

from the angel's hand, and it is not the little book we thus get, but something else; not the truth in its purity, but the adulteration of it, and that will not do much for us.

As a church and people we have always guarded the dignity of the truth, the respectability—if I may so speak—of religion, and I hope we will continue to do so. There is such a thing as putting the book too high up for ordinary people to reach it. And that is a mistake. But it is still more a mistake to put it so low down that without effort, so to speak, they can get at it. Then they despise it, or if they do not despise it, at least it does not help them. They stay about where they are, not lifted up, not improved in their circumstances, not much the better for the good done them, the blessing received. It helps men to come to church to worship. It does them good to clean up, and reverently receive the Word of God at the angel's hand.

The way we receive a thing is almost as much to us as the thing itself. It gives it a value and importance it could not otherwise have, and does us a good it could not otherwise do us. It is with profound reverence and with the deepest sense of responsibility John receives his commission, takes the book. "And I," he says, and you seem to see the man rising to the greatness of the occasion; "and I took the little book out of the angel's hand."

Then after he had received the little book out of the angel's hand he ate it up. When I was much younger and less experienced than I am now, I used to think of the exile of Patmos sitting on a rock, and trying to masticate the sheepskin manuscript, and I imagined in my own way of looking at it that it was hard fare, tough eating. But now I know it was not the paper he ate, but the contents of the book. And we speak today of devouring a book. Just as we eat food to satisfy our hunger, feed our bodies; so we eat books, devour their juicy contents, to satisfy the hunger of the soul, feed the mind.

The figure is thus a striking one, and full of beauty and force. There is a reading that glances over page after page of a book, and finds nothing in it. And perhaps there is nothing in it. And then there is a reading that is greedy hungry eating. It finds a feast of fat things, and some of the chapters it chews and chews over, and finds real nourishment for the soul in them.

Now, there is no book that can stand the eating that the little book in the angel's hand can. Like the widow's handful of meal and crust of oil, it never gives out. The more you eat of it, the more there is to eat. You have been eating here all your life, chewing at these tough pages of truth, and if you had ten more lives to live you would still find enough here to keep you eating. Most books will only stand one good reading, and hardly that. Others will stand two or more. But the Bible you read through every year of your life perhaps, and as the years go by, and you are growing wiser, you find more and more in it, new views of truth, new beauties, new comforts for your soul, new spiritual vistas opening up to the eye of faith, new well-springs of joy bubbling up, new pastures for you to feed upon and lie down in, and you never tire of this wonderful book.

John was being fitted for a special service in the church. He was wanted with a view to say something, write something, that the ages to come might read and learn lessons of wisdom from. So he was sent away to a lonely island, and there was given him a little book to eat. He had not a library; all he had was one little book, the Bible. But that book he ate. He filled his soul with it. He saturated his being with it. And what a spiritual strength it gave him, what wisdom, what an insight into things, what comprehensive views of truth!

We mourn that we have so few books sometimes. But perhaps we have too many. We taste a little out of many authors, but we eat up none. Now, it is the man who eats up, like John, the one little book that comes to be the strong man, the man of vigorous thought, earnest purpose, high resolve and grand achievement. At his feet the people sit gladly and are fed. He is their oracle. To him they look and to his words they listen, and he has the word they want to hear.

Henry Ward Beecher, speaking to young men studying for the ministry, tells them how he used to sit in his study chewing for hours and days at the corners of his pocket Bible for something wherewith to feed himself and his hungry people. And his chewing was not wholly in vain. Oh if there was more of it among the preachers, and if there was more of it among the hearers, there would be more spiritual vigor in the pulpit, and real energy in the pew!

Let us, my hearers, reverently take up our Bibles, and let us not merely taste them as we would some sort of relish, but let us eat them as we eat food. So many today read a chapter perhaps on Sunday, but all the week through the sacred book is not opened. Now, that is not the way John did; that is not the

way to eat up the little book. We should eat it every day, eat it for food, digest it, get at the substance in it, make it ours by a sort of spiritual assimilation.

Our fathers did not have many books, but the few they had they read, they ate. And especially the one little book, they ate that. With it open before them in the pew, they heard the preacher preach, and they turned over its sacred pages to find out if he was speaking the truth. Let us as a congregation cling to the good old Scottish fashion of having our bibles with us, and let us watch with our eye and hear with our ear the blessed words as the minister reads them. Let us do what John did: "And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up."

