

The Religious Intelligencer.

AN EVANGELICAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

REV. E. McLEOD,

"THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST."

Peter.

[Editor and Proprietor.]

Vol. XII.—No. 13.

SAINT JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY, MARCH 31, 1865.

Whole No. 585.

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(From the Quiver.)

GLEANINGS FROM THE GREAT HARVEST FIELD.

By the Rev. W. Pakenham Walsh, M. A.
HINDUSTAN.

When we come to examine the details of missionary labour, we naturally turn our eyes to India, as furnishing at once the grandest and the most important sphere in which that labour has been exercised. Extending as it does for some 2,500 miles from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, and stretching for 1,800 miles from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea, presenting such variety of race, climate, language and religion, and, above all, peopled by a hundred and eighty millions, who are all either under the dominion or the influence of the British sceptre, it presents a field so vast, and a claim so urgent, that no Christian, and especially no English Christian, can venture to overlook it.

But if we were bewildered as we glanced at the map of the world, and tried to realise the numbers and the darkness of its pagan inhabitants, we are scarcely less bewildered as we survey the extent and condition of Hindustan. Here we behold a nation after nation lying in the darkest shadows of a cruel and debasing idolatry, here are populations not deficient in wealth or civilisation, yet groaning under the yoke of the most revolting superstitions. Here are solid millions upon whom, as yet, notwithstanding all the efforts made by the Christian Church, the first dawning of the Gospel have not beamed; men of the same flesh as ourselves and subject to the same gracious Queen, and yet upon whose ear the name of Christ has never sounded, and upon whose tongue the prayer for mercy never yet has trembled. But what of these vast multitudes, who people the valleys of the Ganges, and spread over the plains of India? What is their condition?

About one-tenth of the population is Mahometan, who carried with them into India, as conquerors, the fierce and fanatical religion of their prophet. The rest, with a small exception (which includes the Sikhs, Parsees and others), are Hindoos, whose religion is at once the most complex and the most debasing system of idolatry that ever entangled the minds of men. It would take volumes to describe this "masterpiece of Satan," and to unravel the combination of subtle philosophy and licentious worship which make up the sum of this dark and terrible religion. Indeed, there is much of it from which we dare not lift the veil, although in India it does not blush to practise its vilest enormities in the open face of day. Without entering into minute details of their mythology or religious rites, we must content ourselves with a few general statements.

Every part of Hindustan is studded with temples or pagodas, dedicated to their countless idols. Many of these temples are exceedingly costly and magnificent, and the value of the treasures and jewels which have been consecrated as offerings at these shrines is almost fabulous. And, if the great pagodas have their gigantic images of gold and silver, studded with the most precious gems, the hut of the meanest peasant possesses its clay or wooden images, black with the kisses and devotions of their misguided worshippers. But we must turn to the Vedas, the Shastras, and the Puranas, which are the holy books of the Hindoos, in order to discover their ideas about the deities whom they thus ignorantly worship. No one who reads these books can doubt that the Hindoos once possessed some knowledge of the true God; but that knowledge is now entirely lost. Nay, they confess that they cannot know Him. "God," say they, "is Nirgoon—he is the great nothing." But the Nirgoon (literally "without attributes") became Sagun (i.e., "with attributes"); the nothing has become something, and from him have emanated three hundred and thirty millions of gods, of whom Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, are the chief, and may be regarded as a sort of Hindu Trinity. The first is represented as the Creator, the second as the Preserver, and third as the Destroyer. These have had fierce wars with each other; and in one of them Shiva cut off one of Brahma's heads. It is remarkable that throughout India there is no temple to Brahma, and the account given of this circumstance is that, having on one occasion told a lie, the gods decreed that he should never be permitted to have temples in Hindustan. Vishnu and Shiva, however, though equally profane with Brahma, have temples and worshippers all through the land.

