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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

A PRAYER.

BY THE LATE PHINEAS STOWE, COMPOSED A SHORT TIME BEFORE HIS DEATH.

I have a Saviour—He's pleading in glory,
So precious, tho' earthly enjoyments be few;
And now He is waiting in tenderness o'er me;
But oh! that my Saviour was your Saviour too!

For you I am praying—
I'm praying for you!

I have a Father—to me He has given,
A hope for eternity, precious and true
And soon will my spirit be with him in
Heaven;
But oh! that He'd let me bring you with me too!

For you I am praying—
I'm praying for you!

I have a Harp in those regions all glorious
Away, far away in that ocean of blue;
And there shall it breathe out its music melodious;
But oh! could I know one was tuning for you!

For you I am praying—
I'm praying for you!

I have a crown—and I'll wear it forever
Encircled with jewels of heavenly hue;
I was purchased by Jesus my glorified Saviour
But oh! could I know one was purchased for you!

For you I am praying—
I'm praying for you!

I have a Robe—'tis resplendent in whiteness,
Awaiting, in glory, my wondering view;
Oh, when I'll receive it, all shining in brightness,
Dear friend! could I see you receiving one too!

For you I am praying—
I'm praying for you!

I have a Rest—and the earnest is given—
Though now for a time, 'tis concealed from my view;
'Tis life everlasting—'tis Jesus—'tis Heaven;
And oh! dearest friend! let me meet you there too!

For you I am praying—
I'm praying for you!

Have a Peace and it's calm as a river—
A peace that the friend of the world never knew;
My Saviour alone is its Author and giver;
But oh! could I know it was given to you!

For you I am praying—
I'm praying for you!

For you I am praying—for you I am praying!
For you I am praying—for you, yes, for you!
And soon shall I hear you rejoicing and saying—
"Your dear, loving Saviour is my Saviour too!"

And prayer will be answer'd for you—yes, for you!

And when He has found you, tell others the story,
How Jesus extended His mercy to you;
Then point them away to the regions of glory,
And pray that your Saviour may bring them there too!

For pray'r will be answer'd—
'Twas answer'd for you!

Oh, speak of that Saviour, that Father in heaven,
That Harp, Crown, and Robe which are waiting for you—
That Peace you possess, and that Rest to be given
Still praying that Jesus may save them like you

And pray'r will be answer'd—
'Twas answer'd for you.

Religious.

For the Christian Messenger.

THOUGHTS FOR THE TIMES.

No. x.

CHURCH TRAINING. (Part 1.)

A great blessing has rested on many of our churches since the beginning of the year, and large accessions have been made to their numbers. It is a suitable opportunity for presenting some remarks on a subject which is always important, and peculiarly so at such a time as this. I refer to CHURCH TRAINING.

Among the converts who have been brought into the churches within these last few months there are many who have never before felt any interest in religion, and many more, who, from their youth, must be exceedingly uninformed, and therefore unprepared for the difficulties and dangers which will beset them.

These classes require prompt and special training. Arrangements should be made on their behalf, and exercises planned, whereby they may be instructed in truth, put on their guard against sin, and preserved from sloth and desecration. Various methods may be employed, which will have to be adjusted and altered from time to time, as the state of society changes and improvement appears. No one course will suit all conditions. Here, it must be

elementary; there, of a more advanced type;—the historical mode may be better adapted to some—the didactic to others—the hortatory to a third division; probably a judicious admixture of the whole will suit the majority of cases. There will be ample scope for Christian discernment and prudence.

The training should include, among others, these three points, HOLINESS—TEMPER—WORK.

I. HOLINESS.

The convert should be impressed by the consideration that religion does not consist in assenting to a creed or confession, taking a covenant, being baptized, joining a church, speaking in meeting, and so forth. Whatever importance may be attached to these and other engagements, and however obligatory or useful they may be (some of them are of divine authority), the young Christian should be seriously cautioned against resting in them as proofs of piety, or being satisfied with them, as though nothing more were to be sought after, and no further progress made. It is possible to account the object gained when the first step only is taken, and to sit down in quiet contentment when the question should be, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" It must never be forgotten that "the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power."

The Lord has said that "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation." The outward, visible acts of religion should be wisely discriminated. In times of martyrdom, they are tokens of sincerity; in times of ease they are but customary forms, and sometimes conceal an inward decay. When the soul is healthy, they express and declare holiness; when it is otherwise they may be substituted for holiness. That is a fearful utterance of the Lord's, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Let all Christians, old and young, ponder deeply the testimony of the scriptures concerning holiness. What is holiness? It is to be "joined to the Lord, and of one spirit." It is to "hunger and thirst after righteousness." It is to "put off the old man," and to "put on Christ." It is to "be crucified to the world." It is to "set the affections on things above." It is to "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." It is for Christ to "dwell in the heart by faith," and to be "rooted and grounded in love." It is to live in this world as "pilgrims and sojourners." It is to be in a state of habitual fellowship with God, and of satisfaction with his government. It is to please the Lord Jesus. It is all this, and it is much more. See Heb. xiii. 20, 21; Ephes. iii. 20, 21.