III. THE EFFECTS OF HIS EATING.

The effects to himself of his eating the little book were twofold, sweetness in his mouth, and bitterness in his stomach. "And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey; and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter."

We all know so well that the food that is sweetest and most agreeable to the taste, is not always the best for the stomach, not always the most wholesome. We smack our lips, and call it good, and wish there was more of it; but very soon we are afflicted with nausea, and suffering from headache, and utterly out of sorts, as the result of our indulgence. Usually, however, pleasant-tasting food is good food. What we are not sure of we taste, and finding it sweet in the mouth, we eat it up, feeling sure that it will prove wholesome nourishing food, and we are not disappointed. There are times indeed when no sort of food agrees with one; but that is not the fault of the food. The food is good enough, and is sweet to the taste; but the stomach is disordered, and turns into poison, bitterness, bile, everything taken into it.

Now, we learn here, that the eating up of the little book taken out of the angel's hand was not as good in its effects as we would have expected. It was not wholly sweetness. It was both good and bad, partly sweet and partly bitter, sweet to eat but bitter when eaten. In his mouth it was like honey for sweetness, but when swallowed down the sweetness turned into gall, wormwood, causing nausea, sickness, vomiting.

How then are we to account for these twofold effects, these directly contrary results? If the little book is all it ought to be and claims to do for those who take and eat it, then it ought to be only good in its effects. Pills of poison are sometimes sugar coated to make them taste sweet; but they are poison all the same. Is the little book a sweet-tasting poison, sweet to read but deadly to do? That is the way with some books. They are written in a fascinating style, but their teachings are dangerous, unwholesome, destructive. Endeavor to work them out into real life, and ruin to yourself and others is the result. And some would make us believe that the little book is a dangerous book to put into the hands of the people, and especially the young. It is a two-edged sword that may cut into their life. They may extract poison out of it, not honey.

And there are those indeed who learn nothing good out of the Bible. The gospel is doing them hurt every time they hear it. But then it is not the little book's fault. The bad is in themselves. It is the poison of other things, the poison of vicious teaching, the poison of bad books, the poison of an evil life, that makes the little book a virulent deadly poison to their soul.

But then the beloved disciple was not such a man. His mouth was filled with the honey of sanctified eloquence, and his heart with the sweetness of holy desires. And yet the little book was bitter to him when it was eaten down. The reason was this, that sweet as the little book was to himself, its being received, its doctrines being embraced, its principles being carried out, brought him, he found, to his sorrow, into collision with the evil world, and so exposed him to the bitterness of persecution.

And the taking and eating up of the little book is still both sweetness and bitterness in the experience of God's people. The first taste of it is sometimes so sweet, but a better knowledge of it gives us to see ourselves as we are, our true state spiritually, and we are made sad, bitter, heart-troubled, conscience-stricken. And then so often still it brings those who try to do as the little book tells them into collision with society, and evil men, and the result is bitterness. There is persecution still of a kind for standing up for the truth and doing right, following Jesus. Sometimes men are cast out of society, thrown out of employment, made suffer in so many ways for their faith and faithfulness.

The little book cannot be taken and eaten without more or less of bitterness as a result. The Bible, the gospel, is revolutionary, and wherever it takes hold there will be trouble, the overturning of old-standing evils, the pulling down of idolatrous temples, and the bringing in of a new and better life.

You sit there, my hearer, and sometimes the little book is honey to you, You like every word that is said. It is

the droppings of the honeycomb to your soul. You are sorry when the last word comes to be spoken. You say, "Oh the rich spiritual feast we had today!"

You come again, and somehow every word out of the little book is gall and wormwood to you. You want to get up and go away and never come back. It stirs up all the bad in you, and makes you cross with yourself, your fellow-worshippers, everything, and you do not like it.

Ah! my hearer, it is not always the best sign when the gospel is sweet to your taste, when the sermon just suits you; nor is it always a bad sign when it is bitter as wormwood and gall. The word is all right, but you are not all right. There need to be trouble, bitterness, an overturning within, if you are to be right with God, and right too with yourself and others. If we get at the truth in the gospel for ourselves, if there is a real eating up of the little book, as with the good John of Patmos, then of necessity there will be some considerable bitterness, anguish of soul. It cannot but be. Let us not be discouraged, therefore, if we find in our experience that the little book is more a grief than joy to us, a cause of bitterness rather than sweetness. It is none the less a good to us because it is so.

