

HOME RELIGION.

BY REV. C. BARLTROP.

How sweet is home religion!
How bright its altar ray!
It gilds the soul with gladness,
It sanctifies the day.
The children trace the pathway
By loving parents trod,
And at the dawn of knowledge
They give their hearts to God.

How blest is home religion!
E'en time cannot efface
The scene of parents kneeling
Before the throne of grace.
A child, perchance, may wander
In paths that bring regret,
But home, its love, its worship,
He never can forget.

Oh, give me home religion!
God's Word, our precious gift,
When set in bright example,
Will to the skies uplift.
Immortal seed is planted,
And when the sowers rest,
The children reap a blessing,
And call their parents blest.

Then cherish home religion,
Safeguard the sacred trust,—
This will be heavenly treasure,
Unharm'd by moth or rust,
Lead on by sweet persuasion,
In faith, in hope, in love,
Until we all are gathered
One family above.

FOUR BIBLE SKEPTICS.

Among the many characters which the Bible presents to us four skeptics stand out prominently. Each of these is the type of a spiritual condition, and as such is worthy of consideration.

1. The skeptic from self-conceit.

It was a time of sore need in Samaria. The city had been besieged until famine prices reigned in the market and the kettle stood empty upon the hearthstone of the poor. The king of Israel, his warriors and his statesmen, were at their wits' end. And yet surrounding all the desert of their dire necessity were God's abundant storehouses, unseen but ready to overflow. Then stood forth the prophet with the promise, "Tomorrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel and two measures of barley for a shekel in the gate of Samaria." None could deny that in God's world there was a supply sufficient to make this possible. Faith was required to believe that God could bring the supply and need together. The captain on whose hand the king leaned had doubtless considered every possible method of relief, to find them all in vain. Since he could discover no way of salvation according to natural law, his conceit made him skeptical of any divine plan according to a higher law. He thinks the Lord's arm is as short as his own, and therefore it cannot save. His pride made him a rationalist, a type of that mighty host who throng the way from the beggar's ditch to the professor's chair. They are too conceited to walk by faith and, therefore, they never walk at all. Elisha's treatment of this man is instructive. Doubtless he might have found him a valued helper if his heart had been different, but since he was useless for the prophet's purpose, he simply ignored him, compelled to go on his way of service alone. And the skeptic of self-conceit did, indeed, behold the hand of God, but at an hour too late for his own salvation. "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceits, there is more hope of a fool than of him."

2. The skeptic from moral weakness.

Of all the men in Jerusalem at the time, Pontius Pilate appeared to be the strongest. And yet the only force required to overthrow him utterly was the howl of a mob. He stands to all ages as an example of a moral weakling. The fox of immortal fable having found himself too weak to spring up to the purple clusters above his head at last declared that they were only sour grapes, not worth the having; so Pilate, when he found that he was not sufficiently strong to obey the truth, asked the scornful question, "What is truth?" To believe in justice with its corollary of a righteous God meant for him a strenuous life beyond his will for exertion; he, therefore, tried to deny the facts which made his weakness pitiable. And in this he is followed by a multitude in all ages, for the men whose unbelief is the result of disobedience are everywhere. Such Adams stand aghast at their own nakedness, endeavoring to beat into an unwilling brain the serpent's lie, "Ye shall not surely die." For such moral cowards Christ can do nothing, and Pilate must go on to his suicide's grave alone.

3. The constitutional skeptic.

The unbelief of both the previous character was like the evening twilight darkening into night. The doubt of the two remaining is like the morning shadow, rosy with the promise of the day. The apostle Thomas is the example of constitutional skepticism. He had by nature a tendency to live in the basement of his soul, although the upper floors were flooded with cheerful sunlight. As a result, while he loved the daylight, he generally walked in darkness. He was willing to give his life with the "Light of the world," but he expected that Light to go out. "Let us also go that we may die with him." This disposition mourned in solitude while his fellow-disciples rejoiced with their risen Lord, and led him to a sullen resistance toward faith in better things. How much more quickly Thomas would have believed that the tomb was robbed than that his Master was risen. Jesus reproves his unbelief but he satisfies his love, and Thomas's confession at last surpasses that of all the rest. A good proof that a loving heart is mightier than a doubting head.

4. The honest skeptic.

Some people would be surprised that the last of this group should be considered a skeptic at all. And yet the honest, religious Nathanael was a skeptic in the best sense of the term. He proved all things and held fast that which was good. His mind was open, but as yet without faith, and his heart was loving when first he met the Lord. His non-belief in Jesus was not like the conceited unbelief of the Samaritan noble, nor like the cherished doubt of Pilate, a balm for an uneasy conscience. He simply had not as yet received sufficient evidence to satisfy an honest mind. Let the stupendous claims of Jesus once be proved and he was ready to believe and obey at once. Jesus's exclamation of admiration at finding such a man sounds through the ages, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." And to this man immediately Christ presents Himself in so clear a light that he is at once enrolled among the disciples. And to all such comes Christ's promise of further revelations, "Thou shalt see greater things than these."—Charles E. Corwin.

Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? There is more hope of a fool than of him. Prov. 29:20.

CHRISTIANITY AND SUCCESS.

