

## MONTHLY TRACT FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

## No. II.

## COME UP HIGHER.

Let a little voice whisper in your ear, every day, these words—*Come up higher!* If used aright, they will act as a charm.

Come up higher in *knowledge*. By a figure, we sometimes represent the advancement of the mind in knowledge as an upward journey, through rocks and difficulties. There is a glorious prize always in view; but we never reach the summit. Yet we may be coming nearer and nearer, and he who makes no efforts will make no progress. In such a path, you need a daily incitement. Listen then to the voice which says, *Come up higher*. You may be all your life going higher and higher. You may be adding knowledge to knowledge, as the traveller adds step to step. The process is simple, but it is effective; and it is the only way. Nobody ever leaped to the top of a mountain. It is done by steps. An ant can do it, if it only has time and patience. Nothing stands so much in the way of advancement as the undervaluing of small efforts. "Sands make the mountain, moments make the year." To get learning, do as those do who get wealth. Save the odd pieces. Take care of the pence; the pounds will take care of themselves. Step by step—step by step. Think what vast pieces of work are done by little and little, stitch after stitch. Be cheered by this, in seeking knowledge. Come up higher! Come slowly, come gradually, but be always coming. Every leisure minute you have, every day you begin, every book you open, hearken carefully, and you will catch a gentle sound, saying, *Come up higher!*

Come up higher in your *habits*. Man is made up of habits, and habits are formed by little and little. You never do any thing, that you are not forming a habit, either good or evil. Even if you stop, you are still forming a habit. Elevated or noble habits are not formed without an effort. The greatest and best of all habits are produced by a perpetual fighting against self. You are working up stream. Never cease though the current be powerful. Bend to your oars. You are gaining strength by every effort. Let no day pass without giving a blow or a stab to some evil habit. Accustom yourself to keep down all propensities that would enslave you. Beat and bruise them into subjection, as you would tame a wild-beast. Nothing gives a man a greater lift than battling with a bad habit. Every sinful disposition which you disoblige, and subdue, is just so much ballast thrown out of your balloon: you instantly dart upward. Listen among the clouds for the voice which says, *Come up higher!*

Come up higher in your *aims*. To accomplish great things, we must attempt great things. It is better to fall short of an exalted one, than to propose a low one to attain it. Some defeats are more honourable than some victories. As a Sunday-school teacher, you profess to be no less than one of God's ambassadors. You assume the responsibilities of preaching the gospel of the grace of God to the ignorant and perishing. To enlighten their minds is to confer on them a great blessing. To correct their manners is not beneath attention. To form them to habits of industry and perseverance is worth an effort. But the *higher aim* is to bring them to the knowledge of Jesus Christ as the only Saviour of sinners; to become the instruments of converting them from the error of their ways, of saving their souls from death, and of thus hiding a multitude of sins. With nothing short of this higher aim will you accomplish much; but with such a glorious end in view, you will be stimulated to untiring efforts, and filled with a sense of weakness and dependence which will urge you to importunate prayer. No sacrifice will seem too great, no labour too burdensome, no time too precious.

Many teachers shrink from hard service, and are evidently impatient of self-denial. A slight obstacle will suffice to keep them from the prayer-meeting, and even from the school; or if they attend, their deportment when there betrays a chilling indifference to the great objects in view. The difficulty is, that if they have any purpose, it is too vague or unimportant to nerve their energies. We must come up higher in our aims, if we would be excited to zeal and diligence in our calling.

Come up higher in *devotion*. Devotion is a flight towards heaven. Our natural propensity is to crawl on the earth. Our wings are unpractised, and our best efforts too much resemble the awkward heavy motions of the do-

mestic fowls. But look at the lark, the falcon, or the eagle! Do you know there are heights you have never reached, prospects you have never beheld? Have you ever been fully persuaded, that there are attainments in prayer and love, which are as much above your present experience as the mountains are above the plain? God has not confined you to this poor, grovelling sort of religion. Make the trial, and you will begin to learn that there is a kind of prayer which will absorb your faculties. You will enter on a world of new joy. You will go to your closet as you would go to meet an angel: for you will go to meet Christ. You will so contemplate, and so adore, that you will forget the world, and be loath to rise from your knees. Is all this a strange thing to you? Then you have become but slightly acquainted with the face of Immanuel. Your region is *alow one*. *COME UP HIGHER!*

## Our Own Consequence.

We think of our own consequence; our talents; our attainments. We think what a breach will be made when we die. We think of the mourners who will gather around us with broken hearts. We think of the solemn, sad procession that will go with us to the tomb:—forgetting how seldom it is that the hearts of any considerable proportion in a funeral procession are serious and solemn at all, or care anything about the dead. We look at our own affairs and press them forward, as if everything else should give way to them, and as if the world had no interest so great that they may not be required to yield to our convenience.

