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That God in all

things may be glorified through Jesus Christ—PETER.

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Religious.

TOO LATE!

Too LATE! What undecipherable anguish is often conveyed to the mind by this brief but touching sentence!—What latent sighs and bursting groans has its bare repetition wrung from desolate or broken hearts! And in what innumerable instances has it poisoned the cup of anticipated enjoyment!—How many thousands are at this hour mourning in hopeless grief over the retrospect of neglected opportunities—opportunities which had they been duly improved, might have secured many personal and domestic comforts, many temporal and spiritual blessings! Now it is too late. The harvest is passed, the summer is ended! O, how gladly would they recall those by-gone seasons, those golden hours! Alas, they are gone forever! How thankfully would they grasp at yesterday's to come, and resuscitate their withered hopes! But conscience points to the handwriting that is against them, and every passing breeze wafts to their startled ears, the chilling sentence, 'It is too late!'

A disposition to procrastinate, even in matters of the greatest moment, is too prevalent among men generally, and by cherishing this unhappy propensity, thousands have involved themselves in misery and wretchedness. Even the most benevolent intentions toward a suffering fellow creature, if not immediately carried into effect, may be forever defeated by the removal of the object who excited our pity to another world, where he will no longer need the tear of human sympathy, nor the benefit of human aid.

An eminent minister in the Methodist connection, who recently exchanged mortality for life, and who, previous to his departure, had filled the presidential chair in the Conference, related to me the following incident, which occurred in his own history, and which will furnish a striking illustration of the sad effects of protracted and unnecessary delays. While relating the circumstance he said, with tears in his eyes, that the remembrance of that event would not be effaced from his mind, till the hand of death should wipe it away.

In the early period of his ministerial life he was one evening impetuously by an aged woman to visit her ungodly son, who was at that time, to all human appearance, at the point of death. He had for many years led an idle and dissolute life, and had necessarily occasioned much heart-felt grief to his widowed mother. Indeed, his present affliction was induced by his profligate and intemperate habits. Of this fact he was himself too deeply sensible. Finding that there was no hope of his recovery, and dreading the approach of the last enemy, he had expressed a wish to see a Christian minister, who might talk to him and pray with him. When the pious woman communicated the particulars, the minister was in his study, employed in writing a work which was shortly afterwards published and which has subsequently passed through several editions; but he promised to call on the sick man during the evening. He continued in his study, however, till a late hour; and so deeply was he absorbed in the subject which occupied his pen, that the request of the poor widow was forgotten. When it recurred to his recollection, he instantly rose from his seat. He looked at his watch. 'Surely,' he thought within himself, 'it cannot be of much importance if I defer my visit till to-morrow morning.'

On the following morning, at an early hour, he bent his steps to the dwelling of the afflicted man. 'How is your son?' said he to the widow, on his entrance into the cottage.

'O, sir,' was the bitter reply, 'you have come too late! My son is dead—you can do him no good now. I told him you were coming to talk to him about his soul, and to direct him to Jesus, the Friend of sinners. At this intelligence his eyes glistened with delight. But when midnight came, he said in a faint voice, 'Mother, I fear Mr. — will not come, and I must die without seeing him. Perchance he thinks me unworthy of a visit, and he is right; for I am one of the vilest of sinners. Mother, you pray for me.—No one else cares for me!' He continued to get worse. His end was drawing near; and while I was wrestling with God for my poor child, he heaved a deep, deep sigh, and soon afterwards ceased to breathe.'

The aged woman wrung her hands in hopeless anguish; but the feelings of Mr. —, while listening to this distressing account, may be easily imagined. Every word uttered by the afflicted widow was as 'iron entering into his soul.'

And how often have the benevolent efforts of the most charitable persons been rendered abortive, because those efforts have been made too late! It is true, their sympathies have been awakened while listening to the tale of suffering, and they have resolved to minister effectual relief. Alas, they have delayed to tender that relief until the famishing objects, who had a natural claim upon their compassion, have been mercifully relieved from their sufferings by the friendly hand of death, and removed to a kingdom where they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; and where the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and wipe all tears from their eyes.

I have somewhere read of a wealthy merchant, who on returning home one dark and stormy night, was greeted by a poor, sickly girl, craving alms.—'O give, if it's only a penny. My mother is sick and dying. We have had nothing to eat to-day.'

The merchant looked at the girl.—Her face was pale, very pale, and her garments tattered. He put his hand toward his pocket, intending to give her a shilling. She saw the net, and a mo-

mentary lustre glistened in her previously-lustreless eyes. But the merchant's overcoat buttoned tightly over his pocket.

