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The Religious Intelligencer.

AN EVANGELICAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

REV. J. McLEOD.] "THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST."—Peter. [EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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The Intelligencer.

"THE LORD WILL PROTECT HIS OWN."

"He is faithful that promised."

BY JESSIE HOWARD BELL.

An arrow does not find its way more unerringly to the mark than do these words of Charles Kingsley to the heart of a Christian, and the personal experience of the latter vivifies the simple declaration, "The Lord will protect His own."

God's defence of His people is strikingly illustrated in His dealings with the Children of Israel and their enemies. When the former rebelled and knelt to other gods, He severely punished them, and when they repented of their misdoings He freely forgave, but if their enemies dared to lay the lash upon the backs of His people while they were prostrate, or under the frown of His displeasure, then God rose up in the majesty of His wrath and struck back blow for blow.

Ezekiel abounds in prophecies against those who put their heel upon the necks of this beloved people. "Behold, O Mount Seir, I am against thee, and I will stretch out Mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate. I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord, because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of the Children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity. Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord God, will I make Mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth."

"And I will fill his mountain with his slain men; in thy hills and in thy valleys shall they fall that are slain with the sword; as thou didst rejoice at the inheritance of the house of Israel because it was desolate, so will I do unto thee; thou shalt be desolate, O Mount Seir, and all Idumea, even all of it; and they shall know that I am the Lord."

God's judgments against Edom, Moab and Philistia for their transgressions against the Children of Israel were equally severe.

Through Isaiah, in the forty-fourth chapter, God speaks of His chosen ones thus: "Whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall, for thy sake. No weapon formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn."

Then to Egypt, through Ezekiel, for treachery to Israel, thus: "Behold, I am against thee. All the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the Lord, because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel. When they took hold of thee by the hand thou didst break and rend all their shoulder; and when they leaned upon thee, thou brakest. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God: Behold I will bring a sword upon thee, and cut off man and beast out of thee, and the land of Egypt shall be desolate and waste, and they shall know that I am the Lord."

Against the false shepherds who wilfully neglected their flocks, or knowingly led them astray, thus: "Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves. Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? My sheep wandered through all the mountain, and upon every high hill; yea, My flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them. As I live, saith the Lord God, surely *because* My flock became a prey, and My flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves and fed not My flock, thus saith the Lord God: Behold I am against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand. For thus saith the Lord God: Behold I, even I, will both search My sheep and seek them out. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick. Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns till ye have scattered them abroad, therefore will I save My flock. Behold I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and the lean cattle." And so, all through the history of the Children of Israel, God is represented as the loving Father, the just Judge, and the stern Defender of His people.

If, in those far off days, God was so ready to defend His chosen ones, will He not be just as prompt now to shield from enemies without and foes within those who are trying to serve Him? The experience of every individual who lives to-day is but a repetition of that history which characterized the Children of Israel as a people—sin and consequent suffering, sorrow and joy, alternate darkness and light.

It is just as true to-day as it was ages ago, that when men rebel against Jehovah and kneel to other gods—the gods of Mammon, Avarice, Pride, Selfishness, and all the varied forms of folly—that God, in His own way, punishes them, sometimes in severity and wrath, even as He did the Children of Israel for like transgressions; and when they repent and turn to Him, He is just as ready to receive them and forgive their sins as He was those of that wonderful people. He says, "For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth with him and smote him. I hid Me and was wroth, and he went frowardly in the way of his heart." Then, when the sinner had repented, the Holy One adds: "I have seen his ways and *I will heal him*; I will lead him also and restore comforts unto him." It is as impossible in the nineteenth century as it was in the world's infancy, for a man or a nation to stand when God, in displeasure, turns away His face. Many a man can trace, like a golden thread shining through a life otherwise dark with mist and storm, the leadings of the hand of God.

