The Religious Intelligencer.

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REV. E. McLEOD,] "THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST." Peter. [Editor and Proprietor.

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THE VICARIOUS SACRIFICE OF CHRIST.

It is mid-day. For six long hours the Son of God has been hanging by his wounds upon the cross, amid the scoffs and yells of his furious enemies. But not one groan, not one reproach has been wrung from his lips. He seems insensible to anguish and to insult alike, and cares for others only. From that cross, as from an altar, the great High Priest inaugurates, by pleading for his murderers, the office of Intercessor, which he now fills for us at the right hand of God. "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." From that cross, as from a throne, the Judge of quick and dead issues forth his decrees of mercy, and opens the kingdom of heaven to a penitent, who but a short time before had taken part with the revilers. "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." From that cross, as from a calm death-bed, the Son and Friend makes provision for the comfort of mother and friend. "Son, behold thy mother! Mother, behold thy Son." All he has said, all he has done, is majestic and serene. It is mid-day, and the sun is riding in highest noon, when, lo! a great changes passes over the whole aspect of the scene. Darkness overspreads heaven and earth; the blasphemers are awed in the silence; but the gloom which comes over his soul is blacker than the blackness which hides him from our sight; a terror more terrible than the rage of man overwhelms him now. This we surely know; though in mercy the agony which works on that visage which was marred more than any man, is kept from our sight, and we see no clots of blood fall to the ground, as in Gethsemane. The fourth utterance on the cross, at the close of the three hours of darkness—the cry of despair recorded in the text—reveals that after man had done his worst, worse remained for Christ to bear. He has now fallen into his Father's hands. In his bitter cup it is not the gall infused by the malignity of the wicked which is the bitterest ingredient. This awful incident will, if I mistake not, have a paramount weight in determining the judgment of a Christian as to the main purpose of the death of Christ upon the cross. On this vital point, where we might beforehand have expected to find cordial agreement among all who profess the faith of Christ crucified, controversy has often raged fiercely, and is likely in our day to rage as fiercely as ever. Well it may, for here is the turning point between faith and heresy. All who respect at all the authority of the Word of God, teach indeed that by his obedience to that death upon the cross, the Lord Jesus exhibited to man the strongest evidence of the Divine love, the noblest of examples, the most constraining motive to holiness and charity. But the Holy Church universal has ever found in the Gospel truths more momentous still, and mightier purposes in the economy of salvation. Well does our own branch of it expound the orthodox creed in words like these "Christ died in order by the shedding of his most precious blood to make a sacrifice and a satisfaction to his Father, and to assuage his wrath and indignation against us." So pleasant to God was this sacrifice and oblation of his Son's death, which he so obediently and innocently suffered, that he would take it for the only and full amends of the sins of the world; and that for the merit thereof, if we be true Christians indeed, we be now fully in God's grace again and clearly discharged from our sins. But by enemies of the cross who from without, and by enemies of the cross who from within, in evil days assail the faith, the doctrine of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, the propitiation made by him for our sins, the retributive character of his sufferings has been with more or less boldness denied. The justice of God required no satisfaction, we are told, and the Gospel is purely a declaration of mercy. Christ did not die for the remission, but for the prevention of sin. He did not come to seek and to save that which was lost, but only to incite men to holiness. The true faith, however, lies on the surface of Scripture, and no sophistry can long satisfy any unprejudiced mind that our faith is not the faith taught by Christ and his apostles. The only consistent course for one who denies the atonement of Christ is to disparage the authority of the sacred writers to constitute himself their critic and their judge. So long, however, as our attention is confined to the sufferings inflicted on the Lord by wicked hands—sufferings which he endured in common with those of his saints who have been called to seal their faith with their blood, to blows, outrages, torments, and death—we may perhaps for a moment be seduced into the idea that Christ was only the best, noblest, greatest of martyrs, and the benefit which we derive from his death is, though greater in degree, yet in kind the same as that which we derive from the death of Paul, of Peter, and other confessors—namely a lesson of love, of endurance, of obedience, for his body's sake, which is the Church. Such a theory will not stand the test of Scripture—no, not for a moment. Paul was not crucified for us. We are not washed in the blood of Stephen. Peter did not offer his soul a sacrifice for sin; but Christ did offer his soul a sacrifice for sin. No man can redeem his brother. No saint is our saviour. No, the sufferings which the Lord endured in his body on the tree are distinctly—nay, more distinctly than those of which his sacred soul was the seat, represented as a propitiation for our sins, as the penalties borne by him in our stead; and perhaps the majority of Christians, while they discover at once in the Bible what is so plainly taught there, that Christ did on the cross make a full, perfect, and sufficient oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, never carry their thoughts beyond his outward sufferings and his bodily anguish, and find their ample assurance of reconciliation with God, the full price of their redemption, and