Vishnu has had nine avatars or incarnations, and is yet to have a tenth. Some idea may be formed of the absurdities involved in these incarnations from a sketch of the second avatar, viz., that of the tortoise. The gods wished to extract the water of life from the world; but in consequence of the Flood, the world had become a mass of mud. They, therefore, took the mountain Mandar, and placed it in the middle of the sea, and wound a great serpent (Bastor) round the mountain. Vishnu having crept into the mass, supported the mountain; and the gods standing on one side, and the demons on the other, they proceeded to churn the sea, and soon extracted the water of life, and separated the mass of mud into butter and buttermilk, or land and sea.

The conceptions formed of the characters of their gods may be illustrated from another of the avatars, viz., that of Krishna. He was the reputed son of a cowherd and his wife, and his first feat was an act of disobedience. His mother having forbidden him to leave the house in her absence, and having tied him to a heavy log of wood, in order to secure his obedience, she was no sooner out of sight than Krishna crawled out of the hut, and the log coming against the stems of two gigantic trees between which he passed, the divine child pulled down the tree, and proceeded to amuse himself at play. Soon after he distinguished himself by milking the dairy in which the women kept the milk; and when suspicion naturally fell upon the mischievous Krishna, he was so afraid of punishment that he concealed his delinquency by denying it. And this tale is told by the wretched Hindoos with expressions of the greatest delight at the cunning and ability of their god. The stories recorded of his licentious misdeeds are too horrible for publication in a Christian land, but they are resorted to admiringly in India, sung by women and children as well as by men, and illustrated by revolting carvings upon the idol cars and temples.

Shiva, the Destroyer, as his name indicates, is the impersonation of all destructive agencies.

Together with his wife, Doorga or Paravati, a sanguinary and terrific goddess, he is propitiated by the most bloody and cruel rites.

So true is the language of the apostle concerning the heathen, "that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." No one can read these records of the heathen deities without being convinced that the influence of the Evil One himself was at work in their compilation, and that the character of the worshippers cannot but be a reflection of that of their wretched deities.

We must return to this subject at a future time, and trace the influence of the Hindoo creed upon the life and conduct of those who believe it; but for the present, we would lead our readers to the brighter and happier reflections which the progress of missions awakens in our minds.

It will be confessed that the sketch of India which we have faintly drawn is a dark one indeed—and there are still darker shades to be added to the melancholy picture—and yet in this "region of the shadow of death," the Gospel has won some of its noblest victories. Side by side on the page of history with the names of the great men who have subjugated India to Great Britain, stand forth the still greater names of those who have gone thither to win the land to Christ; and whilst the records of battle or of statecraft tell us of the Clives, Wellesleys, the Napiers and the Clives, we shall find inscribed on the missionary banner the bloodless victories and grand conceptions of such men as Schwartz and Martin, Ziegenbalg and Duff. It will be our duty to point attention hereafter to the services and achievements of these and other devoted soldiers of the cross, and to select special trophies from their field of conflict; but at present we must confine ourselves to a general review of missionary successes in Hindustan.

The mission churches of India (including those of Burma) now number more than 200,000 souls, who meet every Lord's-day in the house of prayer to offer up their worship to the one living and true God, through the only Mediator, his incarnate Son. For every missionary employed, there is an average of 100 habitual communicants at the table of the Lord; and when it is remembered that this is more than can be said of the proportion between the clergy and the communicants in our favoured Christian land, and, moreover, that in the missionary stations none are admitted to the communion of the Lord's supper, without the strictest investigation into their belief and practice, it will be seen that the large numbers thus admitted afford both gratifying evidence, and a satisfactory test of the progress of Christianity amongst the natives.

During the horrors of the Indian mutiny, the converts in Bengal gave striking evidence of their faith and loyalty. After the first battle in front of Agra, 800 native Christians presented themselves at the gates, and offered their invaluable services to the Europeans, when all the domestics had deserted. They were admitted, and proved their fidelity to the last. About the same time 4,000 native Christians at Krishnagar subscribed an address of loyalty to the Governor-General, and offered their services to the British Crown.

