

Sunday Reading.

Longings.

BY REV. THOMAS RAFFLES, D. D.

Oh, had I but wings like a dove! I'd fly to the realms of the blest; I'd soar to the mansions above, And enter the heavenly rest; I'd mingle with spirits no more Entombed in this prison of clay— With seraphim bow and adore, As holy and happy as they!

The Path of Purity.

A SERMON DELIVERED BY REV. A. W. SAWYER, D. D., IN ACADEMY HALL, WOLFVILLE, FEB. 3, 1883.

[It is customary for the different departments in the Institutions at Wolfville to meet in classes on Sabbath afternoon for the study of the Bible. On the first Sabbath of every month all the classes assemble in Academy Hall to hear a discourse from some one selected for the occasion. A request was made that the following discourse, delivered on the third of the present month, should be published.]

young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one." It is true that by the term *word*, as used in the text, only that part of revealed truth could be referred to which had been made known before the time in which the Psalm was composed; but if such efficacy dwelt in the word before the full revelation had been made, how much more shall we expect to find life and safety in the fuller revelation that has been granted to us!

ing an unnecessary shade on the life of the young, to urge the responsibilities growing out of this fact. But the conditions of existence here are such as to make these lessons necessary. We have to impress on their minds the facts, by the knowledge of which they will keep themselves from actions that will be injurious to health and life. The fear of consequences, of which they, with their limited experience, can not form any adequate conceptions, but which they have been taught to regard as fatal to health and happiness, becomes the great motive to prevent them from courses of action that will be injurious to their physical welfare. There is nothing degrading in this fear. On the contrary, it is wholesome and beneficial. Under its sway the young life passes through its stages of beautiful development more securely than if an erring kindness had hidden from the view all the dangers that lurk along the pathway. It will also be found to be true, that the fear of evil will bring no dismal shade over the true joys of youth. It will be found that the desire to know the right way and walk therein will harmonize with the best development of intellectual strength and moral healthfulness and peace. As the years increase, the sense of responsibility should deepen, and the habits of earlier years should be intentionally continued and strengthened, if they are found to be right, or deliberately and firmly corrected, if they prove to be wrong.

and honorable sentiments and conduct in future years. If thoughtful conformity to the obligations of these "minor morals," as they have been styled, is regarded by us as a becoming ornament to think that, if the sphere of duty is enlarged so as to take in a regard to God and his law, the thoughtfulness which was a grace and ornament when manifested in the smaller sphere, has become a badge of servitude, when it is exhibited in connection with our conduct as seen and judged by our Heavenly Father. Let it be noticed that this thoughtfulness will not come upon one, without some degree of effort on his part. Outward influences may favor or hinder its cultivation, and hence we see the importance that attaches to one's companionships and the circumstances in which one is educated. But the lesson must be brought home to us, that what is external is of small value to us, if there is no sincere and fixed purpose on our part to make a right use of the helps to right-living that are placed within our reach. Every one must take heed to his way for himself. This is the condition to right-living. Each one of you must reap the fruit of the seed which you sow; it becomes you then to be careful in respect to the seed sown. This thoughtfulness must not be exercised only on what may be called the great questions of life. Character is shown in small matters quite as well as in large, and the cultivation of character is effected quite as successfully in connection with the ordinary and unobtrusive affairs of life as in connection with marked events that attract the notice of the multitude. The excellence that commands respect and admiration in public, has grown under assiduous culture in private. The real worth of your lives is not to be measured so much by the manifestations of character on extraordinary occasions as by the fixed purpose to be faithful in what may be called the small duties of every day life. If one is thoughtful and true in respect to these, there will be small room to question his fidelity in regard to the duties and service of more public positions. Here it will be made evident, that he who is faithful in the least, is faithful also in much.

walk thoughtfully and humbly before the Lord. In this state of mind they would come to the written word daily and hourly, not to impress their own thoughts and feelings on it, but to find in it the guide for their own feelings and actions. 3. If the young come to the study of "the word" in this state of mind, it is to be expected that they will have an obedient spirit. The Bible is to many diligent readers of its pages a sealed book, because it is read with a heart unwilling to yield to the duties plainly declared. Christ taught the lesson that, if any man would do the will of God, he should know the doctrine. The condition of knowing more truth is that we walk by the truth already known. This single principle gives light and relief in respect to many difficulties. It is not necessary to wait till we can comprehend the whole way with all its varieties of experience, before we begin to walk in it. We have light enough for the next step. That is enough for the present need. When that step is taken we are in better condition to take the next one, and He who has given us light for this will not desert us in the next, if we trust Him. It is not necessary to wait to comprehend all the mysteries of the mightiest doctrines, before we yield obedience to the simpler truths which have been made known to us. It is possible that we may never be able to understand all the mysteries connected with God's character and government. The finite never can comprehend the infinite. But the way to understand more completely the great doctrines of God is to walk by the truth that calls for immediate obedience. When the message comes to the young, as it does to all to whom the gospel comes, "Repent for the kingdom of God is at hand," it finds us all with some sense of sin, some consciousness of wrong. If this message is received with an obedient spirit, wrong is repented of and forsaken, and in these exercises of the penitent soul new views of God's love and of the way of life open in the mind. We are plainly taught that God hears prayer. If one waits till he can comprehend all the mysteries involved in prayer before he prays, he will never begin to pray. But if he studies the word in an obedient spirit he will seek God in prayer, because He has promised a blessing to all who truly seek Him in this manner. The most casual reading of "the word" will show that one is to trust God for life through Christ. This is the germinal spirit out of which all virtues and graces grow, and without which they cannot be possessed. To attempt to use the Bible as your guide in life and reject this portion of it, is to make another Bible for yourselves. If you honestly seek in it for guidance, this lesson will be accepted and in the exercise of this faith you become the children of God. Then all the precepts of this Book will stand out in wonderful clearness, and your way is made bright by a light that is not of this world. It is to be feared that with reference to most of us the trouble is not so much that the precepts and doctrines by which we may walk safely are unknown to us, as that there is unwillingness to act according to the knowledge possessed. Not to attain to the blessedness of the man "that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly," but whose "delight is in the law of the Lord," is to lose the chief value of life,—it is to incur inconceivable loss. The way of life—the way of death,—the difference between them is involved in your choice, year after year. How applicable to us the admonitions of the wise man; *Enter not into the path of the wicked. Ponder the path of thy feet. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding. If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself, but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it.*

