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WHOLE NO. 539

Converted or Unconverted.

"And Jesus said, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. xviii. 3).

DEAR FRIEND,—The question I wish you solemnly and immediately to ask yourself is this: "Am I converted or unconverted?"

There are only two classes of people in the world, the converted and the unconverted; to which class do you belong?

There is such a thing as conversion; and those who experience that great spiritual change know, generally, the time and manner of their conversion; at least they know well that they are converted, and are new creatures in Christ Jesus.

And if you are one of those who think it is of the "secret things," that belong unto God, and that nobody can tell for certain that he is converted, I would say to you: Were I in your place, I would instantly conclude I must be unconverted and on my way to hell; for how could a sinner get his guilt removed, his soul quickened, his heart renewed, and enjoy the indwelling of the Holy Ghost turning his whole life in a heavenward direction, and yet be in doubt whether he be a child of glory or a child of wrath? Be not deceived! If you are a conversion worth having, you will know pretty accurately about it; and it will bear to be told. The conversion, that is so vague and uncircumstantial that it cannot be told, is generally not worth telling, and it is much to be feared, that it will be considered spurious at the judgment-seat of Christ.

The thousands on the day of Pentecost knew what conversion meant, and how and when they were converted. Paul knew the blessed change, and frequently alluded to the glory of his Saviour whose grace was exceeding abundant towards him. Plus Lydia knew when the Lord opened her heart; and the Philippian jailer, who had such a vivid sense of sin, and believed on Jesus in the same hour, would have no difficulty in telling the particulars of his conversion.

Be advised, my friend, to ask yourself, "Do I know when and how I was converted?" or have I had any conversion at all? Has my religion been more education, or has it been experience?"

In the present revival, thousands of perishing sinners have been savingly converted to God: I will give you a number of cases by which to test your own condition before God, and as one who will soon have to meet the Saviour face to face!

See sinners like yourself passing from death unto life, and ask yourself while you read: "Well, now, if this is conversion, AM I CONVERTED?"

The most ignorant, sinful, and careless may be converted of sin and converted to God by his most blessed Spirit.

HOW A CARELESS MAN WAS AWAKENED.

A poor ignorant man has this tale to tell of his former life: "I have been a very wild, living man a card player, a whisky-drinker, and even worse. On Monday night last I was sitting up awaiting the return of my wife from the prayer-meeting. A strange feeling of sadness came over me. I felt I should pray, a thing which I had seldom attempted. While engaged in prayer, the earth seemed to open its mouth to swallow me up. I saw the flames and smoke of the pit as if rising up around me. I prayed the Lord to have mercy upon my poor soul."

He goes on to say: "I did not find peace at the time, having no clear idea of the plan of salvation, even in theory. However, as soon as I recovered my bodily strength, I ran out and asked my neighbors, calling upon them to flee from 'the wrath to come.' I hope I am now saved, and with well-grounded confidence, that I have taken Jesus to be my Saviour, and in him do I trust."

Formerly a proverb in the neighborhood for profane swearing, he is now taking an active part in the prayer-meeting. Ask yourself the question: "If this be conversion, am I CONVERTED OR UNCONVERTED?"

HOW A ROMANIST WAS AWAKENED.

A girl, when weeding in the field, in July last, was visited by the Spirit, and the burden of her guilt lay so heavy on her awakened conscience, that, feeling as if she were to be crushed to the earth by it, she cried out in anguish. Her mother, who heard her cries, came and had her conveyed into the farm-house.

She was a Roman Catholic, and her faith in the priest being strong, she resolved to go and tell him what had happened; but, as soon as she had formed this resolution, she was "stricken" to the earth a second time. "And then," she said, "all my sins rose up like a mountain before me, and, to my great astonishment, the sins I had confessed to the priest rose up with all the others."

As soon as her strength returned, she resolved again to go to the priest and again, on the back of it, she was "overtaken," and this time she fancied she was on her way to the chapel, and the road widened before her until it was like a field, and she heard a voice saying, "Broad is the road that leadeth to destruction."

