

terpreted by the tenderest relations of the human heart, there can be no doubt as to the relation that God bears to the wanderer in sin. God is his heavenly Father, loving him and suffering for his sin. The young man is his son; but a son who has persisted in dishonoring his Father, in destroying his manhood, and in defeating his destiny. God is the Father of sinners, and the great and terrible thing about sin is that sin is rebellion against a loving Father's heart.

The mother taught the little boy to say "Our Father." And in doing this she obeyed the most commanding impulses of a mother's heart. Surely God is the Heavenly Father of her innocent babe. Mothers have been terrorized into believing that unless their babies were baptized or of the number of the "elect," they were fit only for eternal damnation; that they must suffer eternal punishment for their sins committed in Adam. But no mother whose religious ideas grew out of the Bible ever believed such things true of her little babe.

If, then, innocent little children may call God Father, if the same person when a man and a Christian may call God Father, is not God the Father of the young man while he is living in dissipation and sin? Christ's parable of the true father, miscalled the parable of the prodigal son, teaches that fatherhood cannot be set aside by the sin of the child.

Let us see what this means. Man as man is, in a certain sense, the child of God, in that God is his heavenly Father. As an innocent little babe he lies, after his mother, the words, "Our Father." But as he becomes older, it rests with him whether he will honor or dishonor his Father. If he acknowledges God as his Father and lives to his honor, he becomes a Christian; if he turns from God and destroys in part or wholly, his possibilities of growing into the image of his heavenly Father, he may become dead to God, but God can never change his relation to him.

Would it not be better if God did not permit man to wander away from him? Undoubtedly all of us at times have thought so. But if the heavenly Father did this, man would be only a machine. Integrity and strength of character come by doing right when it is possible to do wrong. There is no other way for character to be developed. We may rest assured if there had been another way, God would have adopted it.

Let us not forget that God has safe-guarded man as much as a loving Father possibly could, without interfering with man's power to choose. He makes it hard for man to go astray; he makes every wrong act to be followed by remorse and pain. These are the Father's barriers, his warning messengers saying: This is not the way; destruction and death lie at the end of this path. And along the path of right action, sign-boards are placed every little way pointing the traveler toward peace, strength, character. God's language is a universal language which all may read, whether we are traveling toward him or away from him.

The Christian may say, "Our Father;" the mother may teach her child to say, "Our Father;" and we know God is pleased. But his joy is quite as great when the wanderer, tired and sore, sick at heart and full of shame and remorse, comes to himself and cries: "Father, I am no longer worthy to be called thy son." May some wanderer come back to his Father today. Christ is the way from sin to righteousness and fellowship with the Father.—The Commonwealth.

### "Squire Sinkhorn's" Mistake.

BY J. B. GEMERLL.

I once heard Dr. J. R. Graves, in my house, greatly interested and instruct a number of preachers by relating, in the way of illustration, the following story: Somewhere in Kentucky there lived a magistrate by the name of Sinkhorn. Of course he was Esquire Sinkhorn. A lawyer returning from the state capital to the country where Squire Sinkhorn administered justice met a constable, whom he knew, with a citizen in charge. He inquired where the constable was taking the man, and was informed that he was taking him to the penitentiary by order of Squire Sinkhorn, and that he was to be committed for two years on charge of horse stealing. The lawyer said to the constable: "You had better take that man back. If you put him in the penitentiary on the order of Squire Sinkhorn you will be in trouble." The result was the man returned with his prisoner, accompanied by the lawyer, and the case was reopened before Squire Sinkhorn, the lawyer telling him that it was beyond his power to send a man to the penitentiary. Squire Sinkhorn averred that he was acting within the law, and at once produced the code and read that part of it which provided that for stealing property to a certain amount a man should be sent to the penitentiary for any given time within certain limits. This man, Squire Sinkhorn averred, was undoubtedly guilty of horse stealing, and therefore he had sent him to the penitentiary. But the lawyer said: "Give me the book." and he turned and read the section of the law providing that every one so charged should be tried before a jury of his peers, detailing at length the manner of trial. Squire Sinkhorn was greatly astonished, and woke up to the fact that he

had not read far enough. This Dr. Graves used to illustrate how certain persons have fallen into a great error in discussing the 6th of Hebrews by not reading far enough.

