

Sunday Reading.

"Heavenward goes our pathway on."

FROM THE GERMAN OF BENJ. SCHMOLKE. Heavenward goes our pathway on! Here on earth we must be strangers, Canaan's fields until we've won, Through the desert's toils and dangers, Pilgrims here, no stay, no stand! There, above, our Fatherland. Heavenward mount, then, O my soul! Upward, since thou hast direction, Earth no longer should control Thee to thwart of thy selection; He from God whose source has been, Sure should mount to God again. "Heavenward!" speaks He to my breast, When His holy Word I'm reading; I have found on earth no rest Such as my poor heart is needing; Still, my path it makes more clear That I have some Heav'n, e'en here. Heavenward! Faith to me displays City fair above far shining; Where my soul ascends the ways Up through fading worlds inclining, Ah! how dim their rays divine, As I pass, sweet Heav'n, to thine! Heavenward, death itself shall be! Straight to home my soul conveying; Where I triumph, Lord, in thee, 'Sin and death behind surveying; Thou hast gone the way before, And hast left an open door! Heavenward! Heavenward! Heavenward on! This my watchword still abiding, Till the goal at last is won, Earthly things on earth dividing, Heavenward still my motto be, Till I wake, sweet Heav'n, in thee! J. E. RANKIN. April, 1883.

Without Heart, Sight, or Hearing.

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.—Deut. xiv. 4. The reasons for their incapacity to see and perceive lay, first, in the fact that these people never believed in their own blindness. They had no heart to perceive, and they did not perceive their absence of perception: they had no eyes wherewith to detect their own dimness of vision. They were such fools as to dote on their own wisdom, so poor as to think themselves rich, so hypocritical as to profess to be sincere. They thought they knew better than their God, and so they sat in judgement upon his providence, and styled the provisions of his wisdom "light bread." More than this, these men never asked for a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear. No man hath ever asked for these things and been refused; no soul has cried in its blindness and darkness, "Open thou mine eyes," but a gracious answer has always come. It is the prerogative of the Lord Jesus to open the blind eyes; but this he is ever ready to do whenever men call upon his name. Let but the poor man cry, and the Lord Jesus must and will hear him, and pour the daylight into his soul. In Israel's case, there was a distinct refusal to be blest: "But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me." There was no prayer for the heavenly blessing, but an aversion to it. "Ye have not because ye ask not." "They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in the darkness." Rightly are those left in darkness who will not ask God to give them light, or to open their eyes. Then, moreover, what little light they did have they resisted. When they were forced to see, it was only for a moment that they would be instructed and then they shut their eyes again. When he sent fiery serpents among them or, otherwise smote them, then they perceived his presence for a while but anon they turned back and dealt deceitfully. They loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. They did not actually cry like Pharaoh: "Who is Jehovah that I should obey his voice?" but in their hearts they meant it. O sinners that love not God's light because you love that which is evil! O you that never see him or seek after him, is not the cause of your blindness to be found in your love of sin?

The mournful results of these people being so highly favored and privileged, and yet not seeing nor discerning their God was, first, that they missed a happy portion. I can hardly imagine how happy the children of Israel might have been. They left Egypt with a high hand and an outstretched arm, their ears were hung with jewels, and their purses were filled with riches, while around them manna dropped from heaven, and cool streams flowed at their side. They might have made a quick march to the promised land, and at once entered their rest, for their God who had sent the hornet before them would soon have driven out their adversaries. In the land of promise they would have dwelt securely, and God would have given them rest. They would have known no invading enemy, and felt neither blast, nor blight, nor mildew; in fact, they would have been the happiest nation under heaven. They flung all this on one side; they would not have God, and so they could not have prosperity. They walked contrary to him, and he walked contrary to them; they would not obey him, and therefore his anger smoked against them. Hence they frequently suffered. A plague broke out at one time, and a burning at another; at one time they were visited with fever, and anon the earth opened beneath them; one day the Amalekites smote them, another day fiery serpents leaped up from the sand, and they died by thousands, being poisoned by their bites. They suffered much and often, and in all their trials they did but reap what they had sown. A man does not know what he is doing when he sins. We tell our naughty children that we have rods in pickle for them; and this is assuredly the case with the great Father, who hath chastisement laid up for the people who wilfully revolt from him. At last this evil ended terribly. The Lord lifted his hand to heaven, and swore that the rebellious generation should not enter into his rest, and they began to die by wholesale. Not one of the men that came out of Egypt, save only Joshua and Caleb, reached the promised land. The tribes marched on, and on their march they stumbled into their graves, till the whole of that peninsula in which they had to wander up and down for forty years became one vast cemetery wherein the thousands of Israel were all buried. The land that flowed with milk and honey lay smiling in the calm sunlight, on the other side of Jordan, but they could not enter in because they had no heart to perceive, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear the Lord and his word. And this is the main misery of your condition, O ye careless ones, that you will not be able to enter into God's rest either here or hereafter. Alas, your eyes will be opened one day, in another sense. "The rich man seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." Who was that? That was a Jew of the kind I have described, who had everything in this life, being clothed in purple, and faring sumptuously every day, but he had no heart to perceive nor eyes to see. "In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." Oh, will you wait till then? O ye ungodly ones, you will think then. I pray God you may have sense enough to think now, while thinking will be of use to you. If there be a heaven, seek it; if there be a hell, escape it; if there be a God, love him; if there be a Christ, trust him; if there be a sin, seek to be washed from it; if there be pardon, rest not till you have it. Do not mock your Saviour! Do not make game of eternal realities! Be in earnest about this, and in earnest at once. If you must play the fool, trifle with something less precious than your souls, purchase toys less expensive than your own immortal destinies.