It is an incontrovertible fact that God always punishes for sins knowingly committed. When men wander into forbidden paths, when they descend into sloughs of iniquity, He *permits* the mire to overflow them, that they may call upon Him to lift them out and cleanse them. When they are determined to wade through the depths of sin He permits the billows of consequent suffering to roll over them that they may learn their own weakness and the value of His strength; when they wilfully kindle the fires of perversity He permits the flames to scorch them that they may learn to dread His frown and obey His commands. Though for wrong-doing He causes them to be tossed with tempest and not comforted, while for a small moment He forsakes them, yet, when they turn from their evil ways, with great mercies will He gather them to His bosom. The Lord will surely protect His own. Though with His own hand He in love often chastises His children, yet will He deal as severely with those who lift up the heel against His chosen ones as He did with the enemies of Israel.

It is a well known fact that often a man's worst enemies are those that rule his own soul. Blessed is he who believes that God has the power and the will to help him quell these inward enemies. The Father will surely come to the aid of the child who in the fierceness of the struggle cries out, "Be merciful to me a sinner." He will never turn a deaf ear to such a cry; He will protect his own; He will deliver their souls in peace from the battle that is against them.

If the Christian's heart is right before God nothing can hurt him. Though surrounded by evils he will have the power to shake them off, as Paul did the viper, and remain unharmed. "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." "No deadly thing shall hurt you." "Nothing shall harm you." "The sun shall not smite thee by day nor the moon by night."

"Our God," says Malachi, "is like a refiner's fire." With His own hand He purges the dross from the gold in the souls of men, and He values the gold at its true weight and merit. He separates the diamond from the rude quartz, He subjects the rough stone to the merciless cutting and grinding of the lapidary, that it may come out a flashing gem that will gleam in His crown through all eternity. "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God."

THE DUTY OF TRAINING CHILDREN.

It is the mistake of many parents to suppose that their chief duty is in loving and counselling their children, rather than in loving and training them; that they are faithfully to show their children what they ought to do, rather than to make them do it. The training power of the parent is, as a rule, sadly undervalued.

Too many parents seem to take it for granted that because their children are by nature very timid and retiring, or very bold and forward; very extravagant in speech and manner, or quite disinclined to express even a dutiful sense of gratitude and trust; reckless in their generosity, or pitiably selfish; disposed to overstudy, or given wholly to play; one-sided in this or that or the other trait or quality or characteristic,—therefore those children must remain so, unless, indeed, they outgrow their faults, or are induced by wise counsel and loving entreaty to overcome them.

"My boy is irrepressible," says one father. "He is full of dash and spirits. He makes havoc in the house while at home; and when he goes out to a neighbor's he either has things his own way, or he don't want to go *there* again. I really wish he had a quieter nature; but, of course, I can't change him. I have given him a great many talks about this; and I hope he will outgrow the worst of it. Still he is just what he is and punishing him would'nt make him anybody else." A good mother, on the other hand, is exercised because her little son is so bashful that he is always mortifying her before strangers. He will put his finger in his mouth, and hang down his head, and twist one foot over the other, and refuse to shake hands, or to answer the visitor's "How do you do, my boy?" or even to say, "Thank you," with distinctness, when anything is given to him. And the same trouble is found with the tastes as with the temperaments of children. One is always ready to hear stories told or read, but will not sit quiet and look at pictures, or use a slate and pencil. Another, a little older, will devour books of travel or adventure; but has no patience with a simple story of home life, or a book of instruction in matters of practical fact.

Now it is quite inevitable that children should have these peculiarities; but it is not inevitable that they should continue to exhibit them offensively. Children can be trained in almost any direction. Their natural tendencies may be so curbed and guided as to show themselves in disagreeable prominence. It is a parent's privilege, and it is a parent's duty, to make his children, by God's blessing, to be and to do what they ought to be and do, rather than what they would like to be and do. If indeed this were not so, a parent's mission would be sadly limited in scope, and diminished in importance and preciousness. The parent who doesn't recognize the possibility of training his children as well as instructing them misses one of his highest privileges as a parent, fails of his most important work for his children.