most sure grounds of peace and joy. But has not God's mercy further guarded the cardinal truths of the Gospel by revealing that in his passion the Lord had to undergo, besides those outward sufferings which, if needs be, we are called upon to bear, sufferings in which none can share or ought to share; nay, the very sufferings which his death enables us to escape, the sufferings laid upon him by the hand of God himself? If so, it is plain that to influence the life and feelings of Christians was neither the sole or the main object of the offering made on Calvary. Amends, as our Church speaks, were to be made to the justice of God. Prophetic Scripture had expressly foretold that the Messiah was to be put to grief by the hand of God no less than by the hand of men. "He is despised and rejected of men," wrote Isaiah, "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities;" but Isaiah says also, "who it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief." In accordance with prophetic anticipation is apostolic teaching. "God," writes St. Paul, "God made him to be sin for us who knew no sin;" and when we are taught by the same apostle that Christ was made a curse for us, we feel sure that more is meant than that God converted the evil deeds of men to his own gracious purposes. Man could not make Christ a martyr; it was God only who could make him a curse and a sin. It was God only who could lay on him the iniquities of us all. Surely such language expresses direct intervention on the part of the Most High in the awful mystery of the Passion. Can we otherwise interpret the cry of despair, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and it was that abandonment, not bodily anguish, which overwhelmed the Redeemer's soul. "Thy rebukes have broken my heart" are the words placed in his mouth by the Psalmist. When he took upon him to deliver man, and to bear our sins, he took upon him all the penalties of the soul no less than the penalties of the body; the earthly penalties, but also the penalties due from God; the wrath no less than the shame, the pain and the death. Well does the universal Church in her solemn litanies implore deliverance by the agony and bloody sweat, by the cross and passion; better still the Eastern branch, when she places besides on the lips of her children the more awful invocation, "By the pangs which no man can know, good Lord, have mercy upon us." In all this lies an unfathomable mystery. Human philosophy supplies no explanation of the Divine jurisprudence. When it is in God's Word declared that the cross is a stumbling-block to the Jew, and to the Greek foolishness, it is clear that no appeal is made by the Bible in the matter to human reason; that there is no attempt to represent the Divine counsels as within the grasp of our faculties; and we shall have reason to regard as suspicious any statement of Christian doctrine which was not assailed by similar scoffs, and free from similar difficulties. We must accept this doctrine, then, like other sacred doctrines, on the authority of the Holy Ghost. "God hath spoken; let the whole earth keep silence." All that remains for us is to believe, and by faith to be justified and sanctified. Be it observed, however, that the mystery lies not in the doctrine,—this is plain to the most thoughtless student,—but in the Divine nature, and in the Divine attributes which require so august a victim. No child, no peasant, ever failed to understand that Christ, by his death, did as truly make an atonement to another for the offence of a third, or that the blood of Christ has the same intrinsic virtue and efficacy for the real and actual cleansing of the soul from the guilt and pollution of sin, as water has for the washing away of filth from the body. Indeed, no doctrine can deserve the name of doctrine that is not plain and intelligible. What is incomprehensible, and an object of faith, and not intelligible, is the great efficacy which lies at the base of a doctrine. Thus we understand and believe that God is, and assert the doctrine without hesitation; but the nature of God, or the mode of his being, are utterly unknown to us as colour is to one born blind. We understand and believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God—that is, we believe that he is the Son of God as truly as one man is the son of another; but the real manner of the eternal and Divine generation is utterly beyond the reach of the loftiest created intellect. So it is throughout revelation. Our part, then, is to believe and adore, not to explain, much less to explain away the deep things of God. Our part is gratefully to accept the revelation by human analogies and familiar words of all that is important and possible for us to know. Nor is that the time for revealed knowledge only. We know little more of our soul than we do of God; of our own soul as it is in itself. We know nothing of the world around us but few facts, and we impose upon ourselves when classifying our observations and calling them laws, we imagine that we have penetrated into the mysteries of being. Bear this in mind, and you will be modest in science, humble as to Divine truths. Unscriptural declarations will be as unquestionable to you as facts and axioms to the investigator of nature; and you will not be perplexed by the sophistries which a vain philosophy directs against the mysteries of the faith; nor will you seek to account for the Divine counsels. You will not attempt to show why, in order to give scope for his love, a Father of mercy was constrained to give his only-begotten son; why the sufferings of the innocent head are held to be the sufferings of the guilty members; why the blood of Christ not only atones for sin, but removes guilt from the believing soul. Seeing the broad gulf which separates the incomprehensible mystery from the intelligible doctrine; the secret truth from its analogous representation; the Divine reality from the human conception; that which we now see as in a glass darkly, from that which we shall one day see face to face, you will be content to reverence the secret things which belong to God, and to live by the doctrines revealed for you and your children.—*Bishop of Peterborough.*

