

Sunday Reading.

The Thirteenth Chapter.

Give me sweet charity, my God, That suffereth so long, And still is kind and pitiful To those who do the wrong. The charity that envieth not The better things I see; The charity that vaunteth not What God doth give to me.

He hath Said.

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

The apostles, like their Master, were always very ready at quotations. As inspired men they could have always used fresh words, yet they preferred (and herein they are an example to us) to quote old words upon which the seal of divine authority has been set aforetime. "He hath said." Let us do the same, for, though the words of ministers may be sweet, the words of God are sweeter; and though original thoughts may have the charm of novelty, yet the ancient words of God have the ring, and the weight, and the value of old and precious coins, and they will never be found wanting in the day when we require to use them. "He hath said," not only chases away doubts and fears, but it also yields nourishment to all our graces. When the apostle would make us contented, he says, "Be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said;" and when he would make us bold and courageous, he puts it thus forcibly, "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." So that we may boldly say, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." When the apostle Paul would nourish faith, he does it by feeding us from Scripture with the examples of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, of Moses, of Gideon, of Barak, and of Jephthah. When another apostle would calm us with a lesson of patience he says, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job;" or if it be our prayerfulness that he wants to stir up, he says, "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed and prevailed." "He hath said," is refreshing food for every grace, and a decisive death-blow for every sin. Here you have nourishment for that which is good, and poison for that which is evil. Search, then, the Scriptures, for so shall you grow healthy, strong, and vigorous in the divine life. But besides searching them by reading, and treasuring them by memory, we should test them by experience, and so often as a promise is proven to be true, we should make a mark against it, and note that we also can say, as did one of old, "This is my comfort in my affliction; for Thy word hath quickened me." Wait on the Lord, said Isaiah, and then he added, "Wait, I say, on the Lord," as if his own experience led him to echo the voice of God to his hearers. Test the promise; take God's bank-note to the counter, and mark if it be cashed. Grasp the lever which he ordains to lift your trials and try if it possesses real power. Cast this divine tree into the bitter waters of your Marah, and learn how it will sweeten them. Take this salt and throw it into the turbid waters, and witness if they be not made sweet, as were the waters of old by the prophet Elisha. "Taste and see that the Lord is good . . . for there is no want to them that fear Him."

A Taunton telegram says that, while superintending the preparations for a theatrical entertainment on Saturday, Rev. W. B. Thomas, vicar of Halse, suddenly expired before medical assistance could be obtained. He was suffering from heart disease.

Clear Shining after Rain.

The sway of Christ as King, according to David's description, is like 'Clear shining after rain,' whereby the tender grass is made to spring out of the earth. So have we often seen it. After a heavy shower of rain, or after a continued rainy season, when the sun shines, there is a delightful clearness and freshness in the air that we seldom perceive at other times. Perhaps the brightest weather is just when the rain has ceased, when the wind has drifted away the clouds, and the sun peers forth from his chambers to gladden the earth with his smiles. And thus it is with the Christian's exercised heart. Sorrow does not last forever. After the pelting rain of adversity cometh ever and anon the clear shining. Tried believer, consider this. After all thy afflictions there remaineth a rest for the people of God. There is a clear shining coming to thy soul when all this rain is past. When thy time of rebuke is over and gone, it shall be to thee as to the earth when the tempest has sobbed itself to sleep, when the clouds have rent themselves to rags, and the sun peereth forth once more as a bridegroom in his glorious array. To this end, sorrow co-operates with the bliss that follows it, like rain and sun shine, to bring forth the tender blade. The tribulation and the consolation work together for our good. 'As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.' The clear shining after rain produces an atmosphere that refreshes herbs and cereals; and the joy of the Lord, after seasons of sorrow, makes the soul fruitful. Thus we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—H.

Where Does the Light Shine?

BY REV. A. J. GORDON, D. D.