Not was this all; several of the native Christians suffered martyrdom for Christ, and deliberately chose the most cruel death, rather than renounce his cause. Gopenath Nandi and his wife, the companions in suffering of that brave young Christian soldier, Ensign Cheek, exhibited the spirit of the true confessor. Brought, with his wife and children, before the ferocious Moulvi, threatened with instant and terrible death, unless he apostatised from the Christian faith, Gopenath was cheered by the example of the young officer, who, though himself a prisoner, adjured him "not to deny Christ, whatever might be the consequence." Failing in his attempts to seduce the husband from the faith, the Moulvi endeavoured to terrify his wife into submission; but, with unwavering heart and firm, she declared that she would undergo any torture he could inflict, but she could not deny her Saviour; and then turning to her children, said to them, in the presence and hearing of the infuriated throng—"You, my sweet children will be taken and kept as slaves, when we shall have been killed; but do not forget to say your prayers every day; and when the English power is re-established, fly over to them for refuge, and relate the circumstances of our end." Such was their good confession; and just as they were about to be slaughtered the English bugle resounded in the courtyard, and proclaimed deliverance to the faithful band.

Perhaps the most encouraging circumstances connected with missionary work in India are the growth of the native pastorate, and the rapid extension of Christian education. There are nearly 200 converted Hindoos who are ministers of Christ to their countrymen, and they are aided by 18,000 native catechists. 75,000 boys are now being taught in the missionary schools of India, and 20,000 girls enjoy the benefits of Christian education, instead of being consigned, as the males of the East invariably have been, to ignorance and degradation.

The testimony of opponents carries great weight. What, then, shall we say to the following admissions, made in "A Defence of the Principles of Hindooism," published at Bombay, and drawn up by a learned and clever Hindoo:—"In 1814 all Hindustan became subject to the English; and since that time the ministers of the Christian religion have, by their instructions, turned many from Hinduism to Christianity. . . . Hindoos are sick unto death; I am fully persuaded that it must perish."

And, together with this distrust in their own beliefs, is springing up a wondrous attraction towards a purer faith. The best native newspaper in India lately admitted that the missionary movement was making steady progress, and then added these remarkable words:—"With our converted countrymen, we are anxiously expecting the advent of God's day, when the hearts of many millions amongst us will be stirred, and we may not say by the spirit of Christians, but by a strong, sincere religious agitation. Anything is preferable to this sticking to old ways."

In twenty-five of the living languages of India has the Word of God, in whole or in part, been published; and from five-and-twenty mission printing presses a Christian literature is going forth to leaven the land at the rate of 10,000,000 of publications every year. Another heathen newspaper has lately spoken of the Holy Scriptures in the following apposite terms:—"It is the best and most excellent of all English

books, and there is not its like in the English language. As every joint of the sugar-cane, from the root to the top, is full of sweetness, so every page of the Bible is fraught with the most precious instructions. A portion of that book would yield to you more of sound morality than a thousand other treatises on the same subject."

Could anything afford more indubitable proof of the progress of Divine truth than is furnished by these remarkable admissions?

The period during which missionary labour has been carried on in India is, after all, a brief one, and the supply of labourers has been scanty and inadequate. It was only with the beginning of this century that Protestant missions could be said to have really occupied the land; and even now, if all the missionaries employed they were equally distributed amongst the population, it would only supply one missionary to every 300,000 immortal souls! Imagine London, on a darksome, wintry night, with only seven or eight gas-lamps to illuminate its darkness! Imagine England, Scotland, and Ireland, with their 28,000,000 of people, conigned to the gloom of a single gas-lamp; and then you will form some idea of the disproportion between the work to be done in India and the agency employed to effect it. Instead of wondering, as some do, that so little has been achieved, should we not rather wonder and rejoice that so much has been accomplished? And may we not well inquire, if such has been the amount of success vouchsafed to such recent and feeble efforts, what might not the Church of Christ accomplish, under the blessing of his Holy Spirit, were she to put forth all her energy in sustained and vigorous efforts for her Master's glory?

