

## WHAT SHALL I DO?

When men are in difficulty, they ask counsel of those, who they think understand the nature of their troubles, and are able to direct them what to do to extricate themselves. If a man's property is in jeopardy, he goes to men learned in the law, to ask what is the best course for him to pursue, to secure it. If a man is afflicted with any bodily disease, he resorts to those skilled in the healing art, for advice.

On the Day of Pentecost, when the three thousand were pricked in the heart, by the convicting influence of the Holy Spirit, they came to the apostles for advice. They came not, as cavillers, to find fault with Peter's sermon. They did not undertake to assert that the Bible was full of contradictions, nor to brace themselves up in opposition to God, by dwelling upon the faults of Christians. The sharp arrows of conviction had too deeply wounded them, to let them rest in either of these positions. They came not to the apostles from a vain curiosity to ply them with questions to see what they could induce them to say. But they came as sinners slain by the law. They deeply felt that they had been guilty of imbruing their hands in the blood of the Son of God. They saw nothing in prospect but the infliction of the penalty of the law, which they had broken. Full of these fearful apprehensions, they came to the apostles, inquiring, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The Holy Ghost still convicts of sin, and causes men to feel that they deserve to die. At this time, men in large numbers are coming to their pastors, asking what they shall do to be saved. We, as religious journalists, are deeply interested in this work of the Spirit, and wish to do what we can, to advance this cause. Were convicted sinners to come to our study inquiring, "Men and brethren, what shall we do," we should give the following directions:—

1. We would not say, continue to seek religion, with an impenitent heart. Directions are sometimes given, which if followed would ruin the soul. The convicted sinner is told that he is a mourner, and that he is in a very hopeful way. He is serving God according to the best light he has; that he is very sincere, and that his services are acceptable to God. The apostles gave no such directions. They knew that sinners might very sincerely mourn, because they were under the condemnation of God's Holy law. This is the worldly sorrow that worketh death. It may be felt ever so deeply, and ever so long, without curing the love of sin. The carnal mind which is enmity against God, is unsubdued.

2. We would not say to the inquiring sinner, if you are only sincere, God will accept your services. Paul was very sincere, when he verily thought that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. But this sincerity did not justify him in breasting out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples. Though he was very sincere, yet he was a persecutor of Jesus of Nazareth. Being ignorant of God's righteousness, men may very sincerely go about to establish their own, not submitting themselves to the righteousness of Christ. If dependence be placed on "unregenerate doings," they will not enter the kingdom of heaven.—Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles.

3. We would not say, cultivate the moral principles of your nature, and they will finally ripen into holiness. Cultivate the carnal mind as much as you please, and you can never make it the spiritual mind. Cultivate a thorn-bush, and you may make it a very thrifty shrub; but its nature will not be changed.—It is a thorn-bush still. No refinement of taste, nor cultivation of the intellectual powers, will change the nature of the human heart.

4. The first duty of the inquiring sinner is to repent. He must deeply feel his sinfulness; not merely that he is exposed to suffer the penalty of the law, but that he justly deserves to die. The law that seals his doom, is holy, just and good. He must feel the truth of the words of Watts,

"Should sudden vengeance seize my breath,  
I must pronounce Thee just in death,  
And were my soul sent down to hell,  
Thy righteous law approves it well."

He must humble himself deeply before God. This is his first, and his immediate duty. The Bible gives no directions to any thing previous to repentance. We have no discretion to alter or vary the commands of God. We must abide by the directions of God. The term of

salvation stands unrepealed. Repentance is therefore, the first and immediate duty of every impenitent sinner.

5. The impenitent sinner must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth." He has suffered the penalty of the law which man has broken, so that God can now be just, and yet justify him that believeth. He is wholly indebted to Christ for his acceptance with God. He is the way to the Father. "There is no other name given under heaven, among men, whereby we can be saved." The sinner receives him for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. This is his duty at the present time.—He is now commanded to believe on him, who was lifted up, even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. It is not sufficient for the sinner to think about repentance and faith, and firmly resolve to exercise them at some future time. The terms of salvation are not complied with, by acknowledging that they ought to be done. To secure the promise, the thing must actually be done. We say then to every impenitent sinner, repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.—*Puritan Recorder.*

## Fretting Philanthropists.

There is a class of professed philanthropists, bent on reforming the world, who are impatient of the slow movements of Providence.—With great zeal, they set about removing evils; and because they are not immediately successful, they get angry, and abuse every thing that comes in their way. A specimen of this, we published lately, in an extract from a speech delivered at the late anti-slavery convention at Syracuse; the speaker saying that he was "tired of praying and singing," and impiously declaring that he would reject the Bible and say there was no God, if he stood in the way of his favorite reform. This is a genuine specimen of ill nature, and reminds us of certain personages of olden times, of whom the prophet says that, "when they shall be hungry they shall fret themselves and curse their king and their God, and look upward." No language could better describe the conduct of a certain class of angry reformers of our day, some of whom, in their wrath, like those of old, not being satisfied with the slow developments of Divine Providence, are already beginning to turn away from the "law and testimony," and "seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter," and that rap.