'It is too much trouble,' he whispered to himself, 'and the wind is very keen. Besides these beggars are often cheats.' Then speaking harshly to the girl, he said, 'I have nothing for you.'

Without uttering a word, the disappointed girl shrank back, and drew her tattered garments closer round her shivering frame. But the merchant, as he passed on, saw a tear glistening on her pale cheek, in the dim light of a street lamp.

The next morning dawned bright and clear, but the snow was deep on the ground, here and there lying in huge drifts. The merchant was on his way to the counting-house. He turned down the same street up which he had come on the preceding evening.—A crowd had gathered round the open cellar door of a ruined tenement.—The merchant enquired what was the matter.

'A woman has been found dead in that cellar,' said one of the spectators; 'she was starved to death, they say and the coroner has just been sent for. Her daughter has just come home, after being out all night. She was begging, I believe, but has obtained no assistance. That is her you hear mourning.'

A pang went through the heart of the merchant, as he remembered the occurrence of the preceding night.—He pushed through the crowd, and descended into the cellar. A girl hung over an emaciated corpse which lay on a heap of straw in one corner of the deep apartment. It was the same girl whom he had refused to relieve.

'My poor child, you must be taken care of,' he said. 'God forgive me for refusing to help you. But here, take this;' and he put a large sum of money into her hand.

The girl looked up, and gazed vacantly; then she put back the proffered money.

'It is too late, now,' she cried, 'my poor mother is dead, and does not need it;' and she burst into hysterical fits.

The merchant, at that moment, would have given half his fortune to have recalled her to life.

But the most effecting case of all, in connection with this subject, is that of a careless sinner, who, by trifling with his convictions, and putting off day after day, the necessary work of repentance, is at length 'driven away in his wickedness,' and finds himself in a world where there is 'no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment.' O, the horror that will seize upon his tortured spirit, when he remembers the golden opportunities he has neglected, and the means of salvation, once graciously vouchsafed to him, now irretrievably lost. 'Too late! too late!' will again and again, and forever fall upon his ear, like the knell of his departed hopes. In the day of his probation conscience would, ever and anon, lift its warning voice, and urge him to flee from the wrath to come; but its warnings and pleadings were alike disregarded, under the specious pretext, 'When I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.' That season has passed away, and conscience now speaks in thunders louder than the crash of falling worlds, and more dreadful than the blast of the archangel's trumpet. While viewing, beyond the confines of the impassable gulf, the company of the blessed, already in 'Abraham's bosom'—and while listening to the minstrelsy of the angels—again will the voice of his sleepless conscience proclaim, 'You might have been there, but you would not; you might have joined that blood-bought throng, in singing the hallelujahs of heaven, but you would not. Now it is too late—the sentence is irrevocably fixed, and the door is shut forever!'

O sinner! It is high time to awake out of sleep. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand. Time is hastening towards its close, and the day of eternity will soon dawn upon the world. Yet a little while, He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry. Prepare to meet him at his coming. 'Work while it is day; for the night cometh when no man can work.' This is your day of probation. Here heaven is to be 'you or lost forever. Whatever grace you have to get, you must get it now. Whatever work you have to do, you must do it now. Whatever preparation you have to make, you must make it now; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest.' Pardon of sin, peace with God, holiness of heart and life—these are blessings which you must secure now or never; for 'now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation.' Another day may be too late!

STUDYING THE BIBLE AND READING NOVELS.

If you once contract the habit of daily studying the Bible, and pursue it because you love it, you have found a source and means of happiness worth more to you than the fortune of Girard or Astor. While it awakens a thirst for knowledge, it also satisfies that thirst, and keeps the mind and feelings in a healthful state. But the habit of reading novels and light fictions disorders the mind. Under such an operation it sickens, and often dies out. At any rate, it is rendered worthless for good. There is a constant call for more and more of the dangerous stimulant. The mind of a novel reader is as restless as a tiger in his cage. The regular Bible-reader is generally calm, well-balanced, comparatively happy; knows the will of God, and is, if anybody, prompt in doing it, and holds on his way, growing stronger and stronger.

Make the Bible, then, your man of counsel; consult it daily; read it prayerfully, obey it cheerfully; attach yourselves to the cause of that Saviour whom it reveals to your faith; and you, with all of like

precious faith, who shall have been brought to the knowledge of the truth by your instrumentality, shall praise him forever.—Christian Mirror.

