

## TO MAKE A GOOD MINISTER.

In this age of change and fastidious tastes, when every church is desiring and seeking a good minister, any help to secure such a boon must be of great service to the cause of Christ. I have met the following fact, which seems to indicate an available method if not always a sure one, which I would commend to the prayerful considerations of the readers of the *Mirror* :—

"A young man was settled in a large and popular congregation in New-England, under very flattering circumstances. The church and people had settled him with the belief that he was a young man of more than ordinary talents, and with the expectation of his becoming a distinguished man. After a year or two, when the novelty of the thing had worn off, the current seemed to change, and the feeling prevailed that Mr. B—— was not, nor likely to be, quite what they expected. He did not grow as they thought he would; he did not perform that amount of labour which was needed to build up the church, and interest the congregation. Things dragged heavily. The young man felt the influence of the chill atmosphere which thus surrounded him. His spirits sunk, his health ran down, and it was whispered around in the society, and in the neighboring towns, that Mr. B—— would probably have to leave; he was not the man for the place; he was not the man of talents which they had anticipated.

"While things were in this state, at a meeting of the church, when the pastor was absent, (perhaps called to see what should be done,) Mr. O——, an intelligent member of the church, arose and said, "Brethren, I think we have been in fault respecting our minister. I think he is a young man of superior talents, and will one day be a distinguished man. But we have not sustained and encouraged him as we should. We have not spoken of him to others with esteem and confidence, as we should. We have been standing and looking on, expecting him to raise both himself and us to eminence. Now let us adopt a different course. Let us encourage our minister with our prayers, our sympathies and efforts. Let us speak of him with esteem and confidence to others, and say that we think him a man of talent, and who bids fair to be a distinguished man."

"The thing was agreed on. The leading men set the example. Very soon every one was speaking in favor of Mr. B——. His people visited him, sympathized with him, encouraged him; and people out of the society began to think that Mr. B—— was rising in the estimation of his people. The young man felt the change. The cold, damp chill, by which he had been surrounded, and which had benumbed the energies of his soul, was exchanged for a warm, genial atmosphere. His spirits rose, his health returned, his energies awoke, and he soon showed to all that he had within the elements of a man. Several revivals have attended his labours. In the affections of the church and people he has long since firmly established himself. They delight in him as a man of talent, as well as a good man. His name has become enrolled honourably among American authors, and he is one whom his own church and the churches of New-England delight to honour."

A minister may rightly claim the prayers, sympathies and aid of his church, and if these are withheld, they cannot complain if he lives in a frigid atmosphere. Their prayers, sympathies and co-operation will vitalize his moral powers, and stimulate his mental. This spirit of sympathy and prayer would lead the Christian to agonize in prayer for the Divine Spirit to accompany the Sabbath message to the heart of the sinner, rather than to hear with a critical ear the sermon of the preacher. When Christians listen on the Sabbath with the feelings of our Puritan ancestors, who were wont to inquire after the services, "Who was wrought upon to-day?" and were disappointed if the answer came, "No one,"—we may expect that ministers will have the sympathies and prayers of the church, and will be greatly successful.—*Christian Mirror*.

## Christ All and in All.

The religion of the cross is full of Christ. Christ is associated with all its duties and all its hopes. Christ is its centre. Christ is its living head, and it lives not, any more than an amputated limb, when severed from Christ. Only as its roots strike downward, and clasp this Tree of Life, does it bear fruit. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature." The Christian is nothing, has nothing, can do nothing,

without Christ. It is a bastard Christianity that owns not Christ as its parent. It is an ignorant Christianity that looks not to Christ as its Teacher, and that follows not his teaching. It is an unpardoned Christianity that looks not to Christ as its Priest. It is an impure Christianity that is not washed in the blood of the Lamb. It is a disloyal Christianity that does not recognize Christ as its King, and that hesitates to obey where he commands. It is a wayward Christianity that looks not to Christ as its example, and that does not follow where he leads the way.

The knowledge of the Christian is the "knowledge of Christ." The love of the Christian is the "love of Christ." All his graces find their alimant at the cross. Christ crucified is his glory and joy. Christ in his uncreated glory—Christ in his humanity—Christ in his obedience and temptations—Christ in his death and resurrection—Christ in his kingdom and on his throne—Christ in his weakness and his power, in his reproach and in his honour, in his past history and his coming triumph—is the mighty magnet that attracts his heart, that moves and fixes it, and that fills it with grateful astonishment and devotion. Christ in the Word and ordinances is meat indeed to him when he is hungry, and when he is thirsty it is drink. In the storm and tempest, Christ is the hiding place; in the parched desert, he is as rivers of water; under the noonday sun, he is as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Christ near him is consolation in sorrow, in joy his triumph. Christ in him is the hope of glory. He seeks supplies only from the fulness of Christ. In death Christ is his life, and his resurrection in the grave. When he stands in the judgment, Christ is his judge; and through interminable ages is his heaven.

The religion of the cross is full of Christ; and this renders it so peaceful and happy a religion, and imparts to it, not indeed the paroxysms of ecstasy, but "the peace of God that passeth all understanding." It begins and takes root in the soul, not until it has felt the burden of sin and a sense of its condemnation; not until it has learned to cry for mercy at the foot of the throne; and not until it has found relief in believing in the Son of God, and receiving him as all its salvation and all its desire. Then its peace is as a river, and its joys as the waves of the sea. It is the counterpart of heaven. It is the cup of joy from the river of life, which, clear as crystal, flows from the throne of God and the Lamb.—*Dr. Spring's Attraction of the Cross*.

## Memory.

How awful is the conviction, that the Book of Judgment is that of our life, in which every idle word is recorded, and that no power but His who made the soul, can obliterate our ideas and our deeds from our remembrance or blot our transgressions, and purify our spirits from the actual indwelling of evil thoughts.

Every individual experience amply testifies that the forgotten incidents of long past years require only the touch of the kindling spirit to start up, in all their pristine fullness, before us. How often do we remember having reorganized, in our dreams, those feelings and circumstances which had been lost to our waking consciousness, in the accumulated events which passing time had impressed upon our minds! And although we cannot say that we acknowledge, as belonging to our own actual experience, all the visionary combinations which are thus presented to our notice in dreams, we yet feel that every object in them is familiar to our knowledge. Some persons, as we have said, on the near approach of death, have spoken of the incidents of their lives as being simultaneously presented before them, as if in a magic mirror, every line, as if fixed upon a tablet by the light, exactly as that revealing light fell on it. The portrait of the soul is the perfect reflection of itself, and every man must see his own character, thus forever visible to the eye of God, and, probably, hereafter to angels and to men.

Reason and revelation agree in asserting, that absolute forgetfulness, or obliteration, is impossible; and that all the events of our history are written in our living spirits; and whether seen, or unseen, will there forever remain unless removed by the act of a merciful Omnipotence!

It is true that a thousand incidents will spread a veil between our present consciousness and the record on the soul—but there the record rests, waiting the judgment of God. These sublime facts deeply warn us as to the manner in which we suffer our faculties to be

engaged, not only as their exercise affects ourselves, but also in their influence on the destiny of others.

"Memory, indeed, seems intended to qualify us to treasure impressions in all worlds, and to carry on the record and history of our feelings from time to eternity. But if the experience of earth is to be our all, then memory is without a sufficient purpose. Is death, indeed, to end the scene in perpetual oblivion? Is knowledge itself, though the result of a laborious life of attention and of effort to close forever, like a beautiful symphony, significant of richer harmony to come, but yet terminating, we know not why, in abrupt and eternal silence? Is the stream to be lost, not in the ocean, but in nothing? No. The everlasting future grows upon the past—remembrance is the basis of eternal knowledge. In fact, the full purposes of any one of our intellectual endowments does not appear to be fulfilled in the limited and broken exercise which is afforded to it in the present stage of being, since the utmost advantage we derive from the employment of our faculties now, is to become religious, that is, to be re-bounded to the worship and enjoyment of God. Can it be that this re-binding of the prodigal soul to the Eternal Father is only for death, like the victim bound to the altar, to be sacrificed and consumed to ashes, from which no Phoenix-life arises?"—*Power of the Soul over the Body, by George Moore, M. D.*

## The Saints after Death.

When death shall have disencumbered, and set us free from all sorts of distempers, and brought us into the state of perfect and perfected spirits, how delectable will that society be, when all shall be full of divine light, life, love and joy, and freely communicate, as they have received freely! How pleasant will it be, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God! To converse with angels! those wise, kind creatures, so full of profound knowledge and benignity; instructed by long, uninterrupted experience and observation of the methods of the Divine government and dispensation; highly pleased with our accession to the general assembly, that rejoiced in the conversion of a sinner, whereby but one was hereafter in due time to be added, much more in the glorification of so many, that are now actually added to them! What delightful communings will there be of the mysteries of nature, of the methods of Providence, of the wonders of grace, of the deep and hidden counsels of God! In what part it shall be agreeable to his wisdom and good pleasure, to let them appear and stand in view.

The conferences at the transfiguration made the transported disciples say, 'tis good to be here, when the glory which, while it oppressed, pleased them; though this was but a transient view. But above all that is conceivable in that other state, how delectable will their society be in worship! in their unanimous adoration of the ever blessed God, Father, Son, and Spirit. In how pleasant eternal raptures of delight and praise will all those excellent creatures be, that inhabit and replenish the vast realms of light and bliss; when all behold how the several kinds of being, light, life, excellency and perfection, by a perpetual efflux, spring from the first, the Fountain of all being, the Parent of so glorious and so numerous a progeny, all God-like, and bearing the bright image of their Father! Oh, the inexpressible pleasures of this consociation in worship, perpetually tendered with so absolute a plenitude of satisfaction in the dueness of it, and the gustful apprehension of what those words import. Worthy art thou, O Lord! each one relishing his own act, with just self-approbation and delight, heightened by their perfect unanimity, and there is among them no dissenting voice. Whence it can be but to worship God in spirit and truth, must be to enjoy him; and that he is under no other notion, the more satisfying object of our enjoyment, than as he is the object of our worship. What room or pretence is there now left for unwillingness to die, on the account of relatives we have been wont to converse with in this world, when such an exchange as this is to be made for dying?—*John Howe*.

## Popish Manoeuvres in Switzerland.

The Government of the Canton Freiburg has just published the result of an inquiry into the case of Miss Clara Blafond, who, it was alleged, being left an orphan with some property, was unlawfully prevailed upon to enter the nunnery of St. Ursula at Freiburg, and to make over the whole of her property to the

treasury of that religious society. The inquiry was caused by the rumour of cruel treatment to which this lady was exposed. The Commissioners found her in a cell, lying on straw, and with her feet chained to a post. Her food was scarcely fit for an animal. It appears that the wretched woman had suffered this treatment for fourteen years, and that she had become insane in consequence. The Commissioners ascertained that the abbess and the bishop were both privy to this disgraceful cruelty. The nuns displayed, on their examination, the most revolting heartlessness, cunning, and reserve. The Government of Freiburg, as a matter of course, decreed that the poor creature should be given up to the friends of her family. Another instance of religious perversity is reported from the Canton of Unterwalden. M. Fuster, the parish priest of Buochs, thought proper to offer a young lady of delicate health an asylum in his house, but, in order to turn his charity to account, he circulated a rumour of miracles of which the young woman in question was the object. He said she every Friday died, and descended for some hours to purgatory, where she conversed with the dead. By the interposition of the Holy Virgin she was afterwards allowed to come to life again, with a full consciousness of what she had seen and heard in purgatory. This news caused the people of the surrounding districts to come in crowds to see the young lady, and inquire for the fate of their friends and relations who had passed the bourne from whence it would appear people do sometimes return. Of course the young lady was not sparing in her description of the purgatorial torment, and she enunciated it as a great truth that there are but three means to liberate the poor souls from purgatory, viz.: offerings to the Church, legacies to the Church, and pilgrimages. Of course, this applied only to wealthy families, and large sums of money were consequently given to the Rev. Mr. Fuster. At length it was stated that the young lady intended to make a public death at one o'clock p.m. on the following Friday and that she would be carried to church, where the Virgin would wake her at four o'clock precisely. Crowds of people assembled from all parts of the country to see the miracle. Virgins dressed in white, and holding wreaths of flowers, stood prepared to carry the sanctified maiden to the church. The church clock struck one, and time wore on, but the fair saint did not die. The appointed time was past by half-an-hour, and still she lay with closed eyes, but as much alive as any of the bystanders. At length the Rev. Mr. Fuster leant over her, and whispered in her ear. He received an answer in the same tone of voice, and turning to the impatient crowd, he informed them that the Holy Virgin had left the maiden the option either to die that hour or at a later hour, and that she preferred dying at a later hour. Some people thought this too bad, but the crowd cried,—"Miracle!" and marvelled vastly.—*Deutsche Zeitung*.

## Hints for Improvement.

Charles Butler, a distinguished English lawyer and a fine scholar, ascribes his saving of time to these rules: Very early rising; a systematic division of his time; absence from all company and from all diversions not likely to amuse him highly; from reading, writing, or even thinking, on modern party-politics; and, above all, never permitting a bit or scrap of time to be unemployed—have supplied him with an abundance of literary hours.

His literary acquisitions are principally owing to the rigid observance of four rules:—1. To direct his attention to one literary topic only at a time; 2. To read the best book upon it, consulting others as little as possible; 3. Where the subject was contentious, to read the best book on each side; 4. To find out men of information, and, when in their society, to listen, not to talk.

## Home Example.

That was a startling question proposed by the prophet to King Hezekiah, "What have they seen in thine house?" He had been sick, and was near to death. His earnest prayer for lengthened life was heard, and fifteen years were added to his earthly existence. This striking interposition of God, enhanced in its importance by the mysterious sign with which it was attested, drew forth the astonishment of neighbouring princes. Berodach-Baladan, the king of Babylon sent ambassadors to congratulate him on his recovery. The pride of Hezekiah was excited by this mark of homage,