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The Christian Visitor.

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THE OFFICE OF THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR, Corner of Prince William and Church Streets, SAINT JOHN, N. B. REV. I. E. BILL, Editor and Proprietor.

"Hold fast the form of sound words."—2d Timothy, i. 13.

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HOW THE WILL OF GOD SHOULD BE DONE ON EARTH.

A SERMON PREACHED BY REV. C. TUPPER, D. D., BEFORE THE ANNUAL CONVENTION IN MONCTON, AUG. 24, 1862.

No. 1. "They will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

This is one of the comprehensive petitions contained in what is usually called "the Lord's prayer." I am not disposed to contend with those who deem it the part of duty to repeat this prayer in the exact words of the English version, with frequency. It does not, however, appear so to me. From the numerous prayers recorded in Scripture it is evident, that the ancient servants of God were not accustomed to present their supplications in any prescribed form, but in accordance with the promptings of their minds, in dependence on the aid of the Divine Spirit, as occasions and circumstances varied. (Gen. xviii. 23, 24; xxiv. 12, 14; 1st Kings, viii. 12, 23; 1st Chron. iv. 10; Prov. xxx. 7, 9; Acts i. 24, 25; iv. 24, 30; Rom. viii. 26.) Our Lord was pleased to assist His people by giving them a brief directory to prayer. There is no evidence that they ever repeated this identical form, but as it briefly comprehends all the principal parts of acceptable prayer, all persons may profit by the direction. (ver. 8.) "after this manner, therefore, pray ye." Whatever particular words may be used, unquestionably we should earnestly desire, and fervently pray, that God's will may be done on earth as it is in heaven.

In contemplating this subject, one may, by Divine aid, consider—

I. WHAT IS HERE MEANT BY THE "WILL OF GOD."

II. HOW IS IT DONE IN HEAVEN.

III. THE DESIRABILITY THAT IT SHOULD BE SO DONE ON EARTH.

The phrase "will of God," as "His will," is obviously used in different acceptations. Sometimes it denotes His purpose, or the rule of His own conduct, and may be properly designated "the providential will of God." Thus the Apostle speaks of JEROME as having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, "according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph. i. 5, 9, 11; Rom. xv. 32; 1st Peter. iv. 19; Rev. xvii. 17.) In many instances it means the rule of conduct which He has prescribed for His creatures, and may be fitly termed "God's preceptive will." So our Lord says, "any man will do, His will, he shall know of the doctrine," &c. "Whoever shall do the will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my brother," &c. (Jno. vii. 17; Matt. xii. 50; Ep. vi. 6; 1st Jno. ii. 17.)

This diversity of meaning may be illustrated by the fact, that there are instances recorded, in which men have fulfilled God's providential will, while they have violated His preceptive will. When Joseph's brethren hated him, conspired against him and sold him for a slave, they acted in direct violation to God's precepts, and were highly culpable; and yet they were unintentionally accomplishing the Divine purpose. Accordingly Joseph said to them subsequently, "as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is written, 'I will save much people alive.'" (Gen. 50. 20.) Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, was an instrument in the Lord's hand for the chastisement of a disobedient people, and in this he accomplished the design of God. "How be it," says the prophet, "my strength not so; neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart, to destroy and cut off nations not a few." In this gross violation of God's preceptive will he was actuated by wicked motives of ambition and cruelty. Almighty Jehovah says, "wherefore it shall come to pass that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion, and Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart and the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks." (Isa. x. 7, 12, 15.) Those who "killed the Prince of Life" most grossly transgressed God's law, and yet they undesignedly aided in accomplishing His purpose of grace. "So it was said to them, 'Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and with wicked hands have crucified and slain.'" (Acts ii. 23; iv. 27, 28.)

While, however, Jehovah has thus overruled the evil designs and sinful deeds of ingodly men for the accomplishment of His own gracious purpose, He has not thereby interfered with the liberty of the human will, nor presented any objection to the rendering of obedience to His commands by those disposed to obey them. He has set bounds to the wickedness of men. So the Psalmist says to Him, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." (Ps. lxxvi. 10.)

But here the question arises—in which of the senses now noticed is the will of God to be understood in the text? We may draw a wrong inference by comparing this with passages which, at first view, appear similar. It is needful, therefore, to examine them with care. When Christ, under the insupportable burden of our sins, prayed that, if it were possible, the cup of suffering might pass from Him, He added, "nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." (Matt. xxvi. 39; Luke xxii. 42.) So when certain disciples, who besought Paul, "so not to go up to Jerusalem alone," perceived, from the steadfastness of his resolution, as well as from prophecy, that by Divine appointment he was to be "delivered into the hands of the Gentiles," they ceased importuning, saying, "the will of the Lord be done," (Acts xxi. 10, 14.) But in both these cases the language is manifestly that of submission; and not of request; while the text, "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," is obviously a petition. We ought, indeed, always to acquiesce cheerfully in the providential will of God, and to rejoice in its accomplishment, which may also be a proper subject of prayer. There is not, however, the same necessity to pray, and strive for this as in the other case; for it is invariably done on earth as well as in heaven; "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth." (Dan. iv. 35; xi. 36; Ps. exv. 3; xxxv. 6.) Not so with His preceptive will, which is violated by man continually. It is both scriptural and requisite to pray that we and others may be influenced and enabled to yield obedience to this. (Ps. cxix. 4, 5; Phil. ii. 12, 13; Matt. xiii. 20, 21.) Our direct concern is with the preceptive will of God. So Moses says, "the secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children forever." (Deut. xxxii. 30.)

It appears, therefore, that those who regard the language of the text as merely an expression of acquiescence in the allotments of the Most High, mistake its true and practical import. Evidently it refers to His preceptive will. We ought to pray earnestly, and to labor diligently, that this may "be done on earth as it is in heaven."

EXTENSION OF THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

PROFANE SERMON, PREACHED AT THE WESTERN BRITISH BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, BY REV. S. ROBINSON, AND PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE ASSOCIATION.

No. 1. "There shall be a handful of corn upon the top of the mountains; and they of the city shall shake like Lebanon; and they of the city shall be like grass of the field."

of the promises of God take a long time for their fulfillment, and yet their fulfillment is the less certain. If man make promises, they must be fulfilled very soon, or they never fulfilled, for he is only of a "few days," and then as a flower and continueth not." When God promises, his promises may be long, and yet be certain in their fulfillment, for he is the eternal and everlasting God, from a "thousand years is as one day, and he watch in the night when it is past." Some of his promises have taken thousands of years in their fulfillment. For instance, his promise, ever made to man, the promise that our Lord should bruise the serpent's head, many generations passed away from the time that promise was made until the Saviour came into the world? Sixteen hundred years, the time of the flood, rolled away, and yet promise was not fulfilled. Twelve hundred years, or unto the time of David, and the promise was not born.

We have to wait one thousand years more before the Son of God appears. As four thousand years from the first promise until the time of its fulfillment, it was as certain as if it had been fulfilled on that day on which it was made. For instance of this kind we see in the made of the world's conversion to God. "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the face of the sea; and no man shall say to his neighbour, 'I know not the Lord;' for all shall know him the least to the greatest." Or in the beautification of the text—"There shall be a handful of corn upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon; and they of the city shall flourish like the palm tree." It is more than three thousand years since promises were made, and they are not fulfilled.

The church of God or the kingdom of Christ is the handful of corn in the earth, on the top of the mountains, "small and unpromising, will soon become like the mighty cedars of Lebanon, and multiply as the grass of the earth." Zion it is said, whereas thou hast been taken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a city of many generations.

Our subject is to present some reasons for being that the number of the saved will in the end exceed the number of the lost. It may be well to observe here, that the Bible speaking of God's people in the past and present, always speaks of them as few when compared with the rest of the world. But when speaking of them in the future, it always speaks of them as a great multitude, as the grass of the earth, and as the stars of the heavens. It says of the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom of the whole heavens, is given to the saints of the Most High God. And speaks of Christ's kingdom as "extending from sea to sea, and from river to the ends of the earth." Of all things being blessed in him, and shall call him Lord forever more.

Let us look at the past and present state of the world, and we will see that the number of God's people are few, like the "handful of corn upon the top of the mountains," compared with the rest of the world. From the creation he flood, how few the children of God came with the children of men. At the time of flood only eight righteous persons were left among the teeming millions of the earth. There is reason to believe if there had been a righteous in the world, they would have perished in the ark. God never destroys the righteous with the wicked. From the flood to the calling of Abraham, and from the calling of him to the time of Moses, how little was the true God in the earth.

Let us look at the present state of the world, and we will see that the number of God's people are few, like the "handful of corn upon the top of the mountains," compared with the rest of the world. From the creation he flood, how few the children of God came with the children of men. At the time of flood only eight righteous persons were left among the teeming millions of the earth. There is reason to believe if there had been a righteous in the world, they would have perished in the ark. God never destroys the righteous with the wicked. From the flood to the calling of Abraham, and from the calling of him to the time of Moses, how little was the true God in the earth.