A WORD UPON IDLE WORDS.

BY THE REV. W. M. STATHAM.

There are two renderings given of the word "idle," with which I should like to commence this paper. One is, "not tending to edification"; the other is, "unprofitable." The old Saxon word is, I believe, "ydele," of which, perhaps, our English "empty" is the most suitable synonym. I must, however, be permitted to say that neither of these interpretations of the meaning of idle exactly meets the case when applied to words. For have not all words a power? If not operative for good, must they not be exercising a harmful influence in the sphere of evil? Idle words enter into human hearts, and, if they do not break them, they can wound them. We have it in the best testimony, that "a wholesome tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit."

Many persons would condemn decidedly wicked words, and coarse words, and slang words; and profane words, who seem not to see the harm and evil of idle words. Yet, perhaps, in these lie the greatest danger for us all. Because they are so easy and habitual, we remain unconscious of their noxious character; and live, perhaps, in their daily indulgence with no compunction of conscience concerning them. I am not so much referring to the idle words of evil speakers, who have a missionary zeal in their malevolent work—who "learn to lie, and wander about from house to house, and not only idle, but tattlers and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not"—but rather to the talkativeness which almost unconsciously merges into idle words.

It is not permitted to us to see all the injury that idle words have done. Such a revelation would be as surprising as it would be saddening. Lovers' vows have been broken by them. Marriages, which might have been both bride and bridegroom, have been cursed by them. Situations, which might have saved from poverty and want, have been lost by them. Ministrations, which might have saved a multitude of souls, have been rendered powerless and profitless by them. Virgin reputations have been sullied by them; and she who might have lived in the pure esteem of all, has dwelt in the atmosphere of suspicion and reproach. Life-long friendships have been severed by them. Parental influence has been poisoned by them. The living have been distracted, and the dead dishonoured by them. The poison of idle words is both invisible and intangible, and no scientific analysis of the human mind can achieve what is sometimes done for the human body—viz., discover the secret drug which will save the man.

In writing about these idle words, dear reader, there can be no special apology for their application. They are common to every clime and country; and who is there but knows them to be the bane of town and village life in our own dear native land?

It is not at all uncommon to hear men excuse themselves by some such utterances as these—"Oh, I was only in fun, you know." You did not imagine I meant it for a moment, did you? Why, A, is a very good man—only, &c. And again, "You must discount that, you know; I was speaking, as the stunner orator said, 'hyperbolically,' or, as it were, in a figure." To all which pleasant explanations it is surely sufficient to reply, that they do not serve their purpose. First impressions are the strongest and the deepest; and it is never easy, and sometimes quite impossible, to remove a false one. I have said that a habit of mere talkativeness often leads to this by beginnings which seem harmless in themselves; and again the words of a wisdom which is Divine best meet the case:—"In the multitude of words there wasteth no sin; but he that refraineth his lips is wise."

What insignificant things these idle words seem to be! Yet often we perceive the weakest instrumentalities achieve the greatest results. As a very little wind will sever the stoutest cane, so a very little word will sever the dearest tie. As a very little insect may sting to death the stoutest man, so a trifling sentence may touch and tell upon the bravest heart. It may, I know, be answered me, that many persons are by far too thin-skinned and sensitive—that they have become morbid in their feelings, and require some sort of tonic for their mental weakness; to which I reply, sensitiveness is only a thing of degree, and idle words are now have pained the stoutest hearts. We all feel, more or less, the shafts of satire and of ridicule. Whilst no man has a right to inflict pain upon the nearest animal, much less has he a right to do so on the mind made in the exquisite image of God.

Remember, too, that these idle words are often spoken by those you deem the kindest friends, and the most disinterested in appreciation of your virtues. The man who speaks idly of another is generally to his face the politest of friends; to express which the Italians have one of, I think, the most expressive proverbs in their language—"Who paints me before blackens me behind."