At length a mighty flood seemed to cut the road in two. She said: "I looked to see what there any bridge or ford by which I might cross; but there was none. The waves rolled mountains high. A tall angel sat against them beckoning me to look in a certain direction. I looked and lo! a narrow way, all uphill, lined with angels on either side; and the same voice that cried, 'Broad is the road that leadeth to destruction,' now cried out, 'That is the way walk ye in!'"

She never went to the priest; but she did far better, for what she saw in vision, she realized by faith. She came to "the great apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus," for pardon of all her sin, and she is now resting her soul's salvation on his merits alone.

My friend, are you upon the "broad way" or upon the "narrow way?" Ask yourself seriously, and now have I entered upon the narrow way of salvation by the "strait gate" of conversion? Am I CONVERTED OR UNCONVERTED?

THE PRAYER OF AN AWAKENED YOUNG MAN.

A young man, who prayed in great agony, uttered this among his earnest cries at the throne of grace: "O Jesus, only Saviour of sinners, drop one drop of thy precious blood upon my guilty stains, and wash them all away." Have you, dear friend, ever come to Jesus with a soul crushed with sin, pleading for one drop of his precious blood to wash away your guilty stains? If you truly felt the burden of your guilt you would soon cry for the blood of Jesus. Am I CONVERTED OR UNCONVERTED?

THE PRAYER OF A SIN-BURDENED WOMAN.

The wife of a Romanist, who was awakened by the Holy Spirit to see and feel her sins, cried out one day: "O this heavy burden of sin; it is too great for me to bear. Lord Jesus, remove it; remove it speedily, or I perish. O this mountain load of guilt! Guilty, guilty sinner that I am!"

This is to feel the burden of sin. You will see at once that you must have it removed by Christ or perish when you thus feel the mountain load of your guilt. Do you feel it? Then your prayer will be, "Lord, save me, I perish." Am I CONVERTED OR UNCONVERTED?

THE SUPPOSED CHRISTIAN AWAKENED.

A young man was asked by a minister: "How did you feel when lying in a 'stricken' state?"

"Of the external world I knew nothing. Internally I felt a dreadful load of sin."

"Had you never suspected it before?"

"Never. I had always thought that I was a Christian, and others thought me to be a Christian."

"How was your mind occupied during the long period in which you were stricken?"

"I had a dreadful conflict. The idea of being a Christian was like a voice within contending that I was such; but the dark load of sin on my soul like another self, declared that I was not. I felt utterly lost, and, laying aside the notion that I was a Christian, as a sinner I cried to God to have mercy upon me."

"How did your relief come?"

"On the third day, I heard the archdeacon pray: 'Lord, lay not this sin to his own charge, but lay it to the charge of him whose blood cleanseth from all sin.'"

"That substitutionary truth concerning sin and its removal by Christ at once embraced, and the dreadful sense of its curse was gone; and then, though my bodily strength was completely prostrate, I felt a peace of mind which passeth all understanding—a joy unspeakable and full of glory."

One thing in this case struck me most forcibly, and, I may add, solemnly. I said: "As a supposed Christian, you were in the habit of the daily perusal of the Bible?"

"Yes, daily; but I read it because I wished to know it, and only because it was consistent for me to do so, and, also, that I might understand its truths in relation to surrounding controversies; but (he added) I now know that I never read it; that I never, until now, had any sense or intelligence in my mind or affections of its true value and blessedness."

Dear friend, you see it is quite possible to suppose one a Christian, and read the Bible like a Christian, and yet be no Christian. Do you know a time when you took Jesus as your Substitute? And do you read the Bible, not because you deem it a duty, but because you love it, and can say with truth: "O how love I thy law; it is my meditation all the day?" Am I CONVERTED OR UNCONVERTED?

THE CRIPPLE'S AWAKENING.

Take one case of one who found out his sin, and sought and found his Saviour—became a converted, and loved God and his blessed Word. A poor young lad, a cripple, while passing out at his door one day on his crutches, was taken with a dreadful pain, cried out and fell down. "Presently, (he said) a thought came into my mind. What good had I ever done in my whole life? Why, none at all. Then I shall not go to heaven; and if I don't go there, I must go to the other place." For you see, sir, I didn't know any other way to heaven than by my own works."