EARLY CONVERSIONS.

Why is it not as reasonable that children should be converted, as that grown persons should be? Is the fact of living twenty years in sin and impenitence a natural preparation to conversion? Is continuance in any habit a means for making the habit more yielding? Do not all the facts of human nature show, on the contrary, that the longer repentance is postponed, the more difficult it becomes?

Granted that a child cannot appreciate as fully as a man can, the motives addressed to the reason and conscience. But, on the other hand, the man has become so set in his ways that ten fold the moral power is needed to move him. His feelings have become thoroughly enlisted in worldly interests. His passions have become strong. He is engrossed in business. He has heard the story of redemption so often that it is to him only as a "thrice told tale." Every one, who has ever made the attempt, knows how hard it is to make an impression upon the old. The young, on the contrary, are as wax to receive impressions. And if these impressions are in like manner easily effaced, that is only a reason for increased watchfulness. No doubt greater care is needed in the case of young converts. Parents, teachers, pastors, church sessions, whoever have the spiritual oversight of the flock of Christ, should be doubly assiduous over this part of their charge. A sturdy sapling, after it has been transplanted, may soon be left to buffet alone with the wind and the rain. But the tender and delicate plant, which can hardly as yet hold its head above the soil, must be watched and tended with unceasing care.

The unspoken, but we fear wide spread unbelief and prejudice which prevail on this subject, would no doubt disappear, if the attention of Christians was fixed more on instances of early conversions, in which the subjects survived to manhood. Unfortunately, most of the records of early piety to be found in our Sabbath school libraries, are the memories of precocious and unnatural children who died young. A little inquiry will develop the fact that large numbers of those who are our most active and useful Christians were converted in childhood. Perhaps they did not join the church until near the age of maturity. Their decided religious impressions, however, date back to their earliest years of consciousness, and they can hardly fix the point at which they were converted. But there has been nothing about these persons to make a book of, and so their experience does not enter into the public treasury. If, however, we will examine the biographies of religious men and women, we will find many cheering examples of early piety, and it would be well to bring out into greater prominence this portion of Christian experience.