Now, how contrary all this to truth and reality, it is hardly necessary to attempt to show. Few will care about it at all when we die; and the world at large will care nothing, and know nothing about it. A very little circle of friends will be affected—as a little circle of water is agitated when a drop of rain falls into the ocean. At the centre of that small circle of friends, there will be some deep emotion, and some tears of genuine grief will be shed; at every little distance, the emotion will be fainter and feebler; at a point but a little more remote there will be none, and soon, very soon, all the agitation there was will have died away—as when the little drops of rain fall into the ocean—

The gay will laugh  
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care  
Plod on, and each one as before will share  
His favorite phantom.—Bryant.

A few friends will go and bury us; and then they will turn away to their own concerns, forgetful that we are sleeping in the grave.—Affection will rear a stone, and plant a few flowers over our grave—but the hand that reared the stone or planted the flowers, will soon become unable to cut the letters deeper as they become obliterated, or to cultivate the flowers—and in a brief period the little hillock would be smoothed down, and the stone will fall, and neither friend nor stranger will be concerned to ask which one of the forgotten millions of the earth was buried there. "Old Mortality" will go to cut again those effaced words which told our name, and the time of our birth and of our death. Every vestige that we ever loved upon the earth will have vanished away. All the little memorials of our remembrance—the lock of hair enmeshed in gold, or the that hung in our dwellings, will cease to have the slightest value to any living being, nor will even momentary curiosity be excited to know who wore that hair, or whose countenance is delineated there.

On my grassy grave  
The men of future times will care less tread,  
And read my name upon the sculpured stone;  
Nor will the soul familiar to their ears,  
Recall my vanished memory.—H. Kirke White.

—Rev. Albert Barnes.

## Love the Soul of Religion.

Without love, religion is a task, and a toil, and a drudgery—an irksome work that the slave performs, goaded by conscience or impelled by self-righteousness; but when we love Him, then we serve Him not because we must, as because we will—not of constraint but of choice. Every duty is endeared, every yoke is lightened, every burthen is relieved when God fills the heart. Look at this in earthly things. When the child that delights in the aged father, watches him day by day, and takes no rest in her care by night—smooths his pillow, bears with his complainings, anticipates every wish, watches every glance of his eye—does she deem it a toilsome task? Does she wish it were at an end? Her heart trembles at the thought. To the hireling it

would be a task; but doing it from love, it is a source to her of sweetest delight. So will it be in the service of God; the commandments which are grievous to the sinner, are not grievous to the saint—the requirements which men naturally recoil from, the child of God counts his greatest privilege and enjoyment. To serve God is his heaven begun; to serve him as angels do will be his heaven complete.—Sorrow, too, loses its bitterness, when it is received from the hand of love; when we see that the hand which smites us is the hand which was wounded for us, and when we hear amid the storm and darkness a voice which says, 'It is I, be not afraid,' we can kiss the hand that wields the rod, and welcome the storm and the darkness that brings the Saviour nearer to us. With us in the lion's den, as with Daniel, it becomes 'the house of God and the gate of heaven'; with us in the fiery furnace, as with the children in captivity, we can sing praises in the flames, and rejoice even in the torture; even as the martyr who said when burning at the stake—'You want a miracle; behold one. These flames are to me as a bed of roses.' So did the love of his Saviour fill his soul, that the Spirit of God lifted him above the pains of his body; heaven began, and the flames were to him but as the prophet's chariot of fire that bore him triumphantly to his God.—Rev. Hugh Stowell.

## Predestination—A Narrative.

"A minister being once on a journey, was overtaken by a stranger who urged some objections to predestination, and among others that it made God unjust. 'Before that can be admitted,' said the minister, 'you must prove that God owes eternal life to any of his fallen creatures; and further, that the vindication of a mortal is essential to the equity of a God. Besides, the question is not, What are the difficulties connected with the doctrine, or can a worm solve them all? but, Is this doctrine of predestination scripturally and philosophically true, or is it not? The difficulties of the subject will prove nothing against the fact; and he that brings the legislation of his Creator before the tribunal of his own understanding should first be able to measure the length of his eternity, the breadth of his immensity, the height of his wisdom and depth of his decrees. Is it not a sad evidence of human depravity, that creatures of a day will sit in judgment on spiritual and eternal things, as if the author of the great mystery of godliness were altogether such an one as themselves.'

'I hope you will not be offended,' replied the gentleman, 'if I declare, notwithstanding all you advance, I do not, I cannot believe in this doctrine of predestination.'

'And I hope,' rejoined Mr. C., 'that you will not be offended if I declare, I am quite of opinion you do believe in it.'

