

Sunday Reading.

Christ's Jewels.

"They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels"—Mal. iii. 17. Precious stones are cut and polished By the lapidary's skill; Cruel knife and rasping friction, Work on each the master's will. Not until the sparkling facets With an equal lustre glow, Does the artist choose a setting For the gem perfected so. So when Christ makes up his jewels, Choosing gems of every hue; Pearls and diamonds, rubies, sapphires, Showing flawless through and through. Could I be the least among them, Smallest gem that love could see; And his eye detect the brightness— That would be enough for me. Now I wait the royal pleasure, And when troubles come to me, Smile to think he may be working On the gem, though small it be. All I ask is strength to bear it, Faith and patience to be still; Held by him no knife can hurt me, Loving him, no trials kill.

For the Christian Messenger. Letter from Rev. John Brown.

Dear Editor,— Some few years ago when in Nova Scotia I read with very much pleasure and profit, and I may say found great help in the study of the subject of Baptism—a work entitled "Kind Questions," by Rev. A. M. Stalker; certainly one of, if not the best work I have seen on the subject. The price I believe was 25 or 30 cents. On hearing a few weeks ago that the learned and genial writer was to preach at North Bradley, about ten miles distant, and having been invited by the pastor, Rev. I. Hanon, himself also a powerful writer and able defender and advocate of the Baptist faith, to come. I was not slow to make my way there. I found Mr. Stalker to be just what his book would lead one to suppose, full of kindness, gentleness and love. He is above the middle stature, past three score and ten, hair almost white, a commanding presence, with a slight tremor in his voice, which was so smooth and kindly. He preached from the words, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save," and seldom have I felt my heart laid hold of, and my attention so riveted as when listening to the venerable preacher. Having enjoyed it so much, I thought possibly your readers might derive some pleasure also from as much of it as I am able to send. I can only send words, the man, the manner, the voice, the tones which made those words to live and breathe, I cannot send. With affectionate remembrances. Yours sincerely, JOHN BROWN.

Unintended Testimony.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON BY REV. A. M. STALKER, FORMERLY OF SOUTHFORT, AT NORTH BRADLEY, WILTS. G. B.

"He saved others, Himself He cannot save."—MATT. XXVII. 42. Some people's ceasure is praise. They unwittingly exalt when they intend to degrade. They mean a stigma and a brand, where they leave a crown. They intend that as the darkest shame, which proves a tribute of the brightest glory, of this many illustrations might be given. The toes of the Lord Jesus furnish one of the most cogent and striking. On a memorable occasion, thinking with one fell sweep to lay His sublimest professions in the dust,—with curled lip they exclaimed,—"This man receiveth sinners!" Never perhaps did Jesus endorse any of their sayings more readily, and more cordially than He did this. It was the richest, the grandest eulogy which either earth or hell could pronounce on the Son of God. To "receive sinners" was His work—His joy—His glory. The text shews them again unconsciously doing Him homage. His wonderful career is about closing. On the cross He hangs in apparent utter helplessness. The crowd surrounding Him is dense. Numerous groups are there. All eyes are fixed on Him. Look at His friends! They talk to each other in whispers, in sighs, in tears. His foes exult. They exchange glances which mean, Ah! Ah! see what the Nazarene has come to! He has done wonderful things—

done good to many, but see! in this emergency, though "he saved others, Himself He cannot save!" If ever my hearers, the wrath of man bosannah'd Jesus' praise, it did so in this declaration. Look

1. At the declaration specially touching Christ Himself: "Himself He cannot save." We enquire, is this true? If any ask why we doubt its truth, we answer,

1. Because enemies make the statement. They have already uttered more than one falsehood about the Lord Jesus. The lips that speak one lie often acquire fatal fluency in manufacturing more. Besides, it is well known that we frequently cherish an instinctive aversion towards those whom we have injured. "A lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it." Whatever therefore, it says respecting the object of its hate, is to be received with caution. But surely, now that Jesus is dying, no falsehoods will be uttered! Alas! Alas! men are found in our fallen world, who think they can afford to joke and lie even when surrounded by the shadow of death! What else are these men doing when of Jesus they exclaim, "Himself He cannot save." We ask, Is the saying true? We doubt its truth.