"Well," asked the minister, who was conversing with him, "is there any other way than doing all the good we can in order to gain God's favour?"

"The apple's feet lighted up while he answered: 'By the deeds the law shall not flesh living be justified; for by the law is the knowledge of sin.' "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour."

But, he went on to say, "in this distress I prayed; and they were the strongest prayers I suppose, you ever heard in your life. But God heard them. Somehow they seemed to please him; praying is just telling God what we feel we want of him."

"I then took to reading a Testament and what I found in the house. At first I could find nothing but what condemned me. I was full of sin, about 'serpents and generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?'"

"Then I took to reading it over again; and when I came to the blessed first chapter of the first Epistle of John, and read these precious words: 'The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.' I felt that precious blood heal me, and I seemed as if I were in a new world. I could not repent, I could believe, I could love God; and if I had a thousand lives I could have laid them all down for Christ."

Dear friend, has the Bible brought near to your soul "the precious blood of Christ," and so healed you that you can say: "I can repent, believe, love God, and if I had a thousand lives I could lay them all down for Christ?" Am I CONVERTED OR UNCONVERTED?

THE WOUNDED AND HEALER OF THE AWAKENED.

The Bible is sharper than any two edged sword to convince us of our sin; but it is also infinitely precious as it reveals the divine remedy. It wounds and heals. Its precepts wound us; and its promises heal us. It reveals a Father in his unutterable love, sending his only begotten Son to be the Saviour of sinners; it reveals to us a Redeemer shedding his precious blood that our guilt might be pardoned; and it reveals to us the Holy Ghost, who, by his mighty working, opens our blind eyes to see the glory of Jesus, and imparts life to our dead souls, that by a living faith we may embrace a living Saviour, and have him as our righteousness that we may be accepted as righteous by the holy and the sinning God.

My dear friend, have the Scriptures made you "wise unto salvation?" Consider your ways; and examine yourself by the light of divine revelation whether you be saved or lost, dead or alive, converted or unconverted! And one who knows not what a day may bring forth, I earnestly entreat you NOW to ask yourself the solemn question, Am I CONVERTED OR UNCONVERTED?

W. R.

A TRUE TEMPERANCE CHARITY.

One of the results of the great revival in this city in 1847, was the conversion of a number of apparently incorrigible and desperate men, among them "Orville" Gardner. At that time the sobriety of his conversion was questioned, but all misgivings on that head are now removed, by the long and severe ordeal he has since passed through unharmed, and the character of his conversion is now beyond dispute. He was a gambler and a fighter, and at the time of his conversion he was engaged in the most desperate and unchristian warfare. He was a gambler and a fighter, and at the time of his conversion he was engaged in the most desperate and unchristian warfare. He was a gambler and a fighter, and at the time of his conversion he was engaged in the most desperate and unchristian warfare.

Mr. Gardner early opened a reading room with at once a restaurant attached, in the new Brewery, with the hope of reforming his companions and furnishing an attractive and comfortable place of resort, with occasional religious exercises, for young men. He was at first aided with a small amount of funds by a few Christian gentlemen, but latterly he has been left to struggle in his most precarious warfare of reforming the temperate, until he has exhausted all his own resources, and now he is quite discouraged.

Unless some efficient help is given him, some substantial assistance in approval of his labors, he will be compelled to abandon the work.

The temperance reform, as Mr. Gardner says, is too theoretical; it wants more practical application of its energies to the subjects of it. When he lectures, the temperate and refined go to listen to his thrilling exhortations or weep over his touching narratives. But the intemperates are not so easily won, the degraded husband, who robbing his wife and the friend of the needed food and clothing, to feed his appetite and render him brutal in his household, he is not here. Nor the young man, who is waging his moral struggle and squandering his small means, he is not there; but a class of persons who seek the intense and thrilling enjoyment of the eloquence and wit of this renowned orator. It is a sad state of affairs, and the temperance journals and addresses, and those various festivals got up by the friends of this noble cause; they touch the surface; they do not go to the root and vitals of this horrible evil cancer.