Intense Convictions.

BY JAMES WILLIAM KIMBALL.

All possible knowledge can be made tributary to the promulgation of the gospel, provided, always, that the preacher has intense convictions of Christ and of His gospel; provided also that the preacher has equally intense affections; for faith is the product of these two; and without faith there is no salvation, either for the preacher or for those who hear him. Beware of

spurious imitations! there are many such; there are men whose admirers believe gifted with the tongues of men and angels, who are but sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. Such may have the semblance of prophecy, may understand all mysteries and all knowledge, may have all faith, so that they can remove mountains, and deceive the very elect; who in the sight of God are nothing because they have not received the Holy Ghost, have no intimate knowledge of the Son of God, no intense appreciation of His attributes, and no corresponding love for Him who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person. They may have strong intellectual preferences for one "ism" rather than another, and great readiness and ability in maintaining their preferences; but one radical and insuperable disability remains, they do not know Christ nor His cross; they do not and they cannot glory in it, nor in Him. The man who may know many things about the one and the other, but, alas! he does not know it, nor Him. In his honest moments—if he has such—he knows, or at all events, suspects, this fact. It has been truly said by a recent writer, that "not numbers but quality is wanted for the pulpit;" and this is the precise quality wanted, namely, intense convictions, inspiring intense and boundless love for the Son of God, and commensurate love for those for whom He died.

TO PREACH, OR DIE.—Among the hills of Northern Connecticut are many quaint characters, solemn in mien, sturdy and honest in their dealings, but with a vein of underlying humor that crops out daily in their conversation. Among them was one J—S—, or Uncle Jesse, as he was familiarly called. Early in life he studied hard to fit himself for the ministry, and when he thought himself perfected he called on old Father P—, a noted Baptist minister of that day in S—, and told him he must either preach the Gospel or die, and stated his wish to be examined. After a rigid examination Father P—leaned his head upon his hands and remained silent for a few minutes; then suddenly looking up, he said, "Mr. S—, I'm really afraid you'll have to die."—EDITOR'S DRAWER, in Harper's Magazine for March.

THE FOUNDATION.—Dr. Guthrie, preaching on Christ as the foundation, said: "He is the tried foundation. He has been tried by God and by devils; by many who are now in glory, and by others who are on the way there, and He has never failed. All the stones founded on Him become living stones, and they are all cemented together by the blood of Jesus."

DAISY'S VERSE.—Two weeks ago Daisy asked the children to guess what verse in the Bible her auntie makes them say when she and her little sister get 'out of tune.' Harry, from Newton, thinks it is this: "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger." Charlie and Percy both think it is the 14th verse of the 2nd chapter of Philippians. Get your Bibles and see what it is. Percy is six years old, and has a Bible all his own. He has read as far as the 89th chapter of Job. He has a question for the little folks to guess: In what book of the Bible is the word God not found.—Congregationalist.

THE STRONGER POWER.—In spite of all man's sin, the world does prosper marvellously, miraculously; in spite of all, God is stronger than the devil, life stronger than death, wisdom stronger than folly, order stronger than disorder, fruitfulness stronger than destruction; and they will be so more and more, till the last great day, when Christ shall have put all enemies under his feet and death is swallowed up in victory.—Kingsley.

Prayer is not conquering God's reluctance, but taking hold of God's willingness.—Phillips Brooks.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger. Our Associations. No. 2.