Now, church members have need to be trained in holiness—indoctrinated—examined—catechised, if you will. The subject should be pressed upon their attention in all its bearings and application—"line upon line"—"precept upon precept"—till the Lord's words, "Be ye holy, for I am holy," shall be thoroughly understood and felt, and all things shall be brought under consecration, and on the very "bells of the horses," and the "pots" and the "bowls," and the instruments of labour, shall be written, "Holiness to the Lord" (Zechariah xiv. 20, 21.)

Then, worship will be of a more exalted kind. It is questionable whether that engagedness of heart of which the prophet Jeremiah speaks (ch. xxx. 21) is to any considerable extent experienced among professors of Christianity. There is the bowing of the head and seriousness of aspect while the minister prays: but what is it to worship God "in spirit and in truth," and to pour out the soul before him in adoration, praise, and pleading? Seasons of true devotion are doubtless enjoyed, and the servants of God sincerely join the leader who represents the associated body: but it deserves consideration

whether some plan might not be adopted to secure, by the Divine blessing, a more general manifestation of genuine, united worship. The holy breathings of Jewish saints in their ecstatic addresses to Jehovah, and the impassioned doxologies of the heavenly ones, as recorded in the Apocalypse, may surely be imitated as well as admired. Our worship, private and public, is undoubtedly susceptible of improvement, both in reverence and in fervor. A scriptural revival in this respect is greatly to be desired.

Holiness includes right views and feelings respecting the Lord Jesus. I say, "right views," because Christian experience and Christian practice must be founded on Christian knowledge. The same order is not indeed always observed in the Divine operation at the first. Impression often precedes enlightenment, and sometimes modifies and regulates thought. The piety which begins in emotion is completed in faith, and light is produced by heat. True holiness is the holiness of the truth (Ephes. iv. 24), and the truth is emphatically the truth of Christ. If we trace the course of New Testament godliness, we shall find that it begins with "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." That "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" shows itself in diversified ways, yet always issuing in this result, that Christ and the soul are brought into perpetual contact and union.

What does Paul say? "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."—"For me to live is Christ."—"Whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord."—"We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."—"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity" (Gal. ii. 20; Phil. i. 21; Rom. xiv. 8; 2 Cor. iii. 18; Ephes. vi. 24).

What does Peter say? "To whom coming"—still "coming," after years of holy experience (1 Pet. ii. 4.)

What does John say? "Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John i. 3.)

Personal Christianity is expressed in these words—"Christ is all, and in all" (Col. iii. 11):—"Christ in the heart the object of devout love; Christ in the life, pleasing Him being every day's desire and delight."

Further:—the love of the brethren is a constituent element of Christian holiness. It is so natural and uniform an effect of faith, and has been in every age so marked a characteristic of piety that it may seem needless to dwell upon it here. And yet, so imperfect and wayward are we, that we need to be continually reminded—checked—it may be, rebuked, even in connection with the plainest duties. We are furnished in this matter with a practical test, the application of which cannot but be fitting. A certain line of conduct is proposed to us; we have not yet determined whether or not to adopt it. Is it consistent with brotherly love? Let the decision be shaped in accordance with the answer. Coldness, indifference, reserve, form no part of Christianity. Things are not right with us unless we "love one another with a pure heart fervently." (1 Pet. i. 22.) How watchful should we be, lest we content ourselves with a low standard! Members of the same family ought not to be satisfied with being just on speaking terms with one another. There should be the free utterances of full hearts. "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love" (Rom. xii. 10).

In regard to this whole subject, there must be constant reference to the word which is the basis of all Christian life and prayer. And very much depends on the manner and spirit in which we search scripture. It is not enough that we ascertain what the Bible teaches. Any industrious student, possessing ordinary capacity, can

do that. But the manner of searching is the main thing, and, connected with it, the object we have in view. He who reads the Bible as a critic or judge will learn nothing to purpose. In this case, we are not to judge the author; the author judges us. If the book be, as we profess to believe, God's book, we read it in order to discover God's thoughts, and humbly receive them—God's will, and bow to it submissively. God's thoughts must be true; God's will must be right. We have great need to beware of substituting our thoughts for God's, and our wills for his, and of wishing to understand the book in our own way. There is an unconscious obstinacy in this respect, to which even Christians are liable.

And here it may not be amiss to advert to one feature of holiness which in many instances is less clearly marked than it ought to be. I mean, confidence in the Lord. Christ's work is complete, Christ's promises are sure. Faith is hearty reception, unquestioning trust. Faith rests on Christ, and the soul is at peace. There is no hesitation, no doubt. Has not Jesus said? and will he not perform? Let us believe—and love—and rejoice—and expect—and thus journey on, singing, to heaven. Do not ask, May I be happy? Be happy, in the exercise of faith and love, and you shall have "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Instead of looking within, and growing melancholy, look up, and so, even here, "enter into the joy of your Lord."