We all know the case of Matthew Henry. At what precise time he was converted, cannot be ascertained. This event, however, certainly took place while he was still quite a child. In very early childhood, he was noted for the interest which he took in preaching, and he would often, after hearing the word, retire to weep and pray. After hearing his father preach from the parable of the grain of mustard seed, he walked with him after the service, in order to converse on the truth he had heard, and on his return told one of his sisters that "he hoped he had now received that blessed grain of true grace in his soul, and though it was very small at present, yet that it would come to something in time."

The life of a devoted English Christian, Francis Lewis Mackenzie, has lately been published. He was a graduate of Cambridge, and remarkable for the impression which he made as a Christian, while a member of the University. This young man was the subject of decided religious impressions when only three years old. His biographer says, "There does not appear to have been any period in which this child, when old enough to give expression to thought, was unable to realize and to rejoice in the consciousness of his dependence upon God." He seemed, indeed, to have been sanctified almost from his birth. At least, the divine operations of the gracious Spirit were apparently simultaneous with the awakening of consciousness. The apparent piety of early childhood is not unfrequently changed for religious indifference, or for some of the grosser forms of worldliness. But it was not so with him. He kept the even tenor of his way, his track only becoming brighter until the perfect day.

Such instances are more numerous than they are ordinarily supposed to be, and they should, wherever found, be held up to observation.

PILGRIM STANDFAST.

A staunch old pilgrim he was as ever set out for the celestial city. No persecutions, nor any allurements of pleasure could turn him aside from the right way. Such a pilgrim was sturdy John Knox, who, when the lords of Queen Mary's court bade him stop his preaching, giving him but one alternative—silence, or the gallows—would make answer: "My lords, you are mistaken, if you think you can intimidate me by threats to do what conscience and God tells me I never shall do. Be it known to you that it is a matter of no importance to me, when I have finished my work, whether my bones shall bleach in the winds of heaven, or rot in the bosom of the earth."

The same Standfast blood beat strong in the heart of the martyr Hooper, when he went with a firm step to the fatal stake. "I am come hither to end this life," he said, "because I will not gainsay the truth I have formerly taught you." And when a pardon from the queen was set before him, he cried out with a determined voice, "If you love my soul, take it away: take it away." The price of that pardon, he knew well, must be a denial of the faith. So Bishop Latimer, when summoned before the "bloody Mary," said, "I go as willingly to London, to give an account of my faith, as ever I went to any place in my life." As he rode through Smithfield—that spot which had such baptisms of martyr's blood—he said, "Smithfield has groaned for me a long time."

Perhaps it is quite as hard for Standfast to pursue its integrity amidst the temptations and pleasures of the world, as in fires of persecution. Where persecution has slain its thousands, worldliness has slain its tens of thousands.

A poor woman in India who had embraced Christianity was offered back the jewels and money which had been taken from her, on condition that she would return to her old religion; but she replied; "Oh no, I would rather be a poor Christian than a rich heathen."

And still another, Mr. Judson tells us of, who was very fond of her jewelry, yet desired to follow Christ. When he asked her if she was willing to sacrifice them for his sake, she was for a time much disturbed, but at length taking off the gay necklace, which was her special pride, she said with sweet and touching simplicity: "I love Christ more than this."

Can we all, when the world holds out its glittering baits to us, lay them aside with the same steadfast spirit, and say with her, "I love Christ more than these?"

THE CLOD THAT CAME TO LIFE.—A gentleman who was arranging the grounds around his residence, stumbled over a lump of earth which had rolled from a newly unloaded heap of gravel. He kicked it aside, and bade the gardener's son remove it with other rubbish.

The boy carried the clod to a spot beneath the eaves of his father's cottage, where the rain fell upon it. Whether it contained seed, slip, or root, is not known; but ere long a beautiful vine sprang out of it, which shaded and adorned the cottage, and was annually loaded with grapes of the richest kind, which the gentleman was glad to buy at a high price of the gardener's son, who would by no means part with his vine.

