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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 UNFRIENDLY LETTER.

"Spread it before the Lord, Leonard," said Lucy Grey. "Do not say any more about it, nor answer it, nor take any steps about it, till you have spread it before the Lord."

Leonard Grey made no reply to his sister, but continued to pace the room with unequal steps. His countenance betokened anger, and he thought he did well to be angry. It was natural anger, and just anger, and righteous anger, and generous anger; so he would have said. An open letter was in his hand. His first impulse on reading it had been to tear it up and trample it under his feet in token of angry contempt of the writer; so far he had restrained himself; but whether the offending sheet would be thrust between the fire bars or thrown into his desk was yet an open question, when his sister interposed again.

"Be angry, but sin not, dear Leonard. Follow Hezekiah's example!"

"Hezekiah! Hezekiah! what are you talking about Lucy?" said Leonard, turning round upon his sister, rather sharply perhaps; at least he thought so himself afterwards, when he became cooler. It is to be noted that, though Leonard Grey was a Bible student, he was just then so carried away with his angry feelings, that for the moment he did not catch his sister's meaning. He heard her words indeed, but they conveyed little sense to his mind.

It is a great blessing and a great mercy too when an impetuous, hot-headed, generous-hearted man has a better angel by his side, in the shape of a wife or a sister, for instance; who is not afraid, on any needful occasion, to tell an unwelcome truth in a gentle way, or to pour the oil of mild persuasion and judicious counsel on the turbulent waves of passion. Such an one was Lucy Grey to her brother, who at this time, however, felt too provoked and excited to listen at first to his sister's mild remonstrances.

"Is it not an abominable letter, Lucy? tell me that," said he, striking off from Hezekiah at a tangent.

"If I were to say yes, would that do any good?" asked Lucy, with a half smile on her countenance, though in truth she sympathized deeply with the insult and injury her brother had received.

"Good! why, you know it would do good, Lucy. I should feel doubly sure then that the poor letter in his hand as he spoke—"that the man who wrote this is a detestable, sneaking, undermining—"

"Leonard, Leonard, dear brother; 'in the multitude of words there wasteth no sin,'" interposed Lucy.

"Sin, Lucy! It is no sin to call things by their right names."

"But there may be sin, brother, in the temper of mind which induces us to call things by even their right names. Besides, we may be mistaken; and though this letter seems very unkind, illiberal, and unchristian—"

"Seems, Lucy! It is all that, and more. I am sure you cannot deny it, gloss it over as you may," said Leonard, breaking in upon his sister's apology for the writer.

"Well, dear Leonard, say then that it is all that and more; what a fine opportunity here is for showing a better spirit. Do not forget, my dear brother, that you are a Christian; a follower of the blessed One who, when he was reviled, replied not again, when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."

"I am to submit, then, to these imputations, Lucy; and the fellow who wrote this letter"—once more the poor sheet of paper was crushed up in Leonard Grey's hand—"is to go over half the world blasting my character! Do you mean that?"

"Half the world is a long journey, Leonard. But better even that he should do this than that you should do wrong. Two wrongs can never make one right, you know. They never have yet; and never will."

"A word spoken in season, how good it is!" Leonard paused in his erratic course across the carpet of his drawing room, laid the offending epistle on the table, and sat down in silence by his sister's side.

Now, what was in that letter need never be known; our readers may supply this want of information for themselves. Perhaps it contained false accusations affecting the personal character of the receiver. It might have been a retaliatory letter, threatening injury for some imagined wrong. Or it was possibly a legal demand for a large sum of money, in an agreement or in consequence of some petty legal quibble. Or it was, perhaps, a mean and spiteful letter, intended to give offence to Leonard Grey by some rival in business. On the other hand, it was probably an honest though mistaken outpouring of wrath stirred up by a tale-bearer and backbiter, or by some mutual misunderstanding. All these things have happened since the world began, and will happen again and again before it comes to an end; at any rate until the happy time comes, prophetically prefigured by the dwelling together of the wolf and the lamb, the lying down of the leopard with the kid, and the cow and the bear feeding together. Until then it must needs be that offences come; and brother will sometimes sin against brother.