The skilled physician, in charge of a certain institution for the treatment of simple-minded and imperfectly developed children, has said, that some children are brought to him who are lacking in just one important trait or quality, while they possess a fair measure of every other. Or, it may be said that they have an excess of the trait or quality opposite to that which they lack. One girl, for example, will be wholly without a sense of honesty; will even be possessed with a love of stealing for stealing's sake, carrying it to such an extent that when seated at the table she will snatch a ball of butter from a plate, and wrap it up in a fold of her dress. If she should be unchecked in this propensity until she were a grown woman, she might prove one of the fashionable ladies who take books or dry goods from the stores where they are shopping, under the influence of "kleptomania." Again, a boy has no sense of truth. He will tell lies without any apparent temptation to do so, even against his own obvious interests. All of us have seen persons of this sort in mature life. Some of them are to-day in places of prominence in Christian work and influence. Yet another child is without any sense of reverence, or of modesty, or of natural affection. One lacks all control of his temper, another of his nerves. And so on in great variety. The physician of that institution is by no means in despair over any of these cases. It is his mission to find out the child's special lack, and to meet it; to learn what traits are in excess and to curb them; to know the child's needs, and to train him accordingly.

Every child is in a sense a partially developed, an imperfectly formed child. There are no absolutely perfect children in this world. All of them need restraining in some things and stimulating in others. And every imperfect child can be helped towards a symmetrical character by wise Christian training. Each home should be an institution for the treatment of imperfectly developed children. Each father and mother should be the skilled physician in charge of such an institution. There are glorious possibilities in this direction; and there are weighty responsibilities also.

Your child needs training. It is not enough that you love him, and instruct him, and warn him, and plead with him, and pray for him, and have faith in his behalf; you must *train* him. You must recoguize his faults and correct them. You must know in what he comes short, and bring him up to the right standard, where he is in excess, and there curb him. And you *can* do this. God will enable you to do it, if you perceive your duty and would perform it. God never lays a responsibility upon his children, for themselves or for others, without giving therewith the ability to perform what is needful. With all the difficulty of your present condition and surroundings, you can train that child of yours effectively. What matters it, Christian father, that your wife is a helpless invalid, or that you are without a wife; that your business presses you; that you have no taste for educational processes? What matters it, Christian mother, that your child's father is absorbed in business, is little with his family; or that he has been laid in the grave? If the responsibility of the training of your child clearly rests on you, you can have strength and wisdom and faith for the task; and you can do the work as successfully and as completely as under the most favorable conditions you can imagine. Your "*sufficiency* is of God."

Are you training your child satisfactorily? You ought to be. You can do it if you will.

KNOWING OUR FRIENDS IN HEAVEN.

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D.

The transfer from earth to Heaven does not (according to the only Book which reveals Heaven) destroy personal identity. On the contrary, God's Word assumes continually that this identity will be preserved. The same living organism, the same characteristics which made the Patriarch Abraham a different man from everybody else in Chaldea will make Abraham a different person from any one else in Heaven. These physical and mental traits enabled his neighbors in "Ur" to recognize him. He has carried with him into the eternal world also such personal characteristics that he is recognizable there. According to Christ's statement, the rich man "saw Lazarus in Abraham's bosom." He also declared that the righteous will yet sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in that Celestial Kingdom. It is preposterous to imagine that these three persons are some other persons than those who passed by those names on earth. No matter what change death and the resurrection may produce on the forms or organisms known as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The body here changes by chemical processes, so that there are entirely new particles in my physical form from what were there six or seven years ago. Yet I am the same person. My individuality is not changed in the slightest degree. Lincoln the nursing infant and Lincoln the noble President were the same individual.

In like manner, Paul before the throne is and inevitably must be the identical Paul who preached at Athens and was martyred at Rome. When he longed to "depart and to be with Christ" he expected to be not somebody else, but the same individual. Moses died fifteen centuries before the advent of Jesus Christ. Yet there was a personality still existing, who appeared at the time of Christ's transfiguration on the mount and who was addressed by him as Moses. The prophet Elijah, who had died seven hundred years before, was there also. When the great apostle speaks of his Thessalonian converts as his "glory and joy in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ" he assuredly expected to meet the same persons in heaven that he had been laboring with in Thessalonica. If they were not the same people, and if he could not meet them there, how could they be to him a "crown" or a "joy?"

This point is clearly in accordance with Scripture and common sense. Whatever change may be produced by death, personal identity will not be altered by one jot or tittle. The sinner who sins here will be the same sinner who will be punished in the world of woe. The believer who is welcomed with the glad salute "Come, thou blessed of my Father!" will be the same person who on earth had done the Father's bidding. Without this preservation of perfect identity the whole idea of a future retribution of rewards and punishments would be an absurd impossibility.

