

[From the Macedonian.]
ONE TALENT.

You have already one talent. But God has a claim on you in respect to the use of that talent, as truly as if you had five or ten. If your agent were entrusted with a fifty dollars to spend for you, he would be under as real obligation to fulfil his exact commission, as if it were five thousand. As to the principle, he would have no more right to appropriate exclusively to his own use five dollars of your money than five thousand.

Many imagine that they have nothing to do for God, because they think they are incompetent to do great things. If they could sustain a missionary, or endow a college, or save a hundred souls, they would zealously arouse themselves to action. But consider the following things:

1. As a matter of gratitude, God has as true a claim upon a man for his use of one talent, in its measure, as of more. Because you have but one talent, do you owe him nothing—no love, no service, no gratitude? Has he done nothing for you which lays you under obligation to him? Is it becoming, proper, just, or grateful, to do nothing, because you cannot do every thing?

2. God has bestowed distinguished talents upon only a few persons. He has offered great occasions only to a few. He has given great wealth only to a few. Most of the service done for God and for his cause must be done by persons of common ability; much of it by the poor, or by persons of moderate means; most of it, by improving the occasions which occur every day. He who waits for great opportunities will probably find no opportunities. He who despises present openings for doing good may find no better openings. He who declines to use his one or two talents will never have any more to use.

3. One or two talents, rightly used, can effect more than ten misapplied. The fields are made fertile by the noiseless dew, the tranquil sunshine, and the gentle rain. The great rivers, which bear navies on their bosom, are the combination of the little quiet rills and the brooks which, in distant regions, creep, scarcely noticed among the grass. Feeble means have always been prolific in great effects.—God seems to have rejoiced in this method of operation. Use the one or two talents which you possess. God will, if he sees fit, make them more. Use the opportunities he has set before you. If you neglect these, why should he afford you greater? God wishes to make you humble. The world has seen but one Schwartz, who labored among the heathen fifty whole years. Blessed are those servants of God, who have been willing to honor him by laboring among them only four or five years, or as many months. God has allowed to Carey and Judson those great positions which made them conspicuous in the Christian world.—How few missionary laborers have done anything more than to toil in comparative obscurity, and to lie down at noon on their ungathered or half-gathered sheaves! Few have had fortunes to give to this cause. But the poor widows' mites and the children's pennies have wrought wonders, and God has accepted them.

4. One talent, rightly and faithfully used, may plant gems in the Redeemer's crown. A word spoken in season, a tract given, a few cents contributed, a prayer breathed forth in secret,—by the disciple, or the child, having only one talent,—may be heard of again at the judgment of the great day. The great judge may own it, and crown it with unspeakable honor.

Disciple of Christ, you have one talent. God has a claim upon it. Is it laid up in a knapsack, or buried in the earth? Or, are you improving it for him? When, in the judgment day, inquisition is made as to the use you have made of your money, of your gift of speech, of your influence, of your opportunities of praying for the cause and kingdom of Christ, what account will you have to render?

Doctrines Offensive to None.

It is a favorite but false dogma, that the religion of the gospel may be so trimmed of its sterner features as to prove offensive to none, and yet enough be left to answer the wants of the sinner, and place him in the way to heaven. If this be practicable, it was a secret to the Apostles, who, in all their missionary efforts, found not only that the offence of the cross had not ceased, but that they were constrained, by the very terms of their commission, to declare the whole counsel of God. They seemed to be ignorant of the art of making religion easy, and

divesting it of all sectarian bias and controversial tendency. So far as we can learn from their writings, they know of no method of accommodating the doctrines of Christ to human prejudice; and, had any plan been suggested in the early church for the publication of theological tracts, which would have answered this purpose, Paul's treatise on predestination, as found in the Epistle to the Romans, would have been rejected from the number, as entirely too violent and sectarian. The fact is, as it ever has been, that in the school of Christ religion cannot be made easy; it has hard lessons to be studied, in the acquisition of which the heart must be tutored and disciplined; the level between it and the human heart must be attained, not by lowering its claims, but by raising the heart to admit its claims; and hence the systems of doctrines taught in the Holy Scriptures can never be so popularized as to prove welcome to the unconverted and the religious formalist. It can be dear only to those who have humbly submitted themselves to the teachings of the Holy Spirit. A vigorous, manly, and intelligent piety can never result from the homœopathic system of religion. The favorite graduation by which it is determined with how little truth a soul may be saved, is the prime cause that there are "so many weak and sickly" among us. Flippant theologians, by their confident discrimination between essentials and non-essentials, make the Bible not only the most sadly mutilated book, but the most uncertain spiritual guide in the world. We are free to say that we should feel imperilled by presuming to make any such specific distinctions. While the power and mercy of God are not to be limited in saving men by the instrumentality of much or little truth, he has left us no discretion to dictate on the subject, or to say what portions may be safely withheld of that "all Scripture" which "is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, and instruction in righteousness."—*Presbyterian*.