Whatever the subject of the letter, or the manner of the letter, or whoever the writer of the letter might be, it was an ugly, disagreeable epistle, or it would not have touched Leonard Grey so to the quick as it did. And if you, reader, have ever had your choler stirred by an unkind and unjust, a base and ungenerous letter from either friend or foe, as very likely you have, you will know how to sympathize with him.

"Well, Lucy, what am I to do?" said Leonard, presently, when the first outbreak of his wrath was over.

"Spread it before the Lord," said Lucy, again. "Remember David's counsel, 'Cease from anger, and forsake wrath. Fret not thyself in any way to do evil.' Spread the letter before the Lord, as Hezekiah spread the threatening letter of Sennacherib the Assyrian."

Leonard understood his sister now; but his mind was still in a ferment. He was writhing under the insult received. He answered more mildly, however.

"I dare say you are right Lucy; that is to say, looking at it only from one point of view. But the fact is, the letter must be answered; and it resolves itself, after all, into a matter of business—disagreeable enough; but it is business, and it must be answered in a business way."

"And you think that God does not understand business, Leonard; is that what you are thinking?" asked Lucy, quietly.

"Lucy! what a strange question to ask!" exclaimed Leonard, turning quickly round upon his sister.

"Is the question stranger than the thought, Leonard?"

"I do not say that it is, Lucy; but—" Leonard Grey did not get any further, for he knew that his sister was right. Yet, like some other professing Christians, he had never sufficiently recognized the fact that his heavenly Father really concerned himself about his "mean affairs." He, as we know very well where it is written, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths;" and again, "Casting all you care upon him; for he careth for you." But it is likely he had not realized the full meaning of these encouragements. At any rate, his practice was defective in his faith was sound: no wonder, then, that in time of petty trials his patience failed him.

So Leonard passed that day with his mind unhinged, and his temper soured. He could not help thinking a good deal of the insult and injury conveyed in that unhappy letter; and the more he thought of them the deeper they seemed, as was but natural.

He answered the letter too—and he thought he had answered it well—with angry dignity, but in a tone of defiance which clearly proved, or was intended to prove, that he did not fear his adversary.

Nevertheless, he was not satisfied. His sister's words rang in his ears, or at any rate, fastened themselves on his memory. "Spread it before the Lord." So pertinaciously did they adhere there that he could not shake them off; and the more he thought of them, the more wise and reasonable did the advice seem. "Am I a Christian?"—so he argued, later in the day; "and shall I neglect what is obviously a Christian's privilege? Not that it will make any difference—how can it?—no difference, that is, to the steps I shall have to take about this letter, or to reply to it. But it may calm my mind, and—yes, Lucy is right; and I will 'spread it before the Lord.'"

So Leonard Grey went into his "closet," and shut the door, and prayed to his Father, who seeth in secret. How long he prayed, or what words he used is not of so much consequence as that he prayed "with the spirit and with understanding."

Leonard Grey looked at the unfriendly letter again. His opinion of it was not altered; if possible, it seemed blacker and more malignant than ever. "I would not have written such a letter," he thought, "for any amount of advantage I could gain by it; and I pity the man who wrote it." Then he glanced at his reply; and a blush mounted to his cheeks. "This will never do," he said within himself; and he tore it into fragments.

It was almost past-time, and there was not time to compose another reply. "I must write something, however," thought Leonard; and he sat down and wrote.

"Sir,"—(he could not write "dear sir,")—"Sir, I received your letter to-day; and I have spread it before the Lord."

"I am, sir, yours respectfully,"

LEONARD GREY.

We may follow this short note to the writer of the unfriendly letter.

"Spread it before the Lord! What does Grey mean by sending such an answer as this?" he said, as he turned it over and over to make sure that nothing else was written. "He has spread it before the Lord, has he?" he continued, when he could find nothing else. "A prettily good answer to give to my letter. Is the man making a fool of me? I'll let him know that I am not to be treated in this way."

To all appearance, certainly, Leonard Grey had not improved his position with his unfriendly correspondent by his reply.

