

Sunday Reading.

Heaven.

The whole economy of the heavenly life, both in the service to be rendered and the delights to be enjoyed, will be altogether unlike the earthly and mortal. We cannot too often be reminded of this truth. We are so prone to think of that glorious, but to us almost unknown, world as only the purification and perfection of things earthly and temporal. We only take away night from the sky, and death from the dwelling, and wipe away all tears from the eye, and lit all burdens from the breaking heart and wounded spirit—in short, we only reject from our ideal all that is evil, and gather together all that is good in our mortal experience, and call that heaven. We regard the church triumphant as the glorious consummation of the church militant. And in this sure y we grossly err. The real glory and blessedness of heaven depends upon, yea, consists in its utter and absolute unlikeness to this earthly life. So the Bible everywhere teaches us. Paul, who had been taken up to gaze upon celestial realities, tells us that they cannot be described by earthly language, nor even conceived of by human imagination. And nowhere do these inspired writers attempt this. John, indeed, tells us of a few things that are not in heaven, and in figures drawn from our poor, earthly experience would give us faint intimation of its positive beatitude. But the Bible tells us no more; yea, it can tell us no more, and for a plain reason.

The great change the mortal experiences when it puts on immortality, is a change of faculties. It rises at once into spheres and ranges of thought unto which the things of the earth seem as trivial and unsatisfying as a child's cheap toys to the experiences and exercises of the full-grown man. And for us while in the flesh to conceive of them is as impossible as for the chrysalis, shut up in its little pendulous shell, to conceive of the bright and boundless sphere into which it is presently to burst and soar on its new pinions. Hence I say, the futility, nay, the very futility of all our attempts to describe heavenly things. We gather in thought some of the grandest and fairest things we have known on earth—"trees of life," and "rivers of pleasure," and "thrones of power," and "crowns of glory," and fashion according to our childish taste a little, pitiful, tinsel, mimic Paradise, and call the place Heaven. Alas! alas! for our folly, and our text illustrates it. For just as the golden harvests of Canaan that waved in exhaustless abundance along the fair landscapes and beneath the bright skies of that blessed land of prophecy and promise were unlike the hoar-frost of manna gathered in small vessels from the barren sands of the desert so the state of the risen spirit is unlike our own. And all those descriptions and word-paintings of heaven with which ambitious poetry and oratory so often strive to interest and astonish us, are as pitiful caricatures of the ineffable reality as a child's notion of the universe—a flat, earthly plane a score of miles in circumference, and a firmament above it a little greater in altitude. The heaven they describe is but the poor, flitting phantasms of man's childish fancy. But heaven, as it is, is the perfect realization of the infinite and transcendent imagination of God.—Wadsworth's Sermon on the Manna.

Is not this the Carpenter?

Art may be a very good thing; but sometimes it happens that truth is one thing and art is another. Art represents our Lord as marked out from all about him by his dress and his mien and by the halo. But truth would represent him as wearing the dress of a peasant-mechanic, dusty with travel, his face browned by the Syrian sun, his feet hardened with his long journeys over the stony roads, his hands roughened with the use of the plane and the saw. For he was not merely the son of a carpenter; he was "the carpenter," and was thus known among his neighbors and fellow-townsmen.

One is disposed to inquire why he spent his early days at the work-bench; we are prone to feel that, for one who was to be a public teacher, some school

of the prophets, at any rate some school where the ancient Scriptures were taught, would have been a more natural starting point. Undoubtedly, there was no accident about it, and no error; all was appointed from the beginning; all formed a part of the divine plan. But it was not arbitrarily done; and why was it?

Of course, labor is the lot of universal man. But more than this, the great body of the workers always have been and probably always will be, those who work with their hands. The recluse students, the brain-workers, the soft-handed, are but a handful in the comparison. Was it not a part of the divine plan that He should be by his avocation in sympathy with this large class, that his words should be level to the many, rather than to the few, that he should be able to lay his hand in the hands of the millions of toilers, and say "My brother."

If Jesus had been a professed scholar, if he had sat at the feet of the Rabbis, all of his utterances would have been ascribed to the inspiration of the schools. But when the people asked: "Whence hath this man letters, having never learned?" there could be but one answer. His wonderful wisdom, his insight into human character and into the deepest meaning of the Old Testament Scriptures, all was from God.

And, yet more, the example of this carpenter shows what heights and depths of divine wisdom lie within the reach of the pure soul. It is our selfishness, our selfishness, that puts barriers between God and us, that hides him and his will from our eyes. We do not forget that God gave the Spirit to his Son without measure; but it was long before the miraculous descent of the Spirit upon him that the lad of ten amazed the gray-haired Doctors of the Law with the wisdom of his questions and his answers. And his great attainments in knowledge of the heart of the Old Testament was no doubt made during his youth and early manhood, and was the result of the Spirit shining on and through a soul that had never known sin.

