

Thoughts.

[On receiving leaves—gathered by a Lady Missionary from the graves of Ann H. and the little Maria Judon.]
Down through the years departed,
The form of One we see,
In sorrow deep, for those who sleep
Beneath the "Hopia tree";
His dear Love's deeds heroic,
Are precious memories now;
Faith brings to sight, the crowd so bright,
For her angelic brow.

The breeze just stirs the water,
The wavelets wash the strand,
Could Ocean's moan, with prophet's tone
Reveal the future grand:
Low murmuring—"God's ordained thee
His sovereign power to show;
Through grace thou'lt light, a Beacon
bright
On India's shores to glow:

Thy prayers for Barnab answered—
Jehovah's heard them all—
Booth's image must, lie in the dust,
With the Pagodas tall:
The temples of Messiah
Shall deck these hills and plains,
He will possess, and richly bless
The earth o'er which He reigns."

The wild flowers bloom and wither
Upon those lonely graves,
And he who wept, has long since slept
Mid Ocean's coral caves:
While God has raised up thousands,
Who fear not pain nor loss,
And o'er the world, they have unfurled
The banner of the Cross.

The "midnight oil" is burning
For student and for sage,
The "classic lore" they ponder o'er
May yield perchance to age;
But Judson's Burmese Bible
Shall Pyramids outlast;
By millions read, 'twill radiance shed,
Till time itself is past.

Mrs. Lizzie E. Palmer.
Douglas Harbor, N. B.

Criticisms of Ministers.

BY REV. A. T. WOLFE, D. D.

How often we are greeted with the remark, "Rev. Mr. Blank is leaving the church at Jonesville." "Why, what is the matter?" "Oh, some dissatisfaction in the congregation. Some of the people got down on him, and he has to leave." It is a sad fact that some such trivial conversation as the above is the explanation of a large percentage of the pastoral dissolutions in our Presbyteries. A small minority can usually effect a change in most congregations. The selection and retaining of a pastor is usually dependent on the mere matter of the personal likes and dislikes of the people. They seem to forget that God's ministers are God's messengers, sent directly to them, and that it is God himself who speaks to them by the mouths of his servants. They mistake entirely the nature of the ministerial calling. They look on the minister as a man who, on the Sabbath, is to entertain them with fine sermons, and to flatter their vanity by his good social qualities and polite palaver.

This is one great source of the criticism and fault finding so prevalent in most Christian congregations. You will have to start out like Diogenes with his lantern to find a minister who is not the subject of fault-finding from some source. If it were not sad, it would be infinitely amusing to hear the criticisms of different people.

One minister is not pious enough; another is not social, doesn't visit enough; this one preaches too long, that one not long enough; this one speaks too loud, another raises and lowers his voice often; one speaks too fast, while another is a slow coach. This one is proud, dresses too well; ah! but this man is slovenly. Another would do pretty well, but his wife has some great fault; this one is too flowery, that one too plain in his preaching. Mr. A—would do very well, but he reads his sermons, and I abhor a paper in the pulpit. Mr. B—extemporizes, and often gets his sermons slightly mixed in the delivery. One man is too bigoted, but the next man is too liberal.

These are not imaginary but actual criticisms which the writer has at different times picked up. But even if these criticisms were in a measure just, would it not be better not to express them about those whom God has called, and his Church sent forth to preach the everlasting Gospel? If congregations wait for the gospel till they hear it from a perfect minister, they will never hear it. Some years ago a congregation in Virginia wrote to President Rice, of Prince Edward Theological Seminary, for a minister. They wanted a man of first-rate talents, for they had run down considerably, and needed building up. They wanted one who could write well, for some of the young people were very nice about that matter. They wanted one also, who could visit a good deal, for their former pastor had neglected that. They wanted a man of very gentlemanly deportment, for some thought a great deal of that. And so they went on describing a perfect minister. The

The worst disease—Dyspepsia
The best Cure—K. D. C.

last thing they mentioned was that they gave their last preacher \$350, but if the Doctor would send them such a man as they described, they would raise another \$50, making it \$400. The Doctor replied immediately, and told them that they had better forthwith make out a "call" for old Dr. Dwight in Heaven, for he did not know any one in this world that answered their description; and as Dr. Dwight had been living so long on spiritual food, he would not need much for the body, and possibly might live on the \$400 they proposed to pay!

But seriously, when a man begins to backslide and to grow cold in the Master's service; when he begins to have a distaste for the service of God and the worship of the sanctuary, then he begins to look for occasions to take offence. The man who is looking for such occasions soon finds them, and very soon you hear him uttering the stale expression that has been in vogue for two thousand years, "I don't like that preacher." Then he blows the trumpet of criticism tries to form a party, or stays away entirely from the worship of God's house.

But who made you a judge? Or how will your neglect of duty improve either the minister or the church? Every preacher of Christ has many discouragements, and if you throw hindrances in the way or absent yourself from the sanctuary will you not add to those discouragements? Those who wish to see their pastor able, freer, more wholehearted and cheery must hold up his hands. They must make him feel the stimulus of a warm earnest friendship. Nor will absence from worship cure these fancied ills. It only creates ill will and strife to the injury of the Church. Neither will it help your own soul. Christian graces cannot grow up and flourish under the deadly night shade of dominant criticism. You have covenanted to worship Christ the Lord, and how will your absence from worship and your fault-finding please Him?

And may you not have to answer for these things at the judgment day? And how about your children, if you are a parent? You want to see them saved. But a single word of criticism of either the church or the minister may create in their minds a prejudice that will be the means of their eternal ruin. The ministers of Christ may in many ways fall short of your standard, for they are only "men of like passions" with yourselves. "But we have their treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."—2 Cor. iv: 7. They who preach Christ, however imperfect they may be, are still the chosen vessels of the Lord, and he who hinders the work by invidious criticisms or drives a pastor from his church, incurs a fearful responsibility. It is also time for Presbyteries and Synods to say, that minorities shall no longer rule the churches by getting up a little fuss and driving ministers from their pulpits, because forsooth, a few happen not to "like the preacher."—*Can. Presbyterian.*

Pray On.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

"God is the rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." This single precious promise is linked with every act of obedience and every effectual prayer. God rewards labor, and every pastor preaches his Gospel message, every mission school teacher teaches his or her class, and every conscientious parent tills the soil of his children's hearts in this simple faith.

God rewards obedience. Every blow of Noah's hammer on the ark was an audible proof of his belief that God would be as good as His word. God rewards sincere prayer in all cases where the conduct of the petitioner proves that the prayer is sincere. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." On these promises the Christian plants his knees when he bows in fervent supplication.

But O to what long trials we are often subjected when our heavenly Father would test our faith, or else would strengthen our faith by its own exercise! Christ kept the Syrophenician mother at arm's length to try the measure of her faith. She won her cause and her Master's approval. Her success has encouraged millions of mothers and of wives to press their suit at the throne of grace. "Prayer," said Phillips Brooks, "is not conquering God's reluctance, but taking hold upon God's willingness." His holding back of the blessing is often a blessing in itself, for it tests faith, deepens humility, and produces a submissive spirit. The Master's injunction to us is "to pray and not to faint"; that is, not to turn coward or lose heart. He does not forbid us to wrestle or to agonize, when the object for which we are praying is as dear to us as life itself.

K. D. C. CURES MIDNIGHT
DYSPEPSIA.

"The grief that weighs me down," said a Christian, "is the fact that of my six children not one of them loves Jesus. I am left alone." But she made her daily life an attraction toward Christ, and kept on praying. Five of her daughters were converted during a powerful revival. "Now, mother," said one of them, "let us have a day of prayer for unawakened sister." They did so, and very soon the last bolted heart opened to the knocking Saviour. "The victory that overcame was faith."

Several years ago a godly woman in my church became very anxious for her husband's conversion. She sometimes talked with him about his soul—never scolding or in a hectoring fashion. It was her habit to conduct family worship, and her husband always attended the service very respectfully. One Sunday morning she determined to spend the whole day in prayer for her husband, without saying anything to him about it. She did so, and the woman of Canaan never laid hold on the Master with more importunity. The next morning her husband came and took the Bible out of her hands, and very tenderly said to her, "Dearie, you have read this long enough to us; now let me read it." He did so, while she listened with a sort of dazed delight. On the following morning he offered prayer himself, and at the next communion season he united with the church. That good woman prayed with her lips, and with her life also, she "did not faint." She believed in prayer, and that is more than thousands of good people do who talk very piously, and yet live and act in perfect contradiction to every empty prayer they offer.

I know well the severe strain that is often put on the faith of parents, as well as of pastors. Probably more than one Christian wife is reading this article whose heart is often bowed down to the dust on account of the continued impotence of that husband who is more than half of her own life. To all such I would say, "Pray on!" Never give him up. When you sit alone at the communion table, sundered from him whom your soul loveth, plead for him as a woman's heart can only pray. Keep his conversion before you as perseveringly as in years gone by. Cyrus W. Field kept before his mind's eye the accomplishment of his ocean telegraph enterprise.

Not only ask God to convert your husband, but shape your life and conduct also to help convert him. Your prayers will not likely avail much if you contradict them by your repulsive conduct, or ill temper, or frivolous behavior. Don't ask God to lead your husband toward the Cross and then stand in his way. I don't believe that God ever grants a prayer to which we give the lie by our daily conduct. If you want your husband or your son converted, then live for their conversion. Not only pray for them, but draw them with the silken hawser of your affection, and strengthen that with the attraction of a sweet-tempered consistent life. Practice a holy tact. If your husband is more ready to hear the Gospel message in some other church than your own, don't quarrel with him; go where he is likely to receive a blessing. Watch the leadings of Providence and the motions of his heart, and then cooperate with the Holy Spirit. I could name more than one godly wife in my church whose prayers for their husbands—continued through many years—were answered by the conversion of those men in the sick room from which they went home to heaven. Pray, on, then, ye loving wives, and ye faithful mothers, and ye earnest teachers! Pray on with the importunity of love and the eloquence of a winsome life. Who can tell how soon it may be said to you: "Woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt!"

The Superintendent's Dream.

There had been a very noisy ten minutes in the Sunday-school room, for two small boys were carrying around the baskets, and every child was noisily hunting up and depositing pennies, nickels and dimes.

It was Missionary Sunday, and after the two small boys, in short knee trousers (very short ones) had climbed up to the superintendent's desk, and handed him the baskets, the noise suddenly ceased, and every eye was fastened on the baskets—the school was waiting to hear how much it all counted up.

But Mr. Ramsay seemed to be in a sort of a daze; what made him sit and look into the top basket in that dreamy way, without speaking? "Children," he said, suddenly, shaking off his sleepy look, "a curious thing has happened to me while Frank and Phil were going around; I've had a dream; no, I haven't been asleep, so you needn't laugh, but I've had a dream. I dreamed that our

K. D. C. Restores the Stomach
To Healthy Action.

blessed Saviour was standing by me when the baskets were brought up, and, as I looked into them, I was surprised to see how few bright, well-rounded pieces of money were there. 'Lord,' I said, 'I do not know why this is.' 'I will tell you,' said the Lord; 'when any one puts in a piece of money because he thinks his neighbor is looking at him, or because somebody gave it to him to put in; or if he gives five cents when he ought to give ten, or for any reason except because he loves me, and wants to serve me, that takes from the value of his money, and when it reaches me it looks as you see it.'"

"But Lord," I faltered, "there are some bright pieces." "Look again," he said to me, smiling. I looked, and there in the basket lay a little copper cent; I knew it was a copper cent, because it said so on its face; but I had never seen a diamond half so bright; it glittered, it sparkled, it shone, and even the Lord seemed to look with pleasure on it. "This," he said to me, "was given by a little one who had never had a cent of her own before. This is the first time she has ever had a dress decent enough to appear among your scholars, but she has learned to love me, and she has now given me her whole treasure, and I love her and she is loved in heaven."

The superintendent ceased speaking and there was perfect silence; many eyes were cast down, as if many little givers were wondering how their pennies had appeared. If your eyes are as sharp as mine, you might have seen one little face lighted up with a strange look of questioning joy, as if she knew something about the bright penny. She was a new scholar, and wore an old dress, evidently made for somebody else.

Then the superintendent said softly, "Let us finish our services by singing hymn 184, 'I gave my life for thee.'" But the school forgot to ask, and the superintendent to tell, and so they never knew just how many dollars and cents they had gathered that day.—*Presbyterian.*

New Comers.

A pastor sometimes finds it to be no easy matter to induce the members of his Church to call on the new comers. Even after they have joined the Church, they are often not shown that degree of personal and social attention which is needful in order to make them feel at home. And it sometimes happens that when such a call is made, it is so perfunctorily performed as to rob it of its value. An earnest pastor thus describes an incident which came within his knowledge. "We recently heard of a lady, a member of one of the Churches of this city, who called on another who had been attending her Church as a stranger. She announced by way of apology for calling, that her pastor had urged her to do so, and then told how little she enjoyed calling, of how busy she was, how much work she had done that day, how tired she was, ending with a sigh, and that she must be going." As she went toward the door she said: 'Now I've called on you, you must come to our Church, and come to see me sometime.' Better for all had that woman stayed at home.' It is not enough for the pastor to call upon strangers. His people should heartily second his efforts in that direction. They can render him material aid in this work, and by so doing they help to make their Church more attractive. Strangers will feel that there are warm hearts in such a Church.—*Mid-Continent.*

NOTHING MORE FORCIBLY MARKS the weakness of a bad cause than persecution. Satan, who has no truth to propose to man, comes with axe and sword to make way for his error. Christ's method is wisely different. He teaches the truth and says: "If any man will come after me and be my disciple." When he comes to the heart he uses no violence, but says: "Open to me, my sister, my spouse." If we open he comes in; if we will not open he retires; for the truth is not preached with sword and spears, but by bands of soldiers, but by counsel and persuasion.—*Athanasius.*

The Christian in Persecution.

An old writer says, "Unless a grain of mustard seed be bruised, the extent of its virtue is never acknowledged. For without bruising it is insipid, but if it is bruised, it becomes hot, and it gives out all those pungent properties that were concealed in it. Thus every good man so long as he is not smitten, is regarded as insipid, and of slight account. But if ever the grinding of persecution crush him, instantly he gives forth all the warmth of his savor, and all that before appeared to be weak or contemptible is turned into godly fervor, and that which in peaceful times he had been glad to keep from view within his own bosom, he is driven by the force of tribulation to make known."

F. D. C. Relieves Distress
After Eating.

Well, then, if this be so, let us not be disturbed when the winds begin to howl around us. Jesus says, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Had we not better take a share of this blessedness?

Random Readings.

There is no sex line drawn in sin, and should not be in the punishment of it.—*Rev. O. P. Gifford.*

Faith is the most reasonable thing in the world, and reason is the most faithful thing in the world.

We may be fruitful in all good works if we are ready to receive the influences of the Holy Spirit.—*Inquirer.*

If we would bring a holy life to Christ, we must mind our fireside duties as well as the duties of the sanctuary.

Ministry and spiritual benefit are inseparably associated. If we do not water other souls our own will wither.

Who are worse, the heathen abroad who teach people error, or the Christians at home who withhold the truth?

There is no fit search after truth which does not, first of all, begin to live the truth which it knows.—*H. Bushnell.*

Purity of heart is that quick and sensitive delicacy to which even the very thought of sin is offensive.—*Chambers.*

If church-members are hungry for spiritual food the mud or rain will not be likely to keep them from the sanctuary.

Whatever it may be that leads us to the mercy-seat, and brings us into intimate communion with our God, is good for the soul.

"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

Faith, hope and charity, Christian graces, are inseparable.

A very important duty for every Christian is to know himself.

The secret of a noble character is a perfectly disciplined will.

Have philanthropy and atheism ever been seen walking with linked arms!

Govern your thoughts when alone and your tongue when in company.—*Thomas a Kempis.*

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