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THE BAPTIST CAUSE IN NEW BRUNSWICK.

BY REV. E. B. DEMILL, A. M.

Bishop Medley, in his charge recently delivered to his clergy, has displayed a considerable degree of moral courage. He begs for money, and informs that his flock have been stingy, not to say mean. The Episcopal denomination in this Province began its course under most favorable auspices. Its members long engrossed the wealth and education of the Province. Besides wealth, education, numbers, and the prestige afforded by its connection with the English establishment, large sums of money were given from England. Nevertheless, other denominations originally poor and illiterate, obliged to depend upon their own resources, have pushed themselves into notice, and are competing with the Episcopalians for the possession of the land. Meanwhile, the supplies from England to the Provincial churches are on the point of being withheld, and no available means are at hand to make up the threatened deficiency. Unless strenuous efforts be put forth, stations now occupied must be surrendered, and thus grievous injury will result to the Church.

This is about the substance of what the Bishop has communicated to his flock, and we dare say that his courage and fidelity have excited in the minds of some humiliation and disgust. We have in our denomination a hundred Bishops, all of whom are zealous for the faith. Would it not be a good idea for one or more of the hundred, to examine the condition and prospects of the denomination, and then in Bishop Medley's spirit, to make known the results of such an examination.

It is very easy and very pleasant, no doubt, to congratulate ourselves upon our remarkable progress in point of numbers. With very little wealth, or education, or social influence, we have attained to our present position, and it is very proper that at Associations and Conventions we should indulge in a moderate amount of crowding, but on ordinary occasions, would it not be well to enquire whether an increase of numbers has been accompanied with corresponding increase in zeal, piety, and efficiency in the conduct of our denominational enterprises.

A stranger in coming to this Province, with a superficial knowledge of our history, might indulge in some very edifying reflections. Here, he might say, is a denomination of Christians, which, surrounded by other religious bodies, possessing superior advantages, has yet distanced them all. What an example of the superiority of zeal over wealth, or education, or position! What a zealous, self-sacrificing people these Baptists must be, thus unaided, to have made such progress. Doubtless after such a career, they must now be in a very efficient condition. Their ministers will be so remunerated as to allow them to devote all their time and energies to the spiritual interests of their churches. The various churches will be mindful of the claims of the heathen, and aid largely in their evangelization. Especially after such remarkable success in the past, the older and wealthier churches will at every sacrifice maintain the preaching of the gospel in the destitute localities of the Province. The course of education will also be maintained. Colleges and Academies will be supported, and the youth will be encouraged to flock to them.

Now, we think this stranger, on a little acquaintance with us, would be compelled to modify his ideas very materially. He would discover that Baptist ministers have been, and still are, miserably supported; that as a denomination we have never been zealous or systematic in our efforts, that even now with all the past to encourage us, we are doing exceedingly little for the advancement of the denomination.

A few years ago an incident occurred which may serve imperfectly to represent our condition as a denomination.—A good Methodist brother arose to speak in a meeting; he said, "I bless God for a free gospel, I have been a believer for many years, and the gospel has not yet cost me the first cent." The minister looked over the pulpit and replied, "God bless your stingy soul." Now, it would be very impertinent and incorrect for any one to call us stingy, yet we must confess that our privileges and our progress have cost us wonderfully little. The Baptist can exclaim—our denomination has made extraordinary progress, and is now prominently before the public, yet with the exception of the pittance paid to ministers, our growth has been unattended with expense, and we can boast of expending little or nothing in support of the enterprise of the denomination. The salaries of our ministers scarcely average \$300 per annum. The denominational newspaper has been maintained by private capital. The Province supports our Academy, Nova Scotia supports our College. The rest of the Christians would do the work of evangelizing the heathen, and our Home Missionary operations are conducted so as not to burden us in the slightest degree. Either let us be more active and benevolent—or else endeavor to proselyte by showing the public how little religion costs in the Baptist denomination of New-Brunswick.

IMITATION.

BY REV. DR. SPURDEN.