Nevertheless, when this correspondent sat down to pen a rejoinder, he could not get on. He wrote about half a page, and then he paused. "Grey will be spreading this before the Lord, I suppose," said he; and he took another sheet. He tried to write again, but with no better success. Then he took another sheet, and another; but frame his words as he might, he could not please himself. The truth is, his conscience began to be touched; and this appeal to the highest court of all gave him more uneasiness than he liked to acknowledge even to himself. If the dispute between himself and Leonard Grey had to be referred to a court of honour, or a court of common pleas, or a court of queen's bench, or a court of chancery, he would have fought out the battle, inch by inch, and his natural obstinacy and self-importance would have carried him through the controversy, whether he were in the right or in the wrong. But to have to take into the high court of heaven, and before the Judge of all—so unceremoniously too, and without any preliminary notice! He was not prepared for this. He threw his pen aside, and tore up his unfinished sheet. He would have nothing more to do with a man who could spread his letter before the Lord, like that. He began to be half afraid of him.

A good many weeks passed away, and Leonard Grey began to wonder.

"I have not heard a word from Mr. E—," said he, one day, to his sister.

"Nor written to him about that business?"

"No; for when I came to look at it again there was nothing for me to write about. It was for him to follow up his letter, and nothing I could have written would have made any difference; so I thought the wisest plan was for me to be silent."

"You did not think so at first," said Lucy.

"Well, no, I was too angry; but after I followed your advice and spread his letter before the Lord, it came to me that there was nothing else for me to do. Was I right?"

"I suppose so, Leonard; I believe so. But are you quite sure that Mr. E— is not following up his letter, as you say?"

"Not quite sure; but yet if he had been I should have heard of it. As I have not, I am very well content to wait."

Leonard Grey had not long to wait. That

same evening there was a knock at his door, and Mr. E. was admitted.

"I wrote an ugly letter to you some time ago, Mr. Grey," he said.

Leonard could not deny this, so he said nothing.

"And you sent me a very proper answer. I am come to thank you for it."

"I am glad you think so," said Leonard.

"I did not think so at first; it put me out more than I care to acknowledge now," continued Mr. E—; "but it was a right and proper answer. And I am come to tell you now that I was in the wrong altogether. Will you shake hands with me over it?" He held out his hand as he spoke, and Leonard took it.

"I have something else to say to you," Mr. E— went on; and his voice trembled a little. "I have been ill since I wrote to you"—Leonard Grey noticed now that his visitor looked weak and pallid—"and when I was at the worst, your letter kept haunting me. You wrote that you had 'spread' my letter 'before the Lord'; and I thought how all my thoughts, and words, and deeds had been spread before him all my life long. I thought of this, Mr. Grey, till I could bear the thought no longer."

"And then—"

"And then I spread my own unhappy case before the Lord. I said 'Enter not into judgment with me, O Lord; for I have sinned; I have sinned!'"

"And then, Mr. E—?" said Leonard, with a beaming, eager, anxious smile.

"And then, sir, the blessed truth was brought home to my soul, as I hope and believe,—If I am man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and if we confess our sins, and to cleanse from all unrighteousness." And now, Mr. Grey, I ask you once more to forgive me for writing that unfriendly and unjust letter."

We need not write down Leonard Grey's reply.

ADONIRAM JUDSON, MISSIONARY.

The above name may be less familiar than that of Doctor Judson, the apostle of the great empire of Burmah. If that mighty people become thoroughly Christianized, the masses will look back to him as their first teacher in the true religion, as we look back upon Wickliff and Luther.

He was born in 1788, at Malden, in Massachusetts, one of the American States. His father was a minister of the Gospel, yet, as often happens, the son grew up without any religious principle. Why should this be? Why in minister's families do we so often see the young people grow up frivolous and worldly? Perhaps they have seen at home a discrepancy between profession and practice which has set them against the religion of the father's house. Perhaps the band of authority has been too tightly drawn, and the rebound when the children arrive at ungoverned years is too violent. This was the fault committed by pious George the Third, in his bringing up of his civil son George the Fourth. The father of Adoniram Judson, "though a man of high principle, had unintentionally breathed into him a spirit of ambition, and done something to instil the error that the world stands more in need of great intellects than of purified hearts."

The boy did his best to distinguish himself at school and at college, and succeeded largely, as those generally do who set their minds upon success. His whole heart and energy thrown into his studies, he struggled for the first rank among his fellow-students, and won the place. There was nothing wrong, but something praiseworthy, in this resolve and victory; but he had no idea of dedicating his powerful intellect to the Lord; he began to say in his heart, with the fool of the Psalmist, "There is no God." An infidel friend led him to these fearful lengths of impiety, a fascinating young man of much cleverness and agreeableness, with whom he became very intimate. Mr. E. and Judson became constant companions; agreed to write plays together, to study law together, to live together always.