(From Correspondence of New York Observer.)
DEDICATION OF A PROTESTANT CHURCH AT TURIN, (PIEDMONT.)
MONTAUBAN, (Tarn-and-Garonne,) }
January 4th, 1854. }

This is an event which will cause Christians in all parts of the world to thank God. The Waldenses of Piedmont, so long subject to the most dreadful persecutions, treated like enemies by their own government, and not permitted to own property out of the narrow limits of their valleys, the people, who by their perseverance in the faith, as well as by their afflictions, awakened through many generations, universal sympathy, have now obtained the reward of their unshaken fidelity. The day of religious liberty has at length dawned upon them. The generous heir of the Dukes of Savoy has renounced the intolerant maxims of his predecessors. Intelligent and humane statesmen understand that difference in religious convictions should not deprive any honest citizen of the rights and privileges enjoyed by his fellows. The Piedmontese nation, at least, the most enlightened of its members, applauds the measures of justice adopted toward the Waldenses; and on the 15th of December last, a day ever to be remembered—a Protestant church was publicly dedicated to God at Turin, the capital of the kingdom!

Could the ancient disciples of Peter-Waldo rise from their tombs, could those martyrs to evangelical truth who perished by fire and sword, or were murdered at their firesides by the satellites of the Inquisition, or who died of cold and hunger on the glaciers of their own mountains, could those heroic confessions of the faith have been present at the celebration on the 15th of December, with what joy would they not have blessed the Father of mercies, and welcomed the victory of religious liberty! But they had been destined by Sovereign wisdom to suffer bravely for the cause of the gospel. For them was reserved the crown of thorns and the palm of martyrdom, and their children reap to-day, the fruit of their invincible constancy.

When the Waldenses began to build their church at Turin, the Jesuits and priests did not fail to offer the most violent opposition. They cried out from their pulpits, and in their journals that the sacred interests of religion were betrayed by the king and government of Piedmont—that the triumph of heresy would plunge the country into anarchy and confusion—that God would terribly chastise a people who had forgotten their duties toward the Holy Roman church, &c. These reverend apologists for persecution indignantly shook the dust from their feet against the friends of liberty of worship, the protectors of the Waldenses, and almost announced, in their wrath, that fire from heaven would fall upon men so guilty, as it formerly fell upon Sodom and Gomorrah! But the prince, his ministers and members of the legislative assembly disregarded this opposition of the popish clergy; and, supported by public opinion, they accorded the necessary grants for the erection of the new church. The fate of dedication was peaceable and edifying. The building is situated in one of the most populous quarters of Turin. It is a Gothic structure, but is built with a simplicity suitable to edifices of the reformed worship. It has seats for 1,500 persons, and will therefore accommodate not only the resident Waldenses, but also as many Roman Catholics as will probably at present desire to hear the Gospel. Although there was not room to contain the immense crowd which assembled at the dedication service, such numbers it is not likely will often be disposed to meet there again.

Eighteen Protestant pastors, habited in their gowns, took part in the ceremony. The dedicatory address was delivered by the Rev. Mr. Meille, who selected for his text these words of the Saviour, 'Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.' (Matt. v. 15). He showed that truth cannot and should not be held captive, and that it is the duty of Christ's servants to announce and proclaim the eternal doctrines of revelation, without wearing, in every place and at all times. This discourse deeply interested the attention of the assembly, and the Romanists appeared to receive salutary impressions from it. They were convinced that Protestants far from being negative men or skeptics, as their priests pretend, are very positive believers, who find unchangeable authority in the Bible, and a firm hope of salvation through the redemption of Christ crucified.

Among those present were the ambassadors of England and Prussia. They represented the Protestant powers of Europe, and contributed to give a more imposing character to the celebration. It was but right that the English minister should be present, and occupy an honorable place. Was it not Cromwell, who, by his energetic interference, prevented the ancient Waldenses from being totally massacred? Prussia also has its rights to the gratitude of this people; for during the preceding years, since the peace of 1815, the Prussian legation has always offered a generous support to the Protestants of Piedmont.

The pious and excellent English general Beckwith was also present; the friend, defender, and benefactor of the Waldenses in their days of misfortune; the man who has given liberally to the foundation of schools and other useful establishments in the valleys. The presence of this venerable Christian inspired respect and affection. Many public men and citizens of Turin united with the

Protestants, and the national guard spontaneously offered its services to maintain order.