We hear nothing of Joseph, the reputed father of Jesus, after the child twelve years of age. It seems not unlikely that he died and left the care of the family largely to the oldest son. If this were so, we see another reason why Jesus himself worked at the bench. If he had become a scholar, he would not only have earned nothing during his youth, but he would have been a burden on the family resources, taxing the scanty means of his mother. Engaging at once in a laborious calling, he not only relieved the mother from a burden, but he supported her and the younger sons and the daughters.

Not a few sons, if gifted with some intellectual aspiration, would have said: "Ah, the great thing is culture; I have a soul above hammers and nails; I cannot grovel among shavings and sawdust; I must be developing my esthetic nature." So, not a few Christians, if you propose to them to engage in some mission school or some struggling church, will say: "Oh, I have no social sympathy with these people; I want to go where there is an atmosphere of culture and refinement."

When our Lord chose the life of toil and narrowness of sphere and helplessness, rather than the life of selfish culture, he set an example to all his followers. Of course, the particular calling was incidental; it does not follow that we are all to be carpenters. But the lesson of unselfishness, of willingness to take any sphere where we can be most useful, is permanent and universal.

Rightly considered, there are hardly any words in the gospel more instinct with divine meaning than the words: "Is not this the carpenter?"—National Baptist.

A Sermon from Paper.

The Queen visited a paper mill—they showed her the machinery, how they bleached the rags and ground them into pulp; how they made sheets and smoothed them, dried them, and made them beautiful. As she was leaving, she saw outside the rag pickers and the filthy rags. A few days after this she found on her desk a pile of the most beautifully polished paper she had ever seen; on each sheet were the letters

of her own name, and her own likeness. With it she found this note: "Will my Queen be pleased to accept a specimen of my paper, with the assurance that every sheet was manufactured out of the contents of those dirty rags, which she saw on the poor rag pickers. With all the colors and filth washed out, I trust the result is such as to call forth her admiration. Will the Queen also allow me to say that I have had many a good sermon preached to me in my mill? I can understand how the Lord Jesus Christ can take the poor heathen, and low sinful creatures everywhere, and make them clean; and though their sins be scarlet make them whiter than snow; and though they be red like crimson, make them as wool. And I can see how he can write his own name on their foreheads, as the Queen will find her name on each sheet of paper; and even as these filthy rags may go into the palace and be ever admired, some poor vile sinner may be washed in the blood of the Lamb, and be received into the palace of the great King in heaven."

After the Storm.

After the storm, a calm; After the bruise, a balm. For the ill brings good in the Lord's own time, And the sigh becomes the psalm.

After the drought, the dew; After the cloud, the blue. For the sky will smile in the sun's good time, And the earth grow glad and new.

Bloom is the heir of blight, Dawn is the child of night, And the rolling years of the busy world Bid the wrong yield back the right.

Under the fount of ill Many a cup doth fill, And the patient lip, though it drinketh oft, Finds only the bitter still.

Truth seemed oft to sleep, Blessings slow to reap, Till the hours of waiting are weary to bear, And the courage is hard to keep.

Nevertheless I know Out of the dark must grow, Sooner or later, whatever is fair, Since the heavens have willed it so.

Weak Faith.

Even in a spark there is fire. Only try it, lay suitable fuel on it, and see whether it will not kindle the heap, and burst into a flame. Faith, though it may be weak, is nevertheless faith. Faith is not always a glowing torch, it is sometimes a glimmering taper. The taper gives light, as well as the torch, but not so brightly.

Faith is the eye by which we look to Jesus. A dim-lighted eye is still an eye; a weeping eye is still an eye, you sit in tears and say, how fearful is this unbelief! Oh, that it had faith! But beloved, he really believes who heartily bewails his supposed unbelief; for such tears demonstrate the desire after faith. And he who desires to believe is declared by the word of God to have faith. It is God who puts into our hearts the good desire, as well as brings the same to good effect; and, therefore, he will not disdain the one more than the other.