One vacation when young Judson returned home, he told his father and mother that he had renounced the Bible, and looked upon Christianity as a fabulous story. They were stricken with horror and grief; the poor mother wept piteously; the father reproved earnestly. The pride of the young man would not yield. He set out on a country excursion, leaving them miserable, and himself not very happy; yet he enjoyed the lovely scenes through which he passed, and tried to wrap himself up in his intellect as a parody. A wonderful incident occurred during his journey, which changed the whole current of his life.

At nightfall he reached an inn, after passing through some lovely country roads in a remote part of New England; his mind disturbed by many serious thoughts after conversation with a pious young man who was stopping with him in a house the day previously. "While the landlord was lighting him to his room, he apologized that he had no other in which to put him, adding that in the adjoining chamber lay a young man extremely ill—he feared dying; he hoped Mr. Judson would not be disturbed."

But Mr. Judson was disturbed. God had arrows for his conscience this night, and his piercing home was aggravated by means from the sick room, which seemed to say with emphasis, "Are you prepared to die?"

We may tell the rest of the story in better words than ours. "He could not help thinking of the sick man. Was he a Christian, calm and peaceful at the prospect of entering a joyful eternity, or an unconverted man, shuddering on the brink of a dark, unknown future? Perhaps, like himself, he was a free-thinker, though educated by Christian parents, followed by the prayers and tears of a Christian mother. He could not refrain from imagining himself in the place of this young man on his dying-bed, and fancying how he would feel there himself. But morning came, the sun shone into his chamber, the birds sang in the trees; the moans in the sick room had ceased. Perhaps the sufferer slept. Young Judson laughed at what he called his midnight superstition, and was glad to think none but himself knew of his weakness."

"As soon as he went down stairs he sought the landlord, and inquired how the invalid was. 'He is dead,' was the reply. 'Dead!' repeated the young man, horror-stricken. 'Yes, sir; the doctor thought he would not live through the night! Do you know at all who he was?' 'O, yes, a young man from Plymouth College; a very fine young fellow; his name was E—.'"

No wonder that Mr. Judson was completely stunned for hours. The words—"dead! lost!" rang in his ears continually. As with the force of an avalanche came conviction to his heart. The Bible was indeed true, and he was indeed a perishing sinner. And as for his friend, his tempter, his fellow-infidel, he was gone beyond recall into the dread eternity—into the presence of the God he had denied.

The young man's tour was suspended—ended. He went home to his parents, to his college, radically altered. After a time he was able to rejoice in Christ as his Saviour. "The applause of the world lost its power, and the service of God acquired a dignity which threw everything else into the shade." He studied as intensely as before, but no longer with selfish aims.

He came across a pamphlet which deeply impressed him—Dr. Buchanan's "Star in the East," a sermon on the subject of Indian missions. "For some days after reading it," says he, "I was unable to attend to the studies of my class, and spent my time in wondering at my past stupidity; depicting the most romantic scenes in missionary life, and roaming about the college rooms declaiming on the subject of missions." And we are told that "during a solitary walk the original command to go into all the world with the good tidings was presented to him with such force that he formed a resolution which never wavered throughout a protracted life—to live and die for the heathen."

Judson came over to England, and was adopted by the London Missionary Society as one of their men. But he finally sailed for India from New York, amid the prayers and benedictions of multitudes. Ten days after landing at Calcutta he received an order from the East India Company to return by the next ship to America. He and his wife escaped by a vessel bound to Burmah, and confronted the terrible superstition of ages without a friend in the whole empire. Their human hearts sank at the prospect of the warfare before them.

"Such were our weaknesses," he writes, "that instead of rejoicing in having found a heathen land, from which we were not immediately driven away, our pilgrimages to that peaceful region where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. But if ever we commended ourselves sincerely, and without reserve, to the disposal of our heavenly Father, it was on this evening, 13th July, 1813."

In all the mighty land before them, there was no god but Boodh, and no man believed that his soul was immortal. For eight hundred years this idolatry had stood colossal among the millions of East India. Everywhere were splendid temples, and all the apparatus of a firmly-rooted pagan system. And the simple Christian missionary and his wife, standing on the edge of this dense jungle of heathenism, dared to think of the day when it should fall, and the light of the Gospel of truth break in upon the people.

