyance, and is uttered whenever an intruder—a man, a cat, or a strange bird—comes near the tree in which her treasures are hidden.

Humming-birds sometimes fly into open windows and are caught. At such times they become tame almost at once, but it is difficult, if not impossible, to keep them alive in captivity, and it is cruel to attempt it, except when the little creature is injured and plainly unable to look out for itself.

A lady of my acquaintance discovered a humming-bird under her piazza. It had flown in by accident, probably, and now was darting back and forth in a frantic attempt to get out. The piazza was open on three sides, to be sure, but the frightened bird kept up against the ceiling, and of course found itself walled in.

Fearful that it would injure itself, the lady brought a broom and tried to force it to come down and so discover its way out; but it was only the more scared. Then a happy thought came to her. She went to the garden, plucked a few flowers, and going back to the piazza, set them down for the bird to see. Instantly it flew toward them, and as it did so it saw the open world without, and away it went.

Another lady wrote me once a very pretty story of a hummer that came and probed a nasturtium which she held in her hand.

It is wonderful to think that so tiny a bird, born in New England or in Canada in June, should travel to Cuba or Central America in the autumn, and the next spring find its way back again to its birthplace.—*Bradford Torrey.*



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The following advice by the late Commissioner Kerr, for forty-two years judge of the City of London Court, cannot be too often repeated, or too thoroughly learned:—

"Never go to law under any consideration whatever. You had better lose your money than go to law. As a rule it only puts money into the pockets of the lawyers—the very worst possible way in which money can be spent."

Long ago the same advice was given by "a greater than Solomon": "If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also."

FREEDOM IN SABBATH REST.

THE Lord Mayor of Bristol has issued an appeal to "all those who are not engaged in necessary trades, to suspend business on Sunday." He says to them, "I scarcely need to point out to you that the great majority of the tradesmen of our city—from reasons which cannot but command respect—close their shops and offices on the Lord's Day, and I believe that there is a widespread desire to preserve this day of rest;" and he further adds: "You will readily see that every shopkeeper doing business on Sunday tends to weaken the opinion in favour of keeping the day sacred to rest; is a cause of unfair competition; and is also a distinct inducement to other tradesmen to open their shops."

But what if some tradesmen know that Sunday is not the Lord's Day, and are not anxious to strengthen "the opinion in favour of keeping the day sacred to rest"? Suppose that they, knowing "the immense gain to the whole community which the observance of a day of rest would secure," have already rested on the Lord's Day, the seventh day of the week, commonly called Saturday? Must they close their shops, and rest on Sunday, just because others wish to do so? Surely no one will claim that it would be compatible with freedom to seek to compel them to do so.

that if there are any who do not rest on the Sunday, that will hinder all the others from resting. If that were true, we should expect an agitation for a law requiring everybody to go to bed at the same hour at night, and all to rise at the same time in the morning, on the ground that nobody can rest when others are working. There would be more sense in that than in the other; for people who wish to sleep are often kept awake by the noise of people going about their business, while the fact that one person does not worship at some particular time does not hinder anybody else from worshipping. A man can pray even while others are blaspheming.

We recognise the fact that the observance of a day of rest is an immense gain to the whole community; and this gain is realised if only one person rests. Every person who stands on the Lord's side, worshipping Him in spirit and in truth, resting on the day which He appointed, is a blessing to mankind. But the man who rests on a certain day merely because it is the custom, and who thinks that he cannot rest unless everybody else does, gets no gain himself by his supposed rest, and is no help to anybody else. The world is benefited only by men who can stand alone with God, regardless of other men. We hope that everybody in Bristol whose conscience requires him to rest on Sunday, will do so until he is instructed differently; and we also hope that nobody will assume the right to be conscience for his neighbour.

Just a word as to the significance of real Sabbath rest. It is the sign of the sanctifying power of God. Ezek. xx 12. It is rest from sin even while the sin is in the flesh, struggling for the mastery. It is the sign of the perfect life that God can live in a person, not only in the world to come, where there is nothing to offend, but even in "this present evil world," where all the hosts of sin assail. Thus it appears that the man who cannot rest unless everybody else does, whose rest is broken by somebody else's toil or play, does not know anything about the true Sabbath, and it is therefore immaterial whether he abstains from labour on any day. True Sabbath-keepers may feel sorry that any do not know the joy of the Lord, but they are never offended nor hindered in their rest by the traffic that is always at its height on the last day of the week—God's day. "Great peace have they that love Thy law, and nothing shall offend them."

The Gospel in the Old Testament.—The Gospel of God to which the Apostle Paul declared himself to be separated, was the Gospel "which He had promised afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures" (Rom. i. 2); literally, the Gospel which He had before announced or preached. This shows us that the Old Testament contains the Gospel, and also that the Gospel in the Old Testament is the same Gospel that is in the New. It is the only Gospel that the apostle preached. That being the case, it should not be thought strange for men to believe the Old Testament, and to refer to it as of equal authority with the New Testament.

We read that God "preached beforehand the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." Gal. iii. 8. The Gospel preached to the people when Paul lived, was the same Gospel that was preached unto the ancient Israelites. See Heb. iv. 2. Moses wrote of Christ; and so much of the Gospel is to be found in his writings that a man who does not believe what Moses wrote, cannot believe in Christ. John v. 46, 47. "To Him gave all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." Acts x. 43.

Paul had only the Old Testament when he went to Thessalonica, "and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead." Acts xvii. 3, 3. Timothy had nothing in his childhood and youth but the Old Testament writings, and the apostle wrote to him: "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Tim. iii. 14, 15. Then go to the Old Testament with the expectation of finding Christ and His righteousness there, and you will be made wiser unto salvation. Do not discriminate between Moses and Paul, between David and Peter, between Jeremiah and James, between Isaiah and John.

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