2. Because Jesus has already given many proofs of His power. You remember some of these; and we ask, Shall it be said of Him, who, when His foes sought to cast Him down headlong from a mountain top, deliberately walked through their midst, and went His way?—of Him who in awful majesty trod the surging deep, and with a word hushed the tempest into a calm?—of Him who in a moment smote a fig-tree into perpetual barrenness?—shall it be said of Him, "Himself He cannot save?"—of Him who restored vigour to the cripple, rosy health to the leper,—speech to the dumb,—hearing to the deaf,—sight to the blind,—life to the dead,—shall it be said of Him, "Himself He cannot save?"—of Him who fed thousands with a few loaves,—who hurled demons from thrones they had long usurped in the human frame,—who with a sentence brought a band of enemies in helplessness and terror to the ground,—who as He looked on high, saw twelve legions of angels "harkening to the voice of His word," and ready for His command to haste to the rescue,—who claimed all the possessions, the perfections, the prerogatives of Deity as His own, by declaring, "All things that the Father hath are mine," shall it be said of Him, "Himself He cannot save?" We ask again, is the saying true? And what is our answer? Yes it is true,—but not in the sense in which these men utter it,—yet true it is in a high and glorious sense, "Himself He cannot save." Why cannot He?

1. Because He is resolved to complete the work He came to execute. That work began soon as He appeared a Babe in Bethlehem. It has been advancing with every word He has since spoken, with every prayer He has since offered,—with every tear He has since shed,—with every sorrow He has since endured. "He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." His whole life has been a life of giving. Should He now cease? now shiver the timbers on which He is stretched? now dislocate the nails fastening His hands and feet? Should He now "come down from the cross,"—it will be sounded through the universe, "He began a work He was not able to finish!" But of Jesus never shall this be said. Until Heaven and Earth and Hell echo with his triumphant shout, "It is finished," it shall continue to be true, "Himself He cannot save." Why not.

2. Because of the Covenant into which He had entered with the Father. That covenant He regards as "ordered in all things and sure." It refers to a revenue of glory to Jehovah that can be gathered only as the words of the prophet are fulfilled: "He was wounded for our transgressions, &c." Until "mercy and truth have met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other." "Himself He cannot save" will be grandly true.

3. Because the love He cherishes for sinful men. Of that love some of us have heard from our very childhood. Love prompted the Lord Jesus to come, to make "Himself of no reputation." He emptied Himself of His glory because He was FULL of love. In count-

less ways, and at countless times 'was His love put to the test; but nothing could shake the "steadfastness" with which Jesus "set His face towards Jerusalem." He has already pressed through the "agony" of the garden where "His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." He has reached "the place that is called Calvary" Nothing,—no shame,—no taunt,—no reproach,—no suffering can induce Him to shrink. His sublime, loving resolve is immovable. It is that love, and not the nails that hold Him to the bleeding tree. Because He loves with a love unparalleled, a "love that passeth knowledge," "Himself He cannot save." Hannah More in a letter to her sister tells of a captain who one day went out of his own ship to dine on board another; while there, a storm arose, which made such a wreck of his own ship that it was impossible for him to return. He had left his two little boys on board, one four, the other five years old, under the care of a black servant. The people struggled to get out of the sinking ship into a large boat, the poor black and the two boys were last on board, when about getting into the boat with the boys, the master of the boat shouted, "No room for the three, the boys or you, quick!" Without hesitation the negro replied, "Very well, then take the boys, and give my duty to my massa, and tell him I beg pardon for all my faults," at the same time handing them into the boat, and then, stepping back on the deck of the sinking ship, watched the boat move off with its precious load, and in a few minutes sank to a watery grave, to rise no more till the sea shall give up her dead. "He saved others, himself he could not save." Here was self-sacrifice of a high order, and illustrates in some measure the love and self-sacrifice of the Son of God, who died not for friends, but for enemies; and herein "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us!" "He saved others, Himself He could not save." Let us look