"Can a man succeed in business if he conducts his business on Christian principles?" Yes—he can succeed in no other way. The Bible agrees with common experience in teaching that the chances of success in business are not decreased, but largely increased if a man carries his religion into his business—and his accumulations are apt to stay in the family longer. Integrity has a commercial value. A man who has a reputation of being an honest man and a true Christian has a better chance of getting on his feet again when he falls down. The man who lives according to Bible rules will be temperate, frugal, prompt, energetic, "diligent in business." He will not speculate with other people's money, nor use his own in gambling and dissipation. He will be free from the "moral cracks," through which so many fortunes leak away. He will be courteous and considerate of those whom he employs, or will attend to his employer's interests as if they were his own. The fact is, as somebody has said, "God Almighty has fixed things in this world so that it pays to do right. Righteousness has the promise of the life that now is as well as of that which is to come."—Rev. C. M. Coburn, D.D.

KEEP YOUR LIGHT SHINING.

There is a valuable lesson for us all in the following parable:

One night a man took a little taper out of a drawer and lighted it, and began to ascend a long, winding stair.

"Where are you going?" asked the taper.

"Away high up," said the man; "higher than the top of the house where we sleep."

"And what are you going to do there?" said the taper.

"I am going to show the ships out at sea where the harbor is," said the man; "for we stand here at the entrance to the harbor, and some ships far out on the stormy sea may be looking for light even now."

"Alas! no ship could ever see my light," said the taper, "it is so very small."

"If your light is small," said the man, "keep it burning bright, and leave the rest to me."

Well, when the man got up to the top of the lighthouse, for this was a lighthouse they were in, he took the little taper, and with it lighted the great lamps that stood ready there, with their polished reflectors behind them.

You think your little light of so small account, can you not see what God may do with it? Shine—and leave the rest to Him.

"HE WILL ABUNDANTLY PARDON."

It would seem that the sacred writers struggle with language to find words sufficiently comprehensive to express the magnitude of God's compassion. This word "abundantly" sounds like the waves of the sea that come rolling in upon the beach, day and night, year after year, for countless centuries, never ceasing, never exhausted. So is the compassion of God. He is a bountiful God. He does not give sparingly. When men give alms they give sparingly. When parents give money to their children even they give sparingly, partly because they are not able to give in any other way. But God gives bountifully. Bountiful rains, bountiful sunshine, bountiful harvests, a bountiful sea are the gifts of His hand. When He would fully express the bounty of His com-

passion He gives His only begotten Son.

When men spread the mantle of charity over the faults of their neighbors it is a narrow mantle, leaving the faults exposed to the gaze of all. But when God spreads the mantle of charity over our sins it is as broad as the universe and as long as eternity. When He pardons our sins He blots them. He casts them behind His back, He casts them into the depths of the sea. He separates them from us as far as the East is from the West, He remembers them no more. "He will abundantly pardon."

How One Million is Spent.

Not less than one million dollars is annually spent by people seeking an absolute cure for Catarrh, Bronchitis and Consumption. Numerous are the remedies, but the one standing pre-eminently above all others is Catarrhoxone. It cures these diseases because it is sure to reach them. Catarrhoxone is inhaled into the lungs, throat and nasal passages, and bathes every part of the diseased membrane with its germ killing, healing vapor. You simply breathe Catarrhoxone and it cures. Price 25c. and \$1 at druggists, or Folsom & Co., Kingston, Ont.

"Is there any fear?" asked a timid woman of an old sea captain, when the sea was sweeping over their ship. "No-madam," was the answer, "there is no fear, but there is great danger." The old sailor knew the peril, but he was not afraid. He was resting in his promise, which has said, "He that harkeneth unto me shall dwell safely and shall be quiet from the fear of evil."

The Demon, Dyspepsia.—In olden time it was a popular belief that demons moved invisibly through the ambient air, seeking to enter into men and trouble them. At the present day the demon, dyspepsia, is at large in the same way, seeking habitation in those who by careless or unwise living invite him. And once he enters a man it is difficult to dislodge him. He that finds himself so possessed should know that a valiant friend to do battle for him with the unseen foe is Parmelee's Vegetable Pills, which are ever ready for the trial.

Only holy lives can win the unholy to holiness and heavenliness. The hands that are given to Christ must not do sinful things after engaging in his holy work. The lips that speak his name must not speak wrong words. The feet that run his errands to-day must not walk in the paths of evil tomorrow. The heart that throbs with love at his table must not afterward be thrilled with feelings of passion and hate. If we would be vessels meet for the Master's use, we must have clean hands and pure hearts.—J. R. Miller.

Time Has Tested It.—Time tests all things, that which is worthy lives; that which is inimical to man's welfare perishes. Time has proved Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil. From a few thousand bottles in the early days of its manufacture the demand has risen, so that now the production is running into the hundreds of thousands of bottles. What is so eagerly sought for must be good.

If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle his whole body.. Jas. 3:2.

The great lung healer is found in that excellent medicine sold as Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup. It soothes and diminishes the sensibility of the membrane of the throat and air passages, and is a sovereign remedy for all coughs, colds, hoarseness, pain or soreness in the chest, bronchitis, etc. It has cured many when supposed to be far advanced in consumption.