'We were on shipboard,' relates a captain's wife, 'lying in a Southern harbor. We were obliged, first, to make our way ashore. The waves were rolling heavily. I became frightened at the thought of attempting it, when one came to me, saying, "Do not be afraid: I will take care of you." He bore a peculiarly shaped dark-lantern, only a single ray of light being emitted from a small circular opening. "Now," said he, "take my hand: hold fast: do not fear. Do not look about you, or on either side of you, only on the little spot lighted by my lantern, and place your footsteps firmly right there." I heard the rushing of the waters, and was still conscious of fear; but by looking steadily only where the light fell, and planting my footsteps just there, not turning either to the right or the left, clasping firmly the strong hand the danger was overcome and the shore reached in safety. "The next day my kind guide said, "Would you like to see the way by which you came last night?" Then he showed me where our vessel had been lying, and the very narrow plank by which we had reached the shore. He knew that had I turned either to the right or left I should, in all probability have lost my balance, and gone over into those dark waters; but by holding fast, and treading just where the light fell, all danger would be averted.' Here is a most significant illustration for us. The word of God is called 'a lamp unto our feet,' which would imply that it lights up the pathway of obedience for us. It is not said that it is a light unto our head, throwing its beams out into the outlying realms of science and mystery, to illumine them for us. It is told that in Oriental cities pedestrians could often be seen at night threading the dark streets with a little lamp fastened to their sandals, which kept twinkling as they moved along like a terrestrial star. If the Psalmist had this idea in mind, how beautiful is the imagery! Pilgrims of the night, while our Lord is absent from us for a season, we have the Bible, the sure word of prophecy, which Peter calls a 'light shining in a dark place,' until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in our hearts.' This is a lamp to our feet. It lights up each step of duty; each advance in obedience indicates for us; but it does not throw its beams forward into the fu-

ture, or out into all the regions of surrounding mystery, for it is a foot-lamp of obedience, and not a head-light of universal knowledge. Let it shine upon our pathway, and we shall see each successive step in the way of life distinctly revealed,—repentance, faith, confession, justification, growth in grace, sanctification, and redemption. Take one step, and the next will be plain before us. So many persons halt at the entrance of the way of life, and refuse to advance because they cannot understand the mystery of the Trinity, the mystery of the incarnation, the mystery of regeneration, and the mystery of eternal life. But such knowledge is utterly impossible. We can only enter into a full understanding of God's mind through successive stages of obedience: 'If any man shall do the will of God he shall know of the doctrine.' Every duty done opens for us a door to wider knowledge and further service. I can only enter one attainment through the portals of another and previous attainment. The lamp of obedience just shows us each next step in advance, and no more. The Christian life is like the locks of a canal; only till you have passed through one door, and had it shut behind you, will another door open to you. Until you have believed on Christ and confessed, and so closed the gates of irreligion behind you, you cannot know him in any of the deeper relations of his will.

The lamp of Scripture, moreover, lights up for us the way of obedience, rather the way of disobedience. It were well for us to get this truth distinctly fixed in our minds,—that it is the province of God's Word to show us what truth is, rather than what error is; what life is, rather than what death is; what salvation is, rather than what damnation is.

And if we attempt to explore the realms of error, or to draw up an elaborate philosophy of eternal ruin, we are doing what God does not do; 'Strait is the way, and narrow is the path, that leadeth unto life.' And the lamp of life throws its beams along this path to light it up for us; but over the whole adjacent territory of death and punishment it shuts down an awful cloud of mystery, on which it writes the words, 'the blackness of darkness forever and ever.' If men attempt to light up too minutely this mystery with their little theological lamps, they will do more harm than good; for they are doing what God nowhere does, which is always dangerous. God has drawn out a most complete and perfect system of grace. Let us study the philosophy of the plan of salvation, if we will, but let us not attempt any philosophy of the plan of damnation. With one glance at the fathomless depths of eternal woe, let us turn with a sigh, and bend all our strength to the work of snatching souls as brands from the burning. The danger is that we shall get bewildered, and lose our balance, if we look too much into the deep and dazzling darkness of perdition. Hear what the prophet Habakkuk says to the Almighty: 'Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon iniquity.' The gaze of Jehovah is fixed forever upon the holy, and the pure, and the blessed. Let us fix our eyes there, and press on.—The Watchword.

Worldly Conformity.

