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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

A Sermon in Rhyme.

BY REV. D. W. HOYT.

If you have a friend worth loving,
Love him. Yes, and let him know
That you love him, e'er life's evening
Tinge his brow with sunset glow.
Why should good words ne'er be said
Of a friend—till he is dead.

If you hear a song that thrills you,
Sung by any child of song,
Praise it. Do not let the singer
Wait deserved praises long.
Why should one who thrills your heart,
Lack the joy you may impart?

If you hear a prayer that moves you
By its humble, pleading tone,
Join it. Do not let the seeker
Bow before his God alone.
Why should not your brothers share
The strength of "two or three" in prayer?

If you see the hot tears falling
From a brother's eyes,
Share them. And, by sharing,
Own your kinship with the skies.
Why should any one be glad,
When a brother's heart is sad?

If a silvery laugh is rippling
Through the sunshine on his face,
Share it. 'Tis the wise man's saying—
For both grief and joy a place.
There's health and goodness in the mirth
In which an honest laugh had birth.

If your work is made more easy
By a friendly helping hand,
Say so. Speak out brave and truly,
Ere the darkness veil the land.
Should a brother workman dear,
Falter for a word of cheer?

Scatter thus your seeds of kindness,
All enriching as you go;
Leave them. Trust the Harvest Giver,
He will make each seed to grow;
So, until its happy end,
Your life shall never lack a friend.

Religious.

Responsibility and Power.

FROM "THINGS NEW AND OLD."

The question of man's responsibility seems to perplex many minds. They find it difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile it with the fact of his total want of power. If it is argued, man is perfectly powerless, how can he be responsible? If he cannot of himself repent and believe the gospel, how can he be responsible? And then, again, if he is not responsible to believe the gospel how can he be judged for rejecting it?

Thus the mind reasons and argues, and, alas, theology does not help it to a solution of the difficulty, but on the contrary, increases the mist and confusion. For, on the one hand, a certain school of divinity teaches, and rightly so, man's utter powerlessness—that he will not, and cannot come, if left to himself, that it is only by the mighty power of the Spirit any one ever does come, that, were it not for free, sovereign grace, not a single soul would ever be saved, that "if left to ourselves, we would only go wrong, and never do right. From all this it infers that man is not responsible. Its teaching is right, but its inference is wrong.

Another school of divinity teaches, and rightly, that man is responsible—that he will be punished with everlasting destruction for neglecting the gospel, that God commands all men everywhere to repent, that He beseeches sinners—all men, the world—to be reconciled to Him, that He will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. From all this it infers that man has power to repent, and believe. Its teaching is right, its inference, wrong.

Hence it follows that neither human reasonings nor the teachings of mere theology—high or low—can ever settle the question of responsibility and power. The word of God only can do this, and it does it in a very simple and conclusive manner. It teaches,

and illustrates from the opening of Genesis to the close of Revelation, man's utter powerlessness for good, his ceaseless and thorough proneness to evil. It declares in Gen. vi., that every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only and continually evil. It declares in Jeremiah xvii., that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. It teaches in Rom. iii., that there is none righteous, no not one, there is none that understandeth that seeketh after God; they are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Further, not only does Scripture affirm the doctrine of man's utter and hopeless ruin, his incorrigible evil, his perfect powerlessness as to good, and his invariable proneness to evil, but it furnishes us with an array of evidence perfectly unanswerable, in the shape of facts and illustrations drawn from man's actual history. It shows us man in the garden, believing the devil, disobeying God, and driven out. It shows him when thus driven out, going on and increasing in wickedness till God had to send the deluge. Then in the restored earth, man gets drunk, and again degrades himself. Man is tried without law, and proves himself a lawless rebel. Then he is tried under law, and becomes a wilful transgressor. Prophets are sent, he stones them; the Son is sent, he crucifies Him; the Holy Ghost is sent, he resists Him.

Thus, in every volume, as it were, of man's history—the history of the human race—in every section, every page, every paragraph, every line, we read his utter ruin, his total alienation from God. We are taught, in the most distinct manner possible, that, if left to himself, he never could, and never would—though, most surely, he should turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. And, in perfect keeping with all this, we learn from our Lord's parable of the great supper, in Luke xiv., that not so much as a single merely invited guest will be found at the table. All who sit there are brought or compelled. Not one ever would come, if left to himself. Grace, free grace, must force them in—and so it does, blessed for ever be the God of all grace!