'I beg Sir,' said the other, 'you will explain yourself.'

'If you will favour me with the short answer of Yes or No, to a few explicit questions I shall take the liberty to propose,' replied Mr. C., 'I have little doubt but I can prove what I have affirmed.'

'It will afford me great satisfaction,' said the other, to comply with your proposal.'

Mr. C. then began, 'Are you of opinion that all sinners will be saved?'

'By no means,' said the gentleman.

'But you have no doubt,' added Mr. C., 'it will be formally and finally determined at the day of judgment, who are to be saved and who are to perish?'

'I am certainly of that opinion,' replied the stranger.

'I would ask, then, continued Mr. C., is the great God under any necessity of waiting till these last awful assizes, in order to determine who are the righteous that are to be saved, and the wicked who are to perish?'

'By no means,' said the other, 'for he certainly knows already.'

'When do you imagine,' asked Mr. C., 'that he first attained this knowledge?'

'Here the gentleman paused, and hesitated a little, but soon answered, 'He must have known from all eternity.'

'Then,' said Mr. C., 'It must have been fixed from all eternity.'

'That by no means follows,' replied the other.

'Then it follows,' added Mr. C., 'that he did not know from all eternity, but only guessed, and happened to guess right; for how can Omniscience know what is yet uncertain?'

Here the stranger began to perceive his difficulty, and after a short debate, confessed it should seem, it must be fixed from eternity.

'Now,' said Mr. C., 'one question more

will prove that you believe in predestination as well as I. You have acknowledged what can never be disproved; that God could not know from eternity who shall be saved, unless it had been fixed from eternity. If then it was fixed, be pleased, Sir, to inform me who fixed it?'

The gentleman candidly acknowledged he had never taken this view of the subject before, and said he believed it would be the last time he should attempt to oppose predestination to eternal life.—Rev. H. Bonar's 'Truth and Error.'

## Lost Soul.

But what, (if it be lawful to indulge such a thought,) would be the funeral obsequies of a lost soul? Where shall we find the tears fit to be wept at such a spectacle? Or could we realize the calamity in all its extent, what tokens of commiseration or concern would be deemed 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, or the heaven with sackcloth?—And were the whole frame of nature to become animated and vocal, would it be possible for her to utter a groan too deep, or a shriek too piercing, to express the magnitude and extent of such a catastrophe?—Robert Hall.

## Value of Time.

Time is the cradle of hope, but the grave of delusion. Time is the stern corrector of fools, but the salutary counsellor of the wise. Wisdom walks before it, opportunity with it, and repentance behind it. He that has made Time his friend, will have little to fear from his enemies; but he that has made Time his enemy, will have little to hope from his friends. Hear this, ye young! It is high time even for you to awake; for the hours of youthful hope and spirits bear but a small proportion, in "memory's backward view," to the whole of life. But be assured that they do bear to it a most important proportion, if, even now, you become formed to love and serve your God. O! happy, happy he, "whose yesterdays look backward with a smile!" His to-morrow brightens with a "joy unspeakable and full of glory!"

## Heart Work.

Heart work is difficult work. Heart work is hard work indeed. To shuffle over religious duties with a loose and heedless spirit will cost no great pains—but to set thyself before the Lord, and tie up thy loose and vain thoughts to a constant and serious attendance upon him, this will cost thee something. To attain a facility and dexterity of language in prayer, and put thy meaning into apt and decent expression, is easy; but to get thy heart broken for sin, while thou art confessing it; melted with the free grace, while thou art blessing God for it; to be really ashamed and humbled through the apprehensions of God's infinite holiness, and to keep thy heart in this frame, not only in, but after duty, will surely cost thee some groans and pains of soul.

## Are we becoming Holy.

We may ascertain whether holiness be in any measure our attainment, by examining whether it is our element. Do we delight in holy occupations, in holy society, and holy conversations? Do we feel regret at the close of the holy exercises and ordinances—a regret which we can only solace by the reflection, that in the temple above we shall go no more out? Or is it rather a relief to us when the Sabbath or communion season is over, or when the conversation returns to the topics of earth? In short, are we most in our element when engaged in spiritual or temporal concerns?

## The Domestic Altar.

Family prayer, says Cecil, may be made a vast engine of power to the whole circle. It says there is a God, and inspires a reverence for his character. It proclaims a life to come, and points to the spirit land. It fixes the idea of responsibility in the mind, while it diffuses sympathy through the soul. It furnishes a judicious parent with an opportunity of gently glancing at faults, where direct admonition might be inexpedient. It greatly conduces to the maintenance of family government and order, while its spiritual advantages are invaluable.

## A Promise.

A promise should be given with caution and kept with care. A promise should be made