Mr. Editor,— In my last letter on this subject I quoted from the Constitution of one of our Associations as follows:—"The object of this Association being the cultivation of Christian union, the promotion of individual godliness, and by mutual consultation to seek, in the use of Scriptural measures, the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom." The question for present consideration is "How may our Associational gatherings be made, under their Constitutions, a means of greater good?" It will be conceded, I think, that the subject is an important one. If the Associations occupy their time in the discussion of subjects not within their province, if they almost totally neglect the grand design of their constitution, then it were better they had not met at all. If they waste time in useless discussions, and neglect valuable opportunities of doing good, then they impose upon the church with which they are met. They have effected no service for the Master.

The following thoughts and suggestions are submitted by the writer for the consideration of brethren of wider experience and greater wisdom than he can claim, with the prayer that they may result in such action as shall the better answer the question proposed.

Our Associational meetings are religious gatherings, designed to afford a healthy stimulus to the representative men of the churches so associated. These brethren come from every section of the district, all wishing to learn how they may the more successfully labor for Christ, some have passed through seasons of gracious outpourings and glorious triumphs, these have ventured to go forward and the power of God has been with them. Much of the time, therefore, should be given to free interchange of thought and experience, with oral reports from the churches. We have some brethren in our denomination whose evangelistic efforts have been wonderfully blessed. One or more of these good brethren should be present, and assist or lead in direct effort for a gracious outpouring of divine influences upon the church with which they are met. But at present no such results ever follow from these meetings, and why? Because there is almost a total absence of effort or expectation. On the other hand, how wonderfully God has blessed the Young Men's Christian Associations at their annual meetings, and why? In that organization brethren are urged to come up praying for, and prepared to receive, a great blessing; everything done or said at the meetings has the one grand object in view. The delegates labor personally in the homes to which they are introduced. On the Sabbath every available point is occupied, and the truths of the gospel brought forward and presented, perhaps, as never before. God smiles upon the efforts of his people, the blessing comes, precious souls are brought in, the delegates are themselves revived, the bonds of Christian union made stronger, and personal godliness promoted. The brethren return to their homes carrying with them such a fervor of zeal, and such renewed consecration, that every section of the district is made to feel the results in greater quickening.

I would have the business of the Association directed principally by the Committee of Arrangements, such committee to hold office for the year; that they be expected, in addition to their ordinary work at the session to make arrangements for the session in securing the reading of papers by competent brethren on such subjects for instance as Sabbath Schools, how to conduct them; Revivals, how to promote them; on Prayer Meetings; on the relation of Church and Pastor; on Individual Godliness, how promoted; and kindred subjects. The reading of papers to be followed by short discussions on the subjects introduced. I would omit the publication of the Minutes except as to those portions which were of sufficient interest to claim a place in the denominational papers.

I throw out these hints with the hope that the Associations will take some

action in the premises at their first sittings. And it does appear to me that the carrying out of the modifications suggested, accompanied with the divine blessing, we will thereafter hear very little on the question, "Should our Associations be abolished?" Yours, &c., T. M. K. April 20th, 1883.

For the Christian Messenger. Ministers' Salaries.

In one of the Eastern Counties of Nova Scotia there is a Baptist church which might profitably be taken as a model by many of the churches of the Province. While the membership of the church is small, and the congregational numbers less than a hundred, this church pays its pastor \$700 a year,—not in beans and bacon and barley, or wheat and cheese and codfish, but in money. Nor do the people feel that their duty is done when they have provided for the preaching of the gospel in their own community. Among the contributors to the Convention Scheme fund this church stands with the few that are worthy of high praise.

These liberal things are not done because there are two or three rich men in the congregation who give largely, but because a proper sentiment prevails among the members generally. Some give of their abundance, and others of their penury. A principle of duty is recognized in regard to giving to the Lord. Thus the minister's salary is raised without effort; and lamentations, because of heavy deficits at the end of the year, are not heard.

In another respect this church deserves praise. The weekly prayer-meeting is attended not only by devout women and a few men who are also devout, or who have nothing else to do, but by a large proportion of the membership of the church. Business men and busy women leave their secular cares, and esteem it a privilege and blessing to spend an hour in prayer and praise. A prayer-meeting conducted by such people, who are there because of such a frame of mind, is stimulating and refreshing.

The distinguishing and noticeable feature of this church is this: *Principle sways the members.* At least, those who give character to the church, whose minds and hearts are read in the history which it is forming, are persons who know what it is to have convictions of duty in regard to giving and acting for Christ's sake.

