

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Letters to a Young Preacher.

LETTER XXXVI. PRACTICAL PREACHING.

My Dear Brother,—

While some persons dislike doctrinal preaching, and others do not wish to hear much said about experience, there are those who have a strong aversion to preaching of a practical nature. They regard it as savoring of legality.—In their apprehension it is adapted to lead people to expect salvation by works.

It is true, indeed, that preaching which would naturally have such a tendency is unscriptural and pernicious. That salvation is by grace, is repeatedly stated in Scripture with all possible plainness and decision. (Ps. lxxxiv. 11. Rom. iii. 23, 28. xi. 6.) The grace, however, by which men are saved, lays them under strong obligation to glorify God by yielding cheerful obedience to His commands. (1 Cor. vi. 20.—1 Pet. ii. 9.) It prompts them to the pursuit of this course. So the Apostle Paul, directing Titus to enjoin upon the Christians the discharge of the practical duties of Christianity, "to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work," remarks, as a motive thereto, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." With reference to the doctrine of salvation by grace here stated, and the particulars mentioned, he adds, "This is a faithful saying; and these things I will that thou affirm constantly; that [hina, to the end that] they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works." (Titus iii. 1-8) Hence it is manifest, that the performance of good works should be inculcated upon evangelical principles. The consideration of Divine favor freely bestowed, should be urged as a powerful incentive to active obedience.—(1 Saul. xii. 24. Ps. cxvi. 12-14. Rom. xii. 1. Eph. ii. 4-10.)

The man who hopes to be saved on account of the orthodoxy of his creed, or the clearness of his experience, or of both these combined, does but miserably deceive himself. "Faith without works is dead." So all pretences to religious experience, if it be not attended with holiness of heart and life, and productive of sincere obedience, are delusive and vain. (Isa. 4. 11.—Rom. vi. 16, 18, 22. Heb. xii. 14. Ja. i. 22-27. ii. 14-20.)

The Saviour, in the close of His Sermon on the mount, says expressly, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." He then compares one who hears His sayings and does them, to "a wise man, which built his house upon a rock," and so remained secure amidst all storms and tempests; while one who hears them and does them not, is compared to "a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand . . . and it fell; and" ruinous indeed was "the fall of it." (Matt. vii. 21-27.) So in His account of the final judgment, after having informed us that "the unprofitable servant," who had not improved "the talent" committed to him, would be cast "into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." He states that obedient believers who, from love to Him, have relieved His afflicted disciples, will "inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world;" while those who lived in the neglect of such duties, "will depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matt. xxv. 24-46.) In accordance with this, the inspired writers repeatedly tell us, in unmistakable terms, that men will be judged at the last day "according to their works."—(Eccles. xii. 13, 14. Jno. v. 28, 29. Rom. ii. 6-11, 16. 2 Cor. v. 10. Rev. xx. 12, 13.)

It may be asked, How does this comport with the sentiment, that salvation is by grace, through faith? This apparent difficulty can be fully obviated by Scripture. The man who does not believe in Christ, never performs one action that is truly acceptable in the sight of God; "Without faith it is impossible to please Him." (Heb. xi. 6. Jno. vi. 29. Tit. i. 15. 1 Jno. v. 10.) The unbeliever, therefore, however many deeds he may do that are right and commendable in themselves considered, in reality does no good works. He rejects the only Saviour, and so remains under the curse of the law; and all his sins will appear in dread array against him.—But those who through grace "believe to the

saving of the soul," and so obtain pardon and deliverance from the curse of the law, are led to obey God's commands, to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world.—(Jno. xiv. 21, 23, 24. xv. 8-10, 16. Tit. ii. 11-14.) Their good works are not the ground of their acceptance with God; but the fruits and evidences of their faith.

Some have imagined that grace so strongly incites believers to obedience and good works, as to render exhortations thereunto needless.—Every person, however, who peruses the Scriptures with an unprejudiced and attentive mind, must be aware that they abound with such exhortations. Their instructions are eminently practical. The example thus set manifestly ought to be imitated by every preacher. Not only should he urge believers to the discharge of Christian duty, but likewise, in imitation of the Saviour and His inspired servants, he should faithfully and earnestly exhort the unconverted to "repent and believe the gospel." (Isa. lv. 6, 7. Mark i. 15. Luke xii. 3, 5. xxiv. 47. Acts xvii. 30.)

May you, my dear young Brother, ever be enabled to preach the gospel, as the venerable Edward Manning used to say, "doctrinally, experimentally, and practically," in a scriptural, judicious, and profitable manner; and to add weight to your teaching by a daily example of practical godliness.

Yours in gospel bonds,
CHARLES TUPPER.

Aylesford, June 19th, 1862.

N. B.—As I have been requested by the Western Baptist Association, to prepare for the Christian Messenger the substance of a discourse delivered by me in Liverpool on the 15th inst. compliance with this request will oblige me to suspend the publication of the remainder of these Letters for a few weeks. C. T.

For the Christian Messenger.

The holy life and happy death of a young Indian girl.