Mr. Orville Gardner preciously takes hold of this enormous evil. While doing much to prevent the spread of this fearful domestic vice, he goes into the streets and alleys of this city, and drags its victims up from their pollution, and personal effort and a changing kind and Christian sympathy, labors through evil reports and good reports for their reform. He takes these degraded drunkards to his rooms, administers the pledge, and then he looks after them with the watchfulness of a Christian brother, and earnestness of an honest and sincere friend. He has done this in innumerable cases, restoring many an individual to society, and saving others from irretrievable disaster and death. One educated young man, of wealthy parents and of the highest social position in the interior of the State who was wholly lost to his friends and family in the vices of New York, Mr. G. recently reached in this way. Like the prodigal son, he is now about to be restored to a beloved young wife, and her parents and friends who had supposed him irretrievably lost. It cannot be that the Christian philanthropists of this city will any longer permit Mr. Gardner's labor, expense, and responsibility of this enterprise alone and unaided. A cheering contribution was made for him at a recent lecture of Mr. Gough, but that is only temporary relief. He must have some substantial aid, more co-operation and sympathy, or he will abandon his work, and because will receive almost irreparable damage. (N. Y. Observer.)

From the New York Observer.

DRAWING NEAR TO GOD.

The inspired Psalmist said that it was good for man to draw near to God. He spoke from experience. Some of my readers have had a

similar experience. It is a comfort to believe that this article will be read by some who know that it is good to draw near to God. What are some of the effects of so doing—effects which led the Psalmist to pronounce it good?

By drawing near to God, we are made to feel that he is love. It is not difficult to form some conceptions of the power, wisdom and justice of God. We can do all this while we remain at a distance from him. But to know the meaning of the expression, God is love, we must draw near to him. When we are near to him, we are in an atmosphere of love. We feel that God is love. All dread and distrust are banished. We see the propriety of the expression, God is love. We have some knowledge of its meaning. It is the most precious knowledge of its meaning. It is the most precious knowledge that we can possess.

By drawing near to God, the love of sin is destroyed. No man feels any desire to sin when the love of God is shed abroad in his soul as it must needs be, when he really draws near to God. The love of sin at all remaining in the converted soul, is the great obstacle to progress and the great business of Satan to multiply occasions for exciting that love, and causing it to lead to action. In representing it and subduing it, consists the warfare that is carried on by every regenerate soul. While we are near to God, sin has no power. The soul is absorbed in an object so lovely that it can see no beauty in sin. So long as the soul is near to God, so long is the love of sin held in abeyance.

By drawing near to God, we forget the world, its distracting cares, and its tendency to war our peace, and to lead us away from duty. We are able to have daily intercourse with the world, and it is impossible for us not to be influenced by the pleasures and circumstances by which we are surrounded. So far as these influences are unfavorable to holiness, we need at times to withdraw from them, and to fortify ourselves against them. This can be affectually done, only by drawing near to God. Then the world will be as a false light, and its influence will be as a false light.

By drawing near to God we get clearer views of the beauty of holiness. This is the great end of it, the great end of our being—to be holy as God is holy. When we are near to God, we are near to the great exemplar of holiness. We see his beauty and desirableness as we can see it in nature. Being thus in the immediate presence of perfect and infinite holiness, we are in a measure, transformed into the same image. The more we draw near to God, the more holy we shall become. Truly it is good for us to draw near to God.

L. L.

THEY COMFORTS.

I JOURNEY through a desert dreary and wild; Yet my heart is by such sweet thoughts beguiled.

Of him on whom I can—my strength, my stay,— I can forget the sorrows of the way.

Thoughts of his love!—the root of every care, Which finds in this poor heart a dwelling-place; The sunshine of my soul, than day more bright, And my calm pillow of repose by night.

Thoughts of his joy!—in this vale of tears!— The tale of love unclouded in those years.

Of sinless suffering, and of patient grace, I live again, and yet again, to trace.

Thoughts of his glory!—on the cross I gaze, And there behold his love, still healing rays; Beon his love, which, shed up on high, Flumes with heavenly light the tear-dimmed eye.

Thought of his coming! for that joyful day In patient hope I watch, and wait and pray: The dawn draws nigh, the midnight shadows flee,— And wait a sunrise all that advent see!

And wait a sunrise all that advent see! My thoughts and meditations are so sweet,— I can forget the sorrows of the way.

A DASH OF SALT WATER IN THE MEETING.

A sea captain arose and said, this was the first time he had ever been in the meeting. It was two years since he had met him in his meeting, and had compassion on him as one of the chief of sinners. Since he had been a boy he had been at sea, and without friends, had worked his way till he got to be the master of a vessel, and now, for some time, he had commanded vessels out of this port. It is a wonder to him that God should have mercy on such a sinner as he—swearing, drinking, and all sorts of wickedness—this was his constant course of iniquity and folly.

But it pleased God to open his eyes and show him his unclean condition. He was a monument of amazing grace. He was brought to the foot of the cross a humble suppliant. It was a mercy—he was sure it was, when such a sinner as he could be saved. It was being brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light. A new song was put into his mouth, even praise to God.

He said he was a witness for the power of the gospel. Much was done for the sailor. A glorious work was going on among the men of the sea. In his early life he knew of no piety men among them. Now he meets them on every side.

Another sea captain arose. "When I was in Liverpool," said he, "a little over a month ago, I found one prayer meeting, which was held every day, and about a dozen attended it. These dozen people were praying that salvation might come to Liverpool. The next day I landed in New York, and here I found letters from Liverpool, saying that now prayer meetings are established all over Liverpool. I want specially to mention that prayer for the North Babel in Liverpool. I promised them that there I would say your prayers in their behalf."

"Oh! these men of the sea," he exclaimed with a yearning heart, "how my whole soul goes out for them. I belong to this class of men. A sea captain, I was once, and now I am a Christian. I have gone out to God for the conversion of these sons of the ocean. I see the day approaching when the abundance of the sea shall be converted to God. I see the dawning of that day. I see many men, like myself, were hard men of the sea, now they are humble followers of Him who plants his footsteps on the sea and rides upon the storm."

Another captain arose. "I am for the first time in the meeting. I prided myself on my being a strict disciplinarian—I was the hard captain—the knock-down captain. In my day, there

was nobody to pray for the sailor. Now a great change has come about. I left the sea some years ago, and retired to the country, and I now live in a little town in this State. But I take the New-York Observer, and from that I learn what is going on among seamen. Eight years ago I—a cruel, hard man on the sea. Now how great the change. Think how many ships now have the prayer meetings—ships of war—merchant ships. The voice of prayer goes up from the sea."

One arose and said that for two years, in a Mariners' church in this city, they have had three meetings a day—every day—one of them a prayer meeting, and another an enquiry meeting. Out of 300 added last Sabbath. This is the Baptist Mariners' church in Cherry-street, and a constant blessing hangs over it. A daily prayer meeting is the means of spiritual life to it, and the daily inquiry meeting brings out the cases of the awakened. Every converted seaman receives a sort of commission to labor for the conversion of others. He goes forth, pledged to labor, wherever he is, to win his fellow seamen to Christ. Hence when the men go aboard, they are apt to hear from them in connexion with prayer meetings on ship-board and prayer meetings on shore. The whole ocean is the pious sailor's field.

CHRIST.

The great want of the human spirit is a living Saviour able to save the soul. When man is convicted of sin, and finds himself utterly powerless as to freedom from sin, and begins to feel that possibly he is doomed—what does he want?—what tidings will cheer him? One great fact alone can alter his necessities—it is Christ, who by his grace and power cannot reach. This assurance will help him, and nothing else will. Preach Christ! Having an experience of the want of your own heart in the day of your anxiety, hold up Christ as he met your wants then. Tell the sinner what he needs to know of the Saviour, and his mind with things which he cares nothing for, because he is in no mood for their investigation. Tell him how Christ came down from above, commissioned as the world's saviour—how he was tempted, how he wept and agonized with man—how he prayed—how he was crucified—how he forgave the penitent thief, and assured him of a home in Paradise—how he died triumphant over death, and rose from the grave—how he ascended on high, dispensed the Holy Spirit, and is interceding for us above. These facts at once reveal the past and present interest of Christ in the world's welfare. They assure man that he has a Saviour who lives, as well as one who died on the accursed tree. The Apostle determined to know nothing among the Corinthians save Christ, and him crucified.