The propensity to imitate the sayings and doings of others is a very general, perhaps universal one, in the human race. Its influence may be roughly estimated on a large scale when immense multitudes of men are gathered together, and are acted upon by some force of common interest, and impelled by some feeling of common sympathy. The genuine orator by this means works the minds of the masses. The most sensitive first yield themselves to his magic spell, their bursts of enthusiastic feeling carry with them the rest of the audience, and the speaker reigns with uncontrolled power over the passions of his hearers. Does he aim to arouse indignation, to awaken pity, to draw forth laughter, to excite the imagination? It matters not what may be his object. The principle which causes one to imitate another, when the moving force is strong enough to excite enthusiasm, gives the orator an advantage which enables him to bend the audience to his will, just as the trees of the forest are swayed by the wind. True, there may be a few, that resist the influence, or yield to it but slightly, just as some sturdy oak may bend only a very little to the blast. But a strong effort of resistance is required to do so, and some degree of mental training is required to give a man such control of his feelings as to enable him to resist the contagious influence of an example so near and so powerful. All this shows that imitation is a natural impulse, and that resistance to it must be acquired by mental culture and moral principle.

The existence of the imitation faculty shows itself in very early childhood. Long before the infant has learned to articulate words, it has learned to imitate actions. Many a mother could recall instances of imitation in her child appearing as the first dawn of intelligence. Indeed, a child first learns to talk by imitating the sounds made by its parents and associates; and it is impossible to say how much is due, in the formation of the habits and character of each individual, to an imitation of the speech, manners, and behaviour of his companions.

Trite observations are often most valuable, yet their triteness causes their value to be overlooked. What more trite than the admonition to set a good example before children? What advice can be given of more moment than this? But what is it that renders examples so much more powerful than precept?

The imitation faculty. Young persons, insensibly to them, imitate their parents and teachers, their brothers and sisters, their companions and school-fellows. The nearer and more constant the example, the more powerful the influence; hence the duty of parents to give to their children as much of the example of home as circumstances will admit; and the further duty of making that example instinct with affection, purity, and piety—a model of benevolence to man, and devout obedience to God.

The teacher's influence, also, in this respect upon his scholars is great. His daily spirit and temper tell gradually upon their susceptible dispositions. Are his passions uncontrolled? His scholars may be repressed before him by the sternness of fear, but they cannot learn from him to control themselves. Is he patient and able to govern himself? They may be expected to imitate the same spirit, if placed long enough within the range of his example. Is he hasty and impetuous? Other influences must counteract the injury, if they grow up otherwise. Is he kind and easy of approach? The effect will, in many cases, appear visible in them. Is he slack and indolent? How can they be expected to become diligent and active by his example? Is he conscientiously persevering and alert? It is the best antidote to their indolence and instability.

The tendency to become like that which we propose to our minds as a model, admonishes us to be careful in the choice of associates. Inter-course with the degraded must debase; communion with the wise and good will save us from such debasement, and may, in conjunction with other favorable influences, exalt and refine the character. Let us try to do so, not that it must, because the reason of man is far more prone to evil than to good, and the best external influences may be counteracted by internal vicious propensities.

This same tendency gives additional value to the lessons taught by history and biography, and the superior class of works of fiction. Deeds of heroism and self-sacrifice, sentiments of honor and patriotism, the wisdom of the sage, the fortitude of the brave, become seeds which when sown in the hearts of the youth of future generations, germinate and bear fruit after their kind. But it may be asked, how can one born in humble station, whose life is spent in drudgery, imitate the example of heroes and wise men, whose lives are recorded in history? This question deserves distinct consideration at some future time.

MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF SAINTS IN HEAVEN.

BY REV. J. C. HURD, M. D.

No. 1. "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."

That this passage points to a future state of existence, in which the righteous shall enjoy superior knowledge and felicity, there can be no doubt; but that this has any special bearing upon the subject of mutual recognition, I will not venture to assume. Still, it will not be denied that the argument in favor of such recognition is greatly strengthened by the most natural inference derived from this and other passages of similar import, in both the Old and New Testaments. God has furnished us with all necessary information on subjects of vital interest to us. He has made no provision for mere idle curiosity. Where He is silent, it is folly, perhaps presumption, for us to speak. Speculative theology is a current on which we are most liable to be carried to extremes. Thousands have launched out upon it to their own destruction, like a ship left to the wind and waves. Nothing is easier, or perhaps more natural, than to indulge in speculative theory. It has been the favorite employment of men in all ages. Some of these theories have sprung into existence, and spread with amazing rapidity, exerting an incredible influence over the popular mind. Others have been less successful in the accomplishment of their designs, whether good or evil. The absurdity of some, being discovered as soon as they were born, has consigned them to an early grave. Others have struggled into life, rising gradually above the tide of opposition rolled against them, till science has confirmed their truth and reality even after their originators were dead.