Christians, train the young disciples so to trust in the Lord Jesus that they may not imagine it possible for him to fail, and in that spirit of joy and confidence to go forth to labour for the good of souls. Their own experience will then give a colouring to their work.

SENEX.

April 4, 1874.

JONAH'S VOYAGE.

Rev. J. S. Swan has frequently made very telling use of poor Jonah, the errant prophet. In Br. Swan's "Life and Labors," just published under the editorship of Rev. F. Denison, Dr. Neale, of Boston, communicates the following, as he had it from the late Dr. Ide of Springfield, who was present on the occasion. Said Dr. Ide: "Elder Swan was holding forth in his grandest strain, on the duty of obeying God. Said the Elder: 'We must follow close in the line of the Spirit, and never seek our own ease, when the Lord has work for us to do. There was Jonah, a Baptist preacher; God told him to go to Nineveh and hold a protracted meeting; but, like some other ministers, Jonah doubted whether there could be a revival of religion in the summer time; and so my gentleman goes off on a voyage to Europe. But he did not get off as easily as he expected. A terrible storm arose, and threatened to send the recreant prophet and all on board to the bottom of the deep. The sailors, heathen as they were, held a prayer meeting. Jonah ought to have improved the opportunity, and talked to them about the God of Heaven. But no; he was taking his ease, fast asleep, down in the sides of the ship. And then what a rebuke they gave him: 'Arise, and call upon thy God, that we perish not.' At the suggestion of the shipmaster, the men cast lots, in order to find out whose deity was offended; and the lot fell upon Jonah. The poor fellow then came to himself, and made a full confession, and felt that it was right that he should be thrown overboard. The seamen were unwilling to do it; but as the storm continued, they threw him into the sea. The Lord, however, had an eye on him. He had some work for him to do yet. He prepared a great fish—whale, or shark, or something of the kind—which, following in the track of the ship, seized Jonah and swallowed him down alive. But I tell you, the shark got mistaken that time; he had got a load on his stomach such as he never had before. A backslider is nauseous anywhere, sickening to both

man and beast. The great fish splashed, foamed and pitched up and down, here and there, and everywhere, to get rid of his burden. At length, growing more and more sick, as well he might, he made for the shore, and vomited the nauseous dose out of his mouth. Jonah, finding himself once more on the dry land, was ready to streak it for Nineveh, and he held a protracted meeting there, and had a great revival, and in the summer time too."

The above, Mr. Ide said, was delivered with such imperturbable gravity, that the people listened to it with perfect seriousness. "Indeed," he said, "I did not think of laughing myself, till I got out of doors; but I have since scarcely been able, day or night, to get that image out of my mind—Jonah streaking it for Nineveh."

A lady took her son, a lad of five years, to church. After the minister had been preaching about half an hour the little fellow grew sleepy and commenced to nod. The mother aroused him into attention several times by pinching, but, as it seemed a hopeless case, she concluded to let him sleep undisturbed. After the boy had his nap out he awoke, and saw the minister still holding forth. He looked up in his mother's face and innocently asked, "Mother, is it this Sunday night, or is it next Sunday night?"

ANGELS.—"And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles." Men generally associate angels with birds and flowers. They are executors of God's judgment, as well as ministering spirits. One angel slew a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in one night. Another directed a pestilence in David's time. But more, an angel slew all the first-born of Egypt. God's angels are not after the pattern of our effeminate conceptions. There is no weakness in holiness. "Strength and beauty are in his tabernacle."—Rev. Nehemiah Adams.

UMBRELLAS AS A MEANS OF GRACE.—The Rev. Dr. Wilson said at the recent S. S. Convention,

He thought the first duty of the parent, touching the Sabbath School, consisted in getting up on Sunday morning early enough to get the children to school in time. Second, they should provide over-shoes, waterproofs and umbrellas for the children. Sunday rains are a great deal wetter than week-day rains. A very slight shower will scare people on Sunday, when they would not mind a heavy rain on Monday. Every family should have a supply of stout umbrellas, specially dedicated to Sunday service.

Be sure that those only have a right to a season of rest, and those only truly enjoy it, who have done real work, and who mean to again. This work is full of enjoyment, not even for self-culture in the highest things, but for taking our part in it as God's fellow-workers, and as the followers of his Son, who went about doing good.

Almost everywhere we see an alarming tendency in the church to coalesce with the world in its haste to be rich; to seek popularity; to engage in its light and airy amusements; to substitute outward ceremony for heart work; to ignore the injunction of the great apostle of the Gentiles.

JOHN BUNYAN was once asked a question about heaven, which he could not answer, because the matter was not revealed in the Scriptures; and he thereupon advised the inquirer to live a holy life and go and see.

Consider yourself the guardian of the character of those who may be absent, as you would wish others to guard your character in your absence.

Faith's check was never dishonored in God's bank.

The savings bank is the safe debtor.