

EARTHLY CARE A HEAVENLY PRINCIPLE.

The above is the title of an article in the New York Evangelist, from the pen of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe. The article possesses a peculiarly practical interest, and is worthy of being read and pondered. We quote the closing part of it:—

Hence, too, comes a coldness and general-ity and wandering of mind in prayer. The things that are on the heart—that are distract-ing the mind—that have filled the heart so full that there is no room for anything else, are all considered too small and undignified to come within the pale of a prayer; and so with a wandering mind and a distracted heart, the Christian offers up his prayer for the things which he thinks he ought to want, and makes no mention of those which he does.— He prays that God would pour out his Spirit on the heathen, and convert the world, and build up his kingdom everywhere, when per-haps a whole set of little anxieties and wants and vexations are so distracting his thoughts, that he hardly knows what he has been say-ing. A faithless servant is wasting his prop-erty—a careless or blundering workman has spoiled a lot of goods—a child is vexatious or unruly—a friend has made promises and failed to keep them—an acquaintance has made unjust and satirical remarks—some new furniture has been damaged or ruined by care-lessness in the household; but all this trouble forms no subject matter for prayer, though there it is, all the while lying like lead on the heart, and keeping it down so that it has no power to expand and take in anything else.— But were God known and regarded as the soul's familiar friend, every trouble of the heart, as it rises, would be breathed into his bosom; were it felt that there is not one of the smallest of life's troubles that has not been permitted by him, and permitted for specific good purposes to the soul, how much more would those be in prayer—how constant, how daily might it become—how it might settle and clear the atmosphere of the soul—how it might so dispose and lay away many anxieties which now take up their place there, that there might be room for the higher themes and considerations of religion.

Many sensitive and fastidious natures are worn away by the constant friction of what are called little troubles. Without any great af-fliction, they feel that all the flower and sweet-ness of their life is faded; their eye grows dim, their cheek careworn, and their spirit loses hope and elasticity, and becomes bowed with premature age, and in the midst of tangible and physical comfort they are restless and unhappy. The constant under current of little cares and vexations, which is slowly wearing on the finer springs of life, is seen by no one—scarce ever do they speak of these things to their nearest friends. Yet were there a friend of a spirit so discerning as to feel and sympathise in all these things, how much of this oppressed electric restlessness would pass off through such a sympathising mind.

Yet among human friends this is all but im-possible, for minds are so diverse that what is a trial and a care to one, is a matter of sport and amusement to another; and all the inner world breathed into a human ear, only excites a surprised or contemptuous pity. Who then shall the soul turn to—who will feel that to be affliction, which each spirit feels to be so?— If the soul shut itself within itself, it becomes morbid—the fine cords of the mind and nerves by constant wear become jarring and discord-ant; hence fretfulness, discontent, and habit-ual irascibility, stealing over the sincere Chris-tian.

But to the Christian that really believes in the agency of God in the smallest events of life, that confides in his love and makes his sympathy his refuge, the thousand minute cares and perplexities of life become each one a fine affiliating bond between the soul and its God. God is known, not by abstract definition, and by high-raised conceptions of the soul's aspir-ing hours, but known as a man knoweth his friend—he is known by the hour's wants he supplies—known by every care with which he momentarily sympathises, every apprehension which he relieves, every temptation which he enables us to surmount. We learn to know God as the infant child learns to know its moth-er and its father, by all the helplessness and dependence which are incident to this commencement of our mortal existence—and as we go on thus year by year, and find in every changing situation, in every reverse, in every trouble, from the lightest sorrow to those which ring our soul from its depths, that he is

equally present, that his gracious aid is equally adequate, our faith seems almost gradually to change to sight; and God's existence, his love and care, seem to us more real than any other source of reliance, and multiplied cares and trials are only new avenues of acquaintance between us and heaven.

Suppose in some bright vision unfolding to our view, in tranquil evening or solemn mid-night, the glorified form of some departed friend should appear to us with the announce-ment, "This year is to be to you one of espe-cial probation and discipline, with reference to perfecting you for a heavenly state.— Weigh well and consider every incident of your daily life, for not one shall fall out by ac-cident, but each one is to be a finished and in-dispensable link in a bright chain that it is to draw you upwards to the skies!" With what new eyes should we now look on our daily lot, and if we found in it the same old cares, the same perplexities, the same uninteresting drudgeries still—with what new meaning would every incident be invested, and with what other and sublimer spirit could we meet them. Yet if announced by one rising from the dead, with the visible glory of a spiritual world, this truth could be asserted no more clearly and distinctly than Jesus Christ has stated it already. Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without our Father—not one of them is forgotten by him—and we are of more value than many sparrows—yea, even the hairs of our head are all numbered. Not till belief in those declarations, in their most literal sense, becomes the calm and settled habit of the soul, is life ever redeemed from drudgery and dreary emptiness, and made full of interest, meaning, and divine significance. Not till then do its grovelling wants, its wearing cares, its sting-ing vexations, become to us ministering spir-its—each one, by a silent but certain agency, fitting us for a higher and perfect sphere.