II. At the declaration touching others. Jesus "saved others." Is this true? It is affirmed by the same parties who declared "Himself he cannot save." 1. Yes it is true, I fancy I hear one in the motley crowd exclaim. I look whence the voice comes. There stands a man with uplifted arm. "This very hand," he says, "was long a burden to me. It hung by my side as a dead thing. Instead of my grasping anything with it, I had when I moved, carefully to lift it,—but now how I love to look at it! Many a good day's work it has done since. He whose hands are nailed to that middle cross, restored it whole as the other. As I gaze on Him, I gratefully exclaim 'Yes it is true, He saved others for He has saved me'" 2. "And not you only," cries a second. "For months,—for years, I was the subject of a loathsome disease, scales white as snow covered my body. My neighbours shunned me. My own family hid themselves from me. The people called me a leper. Nine others were in as bad a plight as myself, but the crucified Nazarene came to our help. He cured us all. They soon forgot His kindness, I never could. I returned to thank Him at the time, and now I am come to thank Him again, and to say it is quite true, "He saved others, for He has saved me."

3. In that crowd there is another, but with a radiant countenance. He looks as none around him look. His eye sparkles with a peculiar lustre. He gazes intently on Jesus; and as he gazes, see what tears roll down his cheeks! He tries to speak, but emotion well nigh chokes his utterance. At last he speaks, "I don't know much, but this I do know—once I was blind, but now I see. Yes I do see. I see you—I see the green earth,—the lovely lake,—the beautiful flowers,—the blue sky,—the orb of day,—but better than all, and best of all, I see the "Sun of Righteousness." I see Him, in the light of whose countenance my sightless eyeballs became orbs of vision. I was known as "Poor blind Bartimeus." One day when sitting by the wayside begging, I heard a crowd coming and asked what it meant, and they told me that "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." I longed to be near Him, and I tremulously shouted, "Jesus thou Son of David have mercy on me." He stopped.

Asked me to be brought to Him. Between two friends I groped my way. I stood before Him. He asked me what I wished Him to do. I told Him, and He said "Receive thy sight," and I saw at once, and have seen ever since. It is true—"He saved others, for He has saved me."

4. A fourth exclaims: "Hear my testimony." I know a poor woman, who for eighteen years was bound of Satan. She applied to Him who hangs on the middle cross, and He "loosed her from her infirmity." She is always talking about His power and kindness. People wonder at her. I do not. A demon had once possession of myself. My dwelling was among the tombs. I shouted and foamed, so that people when they saw me, fled; others tried to bind me with chains, but I snapped their fetters. I roamed about, a torture to myself, and a terror to all. But Jesus saw me. He had compassion. He addressed the demon in tones Divine: the demon heard—shrieked, and fled, and here I am, in garments my benefactor gave me, and in my right mind, to assure you that "He saved others, for He saved me."

5. In the same crowd stands an interesting young man. The bloom of health is on his cheek. On one side I fancy I see some of his youthful comrades; on the other, is she whom he loves best—his mother. He wishes to speak: "I was the only son of my mother, and she was a widow. Sickness marked me for its own. I grew gradually worse. Physicians said there was no hope. I took farewell of my loved, my widowed mother. I received her last kiss, I heard her sobbing prayer, I ceased to hear her prayer as I ceased to live. I was laid out. Friends came to the funeral, and were bearing me away. As the procession neared the gate of my native city, a stranger stopped it. He touched the bier, and though a corpse to all beside, I was to Him, a "young man," and He said "Young man, I say unto thee, arise!" I heard His voice of music, Death struggled to keep me but in vain. The Prince of Life prevailed, and I obeyed His call, and He "delivered me to my mother." She is here, and know that all I say is true. Jesus saved others for He saved me."