Dr. Judson went to work very silently; he knew that the learning of the language must precede any attempt at teaching or announcing the heavenly message he bore. A greater thing than speaking the message would be to write the message, and publish the Book of God containing it; for nearly three-fourths of the population could not read, and the written language was different from the spoken. For many years Dr. Judson laboured in obscurity, with the curious manuscripts of the country, and with native pundits or schoolmasters, endeavoring to master the necessary dialects. The difficulty may be imagined from the following description by Judson himself:—"We find the letters and words all totally destitute of the least resemblance to any language we have ever met with; and these words not fairly distinguished, as in western writing, by breaks and points, and capitals; but running together in one continuous line; a sentence or paragraph seeming to the eye but one long word; and instead of clear characters on paper (an advantage often hardly thought of) we find only obscure scratches on dried palm-leaves, strung together, and called a book."

Six years after his landing in Burmah, he could speak and write the language with facility; he caused a little edifice to be built of bamboo and thatched, called a "zayat," where he could sit by the roadside and read aloud his sacred books for the people's use. Other teachers of religion in Burmah did the same; and any persons that wished to be instructed in their different creeds came in and sat with the teacher, and disputed and questioned with him, as with the apostles of old in the synagogues. How delighted was Judson when a resolute man had for months come and gone, uttered such words as these—"I am surprised at the effect which this religion has on me; it makes me love the disciples of Christ more than my natural relations!" Did he not remember John the apostle's token—"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren?"

Dr. Judson experienced persecution of the bitterest sort. He was loaded with three pairs of fetters, and cast into a loathsome dungeon, with gaolers who loved to inflict torture. For some time he lived in expectation of death by burning, any day that it pleased the executioners thus to punish his sufferings. God delivered him after long suspense; and he was more devoted than ever to the mission-work. A band of native preachers was organized from among the earliest converts; and every day these met in his study to receive his directions, and implore the blessing of God on their labours for the day. But he felt it "the one main duty of the remnant of his life to study and labour to perfect the Burmese translation of the Bible;" and this he did with entire devotion for years. The first copy of his translation was for some time buried in the earth, to hide it from the Burmese persecutors; then it was sewed up in a pillow of the commonest description, purposely the coarsest and commonest, that it might not be coveted and stolen; at last a convert picked it up where it had been thrown out as rubbish, and this was the germ of the Burmese Bible.

Thirty years after he had set his foot on Burmah soil, Dr. Judson spread the last sheet before the throne of God, and praising him for the peculiar honour with which he had been enriched, prayed that he might be permitted soon to depart in peace."

"I am not tired of my work, nor am I tired of the world," said he; "yet when Christ calls me home, I shall go with the gladness of a boy bounding away from school." God granted his fervent servant his desire on April 12th, 1850.

DWARFED CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

Many Christians separate their religious life wholly from their worldly life. They are regular in habits of secret devotion, great lovers of a prayer-meeting, and undeviating in hallowing the Sabbath and the sanctuary. But they are not loveable in their families, nor generous in charity, nor sympathizing in trouble. Their ideas of piety do not extend to the common duties of life, in which Jesus makes it to consist. *—The British Messenger says:—*

This man talks, prays and lives, in some respects much like a Christian, and we think he is one. Yet we are perplexed to see how grace can dwell with a man who makes those about him so uncomfortable. How coldly and sternly he speaks to his wife, whom he ought to love even as Christ loved the church and died for it! What a cross and repulsive way he has toward his children! In the family every thing must bend to his iron will and crooked notions. As a neighbour, he makes you very uncomfortable. No plan can be as good as his, no conscience as tender and strong, no help as profitable as that rendered under his lead. He evidently wants to do good and go to heaven, but as evidently has a very crooked way of working and going upward. Selfishness, sternness, petulance, self-will are close dwellers to the graces that the Spirit has introduced into his heart. The brambles, tares and wheat are all growing together. It is righteous let living in Sodom. The man does not realize that holiness in our mother tongue means wholeness of character.

Few things injure the cause of Christ more than these inconsistencies, incongruities and contradictions in good men. Their religion is confined to, and expends itself in certain habits, ways of working, seasons and periods of Christian labor. The whole tree has not been grafted, apparently. So from the same stock, you get both kinds of Jeremiah's figs. "One basket was very good figs, like the figs that are first ripe; and the other basket had very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad."