Can any of the churches which are now pursuing a course the very opposite of that described above, be persuaded to consider their ways? Will any of them ask whether they are doing their duty by their pastor and by their Lord? Doubtless there are churches, the members of which are poor and scattered. In some cases, possibly in most cases, these are doing nearly all they can. But of many churches this cannot truthfully be said. There are churches in this Province having treble the membership of the one alluded to above, and double the means, that pay their pastors less than \$600, while requiring them to perform labors in which a team is necessary, as well as other extra expenses, to which the pastor of the church described above is not subject. Are these churches treating their pastors fairly?

The present condition of the churches of Nova Scotia is peculiar. The progress of education throughout the Provinces, the more general diffusion of literature, together with the enlightening influence of religious and other periodicals, have so stimulated the intelligence of the people that they require sermons marked by some degree of intellectual excellence. To meet this demand a preacher must study. In the first place, he requires training in the higher institutions of learning. Then he needs books from year to year, that he may keep abreast of the times, and that he may not find himself lagging behind those whom it is his province to instruct. In addition to all this he needs time for study and reading. So much is implied, then, in the demand for a preacher.

In some things, however, the traditions of the past still lure, and the people who remember the herculean labors of the "Fathers" do not understand why the ministers of to-day cannot

preach as many sermons in a week as they preached, and make as many pastoral calls, and be content with the same sort of remuneration. Ignoring the changes which have occurred in society, forgetting that civilization is advancing, blind to the fact that new demands are made upon the men of to-day, they keep prating and babbling about the past. Let us grant that the "Fathers" were grand old men, that they nobly served their generation, that they were pious and unselfish and filled withunction. And let us, in all honesty, grant too that the men who are in the pulpit to-day have some faith, some piety, some love for the cause of Christ, and if any headstrong youth is so bold as to say that the Baptist ministers of to-day are just as religious, earnest, faithful and talented as the "Fathers," let us not rebuke him in too harsh terms.

Consider, then, the demands made upon these men, and the remuneration which is, in many cases, given. Is it possible for a minister to meet these demands with the means at his disposal? No other man could, and it may be doubted, therefore, if he can.

What are the expenses of the average Baptist minister? The following list will include nearly everything:

- Food for wife, self and family. Clothing for wife, self and family. Books for self and children. Doctors' bills. Expenses of horse, harness, carriage and sleigh.

If the family be large, some of the above items will be great, and in the case of a family of average size the expenses will count up rapidly. Will some mathematician tell how any family, circumstanced as a minister's family of necessity is, can live comfortably, or even decently, on \$500 a year?

But living is not all. Ministers grow old, as well as other men. Some of them, owing to the greatness of their toils, break down in health while yet comparatively young. And when this evil day comes, what? What shall the poor man do to keep the wolf from the door? He has been able to save nothing in the days of his strength, now in the time of weakness and failing powers he must endure bitter privation, depending upon the slow charity of others.

What wonder that a large number of churches in Nova Scotia find it difficult to secure pastors to their liking? What wonder that the pulpit secures only a few of the ablest men? What wonder that some of our young men prefer to work where the people have read in an old book the maxim: "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn?"

GRENE GREY.

For the Christian Messenger. From France.

PARIS, March 23, 1883.

The Anarchial demonstrations of the past few days are only part and parcel of a new movement the Revolutionary Party have decided on. Finding their meetings in the club room of no avail, and emboldened by the immunity allowed them hitherto by the Government, they have resolved to take to open-air demonstration in all parts of the capital. The difficulty of occupying, by the police and military, several quarters at the same time, render the manoeuvres easy, and handfuls of revolutionists distributed over Paris can keep the town in constant perturbation. Unless the Government arrests all the ringleaders and shows no mercy, it is feared a period of agitation and uneasiness will set in, and cause immense harm to the Republic. Both the Bonapartists and the Clerical parties are doing their best to keep up the anarchial movement.

The foreign policy of France is being formed on bases of active aggression. No doubt is entertained of the intention to blockade the Madagascar ports, the expedition in Senegal is being prosecuted with the utmost activity, and De Brazza has departed for the Congo with an armament which leaves the character of his enterprise no longer in doubt. He has a considerable force with him, and carries 20,000 rifles and an immense quantity of ammunition and military stores, with quantities of presents for the native chiefs, and plenty of rum,—the most cogent of weapons in Africa.

As though it were not enough that Paris should be filled with so-called clubs, where gambling is going on constantly in the midst of all sorts of abuses, as though this were not enough, scarcely a week goes by without a raid being made by the police upon some clandestine hell. The passion for play is so general