How precious is the Book Divine, By inspiration given! Bright as a light its doctrines shine, To guide our souls to heaven.

It sweetly cheers our drooping hearts, In this dark vale of tears; Life, light, and joy it still imparts, And quells our rising fears.

AMEN.

All the sin that has darkened human life and saddened human history began in believing a falsehood; all the power of Christianity to make men holy is associated with believing truth.—Dr. J. A. Broadus.

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Place of Meeting, Divisions, Numbers Night of Meeting, and name of Deputies.
St. Stephen; Howard, 1; Friday; S. Webber; Milltown, St. Stephen; Wilberforce, 3; Monday; H. McAllister.
Market Building, St. John; Gurney, 5; Thursday; David Bradley, Jr.
Orange Hall, Portland; Portland, 7; Monday; A. Y. Paterson.
Market Building, St. John; Albion, 14; Wednesday; E. A. Everett.
Gagetown; Queens, 21; Saturday; H. J. DeVeber.
Shediac, Shediac, No. 28, Thursday, John McFadgen.
Chatham; Northumberland, 37; Friday; G. Stothart.
St. John; Mariners and Mechanics, 38; Tuesday; John Kinney.
Hillsboro, Albert Co.; Albert, 39; Wednesday; John I. Steeves.
Sackville, West. Co.; Sackville, 40; Tuesday; J. C. Harper.
Richibucto, Kent Co.; Richibucto, 42; Wednesday; Robert N. Beers.
Newcastle; Newcastle, 45; Thursday; Jas. Falconer.
Point de Bute, West. Co. Westmorland, 50; Thursday; Jas. W. Colpitts.
Hopewell Hill, Albert Co.; Golden Rule, 51; Tuesday; L. R. Moore.
enfield, Charlotte Co.; safeguard, 58; Saturday; H. C. Trynor.
Cambridge, Que's Co.; ohnston, 62; Saturday; George S. Wilson.
Dalhousie; Dalhousie, 64; Monday; G. Haddow.
Baie Verte; Baie Vert 65; Wednesday; R. Goodwin.
Dover, West. Co.; ver. 70; Saturday; Alfred E. Steeves.
Carleton, St. John; Granite Rock, 77; Tuesday; John C. Thomas.
Derby, North Co.; Nelson, Monday; J. Betts 99.
Douglastown, North. Co.; Caledonia, 126; Tuesday; J. Henderson.
Collina Corner, Kings Co.; Collina, 129; Thursday; Jacob I. Keirstead.
Upper Gagetown, Queens Co.; Oxford, 130; Saturday; A. E. Crothers.
Benton, Carleton Co.; Garibaldi, 151; A. F. Campbell.
St. Martins St. John Co., St. Martins, 164, Tuesday; Frank L. Mosher.
Moncton; Moncton, 183; Monday; F. W. Steeves.
Douglas, York Co.; Dunphy's W. O. Farmers 190; Saturday; Arthur W. Ross.
Salisbury, West Co., Crystal Stream, 191; Monday; S. A. Hoistead.
South Bay, St. John Co. Lime Rock, 207; Monday; Wm. Roxborough.
Vye Settlement, North Co., New Era, No. 215, Tuesday, John B. Burchill.
Milford, St. John Co.; Everett, 238; Tuesday; Geo. H. Waring.
Mex ton; Intercolonial 243; Friday; Miss Vena Fawcett.
Victoria Mills, West. Co.; Victoria, 245; Thursday; A. J. Main.
Baillie, St. James, Char. Co.; Baillie, 248; Wednesday; Fred H. Mann.
Weldford, Kent. Co.; Harcourt, 249; Saturday; H. Wathen.
Portland; Valley, 250; Tuesday; J. Fowler.
Butternut Ridge, King's Co.; Havelock 251; Friday; E. Keith.
Petitcodiac, West. Co.; Petitcodiac, 252; Saturday; D. A. Jonah.
Lewis Mountain, West. Co.; Sunnyside, 253; Saturday; John Lounsbury.
Millstream, Kings Co. Britannia, 255; Saturday; C. W. Weyman.
Little Ridge, Char. Co.; Spreading Oak, 256; Tuesday; A. F. Matheson.
Fredericton; Lansdowne, 257; Thursday; H. H. Pitts.
River Charlo, Rest. Co.; Charlo, 259; Thursday; J. H. Galbraith.