He will be a man who the more Christ was preached, the more men's attention was drawn to him as a Saviour, the less time and disposition would there be for doubtful disputations. Perhaps the experience of Christian preachers has often harmonized with that of the Apostle; they have observed what it was which proved interesting and effectual when preached, they have noticed the hungering and thirsting of the most spiritual and devout after Christ. They have observed the starting tear, the brilliant eye, and the interested look when Christ is preached, which tell very plainly what theme reached the heart and stirred the fountain within. Christ is the soul and centre of the Gospel. The good news relates to his living, dying, and triumphing for us. He who preaches the gospel will preach Christ. Metaphysics, polemics, are as nothing when compared with Christ. They may be useful in the school or the study, for mental discipline, but they are no "bread of life" to a starving world. Preach him who is the "Bread of Life."

HAVE NO SECRETS.

Unrestrained communication is the lawful commerce of confiding affection, and all concealment is a contradiction. It is a false compliment to the objects of our affection, if, for the sake of sparing them a transient uneasiness, we rob them of the comfort of which they are entitled to partake by withholding from them the truth. All dissimulation is disloyal to love; besides it argues a lamentable ignorance of human life, to set out with an expectation of health without inter-union and happiness without ally. When persons marry with the fairest prospects, they should never forget, and that in bearing another's burden, they fulfil one of the highest duties of the union.

PREACHING SIX MONTHS ON ONE TEXT.—The Rev. Samuel Kennedy, who was settled in Back-bridge, N. J., before the commencement of the Revolutionary War, was a minister of an instructive text.—Rev. iii. 20: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will eat with him, and he will eat with me." He preached six of these sermons on the word I, exhibiting the character of Christ, in his mediatorial offices of Prophet, Priest, and King.

FAMILY PRAYER.

The excuse is too often made, that family prayer cannot be maintained, on account of the inability of the head of the household, to lead the devotions of those who dwell beneath his roof. The truth is, that no excuse at all, for the service however poorly or inadequately performed is better than its neglect. The effect upon a family can be estimated by those who have read it, and know the good it accomplishes. While it is of divine obligation, like all other matters which are taught us in God's word, its results can be seen, and so sensible that we feel assured heavenly wisdom could alone have devised it. Indeed, religion is intended to accompany us in all our social relations.

PARTIES.

Amusement is indispensable to human well-being. There must be social gatherings. These cannot be always religious meetings. Parties should be more frequent than they are, and very much less expensive than they are. The company should assemble early in the evening, and disperse early, allowing time for family duties and a full night's rest. Parties should, ordi-

narily, embrace the aged and the young in the same assembly. They should be always such that Christians could be there, the most devout, with a good conscience. They should not be very large, and the amusement should be of some improvement in something valuable with the hilarity which contributes to health and cheerfulness. (Pres. Banner.)

DYING TRUTH.

It is on the elementary truths of God's Word we must die, if our latter end is to be peace. We may try to live on what we please, but we cannot die comfortably on anything save the foundation of truth which set forth Christ and the freeness of salvation. Bishop Butler was a great thinker, and wrote the "Analogy," which has perpetuated the memory of his greatness as a philosophical divine; but all his learning, philosophy, or theological attainments gave him no peace on his deathbed. It is said that, notwithstanding all he had written, he was then less-spirited, and much tempted to doubt God's mercy. He commended his fears to his chaplain, who at once said, "My lord, you have forgotten that Jesus Christ is a Saviour." "That was the answer," but how shall I know that He is a Saviour for me?" "My lord," replied the chaplain, "it is written, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' " "Ah," said the Bishop, "I have read that passage a thousand times, but never saw its beauty as I do now. That will do; I need no more," and he soon after departed in great peace.