(Translated from "The Semeur" by S. T. Rand)

In the year 1857 a missionary employed among the Indians of Kansas, returned to his home one evening with three little girls, two of whom followed him with unequal steps, while the other was carried in his arms. They were three sisters, daughters of a widow of the Sac tribe, whose funeral the missionary had just attended. Their father who had died but a few months previous, was not an Indian, but a French-Canadian, who in his youth had been destined for the priesthood, but who, for some reason unknown, had, when quite young, quitted his native country and gone to live among the Sacs. Having adopted their customs he married one of their women.

The eldest of these little orphan girls taken home by the charity of this servant of Jesus Christ, was now about eight years of age.

Sophia, (for that was her name) showed herself ready to adopt the customs and usages of civilized life, and the principles of the gospel, from her first entrance into the mission house. Her heart was opened with ardor to the impressions of divine grace. At the age of thirteen she gave such satisfactory evidences of piety as to be freely admitted as a communicant into the church; and from that time till her death, which occurred in 1861, Jan. 21st., she continued by her exemplary life to manifest that she was a true child of God.

After three years from the time our story commences, her health failed, and it was soon manifest that she was the victim of that fatal disease, consumption. All the care and all the remedies usually employed in similar cases were ineffectual; her strength daily declined; but thanks to divine goodness, without causing her to suffer much pain. When she was first apprised of the nature of her complaint and its probable termination in death, she manifested some doubts and some anxiety respecting her spiritual state, arising from her deep sense of unworthiness and her profound humility; but soon after all those clouds were dispersed, and the splendor of a real, living, and unshaken faith, shone forth. Some of the incidents of this epoch of her terrestrial existence, will justify their insertion.

Economising the annuities which she and her sisters received from the Council of their nation, Sophia had been able to lay by something, a portion of which, amounting to 1000 francs, had been deposited in a bank. The evening before she died, after having disposed of her clothing and some other articles of but little value, she said to the individual who had charge of her affairs; "With respect to the 1000 francs placed

in the bank of St. Joseph, I wish you to give 500 to the Highland University, and to devote the rest in the way you deem most proper, to spread the knowledge of Jesus among the children of my tribe. And now," she added, "since this business is finished, I have done with the world. I am ready to leave it, and am even happy to leave it, for I thirst for the 'waters springing up into life eternal.' Yes! I thirst for them, and I shall soon drink of them, and thirst no more forever!"

One of the persons who were watching over her, not supposing her end to be so near, spoke of changing her clothing. "O no! no!" she replied, "I have no need of that: I am soon to be clothed with the robe of the Redeemed."—And a few moments after she added: "The moment of my departure has arrived. I desire that all present will be quiet, and not make any noise in my room, and that no one will weep, that I may go in peace." Then calling her little sisters to her bedside she exhorted them in the tenderest manner, embraced them several times and bade them adieu, entreating them in the most touching terms to continue faithful to the Saviour, that they might meet her in heaven. Though breathing with more and more difficulty, she however rallied all her remaining strength to exhort those around her to lead holy lives and to prepare for their last hour.

Suddenly, a few moments before she breathed her last, she asked, "What is that I hear? Are they playing music this evening? and being answered in the negative. "Tis strange, she replied, I hear the most delightful music! Oh how beautiful it is! Listen! and you must surely hear it." A moment after she exclaimed, "I have lost the use of one of my arms (already cold in death), or I would spring up and clap my hands with delight to salute the splendors that I see surrounding me!" After a few other words of exhortation and of praise, she cried out: "See! Jesus comes! See! the angels come! raise me up!" and in a moment without a struggle or a groan, she expired.

After her death the clothes in which she had long expressed a wish that her mortal remains should be arranged for burial, were found carefully prepared and arranged in her trunk. In her Bible on the inside of the cover were written with her own hand two sentences, of which the following is the import:

"I would not for worlds begin again the sorrowful journey of life, to be exposed to the risk of seeing my future obscured by the sufferings of the past."

"My dwelling-place henceforth is heaven.—Adieu thou sea! thou earth and sun, adieu! Heaven opens on my sight! How then can I have one anxious look or thought for you!"

Let no one think it strange that the words of this dying Indian girl should be collected and treasured up. But to one who can look back upon her life, as all those can who were acquainted with her, it is not in these that the most valuable proof is found of the work of regeneration by the Holy Spirit; a spotless and irreproachable life is a much more impressive proof. Sophia truly shone as a light in this world. She seemed to possess all the graces promised to the christian. Her gratitude and affection to her friends, and especially to those who had been the means of calling her out of the darkness of paganism, knew no bounds. Her regard for truth was so great that no one dreamed of doubting her word, even in the most trivial matter; nor would those who knew her hesitate to entrust her with the keys of their treasures. Having formed the habit of regularity in her devotions, she constantly read the holy Scriptures, and other works of devotion—especially Baxter's Saints Rest, which was a great favorite with her, especially in her last illness, when she would often repeat many passages of it, those particularly which refer to the resurrection and the spiritual body with which the glorified saint will be endowed.