6. Another cross becomes an object of interest. The culprit nailed to it begins to speak. "I die," he says, "I deserve to die. I am not only a transgressor against God, but I have broken my country's laws. Yet I do not fear to die. 'He whom my soul loveth' is at my side. I have asked Him not to forget me. He says He will not. I have a place in His royal, tender heart. This is all I ask—all I need—and I have it. 'Underneath are the everlasting arms.' I feel their blessed embrace. Jesus has saved,—is saving, others. He is mighty to save, for He has saved me." What numbers Jesus has saved since then! Amid a tide of confluent voices one clarion in its tones, cries out, "Don't forget me." Who art thou? "I was known both by Heaven and Hell as the 'chief of sinners, a blasphemer, a persecutor, but the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ was great toward me, and He met me as I was going to Damascus to imprison and slay His followers; and sinner, blasphemer, and persecutor though I was,—in answer to my cry. He pardoned me, and made me a new man." "He saved others, for He saved me," and through me, He by His grace has "saved many others." The great multitude before the throne, with one united and harmonious voice "as the sound of many waters," cry, "He saved us all," "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory for ever and ever, Amen."

"He saved others,"—is saying still,—is saying now. Still He loves to save. Accept the salvation. It is full, meeting all our necessities; pardon, and renewal. It is free, "without money and without price." It is ready,—"finished,"—everlasting. If He has saved others, has He saved you? O if not, then let Him. Let Him now be your Saviour. Then, from this moment you will go through the world singing, not only with your lips, but with your life:—

"I love to tell the story Of unseen things above; Of Jesus and His glory Of Jesus and His love. Many Koreans are being converted by Japanese missionaries.

I love to tell the story, Because I know 'tis true; It satisfies my longings, As nothing else can do.

I love to tell the story: More wonderful it seems, Than all the golden fancies Of all our golden dreams.

I love to tell the story, It did so much for me, And that is just the reason I tell it now to thee." "He saved others, Himself He would not save."

How to make your Churches Prosperous.

Through church channels your religious and philanthropic activities ought to find exercise. The church is weakened in two ways. First, because so many of her members do nothing. The men and women, even in our best churches, who do the work are few indeed. There are too many in the rear with the baggage, too many in the ambulances, too many are in the hospital; some, like the great warrior of Homeric song, are sulking in their tents. It is sad to think how much of a pastor's time is taken up in coddling and comforting, soothing and stimulating, in quieting and quickening the complaining saints. When he ought to be after the unconverted, he is well nigh distracted with the inconsistencies of those who should be by his side in aggressive work. But the church is weakened, second, because some working members think they must work in outside organizations. They will give more time and money to a masonic lodge in a month than they will give to the church in a year. The result is that they have neither time, money, nor energy for church work. By a very natural law, they soon lose interest for church work. I am not denouncing outside organizations. I am simply stating facts. Others must work in halls, tents, and hippodromes. They get the idea that no aggressive work can be done in their church. They seldom attend the prayer-meetings. When they do, they spend their time in berating the faithful brethren and sisters for their coldness, and in telling of the glorious meetings they have attended elsewhere. What shall be done with such people? Doubtless they have in God's providence, their uses; but they are sore tests of one's faith. Christ made no mistake in organizing his church. With all her faults she is the most perfect organization on his footstool. Do not slight her claims. The more is your zeal for souls, the more ought your devotion to be to your church. Why fly to outside organizations for work or pleasure? All a Christian needs should be found in a well organized spiritual church. If the church be not such, try to make it such. You will find a few kindred souls. Begin with these; others will fall into line. I have met so-called "higher-life" people who boasted of their indifference to the claims of the church of which they were members. "You belong to such a church, do you not?" "Oh, yes, but I never go there; I have had new light; I have come into perfect trust." Indeed! One would think that such perfect trust would show itself in greater devotion to Christ's church and in a deeper sense of obligation to keep one's covenant vows. Not so. The higher the life, the lighter the obligation; the higher the life, the weaker the loyalty. May God save the churches from this sort of higher life! Its tendency is distraction, disintegration, death. It gives certain persons a roving commission to go about disturbing their peaceful neighbor. It makes a great army of noisy, self-righteous, worthless church members who "despise the church of God."

The line of demarcation between the church and the world must be deep and broad. Too often has it been nearly effaced. The best evidence of religion is religion. The strongest argument for Christianity is Christianity itself. Christians who have the name, but not the character of Christ, do more to injure Christianity than all the infidels in the world. Unchristian Christianity, not infidelity, is the church's worst foe. A consistent life is an irresistible argument.—The Home Circle.

It is the crushed grape that gives out the blood-red wine. It is the suffering soul that breathes the sweetest melodies.—Gail Hamilton.

Hand-shaking Christians.

It has been well said 'the social element is the genius of Christianity.' It is uphill work to love Christ and not love those also who love Him. A love that binds people to Christ and which does not bind them to each other, may do for angels, but it is not the kind of love men want down here. It is to be suspected. There is a good deal of it if we are to believe what people say. But it counts for precious little during the six days tussle with the world, the flesh and the devil. "Every one that loveth is born of God." The other side of this statement is just as true. 'The lack,' says Dr. Wm. M. Taylor, 'of brotherhood among believers themselves, has paralyzed the church in front of the skepticism and immorality of the world; but when we go back in simple faith to the one great fact of our redemption, we shall both be brought into closer fellowship with each other and stimulated to more tender regard for the salvation of men.' Some time ago the Presbyterian put this whole thing in this nutshell: 'Shake hands with somebody as you go out of church. The more of it the better, if it is expressive of real feeling and interest. There may be a great deal of the spirit of the gospel put into a hearty shake of the hand.' There is no place in the moral vine-yard where there is a better opportunity to exercise this Christian grace than right here on Sunday and in the weekly prayer-meetings.

The Mother's Lesson.

A mother sitting in her parlor, overheard her child, whom a sister was dressing, say repeatedly, 'No I don't want to say my prayers.' 'Mother,' said the child, appearing at the parlor door. 'Good morning my child.' 'I am going to get my breakfast.' 'Stop a minute; I want you to come and see me first.' The mother laid down her work on the next chair, as the boy ran towards her. She took him up. He kneeled in her lap, and laid his face down upon her shoulder, his cheek against her ear. The mother rocked the chair slowly backward and forward. 'Are you pretty well this morning?' said she, in a kind and gentle tone. 'Yes, mother, I am very well.' 'I am glad you are well. I am very well too, and when I waked up this morning and found that I was well, I thanked God for taking care of me.' 'Did you?' said the boy in a low tone—half a whisper. He paused after it—conscience was at its work. 'Did you ever feel my pulse?' asked his mother, after a minute of silence, at the same time taking the boy down and sitting him in her lap and placing his fingers on her wrist. 'No, but I have felt mine.' 'Well, don't you feel mine now—how it goes beating?' 'Yes,' said the child. 'It should stop beating I should die, should you?' 'Yes, I can't keep it beating.' 'Who can?' 'God!' A silence. 'You have a pulse too which beats here in your bosom in your arm, and all over you, and I can't keep it beating nor can you—nobody can but God. If he should not take care of you, who could?' 'I don't know,' said the child, with a look of anxiety, and another pause ensued. 'So when I waked this morning I thought I'd ask God to take care of me and all of us.' 'Did you ask him to take care of me?' 'No.' 'Why not?' 'Because I thought you would ask yourself.' A long pause ensued—the deep and thoughtful expression of his countenance showed that his heart was reached. 'Don't you think you had better ask him yourself?' 'Yes,' said the boy readily. He kneeled again in his mother's lap and uttered in his simple and broken language, a prayer for the protection of Heaven.—Lady's Dollar Newspaper.

The American Bible Society cannot supply the demand for Bibles, although making arrangements for issuing 2,000,000 next year. It is the crushed grape that gives out the blood-red wine. It is the suffering soul that breathes the sweetest melodies.—Gail Hamilton.