But on the other hand, side by side with all this, and taught with equal force and calmness, stands the solemn and weighty truth of man's responsibility. In creation, under the law, and in the gospel, man is addressed as the responsible being he undoubtedly is. And further, his responsibility is, in every case, measured by his advantages. Thus in the opening of the Epistle to the Romans, the Gentile is viewed as without law, but responsible to listen to the testimony of creation, which he never has done. The Jew is viewed as under law, and responsible to keep it, which he has not done. Then, in chapter xi., Christendom is viewed as responsible to continue in the goodness of God, which it has not done. And in 2 Thes. i., we read that those who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ shall be punished with everlasting destruction. And finally, in Heb. ii., the apostle urges home this most solemn question. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

Now, the Gentile will not be judged on the same ground as the Jew, nor the Jew on the same ground as the nominal Christian. Each will be dealt with on his own distinct ground, and according to his light and privileges. There will be the few stripes and the many, as in Luke xii. It will be more tolerable for some than for others, as in Matt. xi. The judge of all the earth will do right, but man is responsible, and his responsibility is measured by the light and advantages afforded him. All are not huddled together promiscuously, as though on one common ground. On the contrary, there is the nicest discrimination, and, no one will ever be condemned for slighting and refusing advantages not within his reach. But surely, the very fact that there will be a judgment at all, proves, even were

there no other proof, that man is responsible.

And by whom, let us ask, is the very highest type of responsibility incurred? By the rejecter and neglecter of the gospel of the grace of God. The gospel brings out all the fullness of the grace of God. All His resources are there displayed,—the love of God, the precious work and glorious person of the Son, the testimony of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, God is seen in the Gospel in the marvellous ministry of reconciliation, actually beseeching sinners to be reconciled to Him. Nothing can exceed this. It is the very highest and fullest display of the grace, mercy and love of God, and therefore, all who fail to receive it incur the most solemn responsibility, and bring upon themselves the very heaviest judgment of God. Those who refuse the testimony of creation are guilty. Those who break the law are guiltier still. But those who refuse God's proffered grace are the most guilty of all.

Will any still object, and say they cannot reconcile the two things, man's powerlessness and man's responsibility? Let them bear in mind that it is not our business to reconcile them. God has done that for us, by placing them side by side in His own eternal word. It is ours to submit and believe, not to reason. If we listen to the conclusions and deductions of our own minds, or to the dogmas of conflicting schools of theology, we will be ever in a muddle and jumble, perplexed and confused. But if we simply bow to Scripture, we shall know the truth. Men, may reason and rebel, but the question is whether is man to judge God, or God to judge man? Is God sovereign, or is He not? If man is to sit in judgment on God, then God ceases to be God. O man "who art thou that repliest against God?" This is the great question. Can we answer it?

The plain fact is, this difficulty as to the question of power and responsibility is all a complete mistake, arising from ignorance of our own true condition, and from want of absolute submission to God. Every soul in a right moral condition will freely own his responsibility, his guilt, his utter powerlessness, his exposure to the just judgment of God, and that were it not for the sovereign grace of God in Christ, he would inevitably be damned. Any one who does not own this from the very depths of his soul, is ignorant of himself, and virtually sits in judgment upon God. Thus it stands if we are to be taught by Scripture.

Take a case. A certain man owes me a hundred pounds, but he is unprincipled and extravagant, and has rendered himself quite unable to pay me. And not only is he unable, but unwilling also. He has no desire to pay, no desire to have anything to do with me. If he sees me coming along the street, he walks away down the first opening to avoid me. Is he responsible? And am I not justified in taking legal proceedings against him? Does his total inability to pay do away with his responsibility?

Further, I send my servant to him with a kind message,—he insults him. I send another,—he knocks him down. I send my son to beg of him to come to me and own himself my debtor, to confess and take his proper place, and that I will not only forgive him the debt, but actually take him into partnership with myself. He insults my son in every possible way, heaps all sorts of indignity upon him, and finally, even murders him.

All this is but a very feeble illustration of the actual condition of things between God and the sinner. And yet some will reason and argue about the injustice of holding man responsible. It is all a fatal mistake, and such it will yet be found to be in every case. There is not a soul in hell that has any difficulty about the matter; and, most surely, there is none felt by any in heaven. All who find themselves among the lost will own that they receive the due reward of their deeds, and all who find themselves at last saved will own that they are debtors to mercy only. The

former will have to thank themselves, the latter will have to thank God. Such we conceive to be the only true solution of the question of responsibility and power.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.
Among Enquirers.

ABOUT "COMMUNICATIONS."

Max is not an editor. Like most people he knows better than any editor how to manage a paper. But some things he doesn't know. He doesn't know why it takes half a column to tell of the baptism of one person, nor why the candidate should be described as "happy and willing," and the ordinance spoken of "following the footsteps of the Master," "buried with Him in likeness of his death," nor why the word words.

Max's minister is a Baptist, he baptizes only the "willing and happy." He cannot baptize otherwise than in "likeness of death and resurrection." Mr. Editor, can you tell why a column instead of a line?

And Max would like to know why it takes two columns of address and reply to show the public how there is so much mutual love, confidence, respect and appreciation between a departing pastor and his widowed people, that they cannot get along together any longer. Max don't understand it. Do you Mr. Editor?