Some good men would be improved if they should become less religious, if need be, that they might become more moral. They ought to be better in secular and worldly things, even though at the expense of some of their religious doings. Their family, social, business, public and Christian life needs tempering together into good proportions. Less in parts and more in the whole would improve them. If the bridges are unsafe, the splendid line between will not commend a railway or raise its dividends. A pillar and joy in the family, a good neighbor, a perfectly reliable business man, an active co-operator in the parish, in the church, in the Sabbath school and prayer meeting, a hopeful working man when there is no revival—such a Christian has a roundness, a well-proportioned development of his piety. The wholeness and the holiness of the man remind us of the original identity of those two words.

THE BEST LEGACY.

What a legacy are the prayers of a pious mother! What a Christian would exchange their memory for the richest worldly inheritance! What are costly gems or goodly lands compared with those treasures which have gone for us, with sweet incense, to the very throne of God? Would you exchange the lowliest home where you were early taught of Jesus' love, for the richest abode of earth where your infant mind would have been filled with vanity and folly, and a fashionable contempt for the Bible and its humbling teachings? "As the mother, so are her children;" and generations of worldlings succeed one another in their gay dance down to the gates of death.

Mother, do not sigh that you must leave your children poor, when you can bequeath to them this precious legacy. Your prayers and labours of faith and love will not remain unblessed. Sometimes the child of a professedly Christian parent turns out evil ways. The worldling sneers, and Christian parents grow heavy-hearted as they look at their own loved flock. But has not God promised, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it?" Said a minister, "We can better afford to doubt the piety of professing Christians than the faithfulness of God." Yea, "let God be true, and every man a liar." The seed may be long buried, but "Grace keeps the precious germ alive, When and wherever sown."

A praying mother, sixty years old, had six unconverted daughters. She had been confined to her home by disease for many years, and mourned that she had no one to bear her company Zionward. But she did not give up praying and hoping; and after many years of waiting, four of her daughters were at the same time brought to the Saviour. Soon a married sister joined them, and only one remained unconverted.

"Mother," said one of the daughters, "let us set apart a day together, for fasting and prayer for sister M—." The day was strictly observed, though M— knew nothing of it. But while engaged with her domestic duties, her mind became solemnly impressed with her condition as a sinner, and she found no peace until she obtained it through the blood of Jesus. For several years the once sorrowful mother rejoiced in their Christian fellowship, and then went peacefully to rest.

The young men of a theological school were once interested to know how many of their number had pious mothers. On inquiring, it was found that out of a hundred and twenty, more than a hundred had been blessed with mothers who prayed for them, and early directed them to the Saviour.

Said an excellent Christian worker, "When I was a little child, my mother used to lay her hand upon my head, while she prayed with me. When I was young I travelled in foreign lands, and was exposed to great temptations; but many a time I have been drawn back by the memory of that soft hand upon my head." *—Messenger.*

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING.—It is not by the short and transient application to the throne of grace, which we are too apt to dignify by the name of prayer, that we can hope to be qualified for seasons of peculiar trial, temptation, or labour. This can only be done by dwelling near the mercy-seat—by daily, hourly, constantly sending forth those winged messengers of the heart, the secret, silent, swiftly-flying thoughts, which, while they form, like the Patriarch's ladder, an uninterrupted line of ascending entreaties to the Most High, form also a channel for his descending mercies to our souls.

WHY GOOD RESOLUTIONS FAIL.—Our good principles are too often like Don Quixote's helmet. We arrive at them in leisure, in cold blood, with an unexcited brain, which is commonly called a clear head. Then in actual life they too commonly fail at the first trial. Don Quixote made up his helmet carefully with a vizard of pasteboard. Then, to ascertain whether it was strong enough, he dealt it a blow with his sword. Thereupon it went to pieces.

In like manner, in our better and more thoughtful hours we resolve to be patient, forgiving, charitable, kind-spoken, unsuspicious—in short, Christian, for that includes all. And the first time we are irritated we fail. We grow very angry at a small offence; we speak harshly, we act unfairly. I have heard a really good man preach; afterwards I heard him speak in a lesser ecclesiastical council. He preached (so far as the sentiments expressed went) like an angel; he argued like just the reverse.