Comfort of Piety.

If the righteous have hope in their death, let Christians be concerned to anticipate the prospect without dismay. Hope should be their companion through life as well as their comfort in death. Habitual contemplations of future happiness will do much, to soothe and soften the sorrows of time, and amidst the storms of the mid-way passage, to give the foretaste of the coming joy. All the feelings which are requisite to make death triumphant are requisite to make our present pilgrimage happy. The dying expressions of the venerable Hooker throw a beautiful light upon the habits of piety which he had long cherished beforehand. "I have lived," he said, "to see this world is made up of perturbations, and I have long been preparing to leave it, and gathering comfort for the dreadful hour of making my account with God, which I now apprehend to be near: and though I have, by his grace, loved him in my youth, and feared him in my age, and labored to have a consci-ence void of offence to him and to all men, yet if thou, O Lord, be extreme to mark what I have done amiss, who can abide it? And, therefore, where I have failed, Lord, show mercy unto me; for I plead not my righte-ousness, but the forgiveness of my unrighte-ousness, for His merits, who died to purchase a pardon for penitent sinners. And since I owe thee a death, Lord, let it not be terrible; and then take thine own time, I submit to it. Let not mine, O Lord, but thy will be done." Again, after a short slumber, he added, "God hath heard my daily petitions, for I am at peace with all men, and he is at peace with me. And from that blessed assurance, I feel that inward joy, which this world can neither give nor take from me: my conscience bear-eth me this witness, and this witness makes the thought of death joyful." More he would have spoken," says his biographer, "but his spirits failed him; and after a short conflict betwixt death and nature, a quiet sigh put a period to his last breath, and so he fell asleep."

How incessant should be our gratitude to that gracious Redeemer, who has robbed the grave of its victory, and taken the sting from death! He who died to open the gates of heaven lives to conduct us thither. He who has been the guide of his people, "unto death," will not fail to guard them safely through it. Death to the righteous changes its character. It receives its welcome and farewell at the same moment, for the curse is turned into a blessing. It is the day of release to the cap-tive—the day of triumph to the conqueror—the day in which the heir of glory shall take possession of the purchased inheritance.— "Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ!"

Pulpit Earnestness.

It is recorded of the devoted John Welch that he used to keep a plaid upon his bed, that he might wrap himself in it when he rose dur-ing the night for prayer. Sometimes his wife found him upon the ground weeping.— When she complained, he would say, "Oh, woman! I have the souls of three thousand to answer for, and I know not how it is with many of them." Possessed of such a sense of responsibility to God, and to the people of his charge, how can any true minister of the Cross withhold himself from an earnest devo-tion to his work of arousing souls, and point-ing them to Christ! He feels his momentous responsibility during the week, while prepar-ing the beaten oil for the sanctuary.— It is ever with him. It haunts him in the silent watches of the night. It absorbs his thoughts; and speaks out in every fervid utterance of his closet.

But it is in the pulpit that the earnest am-bassador for Christ feels the long-suppressed solicitude break forth in an overflow of fervid and pathetic expostulations. Whatever is most powerful in argument, or most winning in entreaty, or most thrilling in appeal, he seizes upon and appropriates to his mighty theme. He pleads. He warns. He invites. He points—now to the yawning pit red with the fires of perdition, and now to the Cross, streaming with a Saviour's blood. The very grandeur of his theme possesses him.— It leads him away from the influence of time and sense about him. For the time being he is no longer in this world. He is surrounded by other and mightier auditors. The light of eternity plays about him, and reveals the tre-mendous pomp of the judgment scene. To his eye the awful consummation has already appeared! The Judge is descending. The books are opening. The heavens are passing away with a great noise. The angels are sepa-rating the vast multitudes to the right hand and to the left hand of the Judge, and among them he sees his own hearers! Some of them are crowned with the unfading crown; and some of them—appalling sight!—are driven out wailing to the gates of despair!

With such a spectacle before him, with the shrieks of his perishing neighbours ringing in his very ears, can any appeal be too importu-nate, can any entreaty be too earnest? Is it any marvel that he is ready to throw himself across the pathway of the sinner, and entreat him not to commit the eternal suicide? Even if his overwhelming solicitude moves him to tears, he feels that it is better for him to weep here, than for his hearers to weep in hell.