If identity is preserved in eternity, will the faculty of memory survive also the grave? Undoubtedly it will. The obliteration of memory would amount to a partial destruction of the individual. It would remove some of heaven's richest enjoyments. If I cannot remember what my Redeemer has done and suffered for me, how can I join in the ever "new song" of grateful praise before his throne? The obliteration of memory would take away the severest and the bitterest of sin's just retributions in Hell. Upon this point the description of Lazarus and of the selfish rich man "in torment" throws a distinct light, for Abraham said: "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime received thy good things."

Put now together these two facts: (1) personal identity is not lost in eternity, and (2) memory remains also unimpaired. It follows inevitably that we shall know each other in Heaven. When David cried out, over his dead boy, "I shall go to him; but he shall not return to me!" that bereaved father expected to meet again the child whose spirit had flown home to God. Certainly, we shall not be more stupid in Heaven than we are on earth. If I could recognize such a person as Chalmers in his pulpit, I cannot fail to recognize that same servant of God in his celestial appareling. Martin Luther, in his "Table Talks," makes much of this intercourse with father and mother and kindred in the heavenly home. Sharp, unpoetic old Doctor Emmons used to say: "I hope to have some talks with the Apostle Paul in Heaven." And who of us would not experience a fearful shock, even amid the hallelujah raptures of Paradise, if the sweet affections of kinship were to be obliterated forever? Surely, God would not so punish those whom he loves to bless.

That infants will be doomed to the everlasting weakness and helplessness and ignorance of infancy seems, to my mind, impossible. No mother would ever want to see her darling babe stunted to an unchanged babyhood even here. It would become a pitiable monstrosity. Half the charm of childhood is its constant growth; its delightful openings like the rosebud, to new thought and development. The idea of an undeveloped infancy in Heaven would be almost a libel on the Creator! My darling boy will be none the less my own child in the "Father's House" because (like another child at Nazareth) he has increased in stature and knowledge, and in favor with God and man. That I shall know him there—if God's rich grace doth bring me there—I have no more doubt of than I have of the existence of a heavenly rest. Good Dean Alford struck a chord in every Christian heart, when he sang:

"Oh! then what raptured greetings.
On Heaven's happy shore;
What knittings severed friendships up,
Where partings are no more!"

—*N. Y. Independent.*

THE TOWN CLERK OF EPHESUS.

He is one of the representative figures of the New Testament, full of suggestiveness. Some one has said that his address, if not an apostle's sermon, at least shows him to be a magistrate prudent, considerate, firm and just; one whom many Christian rulers could well make their model. His manly, yet conciliatory bearing, stands in bold contrast to that of the crafty Demetrius, who, like modern demagogues, knew how to fan the flames of fanaticism by his harangues to an ignorant mob.

The Grammateus or town clerk in those days was an officer of repute, like our Secretary of State. He made and preserved the records, and published the decrees of the province or municipality to which he was attached. Rome at this time was jealously watching everything that portended sedition in her dependencies, and it was a capital offence to participate in a riotous proceeding. The silversmith Demetrius is a "type of those dishonest religious zealots who pretend that they are governed by zeal for sound doctrine, the honor of God, and the preservation of truth and order, while their real object is solely to retain their income, ease, and honors. He intended to appeal alike to the religious fanaticisms of his hearers, although he hypocritically represents the interests of the goddess as a higher and more important consideration than any other."

On the other hand, this Greek magistrate, whom God used to control the people and save His appostle, was characterized by four qualities—courage, calmness, caution, and candor.

It took not a little nerve to enter the theatre holding 50,000 people, the largest of the world, and face a riot which was born both of ignorance and avarice. The people were sensitive about Diana, and still more sensitive about their pockets. The former was polluted, the latter plundered. "Our craft is in danger!" was the cry of slave dealers, when abolitionists preached liberty. "Our craft is in danger!" is the cry of rumsellers to-day, as the red ribbon and blue ribbon brigades are pushing their victories.