The latent principles of a sublime growth are lying in many a clod, now quite valueless and unsightly to those who account themselves the rich and accomplished of the earth. The clod would come to life, and bear fruit high above their heads, if there were only given to it a few droppings from the eaves.

THE REV. THOMAS CHARLES, FOUNDER OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY.

This good minister was walking through the little town of Bala, in Merionethshire, where he lived, one day in the year 1802—sixty-two years ago now. He met a little child, whom he recognized as one of his congregation, and asked her to tell him the text of his sermon on the Sunday before. She made no answer, and when he asked again, her reply was, "The weather was so bad, sir, that I couldn't get to read the Bible!"

"Why, is there not one at your father's?"

"No, sir, my father hasn't got any; he says they're too dear."

"And where is it you generally go to read it?"

She named a village over the hills, seven miles off by a wild road, for that part of Wales was singularly rude and uncultured at that time. Hither she was accustomed to go on some day of every week, to read the chapter whence her minister had taken his text on the preceding Sabbath, for none of her friends anywhere nearer possessed a Bible.

Thank God that no such rareness of Bibles exists in Wales now, nor in any other part of our land. Mr. Charles knew, before this incident occurred, what a famine of the Scriptures existed in his neighbourhood, and had often deplored the fact; but he now began to think if there were any means by which it could be remedied. He heard another thing, which also impressed him very much. Twelve poor men subscribed their shillings to buy a Bible, which was to be possessed by each in turn—each to keep it a month, and then lend it to the next on the list. And an old man, the last in order, because the last subscriber, wept bitterly, saying "Alas! it will be twelve months before it comes to me; and before that time I may be gone into another world!"

Such stories touched the heart of Mr. Charles, and he began to think earnestly how the want could be supplied. It was not even that the Bibles were expensive, and beyond the means of the poor people, though when twelve had to club together to purchase one copy, we may be sure that this was the case also; but the holy Book was often not to be had at any price. No sooner was an edition of the Welsh Bible published than it was sold. "The joy of those who received the Bibles amounted to exultation, while the grief of such as could not obtain a copy fell little short of anguish," says one writer.

Mr. Charles was lying awake in his bed one morning, thinking, when the idea of having a society for the printing and distribution of Bibles, similar in plan to the Religious Tract Society, then three years at work, struck him. He went to a meeting of the committee of that society, and represented most earnestly the need of Bibles there was in Wales. One of the secretaries of the Tract Society, Rev. Joseph Hughes, made the memorable observation—

"Surely a society might be formed for the purpose; and if for Wales, why not also for the British empire and the world?"

From the seedling of that thought, sprang the grandest society of all those which make England glorious, "The British and Foreign Bible Society."

Mr. Charles had been from his childhood a Christian, and earnestly desirous of the welfare of other souls, in consequence. His father's house had no family worship, and by his influence it was established. He began the good work of labouring for Christ in his own family, where always a Christian ought to begin. It has sometimes been remarked of Christians that they kept all their religion for outside their own home, and the company of strangers. There is no higher test of a believer than to follow him to his fireside, and see how he comports himself there. If we are to be epistles of Christ, known and read of all men—surely the readiest readers should be they of our own family circle.

One of Mr. Charles's observations concerning the remarkable providences which encompassed his youth, is worth remembering. "There are no difficulties with God: difficulties only exist in our unbelieving hearts." What a want of faith we all have! Because a matter seems hard to us, we therefore imagine it must be hard to God the Omnipotent; and we ask him our requests in prayer as though we feared he were unable to grant them.

In the year 1767, he made the acquaintance of three of the men of that century, whose fame will be most enduring—Rev. John Newton, of Olney, in whose house he was staying; William Cowper the poet, and Mr. Romaine. Their converse was profitable to him, and the evangelical tendencies of his mind were strengthened. When he was ordained, he writes:—"I felt an earnest desire that God would enable me to devote myself wholly to his service, for the rest of my days on earth." Such a desire could only come from God; and was sure of being fulfilled by him to the uttermost.