The Rev. Dr. James W. Alexander wrote to a friend: 'As I grow older as a parent, my views are changing fast as to the degree of conformity to the world which we should allow to our children. I am horror-struck to count up the profligate children of pious persons, and even ministers. The door at which those influences enter, which counterveil parental instruction and example, I am persuaded is yielding to the ways of good society. By dress, books and amusements, an atmosphere is formed which is not that of Christianity. More than ever do I feel that our families must stand up a kind but determined opposition to the fashions of the world, breasting the waves, like the Eddystone light-house. And I have found nothing yet which requires more courage and independence than to rise a little, but decidedly, above the par of the religious world around us. Surely, the way in which we commonly go on is not the way of self-denial and sacrifice and cross-bearing which the New Testament talks of. There is the offence of the cross ceased. Our elder influence on the circle of our friends is often to be traced to our leaving so little difference between us and them.'

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger. Mr. Editor,—The following letter with a few necessary alterations was sent to the Morning Herald as a reply to a letter signed "Omega" in that paper of the 8th inst., as it has been returned to me, the editor of that paper not caring to publish it, I would thank you to give it space in your next issue. Yours, &c., ALPHA. February 26th, 1883.

Unlawful Businesses.

To the Editor of the "Morning Herald": SIR,—I had supposed that the, in its way, very ingenious letter of "Omega" in your issue of the 8th inst., on the morals of liquor selling, would have received a sufficient answer ere this, not having noticed any such answer in my excuse for asking your indulgence.

In brief, your correspondent contends, that because a business is legal it is therefore proper and one in which any Christian man may honestly and properly engage, and that "if the liquor seller is a godly man" the business will be so conducted as to produce no harmful results. He states that wine (the intoxicating article) is not forbidden to Christians, that Christ himself both made and drank wine, and directed his disciples in all ages to use such as the Lord's Table, that our Lord kept company with liquor sellers, and gave them his blessing. Under these circumstances he asks if he sins in occasionally buying a bottle of liquor. I propose, briefly, to answer your correspondent's arguments and statements, which I think I have not unfairly presented, and just here allow me to request that if it is no sin to buy or drink intoxicating liquors, it is certainly no sin to sell, and that the traffic in intoxicating liquors is quite proper and should not be hampered by licence fees or in any other way. But it appears to me that Omega is entirely astray in this matter. The question of liquor selling is one not so much of law as of morals, not *is it legal?* but *is it right?* It is quite lawful to keep bawdy houses in Paris or St. Louis on paying the licence fees. Most people however think it is not right, and that Christian men should not engage in the business. They judge the business by its results, just so in reference to the traffic in liquors, following in its wake, its inevitable results crowd the public vision in scenes of wretchedness and woe, poverty, and crime, in wrecks of manhood and womanhood, in ruined homes and suffering children, and alas that this is not all, it traffics in human souls. God's word tells us that "No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of heaven." Our blessed Saviour said that "It is impossible but that offences will come but woe unto him through whom they come." Does the man who accomplishes all this desire that his business should, with all its dire results, be held up to the public gaze? then he will think your correspondent, but in all fairness let him not thrust himself into the company of honest tradesmen or other respectable men. The liquor seller may be honored by the church, and a eulogy be pronounced over his coffin by his minister, if he has money to leave the church, but he may have lived in a palace or retired to the lunatic asylum or ended his days in the poor house, all the same, the morals of his business will be judged of by its results. I think I may safely say that no "Godly man" will ever be found in the business. Omega is particularly unfortunate in the Scripture argument. It is no difficult matter to logically maintain a direct negative to every statement he has made. Intoxicating wine is forbidden to God's people. See Prov. xxiii. 31, "Look not thou upon the wine &c." Paul also in more places than one enjoins abstinence. There is no evidence that Christ ever drank intoxicating wine, nor that he ever made such, neither did he direct Christians to use it at the Communion. There is no evidence that our Lord ever associated himself with liquor sellers in any way. Publicans in the time of Christ did not sell such vile compounds as may be found to-day in the liquor shops of Halifax, nor did they sell wine of any kind, or any other goods, that were simply revenues collectors, is known to all of ordinary intelligence, unless in deed your correspondent should be excepted. The Publicans of that day would no doubt have been insulted at his insinuation against their characters. It is certainly possible for rum-sellers to become Christians, but they will leave the business, they cannot serve two masters. Christian men may drink wine, and may also fall into many other sins and continue to fall, again and again, and yet be saved in spite of it all, they

had better live uprightly, otherwise they suffer loss, which may be for eternity, but they should not be ranked with the sinful tempter.