Caution and calmness are needed, not only to avoid needless exasperation, but to wisely direct all measures by which success is utilized. Intemperate speech is as dangerous as immoderate drinking. Candor is to inspire our judgments. In all reforms we are to remember the Town Clerk's advice, and to do nothing rashly. It will not do to impugn the motives of those who differ from us. Paul, and Gaius, and Aristarchus were neither robbers of church or blasphemers of Diana. "A soft answer turneth away wrath" in many a theological wrangle, as well as in a secret riot. In all reformatory work, patience and sweetness of spirit, considerateness and kindness, will carry the day against violence and wrong.—*Christian Union.*

FEDELE.

Among the Alban hills, which are situated some miles from Rome, a lad was tending his father's goats, when his eye caught the glitter of arms in the distance, and he knew at once that the King of Etruria, who had threatened to make war upon the Roman republic, was about to carry out his threat. Without waiting to communicate with his friends, he set off at the top of his speed towards the great city, to warn its inhabitants of their danger, and bid them prepare for the coming foe.

Lithe and active, the little brown mountaineer went bounding down the slopes, and across the wide marshy plain, bestrewn with huge fragments of rock, and intersected by sluggish streams and reedy morasses, amid which the red-eyed buffaloes lurked. On he sped, as far as his sinewy legs would carry him, but he had a long way to go; the sun was scorching—there was no pleasant shade of leafy trees to shelter him from its fierce glare, nor any sweet cool water to refresh him, for all about it was unfit to drink, being brackish and muddy. Through a dreary desolate region he had to go. His limbs were ready to sink under him, his thirst almost intolerable; yet the lad's courage did not fail—he kept bravely on, and at length entered the city gate, through which he passed, and ascended the hill to the capitol, where the senate of the republic held its sittings. He was just able to whisper the fatal news; then he sank down and complained of a sharp pain in his foot, on examination of which it was found that a thorn had penetrated very deeply beneath the skin. It was necessary that this should be extracted, and the lad died under the operation. Grateful for such a noble deed of devotion to his country, the senate decreed that henceforth all their gate-keepers should come from Vitrochiano, the boy's native village, and that they should be called *Fedele*—the faithful.

How imperishable is the memory of a good deed! In the beautiful city of Florence there is a marble bust of this lad Vitrochiano, in the act of extracting the thorn from his foot; this is not strictly in accordance with historic truth—he was too much overcome by fatigue to attempt this; it was done for him with a fatal result.—*N. Y. Observer.*

THE FUNERAL OF THE SOUL.

Robert Hall vividly pictures the thought, and asks, "What would be the funeral obsequies of a lost soul?" Where shall we find the tears fit to be wept at such a spectacle, the tokens of commiseration equal to the occasion? Would it suffice for the sun to veil his light, and the moon her brightness; to cover the ocean with mourning and the heavens with sackcloth? Were Nature to become vocal, would it be possible for her to utter a groan too deep, or a cry too piercing to express the magnitude and extent of such a catastrophe?

A Philadelphia paper tells of a scoffing infidel who was reproved by a business associate, who reminded him that his soul might that night be required of him. Lifting his finger to heaven, he impiously cried, "*I'm ready!*" In one minute he fell dead on the sidewalk. His last invitation of mercy had been rejected. Having hardened his neck, he was suddenly destroyed, and that without remedy. Who can paint the moment after death! What appalling revelations will burst upon the soul. The scoffer dying with a sneer upon his lips, the swearer with an oath, and the saint with a prayer, wake to meet the irreversible destiny which he has chosen. The believer goes to his crown and his kingdom, the sinner to unending remorse. The one goes to a bridal scene, the other to a funeral. A bridgeless gulf lies between them forever.

"In that lone land of deep despair,
No Sabbath heavenly light shall rise;
No God regard the bitter prayer,
Nor Saviour call you to the skies."

SEVEN SHORT RULES FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS.

1. Never neglect daily private prayer; and when you pray remember that God is present, and that he hears your prayers. (Heb. xi. 6.)

2. Never neglect daily private Bible-reading; and when you read remember that God is speaking to you, and that you are to believe and act upon what he says. I believe all backsliding begins with the neglect of these two rules. (John v. 39.)

3. Never profess to ask God for anything you do not want. Tell him the truth about yourself, however bad it makes you; and then ask him for Christ's sake to forgive you for what you are, and to make you what you ought to be. (John iv. 24.)