The Christian Messenger. Bible Lessons for 1883. FIRST QUARTER. Lesson X.—MARCH 11, 1883. THE SEVEN CHOSEN. Acts vi. 1-15. COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 6-8. GOLDEN TEXT:—"Seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom"—Acts vi. 3. DAILY HOME READINGS. VI. The Lesson, Acts vi. 1-15. T. The Head of the Church, Matt. xli. 13-17. W. Christ and his Apostles, Luke xxii. 19-30. T. The Apostles, [15-25] John xx. 19-23; xxi. F. Ministers and Deacons, 1 Tim. iii. 1-13. G. Gifts to be Used, Rom. xii. 1-8. S. Destiny of the Church, Eph. v. 17-33. THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK IN PROVIDING OFFICERS FOR THE CHURCH. LESSON OUTLINE.—Deacons Needed, Vss. 1-4. II. Deacons Chosen and Ordained, Vss. 5-7. III. Stephen and his Persecutors, Vss. 8-15. QUESTIONS.—Vss. 1-4.—What revealed the need of more officers in the church? Who had attended to the care of the poor? For what did the apostles now need all their time? What is the great work of ministers? What did the apostles do? Vss. 5-7.—What are the names of those chosen? How were the deacons set apart? What is this rite called? What was the result? What kind of men ought deacons to be? What other office was afterward established in the church? Acts xi. 30. What does Paul teach of this office? Titus i. 5-9. What offices now in the church? Vss. 8-15.—What was the first work of the deacons? Who was foremost among them? How was his work enlarged? What fanatical Jews disputed with him? With what result? What promise was fulfilled? What did his enemies do? What false charges make? What teaching of Stephen did his enemies probably pervert? Before what body was he brought? Of what crime accused? Whom had the Jews before treated in a similar manner? What token of God's approval was given to Stephen? What change in popular feeling was taking place? Scripture Searchings.—When did the faces of Moses and Christ shine? Trace the parallel between the treatment of Jesus and of Stephen (as far as this Lesson goes). NOTES.—I. The First Murmuring (Vs. 1.) In those days. Used indefinitely, as in v. 15. It may have been after the lapse of a year or two. According to Gamaliel's logic, (vs. 39), the church was of God; for, instead of coming to nought, it increased in members daily. The word multiplied is, literally, was multiplying; telling of continual and uninterrupted prosperity. But Satan, who failed to destroy the church by external persecutions, hopes to gain his end by internal dissensions. Murmuring, a whispered expression of discontent. Grecians. Hellenists. The Jews in Jerusalem, at that day, were of two classes: Those who had always dwelt in Judea, here called the Hebrews, and spoke the Hebrew language, or a modification of it, the Aramaean, and prided themselves upon their pure stock; and those of foreign birth, here styled Hellenists, who spoke the Greek language, which as a sort of universal language of that day, was used in the countries where they had lived. The Judæan Jews were wont to look down upon their foreign-born brethren. Hence, a sensitiveness on the part of the converted Hellenists. Their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. The beautiful action of love in the disciples in making a common fund, is the occasion of a danger. The apostles had superintended the distribution to the needy; but as the church rapidly increased, much of this work had to be delegated to others. The Palestine Jews, employed in it, were naturally better acquainted with their own people than with the "strangers at Jerusalem." Hence the native poor would be better provided for. It does not appear that this was intentional, though the Hellenists, probably, thought it was. II. The Deacons, (Vs. 2-7). Vs. 2-4.—The apostles were quick to discern the evil, and prompt to meet it. They acted with unanimity. Called the multitude; the general body of the disciples. It is not reason (fit) that we should leave the word, etc. They had neither the strength nor the time, and it was not wise for them to be doing what others could do as well. Look ye out. A division of labor recognizing the congregational form of government. The church is to choose; the apostles

confirming part, know Holy Ghost covetousness reputation We will prayer energies Va. 5, tuda. T. averted a great man chosen grieved which a work of d the hand of faith, specially tions spo and Phil as desoc no more selyte, of the Jewi them. " of the needed to Va. 7. The work healed d priests. cided acc of the ch III. 8-1 Va. 8-1 Va. 8-1 bier wor advanced the word of speech he had s full of f favor with gifts. F wonders His duty bring his Christian evangelist Va. 9, in Jerusa from dif dialects, The Lib their own nians, c children captive and had by their from C. Alexand whom m as Tarsu Not ab dom was which h Va. 1 they rea hand of men. course, tions by speak b men juo times, in general and scr fore the skillfull Va. 1 as a m Council prejudg law at plac general ones. etc. His plies. T pervers and Ste the Ma repeats the tem xvii. 7 late M words, spirit. Peter cleare end of face, a blas have h Moses shone might he pre Mos prevent salem Nob the ap the ne wisdom Step preach witness him in thoug