The morning service was held in Italian. A second discourse was delivered in the afternoon, in French, by the Rev. Mr. Rezel, president of the Waldensian pastoral body. The audience was as before, very large and attentive. In the evening, Mr. de Sanctis, formerly a priest at Rome, now a Protestant minister, led the services in a fraternal meeting. The assistants exchanged edifying communications, and, with much emotion, blessed the Lord for this signal expression of his merciful protection.

So passed the 15th of December at Turin. May it please God that it be the commencement of a great religious revival among the people of Italy. I am, &c., G. DE F.

(From Correspondence of the N. Y. Observer.)
LETTER FROM THE EAST.

The following letter is from one who has spent a great part of his life in the Turkish dominions engaged in missionary labor. It will be found specially interesting at the present time. The character of the writer, together with his opportunities of observation, give great weight to his views.

DAMASCUS, Syria, Dec. 15, 1853.

The question, what will be the fate of Turkey? must continue to engage more and more the attention, and it is perhaps one of the most perplexing political problems of the present age. Her condition is unique. The Turkish race, that four centuries since conquered the Eastern empire and sat down in Constantinople on the borders of civilized Europe, has lost all its original energy and valor, and from the practice of polygamy and other kindred vices, is steadily declining in numbers and influence. The Christians, on the contrary whom the Turks conquered and reduced to a state of vassalage, are rapidly increasing in numbers, and becoming more and more resolute under their yoke, and anxious for a change of masters notwithstanding the mild and patriarchal character of the government of the present Sultan. Since the conquest of Ibrahim Pasha, who gave them more liberty than they had before enjoyed, and also opened the country to the residence of European consuls in all the principal towns, the moral and social condition of the Christians in Asia Minor, Syria, and most parts of Turkey in Asia, has been greatly changed. The consuls have protected their persons and property, and inspired them with self-respect and courage, so that they have not only increased in numbers, but also improved in intelligence and enterprise. It has also been the constant aim of the present Sultan, since he came to the throne, to govern all classes of his subjects with equity, and though his benevolent designs have often been rendered abortive by the ignorance or perverseness of his subordinate agents, the political disabilities of the Christians have in a great measure been removed in every part of his dominions. They now firm the customs and collect the taxes of the empire; they are the secretaries in all the government offices, from the divan of the Sultan to that of the lowest pasha, and they are the clerks in almost all the mercantile houses, from the highest to the lowest. The Turk is too indolent in body and in mind to attend to the details of such business, and he commits it all to the more active and hardy gendarmerie. The security of their property during the last few years, has also induced many of them to engage in mercantile pursuits, and their superior tact for business gives them great advantage over their Muslim rivals, consequently the wealth of the latter, acquired by conquest and oppression, is passing again into the hands of those from whose forefathers it was unjustly taken. In European Turkey the Christians are three times as numerous as the Turks, who regard them as vassals, and in Turkey in Asia they nearly equal them in number: it is not difficult, therefore, to foresee that a change in the political relations of the two great sects of the empire must soon occur. Intelligence and enterprise every where govern the world, and the superiority of the Christians over the Muslims in both these traits of character, is seen everywhere, in all the pursuits of life, and no diplomacy in European cabinets can long retard the natural results of these characteristic peculiarities. They will break forever the iron yoke they have borne so long, and free themselves from Muslim rule. This done, the doom of Islamism will not be distant. Christians and Muslims can never dwell together in equality; their hatred of each other is too deep and prevailing ever to permit it. The proud Muslim looks upon the Christian, whatever may sometimes be his professions to the contrary, as too base to place on equality with his own negro slaves; while the latter treasures up in his memory traditions handed down from generation to generation, of dark deeds of oppression and violence committed by the former, and the wound rankles in his heart and turns all his natural sympathies to gall and wormwood towards the race of the oppressors. When the oppressed becomes the ruler, as he surely will, the other's neck will be trampled in turn, and the Muslim to escape this will leave the country. The indolent and half-brutalized Turkish race as it is forced to recede before the Christian, will probably find an asylum in the almost unknown regions of Central Asia, while the Muslims of Arab origin will return to Southern Arabia, where their forefathers dwelt. The latter already feel and say that such is their destiny. Islamism, with the races that have embraced it, seems destined to a slow and withering annihilation. The intercourse of Europeans with Turkey has been more fatal to Mohammedanism than the presence of hostile fleets and armies would have been. There is a saying amongst the Muslims of this city

which contains more truth than poetry, notwithstanding its extravagant oriental hyperbole,—that 'the ruin of a thousand mosques would be less injurious to Islam than the residence of Ope Frank.' That Mohammedans will ever embrace Christianity in any considerable numbers can scarcely be hoped.