Steeves' Mountain, West. Co.; Mountain P. Coe 260; Saturday; R. Lutz, Jr.
Lawrence Station, Char. Co.; Lawrenceville, No. 261; Saturday, Thos. Skidmore.
Hampton, King's Co.; Spring, 262; Monday; G. Barnes.
Pomroy Ridge, Char. Co.; Mayflower, 263; Thursday; W. Monlon.
Scotch Ridge, Char. Co.; Iona, 264; Wednesday; D. M. Sinclair.
Oak Hill, Char. Co.; Oak, 265; Thursday; Allen Parker.
Tower Hill, Char. Co.; Willis, 266; Saturday; S. S. Smith.
2d Falls, St. George, Char. Co.; Stewart, 269; Saturday; A. Sherwood.
St. George, Char. Co.; Red Granite, 270; Saturday; Thos. Magowan.
Penobscus, King's Co.; Cardwell, 271; Wednesday; Oscar Stevens.
Hampton Village, King's Co.; Hampton, 273; Tuesday; Chas. Frost.
St. John, 102 King Street; Gordon Division No. 275; Monday; Robert Maxwell.
Eagle Settlement, West'd Co.; Twilight 276; Tuesday; G. A. Taylor.
Salisbury, Westmoreland Co.; Middleton, 277; Friday; Jas. Henry.
Healthland, Charlotte Co.; Rising Sun, 278; Tuesday; Julius Powers.
Goshen Corner, Albert Co.; Star of Hope, 279; Saturday; H. D. Stevens.
St. Mary's Kent Co.; Rosefield, 280; Saturday; W. Vincent.
Elgin, Albe Co.; Elgin, 281; Saturday; W. P. Robinson.
Whites Cove, Grand Lake; Grand Lake, 283; Friday; H. E. White.
Stonehaven, Gloucester Co.; Gloucester Division 284; Tuesday; N. R. Ritchie.
Lewisville, Moncton; Lewisville, 285; Tuesday; A. McN. Russell.
Port Elgin, West Co.; Fort Moncton, 286; Tuesday; C. H. Goodwin.
Centreville, Kings Co.; Centreville, 287; Saturday; C. R. Folkins.
Waterford, K. C.; Essex Division 288; Saturday; E. M. Flewelling.
Dubec, Carleton Co.; Centenary, 289; Thursday; Wm. V. Benn.
Waterville, Carleton Co.; Waterville, 293; Saturday; J. T. Fletcher.
Bath Carleton Co.; Ray of Hope, 294; Friday; W. D. Keith.
Lower Coverdale, Albert Co.; Coverdale 295; Tuesday; F. A. Steeves.
Canterbury, York Co.; Duferin, 296; Saturday; John W. Scott.
River Louisa, Restigouche Co.; Louisa, 297; Friday; Donald Stewart.
Kirkland, Carleton Co.; Monument, 298; Thursday; John Lyons, Deputy.
Woodstock, Carleton Co.; Campbell, 299; Friday; S. McLeod.
Campbellton, Restigouche Co. Campbellton, 300; Monday; Jas. W. Patterson.
Dundee, Restigouche Co.; Dundee, 302; Tuesday; Jas. Malcolm.
McManabe, P. O. Kings Co.; Rising Star, 303; Wednesday; Martin Freeze.
Scotch Settlement, Westmorland Co.; McCarthy 304; Wednesday; David H. Murray.
Upper Millstream, Kings Co.; Millstream, 305; Monday; Zebulon Gaunce.
Gibson, York Co.; Gibson, 306; Friday; J. H. Hamilton.
Case Settlement, Kings Co.; Snowflake, 307; Monday; C. E. Black.
Portland, N. B.; Silver, 308; Friday; Rev. J. Spencer.
Old Ridge, Char. Co.; Brunswick Division, No 309; Monday; R. W. Dinsmore.
Waterside, Parish of Harvey, Albert Co. Gladstone No. 311; Friday; Rev. S. O. Moore.
Poquiock, York Co, Poquiock 312, Wednesday, Edw. Prue.
Kingsclear, York Co.; Kingsclear, 315; Wednesday; Isaac Kilburn, Deputy.
Buctouche, Kent Co.; Buctouche, No. 317; Tuesday; Wm. Wry.
Mount Middleton, Kings Co.; Mount Middleton, 318; Friday; Joseph Chapman.
McKenzie Corner, Carleton Co., McKenzie Corner Division 319 Friday; Jas. Forest.