4. Never let a day pass without trying to do something for Jesus. Every night reflect on what Jesus has done for you, and then ask yourself, What have I done to-day for him? (Matt. v. 13-16.)

5. If ever you are in doubt as to a thing being right or wrong, go to your room and kneel down and ask God's blessing upon it. (Col. iii. 16.) If you cannot do this it is wrong. (Rom. xiv. 23.)

6. Never take your Christianity from Christians, or argue that because such and such people do so and so, therefore you may. (John xxi. 22.) You are to ask yourself, "How would Christ act in my place?" and strive to follow him. (John x. 27.)

7. Never believe what you feel if it contradicts God's word. Ask yourself, "Can what I feel be true?" and if both cannot be true, believe God and make your own heart the liar. (Rom. iii. 4; 1 John v. 10, 11.)—*Brownlow North.*

Men talk too much about the world. Each one of us here, let the world go as it will, and be victorious or not victorious, has he not a life of his own to lead? One life; a little gleam of time between two eternities; no second chance to us forevermore.—*Carlyle.*

A THOUGHT FOR INFIDELS.

"No candid observer," says the *Springfield Republican*, "will deny that whatever of good there may be in our civilization is the product of Christianity. Still less can he deny that the grand motives which are working for the elevation and purification of our society are strictly Christian. The immense energies of the Christian Church, stimulated by a love that shrinks from no obstacle, have all been towards this great aim of universal purification. These millions of sermons and exhortations, which are a constant power for good, these countless prayers and song of praise, on which the heavy-laden lift the hearts above the temptations and the sorrows of the world, are all the product of faith in Jesus Christ. That which gives us protection by day and by night—the dwellings we live in, the clothes we wear, the institutions of social order, all these are the direct offspring of Christianity. All that distinguishes us from the Pagan world—all that makes us what we are, and all that stimulates us in the task of making our selves better than we are—is Christian. A belief in Jesus Christ is the very fountain-head of every thing that is desirable and praiseworthy in our civilization, and this civilization is the flower of time. Humanity has reached its noblest thrift, its grandest altitudes of excellence, its high-water mark, through the influence of this faith."

The *Golden Rule* says, that the world learns but slowly the deep meaning of Christ's saying: "The kingdom of God is within you." Society is so little Christianized that it judges chiefly by the externals. The commercial standard is the one by which the world measures and ranks manhood. A man must be worth something to society, to commerce, to art, or he is not regarded. The *Golden Rule* continues: "Now, our point is, that from the Christian point of view this is all wrong. Christ did not die for the talented. He did not visit the earth in order to save those of great abilities. He does not stop to ascertain how much a person is worth to society before He offers salvation to him. The commercial standard is not the celestial standard of regard. He did not love man because he was great in capacity, and would become a very useful agent to Him. This is a utilitarianism such as men use in their judgment one of another. God discards it. The ear of Infinite Love never listened to the whisper of utility. Strength is no more to Him than weakness. Men and angels are equally dear. The most of our distinctions are unknown to God. Don't forget that when you pause to think what you really are."

WATCH.—Who, of all the men of the world, most needs this exhortation? The Christian. Why?

First. Because he is a soldier, surrounded by enemies, who are waiting to destroy his soul. They are ready to take advantage of his carelessness or neglect of duty; they are vigilant; they are numerous; they are subtle. Therefore he should watch.

Second. Because he is a pilgrim, travelling through a hostile land. There may be snares in his way; stones, over which he may stumble; pits, into which he may fall; enticers, who would strive to make him linger on his way, and lure him from his heavenly home. Therefore he must watch.

Third. Because he is a steward. He has precious treasures to take care of—his own soul, his talents, his time, his Master's honor. He must take care he does not lose the first, misuse the second, waste the third, and endanger the fourth. Therefore he need watch.

Fourth. Because he is a servant. His Lord is now absent; His return is now uncertain; it may be years hence, but it may be to-night. When He comes back He will expect all to be in readiness for His reception, each one at his post, each one looking out for Him. Therefore the Christian must watch.—*Christian Weekly.*

THE TOW LINE.