Squire Sinkhorn's mistake will illustrate the mistake of many others who read only in patches and snatches, and never get a full view of any question which they seek to discuss. Indeed, Squire Sinkhorn stands at the head of a great procession of men in law, in politics, in science, in religion, who come to hasty and vicious conclusions by not reading far enough.

A little learning has been declared to be a dangerous thing. It is very dangerous in law, as illustrated above. It has been amazingly fruitful of perils in science, where little snatches of truth have been taken, and men have built up theories on a single segment of truth. But in no sphere has Squire Sinkhorn's mistake been so fruitful of evil as in religion. The whole theory of Universalism is based on a few passages of Scripture taken out of their connection and away from their meaning. The Universalist does not allow the Bible to speak on the whole question, and so almost every false religion is built up on some select passages taken out of their true meaning. The cure for the evils of a partial view of the truth is the full view of the truth.

At an association in Georgia, where a number of preachers were gathered in a large country home, one brother inadvertently severely on the fact that the congregation was invited to stand for prayer. He regarded it the abomination of desolation, standing where it should not, and said that he had denounced the custom all over our country as unscriptural. When asked the ground of his denunciation, he referred to the fact that Paul and the elders of the church at Ephesus kneeled down to pray. A brother present, taking a Bible as the conversation was going on, selected and afterwards read many passages touching the question of attitude in prayer, and from them altogether it was seen that sometimes people stood, sometimes kneeled and sometimes lay prone upon the earth, and from a full view of the subject it was evident that the Scriptures put no emphasis on the attitude, but all the emphasis on the condition of the heart. When the reading was through, the brother who had condemned standing said that he ought never to preach again as long as he lived. It was suggested to him that the remedy for his mistake was not to quit preaching, but to find out all the Bible said on any question before making up his mind. He had simply made Squire Sinkhorn's mistake. He did not read far enough.

This mistake is notably the mistake of the Arminian. He reads only those passages which teach on the human side of religion, and from them he makes up his conclusion, leaving God a very small place in salvation, and some of them no place at all. The Antinomian reads all about predestination and hardens it into fatalism. With him there is no place for human action. His entire mind is directed to the God side, and because he will not read the other side he had a perverted and hurtful view. A notable example of this was the brother who took for his text "The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men." He laid the stress of his sermon on the grace that bringeth salvation, but did not even look to the end of the sentence, for the doctrine of that text is, that "the grace of God which brings salvation," is a teacher of duty. So, if he had read far enough, he would have seen that the grace of God runs right out into human actions, just as the sap passes through the fibre of the wood and makes leaves and fruit.

Our so-called "Gospel Mission" brethren are much given to Squire Sinkhorn's mistake. Their whole effort is to prove the separate action of churches. They commence with the action of the church at Jerusalem which sounded out the word through Judea, Samaria, and the regions roundabout, and from that argue that a church, single and alone, ought to be a missionary force. They next take the church at Antioch, which was in that day the second great missionary centre in the world, from which especially sounded out the word to the Gentiles. They read how, in obedience to the Spirit, Paul and Barnabas were sent out as missionaries from the church, and deduce from that, very correctly, that a church is thoroughly competent to send out missionaries. Here they stop. But there is more. For instance, it would appear that Jerusalem and Antioch held a council and thereby laid the foundation for all councils between independent churches. If they would read on further they would see that Paul, whose membership was probably at Antioch, arose to the position of a great missionary leader, and that he brought about co-operation among the churches in the support of missionary enterprises. If they would read over in 2 Cor. 8 they would see the divine method of rounding up a great collection and of carrying out a common purpose among the churches. Three things were done: (1) Paul wrote letters to Corinth about this collection, just as our secretaries today write letters to our churches, soliciting collections and co-operation. (2) Paul went to what would be regarded now a prodigious extreme. He sent a number of the brethren to the church at Corinth to help work up a collection in that church after they had already promised it. This was a system of agencies in the churches on a

very strong scale. (3) There were a number of men selected by the churches to take charge of the common fund and to distribute it. The reason for this was that nobody might be blamed. Now this is exactly what is going on today, only we do not put in on it as strong as Paul did.

If the brethren would keep clear of Squire Sinkhorn's mistake and read far enough they would see that while Paul and his traveling companion preached, and planted churches, and ordained elders, that afterwards they went back over the same ground and taught the churches and helped the churches. They were missionaries to the churches.