Al, we make up our helmets with paste-board. We resolve that henceforth we shall act on the most noble principles. And the helmets look very well so long as they are not put to the test. We fancy ourselves charitable, forgiving, Christian people, so long as we are not tried. A stroke with a sword, and the helmet goes to tatters. An attack on us; a reflection on us; a hint that we ever did wrong; and O the wretched outburst of wrath, bitterness, unfairness, malignity!

Of course, the best of men, as it has been said, are but men at the best. Let us be humble. Let there be no vain self-confidence. And especially let us, entering on every scene that can possibly try us (and when do we escape from such a scene?) earnestly seek the guidance of that blessed Spirit, of whom is every good feeling and purpose in us; and without whom our best resolutions will snap like reeds just when they are needed most to stand firm.—A. K. H. Boyd.

GOOD USE OF A SERMON.—Mr. Nott, a missionary to one of the islands in the Pacific Ocean, preached a sermon one day on the words, "Let him that stole steal no more." In the sermon he said it was a duty to return things that had formerly been stolen.

The next morning, when he opened his door, he saw a number of natives sitting on the ground around his house. He was surprised to see them there so early, and asked why they had come. "We have not been able to sleep all night," they said. "We were at chapel yesterday, and heard you say from the word of God that Jehovah commanded us not to steal; whereas we used to worship a god who we thought would protect thieves. We have stolen. All these things that we have brought with us are stolen goods." Then one of the men held up a saw, saying, "I stole this from the carpenter of such a ship." Others held up knives and various tools.

"Why have you brought them to me?" asked Mr. Nott. "Take them home, and wait till the ships from which you stole them come again, and then return them, with a present besides." Still the people begged Mr. Nott to keep the things until they could find the owners. One man who had stolen from a missionary then being on another island, took a voyage of seventy miles to restore the goods.

That is the true way to improve by preaching—doing what it says. A great many people form good resolutions when they hear a sermon which touches the heart and instructs the conscience, but good resolutions are worth nothing unless they are set to action. That clinches the feelings, and makes them of value.

THE ADVENT OF PEACE.—"Standing, at the commencement of these Christian times, and looking forward through them to the time of the end, our Lord and Master said, 'Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, but he that endures to the end shall be saved.' For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in divers cities." Now, here was a prophecy of what we call the Christian times, uttered eighteen centuries and a half ago, and literally fulfilled. It is an accurate description of what has happened ever since. There is not the slightest approach to universal peace among the nations. And if ever there was a period in the history of the world, when, instead of learning war no more, the time, the talent, the science, the wealth of the great nations of the earth, are all giving to the learning of war, it is the time in which we live. There have never been such preparations for war. France, with her enormous army, and adding from time to time to her navy, so that she compels England to add to hers, to maintain her supremacy upon the seas—for the protection of her shores, and for the protection of her commerce—is there any approach towards the period predicted by Micah? Not the slightest. No, nor is there anything in the character of the period of the world in which we live to attune to any such approach to universal peace.

EPHESUS; OR, THE CANDLESICK REMOVED OUT OF ITS PLACE.—"I will come into thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of its place, except you repent." Rev. ii. 5.—A late missionary traveller, in speaking of Ephesus, says: "The candlestick is out of its place. How does the city sit solitary that was full of people! The site of this once famous city is now covered with grass or grain. The church of St. John stands deserted and in ruins, having been occupied as a mosque, after the country fell into the hands of the Mohammedans. In this church are some immensely large pillars of granite, said to have been taken from the temple of Diana; having served successively as a Pagan, a Christian, and a Mohammedan place of worship. No human being now lives in Ephesus; a few miserable Turkish huts are alone seen in this desolate spot. The streets are overgrown and overgrown; and a noisy flight of crows seemed to insult its silence. The call of the partridge is heard in the acorn of the theatre and the stadium. The pomp of its heathen worship is no longer remembered; and Christianity, which was planted and nursed by the apostle, no longer lingers in this once favored church."

The following beautiful and tender passage is from a letter from the late Rev. John Newton to the Rev. William Hall:—"When you are with the King, and getting good for yourself, speak a word for me and mine. I have reason to think you see him often, and have nearer access to him than myself. Indeed, I am unworthy to look at him much more than he should speak tenderly to me."