Light and insignificant as seem these idle words, floating through the atmosphere of conversation

like thistledown on the breeze, yet they alight somewhere. Follow that little, living ball of gossip across the meadow, you will, in time, find it sticking somewhere by the wayside. And idle words are not such "die-away" things as they seem to be; they live sometimes through many days, and long years afterwards the unconscious subject of them finds them in unsuspected places, to his chagrin and sorrow. Probably, then the discovery will lower his idea of humanity, not only shocking his sensibilities, but making him doubt the Divine order and government in the foundation of society. Are idle words weak things if they make men disbelieve or doubt the sincerity of friendship, the honor of common confidence, and the outspoken expressions of respect and love?

Trifling, too, as these idle words appear to be, they cannot be recalled, and seldom explained away. The arrow, once in the oak, takes a strong hand to wrench it out; and even when it does come forth, it leaves for a long time an open wound or gap. Little feathers are these idle words—but they wing arrows which fly from house to house, and enter into the spirits of men. A very trivial utterance may wound a very loving heart, and a wounded spirit who can bear? My eminent men have for years regretted some idle speech, which they cannot buy back or bury. Alas! it proves, indeed, how the sinful side of humanity has developed itself, when they are often remembered whilst the precious grain of truth is wasted and forgotten. Eloquence and erudition have been ignored, whilst a few trashy sentences, or pointed sarcasms, have been treasured up in the memories of men. Wealth cannot buy them back, and time will not bury them. The irreversibility of the word once gone from us is beautifully expressed in the Eastern proverb, "Of thine unspoken word thou art master; thy spoken word is master of thee."

I can imagine that at this point, dear reader, you ask, "What, then, are we to do? Must we be churlish and cold, and curtailed up within ourselves? Must we keep such a guard upon our lips as Emerson mentions, when he says 'See them with all things tucked in?' My friends, are there not in all things two extremes? Must we really strike Sella if we avoid Charybdis? Is there no clear and broad ocean between? Most certainly there is. We plead for gentleness of speech and candour of conversation for the most perfect kindness and courtesy; only let us not abuse these things. If we seek to have the charity, which thinketh no evil, we shall soon have the tongue which speaketh none."

Of course this paper is not written upon any one special class of idle words; but it is easy to see that the habit once indulged, no subject will long escape their exercise of power. There will be probably not a weekly but a daily Chariari, and even religion itself will be talked of with shallow wit and conceited emptiness; my motto—even the text or hymn which we may one day want to comfort us in that hour when we lie down on the bed from which we shall rise no more, may serve to point a jest or to adorn a tale.

Idle words spoken by some careless companion have often spoiled the best impressions of a thoughtful mind; as the flight of a bird may draw away our attention from some majestic scene in nature to some trifling word of vanity may all the mind of the listener away from thoughts of eternity and God. If he who turns a sinner from the error of his way shall shine as the brightness of the stars for ever, what shall be his doom who turns away the eye of the inquirer from the Cross of Calvary, and the feet of the prodigal from the pathway to his Father's house?

But the saddest aspect of the case is the light estimate we put on the sin of idle words. Men seldom seek to alter evil which they have not learnt to dread. And most assuredly the good Sir Matthew Hale spoke truly when he quoted the old Latin proverb—"We perish by permitted things." That is to say, character is undermined and lost, not by the vices which society condemns and the crimes which governments punish, so much as by the faults and follies which are indulged in as permissible, if not proper. Lightly, however, as we may estimate the folly and wickedness of idle speaking, there is one greater than the sons of men, who ranks them amidst the most memorable sins. Has not he said, "For every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof at the day of judgment?" We can never evade the comprehensive condemnation of words like these, and it were well if we pondered the responsibility attaching to each one idle word.