Now, when we see the old world going backward, and tyrants being successful in putting their feet on the necks of the people, we are especially in danger of indulging this temper. But let us not fret ourselves, nor turn to cursing. God's hand is in the events which we see transpiring in the world. Let us stay our minds on him, and according to his promise, he will keep us in perfect peace. God has a work of judgment to perform upon these nations which have given their power unto the beast; and when he would chastise a people, he is wont to do it, by giving them wicked men to rule over them. When his ancient people cast off his authority, he gave them Saul; and as they became more and more wicked, he gave them a succession of wicked and oppressive kings.

The French nation are wedded to Romanism; and while they continue so, they must expect to share the judgments about to come upon the mystical Babylon. When in vision, John saw the fifth vial poured out upon the seat of the beast, his kingdom was full of darkness, and they "gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven for their pains and for their sores, and repented not of their deeds." Without undertaking to interpret prophecy, we may safely say that this is a graphic description of the present condition of Europe. God's purposes are ripening in these commotions. It does not become us to be angry and fret, because current events do not show an outward progress of freedom and religion, nor attempt to put forth a hand to "steady the ark of God." Although it may be shaken with the movement, he will take care of his own cause. And though some of his people may suffer amid the "distress of nations," he will take care that his promise shall be verified, that all things work together for their good.—*N. Y. Observer.*

## A Religious Life.

Dr. Draper, of New York, recently delivered an address to an anatomical class under his care, which, among other excellencies, con-

tained the following just sentiments, as to the importance of a religious life:—

Men often say the pleasures of religion and of a Christian faith are wholly perspective, and to be realized only in another world. In this they make a mistake; for those consolations commence even here, and temper the bitterness of fate. The virtuous laborer though he may be ground down with oppressions of his social condition, is not without his relief; at the anvil, the loom, or even at the bottom of the mine, he is leading a double existence—the miseries of the body find a contrast in the calm of the soul—the warfare without is compensated by the peace within—the dark night of life here serves only to brighten the glories of the prospect beyond. Hope is the daughter of despair. And thus a kind Providence overrules events, that it matters not in what station we may be—wealthy or poor, intellectual or lowly—a refuge is always at hand, and the mind worn out with one thing, turns to another, and its physical excitement is followed by physical repose.

If, viewing things in this way, I am led to regard a religious life as the secret source of earthly contentment, and therefore of happiness, I would not be understood as undervaluing minor means. Its superiority arises in this—that its action is wholly of an intellectual kind, and mainly consists in balancing the expectations of the future against the recollections of the past. How wide is the difference in this respect between us and the brutes! Their powers of memory are so little developed that a very short interval suffices to wipe out every trace of the past. Their knowledge of a future—if knowledge it can be called—is so obscure, that with truth it may be said, that they live for the present moment alone. In the scheme of happiness of sentient beings, two different methods have been followed:—to obliterate all recollection of the past, its disappointments and sufferings, and, hiding all knowledge of the future, to restrict life to the existing moment; or, letting the past remain clear and distinct, to counterbalance its evils with an expectation of future happiness. The one is for the brutes—the other for us. They, therefore, are, as it were, in the darkness of night—dreaming, but not thinking, and knowing nothing of what has gone on around; but we are set in the twilight of morning, subdued with the remembrance of the shadows and evils and disappointments to which we have been exposed; but trusting that the pale light that glimmers in our horizon is the harbinger of a better day.

## A Pious Mother and her Bible.

The mother of a family was married to an infidel, who made jest at religion in the presence of his children; yet she succeeded in bringing them up in the fear of the Lord. One day asked her how she preserved them from the influence of a father whose sentiments were so openly opposed to her own.—This was her answer: "Because to the authority of a father, I did not oppose the authority of a mother, but that of God. From their earliest years my children have always seen the Bible upon my table. This Holy Book has constituted the whole of their religious instruction. I was silent, that I might allow it to speak. Did they propose a question—did they commit any fault—did they perform any good action, I opened the Bible, and it answered, reproved or encouraged them. The constant reading of the Scriptures has alone wrought this prodigy which surprises you."

## Honesty in Little Things.

The following curious account of a practical sermon is copied from the Vermont Chronicle:—

A brother in the ministry took occasion to preach on the passage in Luke xvi. 10: "He that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." The theme was "that men who take advantage in small things of others, have the very element of character to wrong the community and individuals in great things, where the prospect of escaping detection or censure is as little to be dreaded." The preacher exposed the various ways by which people wrong others; such as borrowing; by mistakes in making change; by errors in accounts; by escaping taxes and custom-house duties; by managing to escape postage; by finding articles and never seeking owners; and by injuring articles borrowed, and never making the fact known to the owner when returned. One lady the next day met her pastor, and said, "I have been up to Mr. ———, to rectify an error he made in giving me change a few days

ago, for I felt bitterly your reproof yesterday." Another individual went to Boston to pay for an article not in her bill, which she noticed was not charged when she paid it. A man going home from meeting, said to his companion, "I do not believe there was a man in the meeting-house to-day, who did not feel condemned." After applying the sermon to a score or more of his acquaintances, he continued: "Did not the pastor utter something about finding a pair of wheels?" "I believe not, Neighbor A. He spoke of keeping little things, which had been found." "Well, I thought two or three times he said something about finding a pair of wheels, and really supposed he meant me. I found a pair down in my lot a while ago." "Do you?" said his companion, "know who they belong to?" Mr. B. lost them a short time ago." The owner was soon in possession of his wheels.

## Minister's Wives.

Society, says the Springfield Republican, is a concrete intelligence, an indefinite, aggregate humanity of "large expectations." It expects the "good time coming," progress in all that is good and great, and an undefined amount of service from the wives of the pastors of the churches, forgetting meanwhile, that these same ladies have a lively interest in the good time coming, and would like to make a little progress on their own hook. A pastor is hired to preach to a respectable church for from \$300 to \$1000 a year, depending on the wealth of the organization, and of the expensiveness in living. This is poor pay for well trained and industrious brains, but it keeps body and soul together, though the library stands a poor chance for reinforcement, and the children for toggerly.

This hires the pastor; but somehow or other, people have an idea that it hires the pastor's wife as well. From the day she enters the parish, she is a marked woman. Her dress is expected to be of the most saintly pattern. The color of ribbon may endanger the peace of the whole community. She must be the best woman in the world, the head of all benevolent enterprises, Sunday Schools, ladies' fairs for procuring flannel shirts for Hot-tentots, sewing circles, Bible classes, &c.—She must be the politest woman in the world, receiving calls at all times, and visiting from house to house, and make herself generally agreeable. She must be the most exemplary woman in the world, never laughing above the prescribed key. In short, she must be the paragon of all excellence, and possess a constitution like a horse, patience like an ox, and good nature like a puppy, to meet the wishes of what Carlyle would probably call the Expectational Epoch in the Sublime Cosmos. And why? Simply because her overworked husband has consented to do a most important, a most holy work, for under pay.

We appreciate fully, the desirableness of having, in the wife of a pastor, a pattern of the feminine proprieties and Christian virtues, as much on account of the pastor as the people; but we protest against the too common notion that the pastor's salary makes the wife a missionary, who is to labour with equal assiduity and earnestness for the good of the parish, and to "cotton" to the caprices, tastes and prejudices of the parish, without a farthing's consideration. She has her household duties to perform, and we know not why more should be expected of her than any other good Christian woman, who has the care of a family, and a toiling husband to kiss, comfort and console.

WORDS FROM JOHN WESLEY.—We may die without the knowledge of many truths, and be carried to Abraham's bosom; but if we die without love, what will knowledge avail us? Just as much as it avails the devil and his angels. I will not quarrel with you about my opinion: only see that your heart is right towards God—that you love the Lord Jesus Christ—that you love your neighbor—walk as your Master walked, and desire no more. I am sick of opinions; I am weary to hear them; my soul loathes their frothy food. Give me solid, substantial religion; give me a humble lover of God and man—a man full of mercy and good fruits—a man laying himself out in works of faith, the patience of hope, the labor of love. Let my soul be with such Christians whosoever they are; and whatsoever opinions they may hold. "He that doeth the will of my Father in heaven, the same is my brother, and my sister, and my mother."