NOTHING FINISHED.

I once had the curiosity to look into a little girl's work-box. And what do you suppose I found? Well, in the first place, I found a "head purse," about half done; there was, however, no prospect of its ever being finished for the needles were out, and the silk upon the spools all tangled and drawn into a complete wisp. Laying this aside, I took up a nice piece of perforated paper, upon which was wrought one lid of a Bible, and beneath it the words, "I love," but what the loved was left for me to conjecture. Beneath the Bible lid, I found a sock, evidently some one for some baby-foot; but it had come to a stand just about the little heel, and there it seemed doomed to remain. Near to the sock was a needle-book, one cover of which was neatly made, and upon the other, partly finished, was marked, "To my dear," I need not, however, tell you all that I found there; but this much, I can say, that during my travels through that work-box, I found not a single article complete; and none as they were, how half-finished, forsaken things told me a sad story about that little girl. They told me, with a heart full of gentleness and affection, with a heart full of useful and pretty projects, all of which she had both the means and skill to carry into effect, she was still a useless child—always doing but never accomplishing her work. It was not a want of industry, but a want of perseverance. Remember my dear little friends, that matters but a little that great things we undertake. Our glory is not in what we accomplish. Nobody in the world cares for what we mean to do; but every body will open their eyes by-and-by, to see what men and women and little children have done.

CHOOSING GOD'S SERVICE.

How many wait for God's time for choosing his service, as they say—that is, wait for some other influence, some better opportunity than they now have, for consecrating themselves to Christ. What a false idea that any one must wait for God! Nay, God is ready already, and waiting for them—waiting to see if they, for whom Jesus has died, will love and serve him. Inspiration directs, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve"—making it clear as language could, that men are just as free to choose God's service as the service of self and sin. Joshua says, "We will serve the Lord." This is our choice—and you are just as free to choose religion as we. So all the gospel of Christ teaches, "Come for all things are ready." Waiting for God? Rather God bids you give him "the heart, and waits to see if you will."

We fear that sinners have a very wrong idea in this matter—that some are not aware that God is waiting for them to seek the salvation of their own souls this day and this hour. But so it is. He has made us free to choose his service—the human will does choose; no person is any freer to live in sin than he is free to turn to Christ, if he will, and none will ever choose religion until he wills to do it. See now that you wait for the Holy Spirit. He waits for you, and is at your door this moment waiting for you. And Heaven says, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit." The Saviour says, "How oft would I have gathered you, ye would not. No you do not wait for him, you need not—he waits for you." "The Holy Ghost saith, After so long a time as to-day, hardness, not your hearts." It is all untrue that sinners are to wait for God—God waits for them. Now is the day of salvation.—[Morning Star.]

THE USE OF A SERMON.

"I never"—said an eminent living preacher, to us once in conversation—"I never allowed myself to think of a sermon as an end. It is a mere tool. What's the use of a man grinding and polishing his ax all day long, without once remembering that it is to be cut?" Then spreading the palm of one hand, and tracing lines upon it with the fore-finger of the other, he continued—"When an engraver is at work on a steel plate—though he reaches out his hand after a tool for a fine line, then after a tool for a coarse one—he keeps his eye always on the work. What does he care for the tool? What came to him? He had three hundred sermons, not one of which I could preach over; they were so full of allusions to the sins of my people in I—where I preached them first."

There are probably few pastors who have closed the first decade of their ministry without coming to some like the same conclusion. But, to every new graduate from the theological seminary, for two or three years this "labor time"—this incessant trimming and dressing of the sermon—seems an unavoidable disease as the measles to every child. We met with a young man, a cadaverous young pastor the other day, whom this disease—aggravated by the midnight lamp—was bringing swiftly to his grave.

The evils of all this are legion. It consumes, in mere literary labor, time that might be more profitably spent in pastoral labor from house to house. It absorbs so much of physical and mental strength in shaping the instrument, that