Omega says he occasionally buys a bottle of strong drink, and asks "Is it wrong to do so?" As there is absolutely no necessary use to which he could put it, and as the possession of it might lead to harm, I would say he did wrong to buy it, and the man from whom he purchased did wrong to sell it. The man who sold cheated, inasmuch as he did not give value, the man who bought it acted unwisely in allowing himself to be imposed upon by a worthless article.

Your correspondent says "every thing depends on the way a man conducts his business." Now if the general conduct of a trade is harmful to society, then the sooner that business is abolished the better for all concerned.

In reference to receiving the wages of the tremendous sin against God and our fellow man, the position of the Christian should be that of emphatic protest, whether these wages should be paid into the coffers of the church or to advance the interests of education, or in support of the charitable institutions of the day by the rum-seller himself, or received through the ordinary government channels. The blessing of God cannot accompany money received from such sources, God can take care of his people and carry on his work without Satanic aid, and the sooner this is understood the better for all.

Yours, ALPHA. For the Christian Messenger. Chicago Letter.

Mr. Editor, In an editorial before me you treat well it appears to me, the subject "Compromising for Union." Unity in the church of Christ certainly is greatly to be desired.

And is not the tendency of the different wings of evangelical Christendom strongly in that direction? On every hand we meet with evidences that such is the case.

A significant event transpired last fall in England. The Congregational Union of England and Wales assembled according to previous appointment in Bristol. While they were in session they were visited by a deputation from the state clergy of Bristol, numbering about sixty, with Dr. Elliot, Dean of Bristol, at their head.

This deputation of the Church of England clergy was represented by the dean himself who read an address before the Union in which he heartily welcomed it to Bristol, and expressed, in the warmest terms, his respect and that of those he represented, for, as he said, "Our fellow workers in the cause of Christ."

Such an address coming from such a source was not only unlooked for but unprecedented in English ecclesiastical history and is highly significant of the changed state of feeling in the old country.

To adduce the unmistakable signs of better understanding and fuller sympathy constantly increasing between the different denominational bodies of this country would not be an easy task since they are so many.

The Inter-Seminary Alliances, Christian Conventions, pulpit exchanges, union services, evangelical unions, social gatherings all witness to the fact.

The purpose with which I set out to write was to mention a meeting held yesterday in this city, which, indeed, bears agreeable evidence in the same direction as the above.

After the regular Monday morning meetings of the various ministers associations of the city, the pastors and leading Christian workers of the different denominations—the Baptist, Methodist, Congregational, and Presbyterian—were the most largely represented—met in the Grand Pacific Hotel and dined together, and afterwards took into consideration the advisability of establishing an Evangelical Union to meet three or four times a year, the purpose of which was to talk over evangelical work, and come into a fuller understanding and sympathy with each other. The heartiest good-will was manifest on every hand, and steps were taken to secure such a Union. Dr. Lorimer presided. Speeches were made by Dr. Simeon Gilbert, (Cong.), Bishop Merrill, (Meth.); Dr. Herrick Johnson, (Pres.), Dr. P. S. Henson, (Bapt.), Rev. Robert West, editor of the Advance, Dr. W. X. Ninde, of the Barrett Biblical Institute, and Dr. Northrup, of the Morgan Park Seminary.

Are not such gatherings indicative of good? The tidal wave of infidelity and worse which is sweeping before it into destruction the youth of this great city demands that there be no pause in the

vigorous on-march of the Salvation Army for the different regiments to nurse old differences, hoist up red flags, and hurl invectives against each other. All hail, therefore, everything that tends to promote united effort and good feeling! The reports from the churches here, as in Nova Scotia, are most encouraging. At the Ministers' Meeting the first of February, 166 additions to the churches were reported, and at the beginning of March doubtless there will be a larger number reported. Throughout the State and neighboring States there had been, in many instances, large gatherings. May the good work in your midst go on, as elsewhere, and to His name be all the glory!