Faith is the hand with which we lay hold of Jesus. A trembling hand is still a hand, and he is a believer whose heart within him trembles; when he touches the hem of the Saviour's garment, that he may be healed. You frequently exclaim, "Oh! how can I derive comfort from the wounds of Jesus; I shudder when I reflect on the greatness of my sins, I am a stranger to peace." Yet to have stretched forth the hand to Jesus, this also is faith; say "Lord increase my faith." Faith is the tongue by which we taste how good the Lord is: a feverish tongue is nevertheless a tongue, and even then we may believe, when we are without the smallest portion of comfort; for our faith is founded not upon feelings, but upon the promises of God. Faith is the foot by which we go to Jesus. A lame foot is still a foot. He who comes slowly, nevertheless comes. A Christian must, in his faith, look not at the manner, but the object. What does your faith apprehend? The Saviour. How does

it apprehend Him? With much weakness. Let not that distress you, if only it apprehend Him. God bestows salvation, not because of your act, but on account of the object of your faith, which is Christ. There are two hands which lift me up to heaven, my hand of faith lays hold of Jesus, and clings to his merits. The Lord's hand of grace lays hold of me, and His strength is made perfect in my weakness. My hold is easily separated; His is immovably secure. Thus, I am at the same time, weak in myself, and strong in the Lord.—Dr. Henry Miller.

Most will strive much harder for an estate here than they do for heaven.

The body goes out of the world naked, but the renewed soul goes out well clad.

Discontent and impatience charge God with folly.

Those who think long are the better able to speak short.

Our lighter griefs have a voice, but the most oppressive are mute.

We should hear more from God if we thought more of him.

The earth that stays us up will soon swallow us up.

Our greatest blessings are to be made blessings and to be kept from sin.

Troubles are the trials of tests of friendships.

Sleep is the parenthesis of sorrow.

While living we are sowing in eternity to reap.

Did we better know God and ourselves we should better know how to conduct ourselves towards God.

We should persevere in the way of duty, though it cost all that is dear to us.

Those who are prayerless are graceless.

Fretful, passionate people tear and torment themselves.

The way to have our heart's desire is to make God our heart's delight.

When men's hearts fail them for fear, saints may lift up their heads with joy. Sinners fare the better for saints whether they think so or not.

There is no way to fly from the justice of God but to fly to his mercy.

The Preaching of the Cross.

BY REV. W. H. PORTER, A. M.

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

I remember hearing the late Dr. Cramp, of precious memory, say to his students once: "Never preach a sermon without presenting the way of salvation so plainly, that any one hearing it might be saved, though he had no other means of knowing how, or failing to be saved, he would be without cause on the ground of ignorance." As Spurgeon says: "I have gone down from my platform after preaching, saying to myself, 'Now if I had been there this morning seeking Christ, I should have found him before the close of the service.'" Paul said, "Whom we preach," "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." How is it with us, brethren. 1 Cor. 1: 21.

Be Courteous at Church.

Some fifteen years ago a young lawyer went to New York to pursue his profession. As he was a Baptist he visited several Baptist churches to find a spiritual home. The greeting was not sufficiently cordial in any of them to win him. At length he went to the Calvary Church and was cordially greeted in the vestibule by officers of the church, especially by the lately deceased Nathan Bishop, who invited him then, and at any future time to occupy his pew. A personal friendship sprang up between the enthusiastic young lawyer and this wise counsellor, which was confirmed by common church work and Christian fellowship. This young man whom our readers have heard of by the name of John H. Deane, adopted the principle of systematic giving, and the first week after he adopted this plan, he brought to the pastor three dollars of the fifteen he had earned. Continuing this percentage, his income and contributions have increased, till he is now known as one of the foremost benefactors of the Baptist Denomination.

He who proposes to be an author should first be a student.

Missionary Correspondence.

Rev. J. R. Hutchinson in writing to some of his friends at home, dated February, gives some good pictures of his surroundings at Chicacole. He says:—

CHICACOLE, February.

"A fine river runs through Chicacole. A large stone bridge, about a quarter of a mile long crosses it just here. Just above this bridge, on the bank, is built the Mission House. The floor is about 12 feet above the level of the river, and a strong stone wall protects it on the back, or river side. Houses of white people are built large so as to give plenty of air. A large wide verandah is built front and back to keep out the sun. We have on front two—one covered and one uncovered. On the uncovered one are two or three dozen very large flower pots with choice flowers. All the flowers that at home grow indoors grow here out of doors, and a great many more. Cactuses, from three and four feet high; geraniums without end, and a great many kinds of roses—fine tuberoses among them. All plants and trees about the place must be watered twice every day, and in the hot season three times. We have a man on purpose for supplying water for the house. He carries it from the river in two earthen pots, slung from a bamboo pole across his shoulders. Our drinking water is carried a mile from a good well, but is all filtered before being used. The waterman gets about two dollars a month. The ground on which the house stands, and around it, is called the Compound. On it are a number of small houses (built of mud) for the native Christians who would not be allowed to live in the town among the Hindus. You would not cook much if you were here. There's nothing to cook on or in except three stones and a half dozen earthen pots. . . . Tell A. that little men like him—run about with nothing on but their skin. Sometimes if they are going into company they tie a piece of cloth about their hips—they also have their heads shaved, all except a little place behind. We are all well and getting along nicely. . . . Miss Hammond is now away for a little rest. She went away the 9th of January to the Conference. I have to cut off every button before the clothes go to be washed or they will come home without any. They get the dirt out by beating the clothes on stones and that breaks every button! It is no small piece of work to take them all off and sew them all on again. Clothes will last three times as long at home as they do here. . . . The worst of it is there is no help for it—that is the way their fathers did and they can do no other way. . . . I got our cook to make some molasses out of some dark brown sugar we can get in the bazaar. After he cut the sugar up and put the water on he wash-d his hands in the water to get all the sugar off! What do you think of that for economy? We appreciated it very highly!