But what of the mutual recognition of saints in heaven? This is something which has occupied the minds of men from periods of remotest antiquity. It has not, and never can be consigned to oblivion. It lives in the hearts of millions

THE COLD SHOULDER IN CHURCH.

We know a man, well-educated, polite, agreeable in all private intercourse, who did a very impolite thing the other day in church. When the sermon began, he half looked up, with no encouraging expression on his face, but with the air of a suspicious man, who "does not believe there is much in it," but is willing to wait a little and see. He was clearly prepared not to be interested. If all church attendants greeted their preacher thus, they would break him down at the outset. Our friend soon dropped his eyes, turned as far round as the seat would let him, and fairly gave the preacher the cold shoulder. He did not shut his eyes; that would have been less discouraging. The minister might have thought, "Poor man, he has been hard worked in his business, and though the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak." He was provokingly wide awake. But he looked down, straight and hard, as if he would look the floor through, and look out an underground passage by which to escape. There he sat, stern and rigid, seeming to feel sour, discontented and bored. His whole attitude said, "That sermon is not worth much—I wish I could hear something better than that." Well, the sermon might have been poor; we have a right to speak on that point. But it cost labor. Weary, though pleasant, hours were spent in thinking it out, in casting and recasting it, in trying to make its central truth stand out prominent and impressive. And its truth was one of great moment. Even though, in the estimation of the unwilling hearer, poorly set forth, it deserved serious and respectful attention. But there sat the hearer, saying all the while by his manner, "I wish you were in Joppa." In one place he did look up, as if about to show some interest, but he soon relapsed into the disgraced state. As a whole, it was a most decided case of the cold shoulder.

We are sorry he was so ill-satisfied. We wish every man he hears were a star preacher, able to fascinate and entrance him. But as most preachers are not extraordinary men, we do not see how he is to get along. He is a church-member, and it would scarcely be reputable to stay away from church; and it may not be convenient to go every Sabbath where brilliant orators are to be heard. He must go to church; and he must hear some sermons which claim no more than to be plain, simple presentations of religious truth. Now we ask, is it polite for him to frown on a minister in the very house of worship? If he cannot be pleased, may not others be profited? And if the preacher has any right to preach at all, if it is best that he should preach, is it not best to show a decent interest in the services? Perhaps we mistake our friend. Perhaps he is pretty well satisfied, but "that is his way." If so, it is a most unfortunate way. Gentlemen do not treat each other so in the parlor or the counting-room; why should they in the church? The thought will do to dwell on, and carry out. Letral church-goers pay good and evident attention to the preacher, and they will encourage him more than they think of. And if they wish to get better sermons, that is just the way to bring it about.—Pacific.

"I ONLY CRIED WITH HER."

The widow's mite was of more value in the Saviour's eyes than large contributions by the wealthy, because of the willing heart and the scanty means. The following beautiful little incident shows how even children can do good by a little tender sympathy.—

"A poor widow, the mother of two children, used to call on them at the close of each day, for the report of the good they had done. One night the oldest hesitated in her reply to her mother's question, 'What kindness have you shown?' 'I don't know, mother.' The mother, touched with the tone of her answer, resolved to unravel the mystery; and the little sensitive thing, when reassured, went on to say—'Going to school this morning, I found little Annie G., who had been absent some days, crying very hard. I asked her, mother, what made her cry so, which made her cry more, so that I could not help leaning my head on her neck, and crying too. Then her sobs grew less and less, till she told me of her little baby-brother, whom she nursed so long, and loved so much—how he had sickened, grown pale and thin, writhing with pain until he died, and then they put him in her coffin. Mother, she told me this; and then she hid her face in her book, and cried as if her heart would break. Mother I could not help putting my face on the other page of the book, and crying too, as hard as she did. After we had cried together a long time, she hugged me and kissed me, telling me I had done her good. 'Mother, I don't know how I did her good, for I only cried with her. That is all I can tell, for I can't tell how I did her good.'"

A CURS FOR HICCUP.—You may be the medium of relief to many who suffer from hiccup if you will state in your paper that it can be cured immediately by the mere placing of the palm of the hand of any person upon the pit of the stomach of the one afflicted, and a persistent state of the eye of the sufferer into that of the one who undertakes the cure. I do not recollect how first I learned this cure, but for twenty years I have known it to be a fact without a single failure.—Cor. St. Lewis Republican.