There is a great deal in reading far enough. The short sight is not as good as the long sight. Part of the truth is not as good as all of the truth. And the man who believes his theory, or accepts his doctrine from a partial view of the truth, is constantly in danger of being upset by more truth.

A good many men need today, as Squire Sinkhorn did, to revise their findings, finally making them conform to the whole doctrine of God's Word.—Baptist Standard.

### My Pastor.

"How does it happen that you have such a number of men in your church?" I was asked the other day. "Because we have a man in the pulpit," was the reply. My pastor is first of all a man—a strong, verile, courageous man. His dignity is but an incident of his self-respect. He is true to his convictions and to his congregation. With unflinching fidelity he preaches the whole truth as he understands it, and he never sacrifices principles that he may tickle men's ears or attract and hold their attendance. He is too big a man for that, for he knows himself a commissioned preacher of the strong Son of God. There is no cringing, toadying or mock humility about my pastor. We love him because he deserves the big, honest name of man. My pastor has a heart of sympathy. Now do not understand that he is a professional sympathizer. There is nothing lachrymose or sentimental about him. But he feels with people. Quietly and unassumingly he enters into the joys and sorrows of his congregation. When any of them are in trouble he may be found with them. Their troubles concern him, and to those of us who know him best—for my pastor does not parade his sympathy; you have to need it to discover it—it is manifest that he places the interest of his flock above his own interest. In other words, my pastor has learned in the school of his self-sacrificing Master, the surpassing lesson of love. My pastor is a growing man. He is not the best preacher in town, nor is he the most profound theologian, nor, I suppose, the wisest pastor. But he is a better pastor than he was a year ago. His delivery will be smoother and he will become less diffident and modest. Yes, although he is only a few years removed from the seminary my pastor is a humble man! We rejoice in his growth of knowledge and efficiency. But we are satisfied with him as he is. He does not "get up" sermons; his endeavor seems to be rather to find the people's need and the Book's message and to bring the two together. And he appears to have better success each week. Because he is noble, and brave, and honest, and unselfish, we love the man. Because he preaches in sincerity the Gospel of Christ we throng the church to hear him. Because he is a pastor who without cant or professionalism, loves us and is interested in what interests us, and because he is faithfully trying to make us better Christians, we follow him and are loyal to him, and bring our neighbors to hear him. Do you wonder that our church at every communion receives new members, and that in our midst are many men and women of singularly holy lives, who would be surprised if you told them so? And yet I suspect that many other churches have just such pastors, and are as proud of them as we are of ours.—Parishioner, in Interior.

### Patience.

Now, again, patience enters largely into the make-up of the better self. None of it is made in a day. We are to lay up treasures in heaven—not all at the same time, but from time to time. In the first place, learn that the mills of the gods grind slow. No man can live up to his ideal in a minute. The law is that moral change takes time. There are notable exceptions, but these border on the miraculous. The law is—slow. We say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." But the promise is not to do all things in a minute. I may fail once, I may fail twice. Shall I say then there is no use in trying any longer? God forbid! Wait. Have patience. Remember the time element in morals. Can't you conquer temper? Work and wait. Can't you keep down jealousy? Try a while longer; keep on trying, and don't forget that it takes a good while to hew out a huge boiler. Little pebbles are little troubles, but they are also of little consequence. Remember that sanctification is a process. It grows, so that one increases more and more. Better life comes little by little. A day at a time is the way to grow, and you can't see every evening how much you have increased in moral stature since sun-up. Increasing in all good is little by little. Have patience; take time. Second, learn not to get discouraged. Of course we aspire to goodness at once. Each has his ideal to which he would be equal to a bound. But that is not the way we achieve the ideal. Keep at it. Not this day nor the next makes a life. Wesley said to himself: "All at it and always at it." That is excellent. It is not the fastest moving train, but the one that makes the fewest stops that makes the record. Esop's fable of the hare and the tortoise would come to advantage here. We cannot go very fast, therefore we have to make up for lack of speed by continued effort. It all takes time. And patience is the time element in morals. Keep at it. Try hard. God honors in the long run.—Selected.

How constant is God's friendship! He loves us with an everlasting love and to the end, when other friendships are upon slight grounds easily and often broken off.—John Howe.