"Ofttimes I have seen," says Oliver Wendell Holmes, "a tall ship glide by against the tide as if drawn by some invisible tow line, with a hundred strong arms pulling it. Her sails unfilled, her streamers drooping, she had neither side wheel nor stern wheel; still she moved on stately, in serene triumph, as if with her own life. But I knew that on the other side of the ship, hidden beneath the great hulk that swam so majestically, there was a little toiling steamtug with a heart of fire and arms of iron, that was tugging it bravely on; and I knew that if the little steam tug untwined her arms and left the ship, it would wallow and roll about, and drift hither and thither, and go off with the refluent tide no man knows whither. And so I have known more than one genius high decked, full freighted, wide-sailed, gay pennoned, that but for the bare, toiling arms, and brave, warm-beating heart of the faithful little wife that nestled close in his shadow and clung to him so that no wind or wave could part them, would soon have gone down with the stream and been heard of no more."

THE KIND OF MEN WANTED.—In answer to the important question, "What is the great want of this age?" the *Southern Home Journal* thus forcibly and beautifully speaks: "The great want of the age is *men*. Men who are not for sale. Men who are honest, sound from centre to circumference, true to the heart's core. Men who will condemn wrong in friend or foe, in themselves as well as others. Men whose consciences are as steady as the needle to the pole. Men who will stand for the right if the heavens totter and the earth reels. Men who can tell the truth and look the world and the devil right in the eye. Men that neither brag nor run. Men that neither flag nor flinch. Men who can have courage without shouting to it. Men in whom the courage of everlasting life runs still, deep, and strong. Men too large for sectarian bonds. Men who know their message and tell it. Men who know their places and fill them. Men who mind their own business. Men who will not lie, (nor defraud, nor steal.) Men who are not too lazy to work, nor too proud to be poor. Men who are willing to eat what they have earned, and wear what they have paid for."

DO IT WITH THY MIGHT.—A medical man was one day returning to his home, when he saw a child in great peril in the street. Another instant, and she would have been crushed under the iron shod hoofs, which were almost upon her. At the risk of his own life he rushed forward, and seizing the little one bore her safely to the pavement.

He looked into the child's face, pushing aside her flapping sun-bonnet, and what were his feelings when he saw that it was his own daughter whom he had rescued! So he who hastes to save the perishing, often finds reward he little expected. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

A student asked Dr. Archibald Alexander the question 'What is virtue?' His simple and admirable reply was, 'Virtue consists in doing our duty in the several relations which we sustain in respect to ourselves, to our fellow-men, and to God, as known from Reason, Conscience, and Revelation.' '—*Watts.*

LET IT DRY.—Mr. Spurgeon once went to preach in a church a little outside of London. The day was wet and muddy, and the pants of Mr. Spurgeon were plentifully covered with dirt. A good deacon in the vestry said: "Bro. Spurgeon, let me get a brush and take off some of that mud; you can't go into the pulpit in that state." "Don't be foolish, Deacon," said Mr. Spurgeon, in his usual good-humored way; "don't you see the mud is wet, and if you try to brush it off now you will rub the stain into the cloth? Let it dry, and then it will come off easy enough, and leave no mark." There is an admirable hint here for every one. When evil spoken against, as we we may be for the sake of truth, and men throw mud at us, do not be in a hurry about brushing it off. Too great eagerness in this respect is apt to rub the stain into the cloth. Let it dry, and then by and by, if need be, it can be removed by a little effort.

BIRTHDAY REFLECTIONS.—Each year as it rolls by seems to rivet with more enduring importance a day of anniversary, more especially one of an event which was the ushering of a responsible creature into an eternity of misery or joy. As boys, we have looked forward to these anniversaries as the occasion of a holiday; as men we look back on them as so many waymarks on which are noted the sins and mercies of successive years. They were then seasons of unmingled pleasures, now of self-reproach and melancholy retrospect. Opportunities irreparably suffered to slip by—years of self-indulgence—friends alienated, others wantonly grieved in some instances, the hour of reconciliation lost for ever, because they have gone to their long home. Two lines in the frontispiece of a little hymn-book, which I have not seen since I was five years old, seem branded with letters of fire on my memory:—

"Oh! if she would but come again,
I think I'd vex her so no more!"