Union of Good Men in Heaven.

BY REV. R. HALL.

If the mere conception of the reunion of good men in a future state, infused a momentary rapture in the mind of Tully; if an airy speculation, for there is reason to fear it had little hold on his convictions, could inspire him with such delight, what may we be expected to feel, who are assured of such an event by the true sayings of God! How should we rejoice in this prospect, the certainty, rather, of spending a blissful eternity with those whom we loved on earth; of seeing them emerge from the ruins of the tomb, and the deeper ruins of the fall, not only uninjured, but refined and perfected; with every tear wiped from their eyes standing before the throne of God and the Lamb in white robes, and palms in their hands, crying with a loud voice, Salvation to God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever! What delight will it afford to renew the sweet counsel we have taken together, to recount the toils of combat, and the labor of the way, and to approach not the house but the throne of God, in company, in order to join in the symphonies of heavenly voices, and lose ourselves among the splendors and fruitions of the beatific vision!

To that state all the pious on earth are tending, and if there is a law from whose operation none are exempt, which irresistibly conveys their bodies to darkness and to dust, there is another, not less certain or less powerful, which conducts their spirits to the abodes of bliss, to the bosom of their Father and their God. The wheels of nature are not made to roll backward; every thing presses on towards eternity; from the birth of time an impetuous current has set in which bears all the sons of men towards that interminable ocean.

Meanwhile, heaven is attracting to itself whatever is congenial to its nature, is enriching itself by the spoils of earth, and collecting within its capacious bosom whatever is pure, permanent, and divine; leaving nothing for the last fire to consume but the objects and the slaves of concupiscence; while every thing which grace has prepared and beautified, shall be gathered and selected from the ruins of the world, to adorn that eternal city "which hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God doth enlighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

Andrew Fuller in the Pulpit.

Very few men of his day produced so much impression in the pulpit as Andrew Fuller, and yet it would be almost difficult to say ex-

actly how this impression was produced. It would be entirely unnecessary to tell the reader that there was nothing about him noisy, bombastical or dogmatical. No trick of art, no artificial rhetoric, no oh's and ah's, nor any thing theatrical. You saw him ascending the pulpit, tall, robust, stout, awkward alike in his person and his manners. His prayers were short and Scriptural, but excepting on some very few remarkable exciting occasions, he did not manifest any very extraordinary gift of prayer. He rose to preach with gloves on, and his hands placed in the pockets of his pantaloons. His look was heavy but commanding, and you wanted much to hear what such a man had to say. He read his text, generally a plain and important passage of the Divine Word, and commenced with great simplicity and apparently with little or no emotion; at length one of his hands was drawn from its hiding place, and in a few minutes the other also was released; a little while and a glove was drawn off, and the other shortly followed it to the pulpit floor. His feelings soon became earnest as he presented the exact views or feelings of the sacred writer.—The transparent simplicity of the preacher was wonderful; how is it, the hearer would ask, that I never saw the passage in that light before? Then came chiefly from the Scriptural history, illustration after illustration, intermingled with touches of imagination, and strokes of pathos which entirely commanded attention, and do far more than call forth admiration. If the hearer could spare a moment to look at the preacher, he would see him twisting off a coat button and unconsciously preparing a task for Mrs. Fuller on Monday morning. So much was this a habit, though always unconscious of it at the time, that among his intimate friends he would describe a season of great enjoyment in preaching, by calling it a "button time."

His sermons were from fifty minutes to an hour in length, and no one ever complained of him as being tedious. The impression produced on the mind of the hearer by any single sermon would seldom be effaced. His arguments appeared irresistible; so that a pious lady, who heard him for the first time in his own church, asked whether it was possible that there could be any unconverted persons among his regular hearers.

A Strange Thing.

Even the wise virgins slumbered and slept. As sinners sleep in their sins, so Christians sometimes sleep over their duty. This is a strange thing.

It is strange, if we consider what has been done for them. God has loved them with an everlasting love. For them the Saviour has died. The Holy Ghost has been sent down from heaven to renew their hearts and lead them to Christ. They have been made alive from the dead, and been made not only children but heirs of God. And how can they sleep, for whom so much has been done?