Truly yours, BLUENOSE. Chicago, Feb. 21, 1883.

Foreign Missions.

FROM BURMA. MET-TAY, TAYOY, Dec. 28th, 1882. Dear Bro. Selden,—

Yesterday was the sixth anniversary of our arrival in Burma, but my position was quite unfavorable for writing, and so must do so to-day in order to keep up my custom. The whole day and parts of the nights at both ends were spent on the back of a large elephant, travelling the rough path from Tayoy to this Karen village. If any one should suppose it to be pleasant to be mounted some ten feet from the ground on one of these great creatures, and be borne along, now climbing a mountain side, the elephant stepping up three feet or more perpendicularly at times, then descending in the same manner, again along the bed of a mountain torrent, carefully feeling each rock with his trunk to ascertain if it is sufficiently firm to bear his great weight before placing his foot upon it, again winding along the edge of a precipice where no other beast of burden yet discovered would venture, but where his great pad-like foot is quite safe, I should say that a very brief experience would make a decided change in his opinion. The rider is swayed from side to side at each step of the elephant, and then jerked in the opposite direction for the sake of variety, till he can think of little else than dislocated backbones and fractured spines. The howdah or box used by the Karens is simply a large oblong bamboo basket, about four feet long by less than two wide. Into this you pack your baggage and then yourself. To get into a very comfortable position is not to be expected, but you must settle down and try to enjoy it. When the Karen driver sitting astride his elephant's head turns round and asks, "Is the Teacher happy?" You must say "happy." I left home a little after three in the morning, and kept moving till noon. That brought us to the usual stopping place on this route, and we halted for breakfast. It is the place where Boardman met the Karen converts he was too ill to baptize, which rite was performed by Mason, then newly arrived in the country. That occurred nearly fifty-two years ago. What a mighty work has God wrought since then! A few timid, ignorant disciples then, a great host now, many thousands of church members, hundreds of churches and pastors, with schools and institutions of learning of no mean grade. We can but pray that the next half century may be even more fruitful in results. Does some one ask how breakfast is got in the jungle. There are no hotels or even houses. We carry our food and all necessary cooking utensils with us, and of course, have a servant to do the work. We dismount, walk about or lie down in the shade of a clump of bamboos, or a great tree, till the announcement is made: "Breakfast done ready, sir." In the meantime the Karen assistants and drivers prepare and eat theirs. The poor elephants are tied to trees and allowed to look on. A Karen will drive his elephant a whole day and night and never feed him, except as the poor beast twists his trunk round a bunch of grass or branch of a tree growing near his path. This the elephant does at the risk of a severe blow on his head, or of being pierced by the little pickaxe a driver usually carries. As soon as I had breakfast I came on, and did not stop again till I reached this little chapel at eleven o'clock at night. I have travelled the same road several times, but never performed the journey in one day. I was very much fatigued, and quite cold, and could do little more than crawl to one corner of the chapel, assist my Karen boys to make my bed, and lie down. It is very cold in the jungle at this season. There is no frost, but the air is damp and chilly. I was by no means too warm under two blankets, four comforters, besides sheet and woolen night-clothes. We can cool off in Burmah at times, and particularly in the jungle.

To the of tour of of the trip in the us great know pain-k nine, ends. not in bring mint with n The forme visited thro. B Mr. B all his Ko-the while I find dred a are w the na note o pastor here, a which Mon here, a village consist in refer dition, in the renew should their b put in ling t proved do bet At pr memb without presen then p aftern the K sant se names Lord's for the and g rupeed Christ depart While a num I kno my b tance Karen Geth forme came worshi Sabba young have churc report from name and young Two o of fan little them perfect gether Lord's dained vice for a mo Early next G-M light many me on ten o' tized I been more fruit a son, a The e health has w happy and n and a Sabba exper His w but go be say idea a ed not ing th and fo the pl stand a little so mu four wish had to come