F. W. ROBERTSON.

RANDOM READINGS.

It was William Hazlitt who wrote—'Books wind into the heart; the poet's verse slides into the current of our blood. We read them when young, we remember them when old. We read there of what has happened to others; we feel that it has happened to ourselves. Books are to be had everywhere cheap and good. We breathe constantly the air of books. We owe everything to their authors, on this side of barbarism.'

He that is sincerely obedient will not pick and choose what commands to obey and what to reject. He will lay such a charge upon his whole man as the mother of Christ did on the servants at the feast: "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it." With eyes, ears, hands, heart, body, soul, he will endeavour seriously and lovingly to observe and diligently do whatever Christ says unto him.—*T. Brooks.*

The day is coming when our garments shall shine as the sun, but meanwhile our glory is hidden; we are princes in disguise. It doth not yet appear what we shall be: only we know that in the resurrection day we shall put on "incorruption" and "immortality" and "glory," and what we know not now we shall know hereafter. Our coat of many colors shall attract even the eye of angels.

O blessed love! which from the throne
Hath stooped where we so lowly lay,
To share the lot of fallen man,
And change our darkness into day.
O blessed life! which ever spent
In love's behest the painful hours;
And left through all the wilderness,
In every footprint, heaven's flowers.
O love and life! On cross, on throne,
Hear us, our Saviour, as we pray;
Give us to share thy life, thy love,
And by thy cross to pass to Day.

"AS."—That little word has cost me more trouble than the whole vocabulary of the English language. It often makes me tremble from head to foot, and not unfrequently brings tears to my eyes. It is not the two letters of which it is formed, or just the word itself, but the place which it occupies in one of the petitions of that inimitable prayer Jesus Christ taught to his disciples: "Forgive me my debts *as* I forgive my debtors." There it stands as the deciding index on the beam of the balance; while in one scale is placed my prayer for forgiveness, and in the other the exact weight of my pardon. As I forgive, so, Lord, forgive me. We repeat the Lord's Prayer from earliest infancy to our dying day; yet if we indulge in an unforgiving spirit we unconsciously plead for punishment, instead of mercy. The question is: Can I conscientiously use the argument, "for I also forgive every one?" And, if not, can I expect my sin-darkened soul to be washed and made whiter than snow?

"There are times when God comes near to his people. There are occasions when efforts to advance his cause are specially blessed. There are harvest seasons for souls. This is proved by the whole history of the progress of the Church of Christ. At such times the hearts of men are ready to receive the seed of the Word. It falls as upon tilled ground, moistened by the rains of heaven. Where before all seemed hard and barren, we find mellowness and readiness to receive the seed, and to bring forth fruit. Such a season, we have good reason to believe, is now upon us. Pastors, and elders, and private Christians, will, therefore, suffer us to offer them a word of exhortation; and that exhortation is, that they be bold. The harvest is ripe, it is perishing. All around us are those who have heard the Gospel for years, but who have neglected its claims. It may be that even now the Spirit of God is striving with them—is convincing them of sin, of danger, of a judgment to come. Do not, then, delay. Do not wait for them to come to you. Go you to them. Speak to them. Pray for them. Remember that immortal souls are going down to death. Delay not, lest while you tarry they vanish from your sight.

Survey the things that raise your pride; consider how vain they are. Is it silver and gold? The dust of the earth!—perishing treasures!—poor comforters in an hour of inward distress, of sickness or death! Is it beauty, and youth, and strength? What withering flowers are all these!—what gay and dying vanities, that are wasting hourly, and may be blasted with an east wind! Is it honor and fame among men? What an empty thing is the breath of mortals!—how subject to change! How unjust and feeble a foundation for pride! It is sometimes given to the worst of men without due merit; and even when it is best merited, and most justly given, it is but a sound that vanishes into empty air. Is it high birth that makes you proud and scornful? This is the honor of your ancestors more than your own, and perhaps it was not raised at first upon virtue or true merit; then it is a worthless thing indeed. Is it your wisdom and knowledge that puffs you up with conceit? It is a sign you want one large branch of it—that is, the knowledge of yourself, for that would make you humble.—*Watts.*