It is strange, if we consider their professions. They have subscribed with their own hands unto the Lord, acknowledged his right to them, vowed to be his. When convinced of their sins, and brought to feel their need of Christ, they bowed to his sceptre, and made a full surrender to him. They kept back nothing then; they made no reserve. And when they stood up in the great congregation, to profess their faith in Christ, there was no reserve made in their dedication to him who bled for them. And often since they have repeated their vows, and said we will serve the Lord. Yet after all, they fall asleep, and this may well excite astonishment.

It is strange, if we consider their circumstances. They are engaged in a warfare. "Hell and their sins resist their course," and yet they sleep on the field of battle, and when their leader cries to arms! they are surrounded with temptations; within them are the remnants of corruption, without and around them the seductions and allurements of the world; they need to watch and pray, and yet they sleep; they are the salt of the earth, the light of the world, and stand in the most solemn relations to the cause of Christ and to perishing men; they are under the strongest obligations to be ever vigilant and active.—On them is suspended, instrumentally, the salvation of souls and the conversion of the world! How then can they sleep? How strange that they can slumber, with the weight of a world resting upon their shoulders, with the destiny of immortals suspended upon their zeal and watchfulness! Christians asleep!

It is a strange thing!—*Home and Foreign Record.*

Christ's Teaching on Universal Salvation.

On one occasion during our Saviour's ministry the question was put to him, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" If Christ had been preaching the final salvation of all men, it is strange that such a question should have been proposed to him. Yet he manifested no surprise at it. He did not reprove or correct the inquirer for having dishonored the goodness of God by the supposition that any would be finally lost. He did not refer him to his past teachings to learn that all would be saved.—Nor did Christ then advance the doctrine of universal salvation. Never had he a better opportunity. The question was directly to that point. Are there few that be saved?—What did he answer? Did he say, all men shall be saved? Did he even say, many—the great majority of mankind—shall be saved? Did he say, a just and benevolent God will never punish any after this life? His answer was "Strive to enter in at the straight gate"—that is, agonize to enter heaven by an incessant warfare with sin—"for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Whoever may preach universal salvation, and upon whatever authority, certain it is that Christ preached no such doctrine.

Years.

Luke Short, when about fifteen years of age, heard a sermon from the celebrated Flavel, and soon after went to America, where he spent the remainder of his life. He received no immediate impression from Flavel's sermon, and lived in carelessness and sin till he was a century in age. He was "now a sinner a hundred years old;" and, to all appearance, ready to "die accursed." But, sitting one day in a field, he fell into a busy reflection on his past life; and recurring to the events of his youth, he thought of having heard Mr. Flavel preach, and vividly recollected a large portion of his sermon, and the extraordinary earnestness with which it was delivered. Starting as if stung by an adder, he instantly labored under accusings of conscience, and ran from thought to thought till he arrived first at conviction of sin, and next to an apprehension of the divine method of saving the guilty. He soon after joined a Congregational church in his vicinity, and to the day of his death, which happened in the one hundred and sixteenth year of his age, gave satisfactory evidence of being a truly converted and believing follower of the Saviour. Mr. Flavel had long before passed to his heavenly rest, and could not, while on earth, have supposed that his living voice would so long continue to yield its echoes as an instrument of doing good to a wandering sinner. Let ministers and private christians, who labor for the spiritual well-being of their fellow-men, cast their bread upon the waters, in full faith that though they lose sight of it themselves, it shall be found after many days.—*London Evang. Miss.*

Golden Envelopes.

A touching incident is related in the last number of the Christian Union of a poor servant girl in England, who had attended the ragged schools and received spiritual as well as intellectual benefit from them, and who, one evening, at the close of the school, put in the rector's hand, much to his surprise, a note containing half a sovereign, i. e. a gold piece of the value of 2s. Her entire wages were only \$40 a year. She offered this as a thanksgiving tribute to God for the blessing she had received from the schools, very modestly and beautifully remarking that it was not much. "But, sir, I have wrapped it up in an earnest prayer, and with many tears."—Here is indeed a most rare and beautiful envelope. Would that our offerings as we lay them upon God's altar were more generally enclosed in such golden envelopes, "an earnest prayer and many tears." Sweet child, thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

The Way to Hear Sermons.

At every point that concerns himself, the good parishioner turns down a leaf in his heart, and rejoiceth that God's word hath pierced him, as hoping that while his soul smarts it heals. And as it is no manners for him that hath good venison before him, to ask whence it came, but rather fairly to fall to it—so hearing an excellent sermon, he never inquires whence the preacher had it, but falls aboard to practice it.—*Fuller*.