Mr. Charles was a very poor clergyman, and never attained to great place or honour in the church to which he belonged. But without being very distinguished, he was very useful. His income was at one time only forty pounds a-year. We are told that among children and young people his preaching was especially blessed. He invited classes of them to his house on Sabbath evenings, and taught them earnestly.

"The fruits of his labours, and the results of his long and toilsome journeys"—for Mr. Charles was chiefly an itinerant minister—"are still visible in Wales, in the superior knowledge of the Scriptures possessed by many whom he had caused to be taught as children. Many thousands at the great day of account will probably acknowledge him as the instrument of their salvation, during the thirty years of his earnest ministry. In many parts of the country the sound of the Gospel had scarcely been heard for centuries, and the people were as ignorant as those in a heathen land. In many parishes, not ten persons could read. Mr. Charles soon perceived that in order to do permanent good, the children must be regularly instructed; this, therefore, he undertook as his special work. A few years before, there had been established, by the liberality of a lady named Mrs. Bevan (who left ten thousand pounds in her will for the purpose) what were called "circulating schools," moveable from one place to another, at the end of nine or twelve months. Something had caused the cessation of these useful schools, and Mr. Charles wanted to re-establish them. He asked his rich friends for money, and spared no personal exertion. As his biographer remarks—"it was said by the Duke of Wellington, that if you want anything done thoroughly, you must do it yourself." Mr. Charles acted on this principle by anticipation; for he taught personally some of the first teachers.

Each of them were paid twelve pounds yearly. Mr. Charles visited the schools by turn, and publicly examined the progress of the children. Nine months were generally found sufficient to teach them to read the Bible in Welsh, their own language.

"After a while, the parents also began to attend the schools, and the teachers did not refuse grown-up scholars. Many an old person was obliged to buy spectacles for the sake of learning to read the Word of God, for neither age nor dimness of sight deterred them. The young often spent part of the night in learning chapters, or searching the Scriptures on points given them to seek out and prove. Boys and girls from eight to sixteen learned whole books of the Bible; parents and children recited together; and one little girl is mentioned, who, at five years old, could repeat a hundred chapters, and went on learning another every week."

This was on account of the scarcity of the Bible through the country. The only way in which a poor man could grasp the sacred Scriptures for his own was to put as much as he could of them in the keeping of his memory. And from the memory those holy words would sometimes pass into the heart, and being mixed with faith, would prove God's means for his salvation.

Sometimes the school examinations were held on a fine Sabbath-day, when the children and their teachers would walk many miles to the appointed valley, and seat themselves in the open air, under God's canopy of sky, and surrounded by the glorious hills. Mr. Charles would preach to the great assembly when the examinations were over. How fine the hymn must have sounded, going up to heaven like the very incense of praise!

The first Bibles sent by the new society to Wales were received with enthusiasm. "When the arrival of the cart was announced which carried the sacred load, the Welsh peasants went out in crowds to meet it, welcomed it as the Israelites did the ark of God, drew it into the town, and eagerly bore off every copy as rapidly as they could be dispersed. The young people spent the whole night reading it, and labourers carried it with them to the fields, that they might enjoy it during the intervals of their work."

Mr. Charles's life was once prolonged in a remarkable way, in answer to prayer. He was lying apparently near death, and some of his Christian friends met to pray for him. One old man, alluding to the fifteen years granted Hezekiah at his prayer, asked the Lord to spare Mr. Charles for like space—"Fifteen years, O God! but add fifteen years, to the life of thy servant! spare him for so long to thy Church and people!" Just at the end of fifteen years from the date of this prayer, he died having in the meanwhile founded the Bible Society and established Sunday-schools through Wales—noble objects for which to be spared awhile from his heavenly home.