It was with emotions akin to those which I have been attempting to describe, that the great Apostle set before the trembling Felix the realities of a coming judgment, and startled the proud Agrippa on his marble throne. It was with such emotions that the fervid Whitfield was borne on in his impassioned oratory until his auditors became as dead men beneath his feet! Such was the intense agony of Bunyan when he "went to his people in chains to preach to them in chains; and carried that fire in his conscience which he per-suaded them to beware of!" So felt the holy Rutherford when he said to his flock: "My witness is above, that your heaven would be two heavens to me; and the salvation of each of you as two salvations to me." Radiant will be the crown of such a minister of Christ amid the glories of paradise; it will be all on fire with blazing stars.— T. L. Cuyler.

The Word with Power.

A specimen of preaching by Dr. Candish of the Free Church of Scotland.

If Christ be in you there is evidence, and you may know it. It is worth knowing. It demands a sincere and searching examination. Anxious to avoid anything that might look controversial, nothing will be said of assurance of faith. Faith is a loving looking to Jesus. Whether a man may have faith—may be a Christian—without knowing it, we do not say. We do say, if you search, and it is there, you cannot fail of finding it. The duty enjoined we are bound to comply with. We are urged by the profitable nature of the exercises even. Behold the greatness of the discovery; some have a difficulty in knowing the signs of conver-sion, and say that Paul had difficulties of the same kind. The last is an assumption. But in order to set you in the right course, we propose a question and offer a suggestion.

1. Can the time and manner of your great change be ascertained? Have you any sus-picions about the fact? This should at once arouse you. To be created anew is not so

slight a matter, as to escape observation. It did not escape observation in heaven; angels rejoiced. It should not on earth. Look back! Look back! When left you the broad road to take the narrow path? Speak, for there was a turn? Alas! can it be that you turned not? We press not for day or date, although there is a point of time in every Christian's life, before which he was a reprobate, after which a new creature, and the moment is often known to the creature as soon as to God. I speak not of the moment, but of the whole season, from the awakened conscience, until little by little you may have been led to Jesus and made one of his. Have you such a season? We ask not out of curiosity, but for your soul's sake. Your soul has it in remembrance.— Look back! Think of your aspirations then! How have they been fulfilled? The soldier, covered with glory, delights to think and talk of his enlistment under his noble captain—the scholar, to tell of his consecration to his favorite pursuit. My brother, Jesus is your captain, the Scriptures your text book.

2. But I offer a suggestion. Finding your-self in him—should you be so happy; never rest on that. It is not your confidence; it may be, nay, it should be, your encourage-ment. It should spur your flagging zeal.— Turn to the recollection; dwell on the fact! I knew him then, I know Him now. Examine your present as well as your past; now now alone will give you confidence. If you are in him now, take courage. There need be no uncertainty. Surely you are not so mad as to wish to be uncertain about it. Away with your false humility! How sadly you disparage the grace of God. You may gaze and won-der at those who move in heavenly orbits, but where are you? To know the fact, to feel the encouragement is not all. Secure the foundation; secure it at once, and once for all, then leave it. Waste not your life on the low-est story. Up with the building! Follow on to know the Lord. Onward, onward! dark-ness and despair may threaten—take courage. Go forward, in God's name. You can never be worse off than Israel, with the Red Sea be-fore and the Egyptians behind.

Repent Ye.

Impenitent sinner! God calls you to re-pent, and you have reason to do so. For you have broken his law, not merely by the tenor of your life, but the whole bent of your heart. You have never loved God; and have it in you to hate him, had you clearer views of his holy and sovereign character. In this guilt—enough to sink a world—you have spent your whole past life.

You have rejected Jesus Christ! When condemned, Christ died for your ransom, and now offers pardon purchased with his blood; and yet you have refused that pardon as often as the Gospel has been presented to you, and doing so, have said, "I will not have this man to reign over me."

You have grieved the Holy Spirit. Often as that Spirit has aroused your conscience, convinced of guilt, and urged to repentance, you have resisted, and committed a most deadly and awful sin. And have you not reason to repent? "Repent ye," for

It is a practicable duty, and no impossibility. If you felt as you ought, you could not help repenting. "Repent ye," for

It is a reasonable duty, enforced by all the motives of interest and obligation which can be drawn from three worlds, from the rela-tions of an immortal soul and an Infinite and Holy God, who commands it by all his autho-rity as Lawgiver and Judge.

"Repent immediately; for hope and par-don may be suspended on "to-day." While you hesitate, God may lift up his hand, and swear you shall not enter into his rest.

Repentance is the first step to a reconcilia-tion, and, until this is done, you have done nothing pleasing to God. So long as your heart remains obdurate, you do virtually ap-prove and put your seal to every sin you have committed; and will your prayers, offered in this wicked state, avail with God? Never, while you continue thus will he show favor to you or any of your doings.

Why not repent? Do you look for impu-nity in impenitence? What! go to heaven with rebellion in your heart and carry all your opposition to the very foot of the throne of God!

Thoughtless worlding, and decent moralist; contentious opposer of God's humbling truth, and distressed, convicted, but unconverted sinner! repent ye, for it is true of you all, that "except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish."