

testimony the most authentic, and that sanctioned by the Church, we claim that it is demonstrated to be of Popish origin; and as stated by Dr. Clark, designed to meet the Brumalia, or feasts of Bacchus, which were held by the Romans in December. If we are mistaken—if any man has authorized ecclesiastical reference to prove that Christmas was known to the Church until two or three hundred years after Christ, let him present it to the world. Let the time, place, and all of its observance be told. We do not call for testimony that is posterior to the flood of rites which inundated the Church after the third century. We call for names and for dates previous to 200, 350, 398, or 413. Until we have such names and dates, we may be told of time immemorial, and of cycles, and of calendars, and of Decretal Epistles, and all else which helps make up the mass of Romish corruption, and shall not be satisfied. We must still ask for proof that Paul, or Barnabas, or John, or Polycarp, or the early Church at Corinth, or at Rome, or Ephesus kept a feast, and dressed their houses, and wished each other and all a merry Christmas on the 25th of December!—Give us testimony of this, and we shall see our way clear to advocate an appeal to divine sanction of the day.

These are some of the reasons which induce multitudes of honest individuals to disapprove the observance of this festival.—*Baptist Memorial.*

### The Parent's Mission.

The following beautiful illustration of the importance of parental fidelity, is from Hon. Horace Mann's Lectures on Education.

You recollect my friends, the memorable fire which befel the city of New York, in the year 1835. It took place in the heart of that great emporium,—a spot where merchants, whose wealth was like princes, had gathered their treasures. In but few places on the surface of the globe, was there accumulated such a mass of riches. From each continent and from all the islands of the sea, ships brought thither their tributary offerings, until it seemed like a magazine of the nations,—the coffer of the world's wealth. In the midst of these hoards the fire broke out. Above the dome of the sky was filled with appalling blackness; below, the flames were of an unapproachable intensity of light and heat; and such was the inclemency of the season and the raging of the elements, that all human power and human art seemed as vanity and nothing. Yet, situated in the very midst of that conflagration there was one building upon which the storm of fire beat in vain. All around, from elevated points in the distance, from steeples and roofs of houses, thousands of the trembling inhabitants gazed upon the awful scene; and thought,—as well they might,—that it was one of universal and undistinguished havoc. But, as swift cross-wind furrowed athwart that sea of flame, or a broad blast beat down its aspiring crests, there, safe amidst ruin, erect amongst the falling, was seen that single edifice.—And when the ravage ceased, and men again walked those streets in sorrow, which so lately they had walked in pride, there stood that solitary edifice, unharmed amid surrounding desolation;—from the foundation to the cope-stone, unscathed;—and over the treasures which had been confided to its keeping, the smell of fire had not passed. There it stood, like an honest man, in the streets of Sodom. Now, why was this? It was constructed from the same materials, of brick and mortar, of iron and slate with the thousands around it, whose substance was now rubbish, and their contents ashes. Now, why was this? *It was built by a workman.* The man who erected that surviving, victorious structure knew the nature of the material he used; he knew the nature of the element of fire; he knew the power of combustion. Fidelity seconded his knowledge. He did not put in stucco for granite nor touch-wood for iron. He was not satisfied with outside ornaments, with finical cornices and gingerbread work, but deep in all its secret joints, where no human eye should ever see the compact masonry,—he consolidated, and cemented, and closed it in, until it became impregnable to fire,—insoluble in that volcano.

And thus my hearers, must parents become workmen in the education of their children. They must know that, from the very nature and constitution of things, a lofty and enduring character cannot be formed by ignorance and chance. They must know that no skill or power of man can ever lay the imperishable foundations of virtue, by using the low motives of fear, and the pride of superiority, and the love of worldly wealth, any more than they can rear a material edifice, storm proof and fire proof, from bamboo and cane-brake!

Until, then, this subject of education is far more studied and far better understood than it has ever yet been, there can be no formation of pure and noble minds; and though the child that is born to-day may turn out an Abel, yet we have no assurance that he will not be a Cain. Until parents will learn to train up children in the way they should go,—until they will learn what that way is,—the paths that lead down to the realms of destruction must continue to be thronged;—the dotting father shall feel the pangs of a disobedient and profligate son, and the mother shall see the beautiful child whom she folds to her bosom, turn to a coiling serpent and sting the breast upon which it was cherished. Until the thousandth and ten thousandth generation shall have passed away, the Deity may go on doing his part of the work, but unless we do our part also, the work will never be done,—and until it is done, the river of parental tears must continue to flow. Unlike Rachel, parents shall weep for their children because they are, not because they are not;—not shall they be comforted until they will learn that God, in his infinite wisdom, has pervaded the universe with immutable laws, which may be made productive of the highest forms of goodness and happiness; and, in His infinite mercy, has provided the means by which those laws can be discovered and obeyed; but that he has left it to us to learn and to apply them, or to suffer the unutterable consequences of ignorance. But when we shall learn and obey those laws—when the immortal nature of the child shall be brought within the action of these influences, each at its appointed time—which have been graciously prepared for training it up in the way it should go, then may we be sure that God will clothe its spirit in garments of *amianthus*; that it may not be corrupted, and of *asbestos*, that it may not be consumed, and that it will be able to walk through the pools of earthly pollution, and through the furnace of earthly temptation, and come forth white as linen that has been washed by the fuller, and pure as the golden wedge of Ophir that has been refined in the refiner's fire.

### Responsibility of Baptists.

[This truthful and impressive paragraph is from 'A Pure Christianity the World's only Hope,' by Rev. R. W. Cushman.]

The position of the churches of this denomination is one of awful responsibility and surpassing glory. Would to Heaven, that they better understood their position and their mission!—God has raised them up to be living witnesses for his truth, and to furnish a standing protest against the perversion and corruption of the religion of Christ. Through them he has already given to this country the blessing of religious liberty; he has made chiefly instrumental in waking and sustaining the life of evangelical Christianity in this country, at a time when it was waning to extinction; he has honored with setting in motion the missionary enterprise in which Christians of both continents are now enlisted; to them are the nations of the earth indebted for the origin of that sisterhood of societies which are now employed in giving the Bible to every tongue and people; and to them are Christians of every name indebted for that vast symphony of prayer which monthly girds the globe with petitions for the emission of Jehovah's light and truth, and Messiah's universal empire.

To this prayer let that people with whom it began add their most devout amen, and, in the faithful discharge of every Christian duty, seek to hasten the day when Christ, as King in Zion shall be more implicitly and fully obeyed and the crown of all nations shall flourish on his head.

Let them remove every thing from among them which is a just cause of offence to an enlightened piety and pure taste. Let them preserve their churches as golden candlesticks, supporting only the pure flame which rises from the oil of the sanctuary.

Let them do all in their power to correct misapprehension of their position and peculiarities; and to quicken the religious conscience of all who profess a Christian discipleship. And, remembering that the truth, when spoken in love, and accompanied with the demonstration of the Spirit, is mighty to the pulling down of strong holds, let them take care that all the weapons of their warfare be spiritual. And, above all things else, let them see that their individual religious character is such as to be a light to the world, and salt of the earth; awaking, in those with whom they mingle, the conviction that they have been with Jesus, and learned of the meek and lowly in heart.

### The Little Prayer Meeting.

Blessed is the little prayer meeting! When only a few are together, attention is not diverted with intruding circumstances. Men do not fill it; and as man is less, God is more. It is a sort of social, private devotion. Where two or three—not where a hundred—are together; there am I. The excitement of numbers, and the unhallowed associations of which the senses are the avenues to the soul, do not form a part of such meetings. Form is not so likely to be found when the plea for, and the need of it does not exist. The fear of men will not come, where there are not enough to disturb confidence. Where the arm of flesh is nothing, the arm of God may be all.

Still there are those to whom the little prayer-meeting is peculiarly irksome.

The man of the world dislikes and despises it.—He will not attend it. He will not go where the world will not go. He does not see the connection between the means and the end. He fancies a great number might effect something, but what can these do?

The stupid professor does not love the prayer-meeting. It seems so cold to him! When every body is awake to a sense of eternal things, and the meetings are full, he goes too—there is some excitement in that.

The Pharisee despises the little prayer meeting. He loves to go up to the temple to pray. His views are so large, and his faculties so efficient, that he wants a large theatre for action. This praying by two or three is a dull business to him.

But there are others who do love it. Christ gave it his special approval in the words already quoted. On the mount of transfiguration, there were but three. At the last sad prayer meeting in Gethsemane, there were three. On Mount Olivet, and away by the lake of Galilee, this was a frequent number. He taught the many; he prayed with the few.

The humble and faithful Christian loves the little prayer meeting. He thinks of what Christ said and did, and believes, he comes to pray to God, and he knows God can hear the few.

Reader, do you dislike the prayer meeting because it is small, and keep away for that reason? Then go, and it will be larger by one; and if you can induce others to go, it will be so much larger still.—But suppose others will not go; does that excuse you? Can you really find no comfort in such meetings; or do you think them useless? It might be so if man did the work, and not God. But the smaller the meetings, so much the more need of your being there. There are always fewer at the seeding than the harvest, yet as much need of those few. The husbandman sows by himself; he calls others to aid when the harvest comes; but cannot you muster faith for the seed time?

But you do not make the absence of others a mere excuse for not going yourself. Do you not say, "There are so few, and the meeting is so dull and cold, I will not go," at the same time that you are secretly glad of the excuse? This is the worldly man's plea, who has faith in numbers but not in prayer.—*N. Y. Observer.*

### The Ways of Providence.

The following account is given by the Rev. Leigh Richmond, as having been related by a minister in a meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

A drunkard was one day staggering on the brink of the sea. His little son by him three years of age, being very hungry, solicited him for something to eat. The miserable father, conscious of his poverty and the criminal cause of it, in a kind of rage occasioned by his intemperance and despair, hurled the little innocent into the sea and made off with himself. The poor little sufferer, finding a floating plank by his side on the water, clung to it. The wind soon wafted him and the plank into the sea.

A British man-of-war, passing by discovered the plank and child, and a sailor, at the risk of his life, plunged into the sea and brought him on board. He could inform them little more than that his name was Jack. They gave him the name of Poor Jack. He grew up on board that man-of-war, behaved well, and gained the love of all the officers and men. He became an officer of the sick and wounded department. During an action of the late war, an aged man came under his care, nearly in a dying state. He was all attention to the suffering stranger, but he could not save his life.

The aged stranger was dying, and thus addressed this kind young officer: "For the great attention you have shown me, I give you this only treasure that I am possessed of, (presenting him a Bible bearing the stamp of the British and Foreign Bible Society.) It was given me by a lady—has been the means of my conversion, and has been a great comfort to me. Read it, and it will lead you in the way you should go." He went on to confess the wickedness and profligacy of his life before the recep-

tion of his Bible; and among other enormities, how he cast his little son, three years old, into the sea, because he cried to him for needed food.

The young officer inquired of him the time and place, and found here was his own history. Reader, judge, if you can, of his feelings, to recognize in the dying old man his father, a dying penitent under his care; and judge of the feelings of the dying penitent, to find that the young stranger was his son, the very son whom he had plunged into the sea; and had no idea but that he had immediately perished. A description of their mutual feelings will not be attempted. The old man soon expired in the arms of his son. The latter left the service and became a pious preacher of the gospel. On closing his story, the minister in the meeting of the Bible Society bowed to the Chairman and said, "Sir, I am poor Jack."

### Borrowing a Religious Newspaper.

[Seven reasons were once given by a Minister, in a sermon on giving attendance to reading, against borrowing a religious newspaper. They were as follows:]

First. Not to get it with any regularity. It will not be as if it came to him every week. He will sometimes obtain it, sometimes not.

Secondly. He will read it, if regularly, with much less attention and interest.

Thirdly. He will always receive it behind the time.

Fourthly. He cannot allow his whole family to have the benefit of it, as they should, without exposing it to an injury from which a neighbor's property should be exempt.

Fifthly. He can keep nothing in it which he especially values for future reference.

Sixthly. He does nothing toward sustaining the paper, which perhaps is struggling to live. This has been the fact with some of our very best religious newspapers, although not true of all. If their readers were principally borrowers, the papers would soon die.

Seventhly, and decisively, he troubles his neighbor, and this in various ways. He either hurries him and his family through the reading of the paper; or takes it from them before they have finished it; or annoys them by repeatedly calling for it in vain; or he fails to return it in due time; or he returns it defaced, or torn; or he loses it, and fails to return it at all.

For these reasons, then, it is always best to take the religious paper you read.

And—need I say it? as an honest man, pay regularly and promptly for the paper you take.

### Salvation by Grace.

A man having heard the late Thomas P. Benedict preach a sermon, the object of which was to show that salvation is entirely of grace, said to him, "If what you have preached is true, what is it my duty to do?"

"It is your duty to believe it."

"What else is it my duty to do?"

"It is your duty to love it. You ought surely to love the truth."

"What else is it my duty to do?"

"I fear I have told you now more than you will ever do. If you will do these things you will find no difficulty in regard to any part of your duty. It will be very plain."

### "Killing the Old Man!"

The Rev. Dr. D'Aubigne, in an address in England describing the state of religion in France, where though Popery is making alarming progress, the efforts of humble colporteurs and evangelical preachers are greatly blessed, related the following anecdote:

One of the evangelists entered a Roman Catholic community and began to preach the gospel. He opened a house for prayer, and many people came to hear him, because the word of God had been taken there before by colporteurs.

There was living in that village an old couple.—The woman said to the husband, "I have heard many persons speak about that man—I will go and hear him." She went to the meeting—heard the sermon, but became very much troubled. On her return, her husband asked what she had heard.—She answered, "Horrible! I may not tell you what that man has said." "What has he told you?"—"He has told me that I must kill the old man!"—"Not possible!"—"Yes—yes."—"Not possible; we will go together, and see what is the matter."—They went together, heard the minister, and then went spoke to him. He explained to them what he called "the old man," and, by the grace of God, they have killed the old man, and they are now both members of the congregation. Such is the work which is going on in France, and on the continent.