Stylesville, Westmorland Co.; Mapleville, 320 Saturday; John Crandall.
Bayfield, Westmorland Co.; Bayfield, 321 Monday; A. W. Bent.
Clark's Corner, Queens Co.; Clark's Corner, 325 Thursday; Isaac H. Carle.
Fredericton, No. 2 Gordon, No. 326; Wednesday; Sergt. Major McKenzie.
Smith's Corner, Walker's W. O., Kent Co., Olive Branch 327 Saturday, Ephraim Wheten.
Berry Mills West Co. Millville, 328, Monday John T. Prince.
Blackville, Northumberland Co.; Blackville, 329; Wednesday; Otto Hilderbrand.
Black Brook, North. Co.; Silver Stream, 330; Wednesday; Wm. Taif.
Tattagouche, Gloucester Co.; Forest Home, 331; Thursday, Richard Bell.
Bathurst, Gloucester Co.; Ever Onward, 332, Monday, Dr. Wm. P. Bishop.
Dalhousie Junction, Restigouche Co., Maple Green; 333; Wednesday, Wm. Jamison.
Little River, Buctouche, Kent Co. Forest View No. Co 334; Monday, Chas. Ward.
Upper Woodstock, Jubilee 335, Wednesday, John Burpee.
Napan, North Co., Napan, No. 336 Thursday Alex Dickson.
Presque Isle, Connell P. O. Carleton Co.; Dawn of Hope No. 337 Tuesday; John N. Perry.
Bloomfield Corner, Carleton Co.; Unity No 338 Saturday, T. D. Stokoe.
Mapleton, Albert Co., Mapleton, No 339, Tuesday. Albert W. Stiles.
Boiestown, North. Co. Boiestown, No. 341, Wednesday; Rev. Thos. Allen.
Little River, Albert Co.; Princes, Lonise, No 342; Saturday; Sanford Parkin.
Moncton, Bulmer, No. 343, Saturday; James M. Murray, deputy.
Caracquet, Gloucester Co., Caracquet, No. 344 Saturday, J. W. Young.
Ludlow, Northumberland Co., Pine Grove, No 345, Thursday, Frederick Price.
St. John, Excelsior, No. 346, Friday, Robert Wills.
Bamford Settlement, North Co., Blissfield, N. 347, Saturday, David Bamford, Deputy.
Carleton, St. John, Tilley, No. 348, Monday Herbert B. Belyea.
Marysville, York Co., Marysville, No. 349; Friday, A. S. Morissey.
Sunnie Brea, West. Co., Fairview, No. 350 Monday, A. R. Blake.
Springfield (White's Corner) King's Co, Sun Brea, No. 351, Tuesday, Oscar Davis.
River View, Albert Co., River View; No 352, Monday, Azor Jonah.
St. John, S.; George Division, No. 353, Wednesday, James Kelly.
Anarance Ridge, King's Co.; Sa e Refuge, No 354, Tuesday, Nehemiah Graves.
Welsford, Queens Co., Welsford, No 355, Friday, Wm. Howe.
Tracadie, Gloucester Co, Tracadie, No. 356 Saturday, Alex Fleet.
Youghall, Gloucester Co, Seaside, No 357 Tuesday, Richard Willis.
St Andrews, C. Co, St Andrews, 358, Monday J. M. Hanson.
Whitneyville, North Co., Whitneyville, 359; Monday, Benj. Forsyth.
Lower Prince William, Y. Co., Prince William, No 360, Tuesday, Walter B. Barker.
P. O. dres, Burden's P. O., York County.
Redbank, North. Co., Redbank, 361, Friday, Rev. J. D. Murray.
Middle Southampton, York Co.; _____ 362; Saturday, Frank R. Brooks.
Lakeville, Car. Co.; Livingstone, 363; night of meeting _____ Colin King.
Victoria Corner, Car. Co.; Victoria, 364; _____ Coleman Shaw.
Hartland, Car. Co.; Inebriate's Friend, 365; Tuesday, H. H. Boyer.
Bonney River, Char. Co., Grinnville, 366; Saturday; James Bowden.
Oak Bay, Char. Co., Oak Bay, 367; Saturday, Thos Cottrell.