It is very certain that all men may be the subjects upon which the conversation turns. Crowned heads, as well as cottagers, have suffered from the venom of idle words. Whilst you are reading this it is possible that your name may be taken lightly upon some human tongue. Your prudence may be ridiculed as cowardice, your unkindness as forwardness, your delicacy as prudery, your acts of generosity as baits for praise; idle words, inasmuch as men know neither your heart nor you, and idle also because we want our words for noble ends, and have all too little time in this brief pilgrimage of life to do each other good. What a gift is human speech! Mysterious, indeed, is the power thus given by God. Who can define the mode by which the mind whispers to the will, and the will calls into play the vocal organs, and your thoughts become incarnate in human speech? Most glorious gift of God! Given us, most certainly, for great and Godlike ends. We can with human words cheer those who are sad, instruct those who are ignorant, stimulate those who are weary, strengthen those who are weak, inspire those who are struggling, and bless those who are dying. Can any perversion be more serious than to use so Divine a gift as human speech for vain and idle purposes? Consider the misuse of this power of speech in the cases of the backbiter, the busybody, and the slanderer! In their idle tales, it is not true, the tongue is a fire—a world of iniquity! In a world, too, such as this, is what opportunities offer for the beneficent exercise of speech. Solomon speaks of "the grace of the lips," and suffer me to suggest that this is no unattainable gift; it is within the reach of the humblest as well as the most exalted of the sons of men; our words may be always seasoned with salt, profitable and pleasant whenever we mingle with our fellow-men; most manly, too, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

There is a reference, however, in the Best Book to the deadly poison of the tongue, and this is often distilled from idle words, just as sometimes falling leaves, drifted by the hurricane, may contain in them the sure elements of death. I remember reading, years ago, some counsels to so-called plain-spoken persons. They were to the effect that

three questions should always be asked by us, before speaking to the detriment of anybody—first, Is it true? secondly, Is it kind? thirdly, Is it necessary?—and that we should hold our tongue unless all these questions could be satisfactorily answered. It is excellent advice, and I have often found it a good medicine for my own soul.

With regard to plain-spoken persons, generally, I think they deserve a paper to themselves at some future time.

Truly says the old adage, "The tongue is not steel, but it cuts;" and think of what it cuts! It has to do with heart-strings, which bleed inwardly. Many whose circumstances are not only above want, but include luxury, know that there may be cruelty without blows, and sharp arrows without juniper-wood.

Reputation is precious to most men, and the edifice which is carefully reared by invisible influences may be defaced by the atmosphere of idle words, as the stone work of the British Houses of Parliament is worn and fretted by the wear of wind and storm.

Surely it is a good thing to be held in high esteem: "a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour than silver or gold;" but how often idle words despoil the edifice, and do more, indeed, not to shake its foundation, for this they cannot do, but to desecrate its walls, than the most openly violent and virulent assault! Can it be—how hope not—that idle words are often the stones cast at another's house to withdraw attention from the rotten and ruined state of our own?

It would be scarcely wise to close this paper without some suggestions for the cure of a habit which may, by Divine aid, ultimately be overcome. We are told, on authority, to put a bridle on our tongue: suffer me to say that until the horse be completely broken in, the bit should be a curb, and not a snaffle; such a bit as will pull the steed at once upon his haunches, and check the headiness of idle talk at once.

But the best cure, for it that I can suggest, of a human character, is never to encourage it in others. If there were no market for it, the commodity would soon cease to be supplied. Alas! how many apparently enjoy that which afterwards they condemn. Let us ponder the Chinese proverb—"He who laughs at an impertinence makes himself its accomplice;" and the French one—"He sins as much who holds the bag, as he who puts into it." Men would soon tire of idle talk if they had no ready ears and receptive hearts to form an eager audience. Above all, there should be high, exalted efforts made in this, as in all else, to follow Christ; to catch his spirit, and to embody his character. Think of those words of his, all full of grace and truth, not one of which he could have wished unspoken when he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. It is open to all who love him to speak a word in season to those who are weary and out of the way. It may be that many cannot talk cleverly, but they can always do so sincerely and kindly. Many words which have in them none of the inspiration or glow of genius are yet like "apples of gold in pictures of silver."