FROM MISS HAMMOND TO THE SECRETARY OF THE N. S. CENTRAL BOARD OF W. M. A. SOCIETIES. BIMALIPATAM, INDIA, } March 18, 1882. } My dear Mrs. Selden,— It is almost like renewing an old acquaintance to write you from Bimili, and I have a home-like feeling for the place, that I may never have for another in India. You know ere this that the new missionaries arrived in the last days of December. I was to leave for Conference in the early part of January, so no time was wasted in introducing them to the various phases of the mission work. If they succeed in making an early and fair beginning with the language, I predict for them a useful future. I went down to Cocanada by steamer, thence some distance by canal to Akidi. Our meetings were all that I anticipated, but I was so thoroughly tired, that I enjoyed them less than I would otherwise have done. No little effort and resolution were required to keep about my work till the last. There is a kind of tonic in heavy responsibility; when it is removed the energies seem to relax, and the strength to disappear. I have known

for months that my health was failing, but hoped that rest was the only requisite restorative.

I accepted the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Currie to spend a couple of weeks with them at Tuni. My cough which has been troublesome for some time was a little better, but I did not feel well. Was there rather more than a month; my cough decreased, and I came away feeling much better, but with no desire to work very hard at present. Am not very strong and my lungs will probably be weak for some time.

My visit there, at Cocanada, necessarily shortens my stay with the friends here. Mr. and Mrs. Sanford expect to embark in less than two weeks from this date. I have no doubt that if the life of Mrs. Sanford is to be saved the time for action has arrived. She has been over eight years; more than the average length of time to spend in the country, I believe. She is looking weak and frail; this is the second day she has kept her bed this week. I think the cool air of Canada will restore her health and give back some, at least of her former elasticity. Mr. Sanford will not likely go farther than England; and it is a pity that he should be obliged to go that far; but I do not see much help for it. The time is fast approaching, when your first band of workers must all leave the field. Unless our people intend their mission to be a failure, the hour for a strong reinforcement has more than come. As I think about this matter, in the light of our great need, I wish I could lift my voice and speak to the Ladies' Boards. Months ago I knew our present condition was approaching and pleaded hard for a young lady. I cannot get over the fact that one should have been sent last autumn. Should a family and young lady not come this autumn,—but it is useless to anticipate, developments will prove themselves. Words from hearts that are stirred, and action strong and earnest are requisite to accomplish the work that the Lord God has given into our hands. Ways and means are among our people and may grace be given to utilize them.

March 21. How to arrange our force about our stations has been a matter of deep consideration with us here at Bimili during the last week. It is a pity to leave this place alone even for a time, and once it was almost decided that I should remain here till Mr. S. returns at least. I always liked this better than any other station, and having been sent here have something of a home feeling for it. Again a seaport would be a sanitarium for me at present. But the missionaries at Chicacole are new and I do not need to be told that the work is heavy, and they are fully expecting my return, so we have concluded that this station must be left alone. The three boarding girls will go with me to Chicacole.

The girls from the town have dropped out of the school until now few if any are left, boys take their places. There could be a good work here, only it must have constant attention. My work in this line was only beginning to tell when it had to be relinquished for Chicacole. Mrs. Sanford has done all that her strength permitted, and it is a pity to lay our hands upon a thing and turn back.

Our stations are now getting in a position to care for boarding schools; and as soon as our fields produce proper subjects for these schools, I have no doubt but all our people will extend to them ample and hearty support.

Help is what we want and I feel that it is there for us, only the Lord's people must seek it with full purpose of heart.

With earnest wishes for the prosperity of the work at home.

I am yours, &c.,

CARRIE A. HAMMOND.

Members of a family recently baptized by Dr. Walsh of the South Baptist church, New York City, consisting of father, mother and son, were led to Christ by the father. The circumstances of his conversion were somewhat peculiar. He was, he says, convicted of sin by the ceremonies attending the laying of the cornerstone of the new North church. He was the builder employed to set the stone in place that day. The conviction, never left him until he gave himself to Jesus.