"The good Mr. Charles" was his name through all the districts where he was known to preach. The multitudes at his funeral were large beyond precedent. And whenever we get or give a cheap Bible, printed by England's greatest society of good men, we are reaping some of the fruit of his labours.

IMPORTUNATE PRAYER.

"The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James 5: 16.

How often the true child of God has labored and prayed for the salvation of some beloved object, and as year after year has passed away no answer has been vouchsafed. As Mr. Barnes has truly said, "God does not promise to give blessings *at once*. He promised only that he will do it; or will answer prayer. But he often causes his people long to wait. He tries their faith. He leaves them to persevere for months or years, until they feel *entirely* their dependence on him; until they see that they can obtain the blessing in no other way, and until they are *prepared* for it."

Of the truth of these remarks, we have recently received striking evidence, from the following facts:

Mr. W——, a man of eminent piety and large benevolence, was the father of two sons. Both in early infancy had been solemnly consecrated to God, and both were trained with the same watchfulness and care. But, as is often seen in the same household, the one early manifested a spirit of love and obedience, while the other was rebellious and wilful.

One early became a follower of Jesus, a bright ornament to the church, and a blessing to the world, while the other continued to be a source of grief to his parents, and a scoffer of everything sacred and holy.

Long and earnest were the pleadings of the godly father that Daniel might be turned from the error of his ways. Sleep often departed from his eyes, and slumber from his eyelids, while he wrestled in prayer for his wayward son.

But he lived on, often breaking through the restraints of college laws—drawing largely upon his father's means of support, and causing keenest anguish in the pious hearts at home.

At length the father resolved that he would spend one whole night in prayer to God for his erring boy.

With brokenness of heart and contrition of spirit, such as is well pleasing in His sight, he wrestled with Jehovah, until, like Jacob, he prevailed, and a blessing rich and full was poured upon his own soul.

As midnight he became calm as the still hour—his will wholly swallowed up in the will of his heavenly Father—and he said, "Do what thou wilt with my beloved son, *I will praise thee; for Thou doest all things well.* If he will walk in the ways of his own wicked heart, glorify thyself in disposing of him as seemeth to thee good."

With his whole being filled with peace, such as none but the true child of God has known, he sought his bed and found quiet rest.

With the holy confidence and peace still pervading his soul, he was prepared on the following day to meet his son, who unexpectedly arrived home.

It was the return of the repentant prodigal whose language was, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight." "Through the boundless mercy of God, I trust I am forgiven through Christ." At twelve o'clock last night, father, I submitted to him. Can you forgive me for all the trouble I have brought upon you?"

Praying father or mother, be not discouraged, though the answer to your earnest petition be long delayed. Pray more earnestly—more perseveringly—more importunately. Prayer has not yet prepared your own heart to receive the blessing craved, or it would no longer be withheld.

It may be proper to add that the repentant son became a preacher of the everlasting Gospel.—*Congregationalist.*

ASK GREAT THINGS.—To a friend asking aid, Alexander gave a blank order on his treasurer, to be filled with any sum he might choose. The indigent philosopher immediately demanded ten thousand pounds. When the treasurer, who had refused to pay the sum, remonstrated with the king, Alexander replied: "Let the money be instantly paid. I am delighted with this philosopher's way of thinking. He has done me a signal honor; by the largeness of his request he shows the high idea he has conceived both of my superior wealth and my royal munificence." Is not the King of kings honored by large requests? Few seem to be aware how he is dishonored by their not rising to a more comprehensive and vigorous grasp of faith. All need to be placed in a school where they shall go on from one grade to another in learning the proper scope of supplication and the fullness of God's promises.