And now, dear reader, I leave you here. We have all spoken idle words; we have all felt the keen smart occasioned by them when spoken concerning us; we know not how much harm we may have occasioned, nor how much we have repaid. We cannot, then, take leave of each other better than by remembering the inspired petition—"Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips." Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my Redeemer."

A MINISTER'S STRENGTH.

In the economy of divine grace, and the organization of the church on earth, God in his infinite wisdom saw proper to call certain persons to preach the Gospel; and it is his will that those whom he calls to that work should be efficient, and in order to be successful, they must have strength. It is not my purpose to speak of all the necessary qualifications of a minister of the Gospel of Christ. Of one thing only would I speak, and that is, Consecration. In this I conceive is the minister's strength. Education has its advantages, and when consecrated to God will only add so much more power to the minister.

To consecrate to God is to dedicate one's self to his service and worship for time and eternity. To specify more particularly it would embrace the devoting of one's soul, body, spirit, time, talent, influence, reputation, property, and character, to the service of God. A man without this entire devotedness to God is liable to become discouraged, and is easily turned aside from the great work of winning souls to Christ. In fact, he is only half a man in God's cause. There is a power in consecration, even in a bad cause. Let a man get a purpose fixed in his mind, and then throw his whole soul into it, and what can he not accomplish? What gave Washington his power as a General? Was it his superior knowledge in military tactics? No. It was this. Washington was consecrated to the service of his country. What gave Luther his success and power? Was it, because no man that opposed him was his equal in scholarship? No. Martin Luther was consecrated to God and the work of reformation. This was his strength.

It should not be forgotten that consecration does not make a man really holy, it only declares him sacred; set apart for divine service, to be used as God in his wisdom may direct. The great work of sanctification, or the purifying of the nature is wholly an internal work of the Holy Spirit, by means of the precious blood of Christ. Both these doctrines are clearly taught in the Scriptures, not only by precept, but by the experience and example of many persons, whose lives are recorded. Paul was a consecrated man, as we may learn from the following passages in his writings. 1st Cor. xi. 2, "For I am determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Paul was not absolutely a one-idea man, yet all other ideas were lost in this one great thought, "Jesus Christ and him crucified." Philippians iii. 8, "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, so that I may win Christ." 2 Timothy i. 12, "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." All that Paul had was given to Christ. Peter said, "Lord we have forsaken all and followed thee." Indeed

all the apostles were entirely consecrated to God, and so were many of the primitive Christians. O, those were men of power, power with God, power in God. The life that they lived was by faith in the Son of God. To them, Christ was all and in all. If they lived it was for Christ, and if they died it was for Christ's cause. They were not vacillating as most of men are; they had a purpose fixed in their mind in which they threw their whole soul, body and spirit, and before them fell the altars of idols and the temples of deities.

A minister that is not wholly consecrated to God and his service cannot do the work assigned him, no matter what his apparent zeal may be; he is a weak man, and easily turned aside from his duties. But when he is all given up to God, and has the inward assurance, that he is accepted, he can go forward; nor does he stop for sacrifices. No duty seems too hard. He is like Mount Zion which cannot be moved. And what is remarkable in the life of a consecrated man is, he cannot be conquered so long as he holds to his consecration. He may be crushed but not conquered. Jesus was crucified, but not conquered. Paul was beheaded but not conquered. John was banished but not conquered. And so of every other consecrated man, they cannot be conquered. It would be no less difficult to conquer all heaven, than a man wholly devoted to God. He is bound to God in covenant engagement, and unless he breaks the contract he will stand in spite of wicked men and devils combined.