There is, however, one most serious impediment against the advancement of Christian power and influence in Turkey, and one that, while it continues will ever prevent the Christians from forming an independent government—the enmity of the rival sects and races to each other. The hatred of all towards their Muslim tyrants is scarcely deeper and more inveterate than towards one another. The Greek Catholic looks down upon the Greek with contempt bordering on loathing, while the Greek regards the other as an apostate from the faith of their fathers, whom he cannot too deeply despise; and the Armenian hates them both as cordially as they contempt him. They are constantly jealous of each other, and one sect will neglect no opportunity which offers to bring another into disfavor with the government, or otherwise annoy them; and were it not for the controlling power of the Turks, they would consume one another. This description refers to Turkey in Asia only, as in the European provinces most of the Christians are of the Greek Church. But there the hatred of races forms an element of discord as fatal to their union as the hatred between sects here. Bulgarians, Moldavians, Wallachians, Servians, Greeks and others, speaking different languages and belonging to divers original races, retain all their clannish prejudices, and hate each other only a degree less than they do the Turks. The Turkish government has often profited by this rancorous feeling of the Christian sects and races towards one another, and will doubtless prolong their imbecile rule over the country by means of it. The only hope for the union and independence of the Christians is to bring them under the power and humanizing influence of the Gospel. Till they are made free by the truth, and the malignant feelings which now divide them are subdued by love, they will never erect a government of their own. They will throw off the Turkish yoke, but they will only exchange one foreign master for another, without perhaps improving their condition. But there is hope that this result, so important to the secular no less than to the spiritual interest of all the sects, will soon be accomplished. Whilst almost all Europe is closed against the word of life, and the exercise of freedom of conscience leads to bonds and imprisonments; if not death, God in his mysterious providence has moved the heart of the monarch of Islamism to extend theegis of his protection over the infant evangelical communities throughout his empire, and the Scriptures in seven or eight different languages, are circulating freely in all parts of his dominions. They are sought too, and studied with avidity in every province of Turkey, and are beginning to exert their legitimate influence on the hearts of the people. The Armenians, by far the most intellectual of all the native races of Turkey are fast becoming evangelized. Through the arduous labors of the missionaries of the American Board located in Constantinople, Smyrna, Erzeroum, Dier Bekir, Ain Tab, and several other places, this sect has been instructed in the pure and simple doctrines of the Gospel, and they have received them with an ardor kindred to that of the first converts to Christianity, and those who have embraced the truth have carried it with a martyr's zeal to their brethren in every part of the empire, until nearly their whole race has become leavened with evangelical doctrines. This sect is scattered over all parts of the kingdom, and being everywhere engaged in the most active business pursuits, comes into contact with every other class of Christians, and is thus exerting a most salutary influence in diffusing pure Christianity. Large numbers also of the Greek church in various parts of the empire, through the labors of missionaries have embraced the Gospel, and although they have suffered much persecution through the influence of Russian agents, they have in general remained firm in their attachment to the truth, and many of them, with commendable zeal, are labouring to communicate with their brethren the same precious faith. The changes, therefore, which a very few years have effected in the moral condition of the Christians of Turkey, even under very unfavourable circumstances, warrant the hope, should the life of the present sovereign be spared, that the Gospel will soon triumph over all the countless forms of error and superstition which ages of ignorance have engendered, will subdue their sectarian enmity, and prepare the way for the formation of a free and happy Christian nation here, when Islamism shall have accomplished its strange destiny.

THE FIRST NINEPENCE.—The first bit of silver he could call his own, says the Hon. J. T. Buckingham, in his just-published 'Personal Memoirs,' was a ninepence, the proceeds of the sale of a bunch of bristles to a brushmaker. He kept it as a pocket-piece for years, and then parted with it to pay the postage of a letter to his mother. How much is revealed of the human heart in such a trifling anecdote! The affections overcame the vanity or the incipient love of accumulation, which boyish desires or wants could not conquer.

THE GAIN OF VIRTUE.—Every virtue communicates a proportionate degree of felicity, as may be instanced in that of honesty, which gains confidence; the exercise of judgment gains estimation; prudence, respect; courtesy and affability, affection; temperance gains health and fortitude, that peace of mind which adversity cannot disturb.