And light is wanted on another subject. Some time ago some one worried because the Year Book "was turned into a graveyard." Why should the Messenger be set with "In Memoriam" tombstones? If the inscriptions and ascriptions thereon and therein were brief, and just what would be said of the persons if living, Max wouldn't mind. Can you tell him, Mr. Editor, why the troubles of life and the terrors of death are increased by these endless obituaries?

ABOUT "EDUCATIONAL NEWS."

Why did you not tell us, Mr. Editor, that Horton Academy was so full of students that it couldn't take any from New Brunswick? Why did you not tell us that all the College and Academy debt was paid? We wanted to hear these things Mr. Editor. These must be the facts, for brethren "wise and true" are about to build an Academy in St. John for the shut-out N. B. youth, and are about taking the money left over after the discharge of their covenant and Conventional obligations for this purpose. Give us the cheering facts Mr. Editor. Don't put cart before horse, and tell of "Academy" projects first.

ABOUT "REPORTS AND FIGURES."

Max wants to know why that Conventional Phonographic reporter was stricken with paralysis when Mr. Armstrong's written arraignment of the Board was read, so that his "Phonographic" (?) report reads, "Mr. Armstrong now read till 11.55." Max is glad to know that the reporter was convalescent next day when the "Supplementary report" was read. But such paralytic attacks are perilous,—a final "stroke" came after the "defence" closed, and reporter and report go out in darkness together.

By the way, Mr. Editor, why won't figures stop lying, even when they are given the platform at Convention? Max is "good at figures" but he can't always tell when they lie. Other better and greater men cannot,—always. Most of all figures lie, most after they are "cooked." Don't that convention batch lie Mr. Editor? If some one had whispered, "Even missionaries do not live on heavenly manna all the year, and then come down in December to gorge 2,200 rupees worth of earthly good. Their stomachs balance accounts daily and call for prompt remittances," if some one had whispered this wouldn't the wicked figures have been found out and "cast out," instead of more precious possessions. But these will have "their part with all liars." Without

are dogs . . . and . . . figures. No figures in heaven,—no such figures!

ABOUT "UNION WORK."

Max is more than doubtful as to whether Baptist money should be given to the "Union Home Mission work" of the British American Book and Tract Society. The claims of that Society are shrewdly advocated on that ground by its Secretary, through the Messenger. It is said too that "Baptist bigots" sometimes refuse to give to that society. Are the refusers "bigots" Mr. Editor? Are we Baptists called upon to engage in this "Union" work? If so, why not go the whole thing and unify all around? Max is willing—if they will take his "doxy." If not he prefers to enter his own "open door" of opportunity and effort.

MAX.

For the Christian Messenger.
Missionary Correspondence.

FROM BOBBILI, INDIA.

Mrs. Churchill under date Aug. 19, writes to the Secretary of the N. S. Central Board of W. M. A. Societies:

"I am glad I can at last tell you that our prayers for native helpers have in part been answered, and you can scarcely imagine our joy when they came to us August 1st. Our dear Brother Timpany was the means of getting them for us, and showed his unselfishness and real interest in the whole work by sending them to us instead of keeping them on his own field where the need of helpers is great, but not so great as ours. Nursiah, the preacher, seems to be an earnest, hard working man, and comes well recommended for his christian character. I was so glad to see him, and Mr. C. start off for their first tour yesterday, though feeling lonely enough to be left behind for the first time in Bobbili.

Siamma, the preacher's wife, promises fair to make an excellent Bible woman. She is already a great help to me. I take her with me every morning when I go to school, but as there are so many opportunities for work all around, I think it best not to keep her in the school, but send her out on to the veranda to talk to the women who come to look on and see what we are doing inside, or to the nearest house, to talk of the great salvation to as many as she can get to listen to her, and she seems to be very well received. In the afternoons she goes out with me to my Zenana work, and visiting the women of the town. So far she has only gone to houses where I had visited before she came, but this afternoon I have sent her to some new houses, and will see what reception she meets with. Before starting she came in to see where I wished her to go, I had just written her name at the top of this page and told her I was writing to you, and she said, "send Ummah my salaams." As I have obtained a government grant for my school this year through the kind recommendation of the Inspector of schools for this division, I shall not need for it all the good sisters at home have sent me this year, so I ask if I may be allowed to support this Bible woman from that fund, or would you rather send me something specially for her? If she continues as she has begun she is well worthing of your support; and as the preacher gets but small wages, it is right if we require her work that we give her a small salary too. I could not go out with her yesterday afternoon, so told her to go to the Velama houses where we went together last week, and she did not return till dusk, and then her face was all aglow because so many women had listened to her message well, but she said they all wanted the Ummah to come again soon.

I fear you are not going to send me a young lady this year. Before many years we will have to plead for another Missionary to be sent to Bobbili I expect to hold the fort while we go home to recruit. It is a great pity for any of our stations to be left without a missionary, and the brethren at home should see to it that mission is sufficiently manned