[Farewell, sweet child! thy blameless life Shall cheer my heart amidst toil and strife; And thy triumphant death shall be A source of faith and hope to me. And when my course like them is run, Then farewell sea, and earth and sun. I saved by grace and saved like thee, Will join that blissful company.]

Missionary Intelligence.

More disastrous intelligence from the New Hebrides.

Whilst the sad end of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon, Presbyterian missionaries at Erromanga, is fresh in the recollection of our readers we have further accounts of a lamentable suspension of the work of their missionaries at Tanna, the destruction of their property, and the most miraculous and hair breadth escape of themselves from the island, after having been repeatedly threatened

with immediate death. We give some extracts of a letter from the Rev. Mr. Paton to the Secretary:

TANA, 30th January, 1862.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—My last letter informed you that about sixty persons were now attending worship at my station; that they had put on clothing; that they were busy preparing to erect a new church; that they were eager to receive spiritual instruction; that a number of young men had begun to attend worship; and that, by God's blessing, our work was prospering as it had never done, which had so increased the hatred and opposition of our enemies that war between the two parties seemed inevitable.

Nauka, Miaki, and Karewick united against our people, and gave the challenge to war by killing a fat pig of Sirania's, cutting down my fences and bananas, killing three of my goats, and attempting to kill a chief's son who had come to stay at our house; and, though fourteen chiefs and their people were on our side, yet, notwithstanding of all these provocations, I got them to promise not to go to war unless some person was killed. Miaki and Nauka now said they would kill Jau by witchcraft, and then they would make a hurricane to destroy Missi's house, and kill him and all who attempted to worship; for they hated Jehovah and his word, as it caused the people to disregard their word and customs.

Jau, who was one of the most powerful chiefs on my side of the island, and one of my best friends, took ill and died in a few days; and a week after that we had a fearful hurricane, which destroyed yams and bananas, fruits and fruit trees, fences and houses, but left our mission-houses uninjured. Therefore, the inland people assembled in thousands to assist Sirania, Manuman, and our friends, to take revenge on Miaki and our enemies for all their base conduct. The day after the hurricane Miaki came with all his associates to shoot me; but on seeing his forbidding appearance I asked for his wife, who was about to be confined, and gave him a blanket, a piece of calico, and a piece of soap, which he received, and after consulting with his followers, and shewing much hatred to us, they left.

Next morning (Saturday 18th) the war began; and as I had done my utmost to prevent it, both parties now urged me to keep my house, and they would do us no injury. But Miaki and his party took shelter, and fought round our houses, and though the balls fell thick near to it, God protected us from all harm. Jau's people now retired, and Nauka and Miaki gave a large present of food to the Inikahi and Kasirumini people to help them to fight Missi and the natives who now attended worship. The present was accepted, and they agreed to "kill and cook Missi and his two Aneiteumese at every village on Tana, to steal all their property, and to burn all their houses." Our bodies were to be cut into small pieces, so that they might be sent to be cooked at all the public villages. So at five P. M. the whole party left to raise reinforcements for next morning, and Miaki and his friends assured me that the present was given to keep them from doing me farther injury.

Next morning (Sabbath 19th), at daylight our house was again surrounded by thousands of savages, howling and yelling. Miaki again sent them word to "kill Missi, steal all his property, and burn his houses." So, headed by Karewick, Esukarupi, and Ringian, the Inikahi and Kasirumini people began by discharging muskets at our house, and then they tried to beat in the walls with their clubs. They then smashed the window and door of my store-house, broke open boxes and casks, tore my books to pieces and scattered them about, and stole all that they could carry away, both of mission and of personal property. They also broke into my Aneiteum teachers' house, and stole all it contained. They next made a rush at our house, firing muskets and howling fearfully. A chief called me to the window, professing great kindness, but instantly sent his axe through it, calling to all, "Come and kill them now." I said, "God will punish you for such bad conduct, and if you kill me, a man-of-war will punish you;" but he said, "It's all lies about a man-of-war," and instantly hundreds of muskets were presented at me, when again the chief cried, "Come on, let us all kill him," and aimed to strike his axe into my forehead; but on observing a revolver in my hand, he fell back and said something to the people, who instantly lay down for a few minutes, and then all fled for the nearest bush, where they kept howling and showing their firearms; and by this means God preserved our lives till about five P. M., when they all left.

After continuing the narrative of the treachery of some of their professed friends he proceeds:

Towards morning I got a few things which I could lay hold of in the dark, put into the canoe and taken to Nowar's, but no native durst assist me, so we could do little. Abraham and I returned, and waited to see if the Inikahi and Kasirumini people would return. And, as the sun rose, Miaki blew his large conch, and a mass of howling savages began to rush down the Inikahi hills, and continued increasing till the shore was covered with them, reaching from the mission-house as far as I could see; and as they were all yelling and pressing on for our house, I thought it prudent to lock up the house, and retire through the bush to Nowar's village, where we found the people all crying, quaking with terror, and running about in despair, at seeing so many armed savages assembled on the shore so near them, scarcely a mile distant. A large party went to our house, but as they found it locked and no person about they returned to the assembled thousands on the shore.

Nauka and Miaki now went to them and advised them not to steal, or burn my house to day,