What a slight it is upon God, who has exhaustless treasures in store for the Church and the world, who throws wide open the door and invites believers to become almoners to the largest amount, for them to look doubtingly on, and take hardly enough each for himself, when thousands might as well be filled! Thus are souls kept starving and Zion languishing. O needless famine! O fraudulent bankruptcy! We would be no longer content with moderate desires and requests. In view of the promises, we would stir up ourselves to a devout enterprise; would strike out upon this broad ocean and spread all sail. There is as much encouragement to seek great things as to seek at all. Has not past experience sometimes surprised us by the largeness of bestowment, and that, too, merely as an earnest of what God is ever ready to grant?—*Thompson's Mercy Seat.*

AN ATTEMPTED PERVERSION.—English society here is greatly excited by a case of attempted perversion, which has happily been frustrated. Mrs. C——, widow of an English clergyman, came to reside in Florence eighteen months ago with her three daughters. A distant relative, in the person of Marchesa B——, a pervert to Rome, made their acquaintance last winter, and showed the young ladies kindness. Entirely ignorant that the Marchasa's name was deservedly in bad odour in Tuscany, the eldest daughter, twenty-two years of age went on a visit to her at Lucca for two months this summer.

Ten days ago, a letter came from the young lady, stating that she was about to enter the Church of Rome, begging her mother's consent and blessing, and promising in a few days to send a description of the ceremony and the dress she wore on the occasion. The mother was stunned by the intelligence, which no previous whisper or suggestion had prepared her for. The British Consul and other friends could render no help beyond counselling the parentto write, recalling her child home, and, failing instant obedience, to go in search of her daughter, who was said to be already hidden in some unknown convent. After several days of dreadful anxiety, the young lady made her appearance, and after an hour or two's earnest conversation over the open Bible, renounced every idea of Romanism, which she had been led to accept under peculiar circumstances. It appears that from the time of her arrival at Lucca she has been surrounded with perverts, priests, nuns, and members of the bigoted aristocracy of the neighbourhood. She was never left alone, and never free from questionings and reasonings on the one subject of Catholicism. The Jesuit influence was skilfully instilled. The victim of their united cajolery seemed so docile to their instructions, and so well grounded in her new faith, that she was sent home to pervert her mother and sisters, that with great *eclat* the whole family might be welcomed at once into the true fold of Christ. And thus she escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowler. The crucifix and other trappings of Rome with which she was already adorned, were soon cast aside; and the family has resisted every entreaty, by word or letter, through the Marchesa's female and priestly friends, to send back the well-nigh deluded member.

AN INDIAN DEATH-BED SCENE.—A little more than one year ago, while I was connected with the hospital at Fort Scott, an Indian, belonging to one of the Indian regiments in the United States service, was brought into the hospital sick. As he could not speak English, I could not converse with him; but the patience with which he endured his suffering, and the gratitude manifested when anything was done for him, seemed to increase my interest in him. Disease continued to progress from day to day, until it became manifest his end was near. Late, one night, he manifested a desire to be propped up in bed. As soon as this was done he began to sing in his native tongue, with a very sweet and plaintive voice. All in the room seemed to be deeply interested and through another Indian in the room, who could speak a little English, it was ascertained that the hymn he was singing was "Alas! and did my Saviour bleed?" Having finished singing the hymn, he crept out of his low bed on to his knees, and, in earnest prayer, committed all his friends to God, and crawled back into his bed and died.

The scene was very affecting, and produced a deep impression on many minds. All seemed to feel that was a happy death; and the end of that man was peace; and that soul was prepared to meet its God. This was a poor Indian. On further inquiry, I learned that he once enjoyed a short acquaintance with one of the missionaries among the Cherokees; and the few rays of gospel light he possessed he had received through him. Probably there was not a white man in that hospital who had not better opportunities to know the gospel, and to be prepared for death than he; and yet only one here and there, among those that died while I was connected with that hospital, gave any evidence that they were prepared to meet their God.—*Letter in Record.*

Some men seem to be made great merely to be marks for envy to shoot at. All they do is criticised, and one-half of what they do is condemned. A little man is not attacked, because the game is considered too small, but every marksman likes to shoot the eagle.

It is a greater work to educate a child, in the true and large sense of the phrase, than to rule a state.