In a certain community noted for infidelity, there lived a pious man of God. Unassuming, unpretending, he went about doing good. As a preacher, he was not noted for anything special, only his entire devotedness to God. There came into that vicinity a noted infidel, challenging any man to meet him in discussion on the subject of revealed religion. All the ministers near were waited upon and asked to meet this champion in debate, but they refused. At length this old man of God said he would meet him; but his friends used every means to dissuade him, telling him it was no use he would be beaten and the cause would suffer. But the old man of God would go, and he did go. They met in the presence of a large audience, and the infidel opened the discussion with a flaming speech. All his friends were elated, supposing that the old man would have no argument to meet him. The professed friends of Christ were trembling with fear. The old man was calm. When the infidel sat down, the old minister arose in his place, with a countenance as calm as a summer's eve. He commenced by simply relating his Christian experience. He told how wicked he had been, and how grace found him, and as he talked his old heart grew young and warm. Still he went on talking, many hearts were touched, and the infidel became restless, he could not see where to take hold of the old man's talk. He felt a certain kind of force about it, but could not see how to meet it; still the talk went on. Presently the infidel started for the door, and meeting one of his friends near the door, he asked the champion what he meant. "Well," said he, "I will tell you what it is, I am not afraid to meet any man, in the world, but this thing of meeting God in a man, I do not understand that." He left, while the old man went on, until many hearts were subdued, and in a short time, many were brought to Christ.

Ah, my brethren, it is God in us that gives us power and strength, and this we will have if we are wholly consecrated to him. There are many weak and sickly ministers, spending year after year, and scarcely a soul converted, but why? They are not consecrated to God and the work of the ministry. Some preach for ease, some for gain, and some for heaven knows what. My brethren suffer this word of exhortation, your calling is above every other calling. The cause is not yours, it is God's; be careful how you work. Work not at all unless you can give your whole soul to it. O, consecrate your whole being, and all your interests to God and his cause. Put on to the altar, leave it there, until God shall say, "It is enough, come up higher." In God is your strength. Consecrate, consecrate.—*Religious Telescope.*

A TRUE, STRANGE STORY.

The absolute truth of the following incident is known to many, though the family immediately concerned in it have passed away. Merton Smith, in his early childhood, was a boy of unusual promise; the idol of a doting father, who could scarcely see a fault in him. "Isn't he a likely lad?" the fond parent one day asked of a visitor to whom he had admiringly displayed his child's acquisitions.

"Yes," was the reply; "but such a boy will need careful training. I hope you will think of that." "I guess he'll train himself, mostly," the father answered; "his mother has her hands full with half a dozen girls to bring up. And I like to see him have a mind of his own; so long as he don't take to anything bad, we shall let him have his way pretty much I reckon."

Merton Smith did have his own way. He was bright and beautiful; and though sometimes mischievous, and wilful, he was so much the pet and pride of parents, and sisters, that he received more caresses than rebukes. His father and mother were neither of them pious, and the former seldom attended divine worship; yet both of them felt shocked and mortified when they found that Merton had begun to use profane and ribald language. The mother entreated, and the father commanded him to give up so foolish and disgraceful a habit; but their efforts were alike fruitless. So he grew to opening manhood a swearer and blasphemer.

It happened one sultry day in August that, with two or three young companions, Merton Smith went down to the river for a bath. He was more profane than usual; and talked so shockingly that such proof of one of his comrades less addicted to such folly. At this he became enraged, and let fly a volley of oaths wicked almost beyond belief. Suddenly he stopped; and to the surprise of his companions swam ashore, pale and silent. That silence was perpetual.

He never spoke again.

Mental imbecility had taken the place of his once bright talents; and though he lived several years, he was incapable alike of business or enjoyment, having only sense enough left to dress and feed himself, and to roam around his native village, a wreck and a nuisance.

I do not say that the terrible event thus related was the judgment of heaven upon the young blasphemer—retribution being, as I believe and acknowledge, chiefly deferred to a future state; but I know that we should question the divine right to vindicate, sometimes, even here, its outraged majesty, and to show to presumptuous sinners that God "will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."