

Hold fast the form of sound words.—2d Timothy, 1. 13.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, JUNE 23, 1864.

THE BARLEY FIELD ON FIRE.

A SERMON, BY REV. G. H. SPURDON.

be done unto you? O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? Shall I give thee up? How can I give thee up? How shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? The heart of mercy still yearns after thee. Return thou! return thou! God help thee to return, even now!

Others of you have not suffered all this in the past, but are just now enduring a part of it. Let me entreat you by the mercies of God and by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye despise not him who speaketh unto you. God doth not continue to send his messengers for ever. After he hath laboured with you for a time he will leave you to cursing. Long-suffering lasts not forever. Mercy has its day. Behold the king runs up the white flag of comfort to-day, and he invites you to come unto him. To-morrow he may run up the red flag of threatening, and if that answereth not, if that red flag will not make you turn, he will run up the black flag of execution, and then there will be no hope. Beware! the black flag is not up yet; the red flag is there now in trials and troubles, which are God's threatenings to you, bidding you open wide your heart that grace may enter; but if it cometh to this that the red flag fall, the black flag must come. Perhaps it has come! God help you with broken heart to cry unto him that you may be saved, before the candle is blown out, and the sun is set, and the night of the dead is come on without the hope of another sun rising on a blessed resurrection.

What is the drift of all this? My drift is this. If now a word of mine could make you come to the king this morning—I know it will unless God the Holy Spirit compels you to do so by his irresistible power—but if he would bless it, I would rejoice as one who findeth great spoil. Wherefore do you stand out against God? If the Lord intendeth your eternal salvation, your resistance will be in vain; and how will you vex yourself in after years to think that you should have stood out so long! Wherefore dost thou resist? God's battering-ram is too mighty for the walls of your prejudice; he will make them fall. Why dost thou stand out against thy God, against him who loveth thee, who hath loved thee with an everlasting love, and redeemed thee by the blood of Christ? Why stayest thou out against him who intends to lead thy captivity captive, and to make thee yet his rejoicing child? "O!" saith one, "if I thought there were such mercy as that, I would yield." If you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, this shall be an evidence that such mercy is ordained for thee. O that the Spirit of God would enable thee, sinner, to come just as thou art and put thy trust in Christ. If thou dost so, then it is certain that thy name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life, that thou wast chosen of God and art precious to him; and that thy head is one on which the crown of immortality is to glitter for ever. O that thou wouldst trust Christ! The joy and peace which works in the present is worth worlds, but on the glory, the overwhelming glory, which in worlds to come shall belong to those that trust in Jesus! God give you this morning to cast your souls upon the finished work of Jesus. His blood can cleanse; his righteousness can cover; his beauty can adorn; his prayer can preserve; his advent shall glorify; his heaven shall make you blessed. Trust him! God help you to trust him; and he shall have all the praise, both now and forever. Amen and Amen.

THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY. The seventy-second annual meeting of this Society was held at Exeter-hall on Thursday, Dr. Thomas, of Pontypool, led the devotional services, reading the 72d Psalm, and offering prayer, after the 19th Psalm had been sung:—"The heavens declare thy glory, Lord."

occasion; but the matter having been promptly taken up, the income for the year had actually exceeded that of any former year in the history of the society, with the exception of the jubilee period. The total receipts were £34,419. Included in this was £5,934 contributed to prevent the apprehended debt, and the General Purpose Fund was larger than usual by £5,284, so that instead of the society being in debt, it possessed a balance in the treasurer's hands of £3,723; or £40 when all the account bills shall have been paid.

THE REV. T. EVANS, OF DELHI.—DIFFICULTIES OF MISSIONARY WORK IN INDIA.

The Rev. T. Evans, of Upper India, treated of the difficulties which the Indian Missionary has to contend. We can only give a few passages from his elaborate speech. The first difficulty was the acquaintance of the languages of the people. To the polished and learned Hindoo of Upper India, the missionary must preach the Gospel in good pure Hindee; to the common people a corrupt dialect must be used; and to the Mohammedan he must use another language, and to know this language well he must make Sanscrit, the Arabic, and the Persian his study. Moreover, the spoken languages of India must be thoroughly mastered by the missionary. He cannot fall back in the bazaar on the aid of learned Pundits and others in the discharge of his duties. He must be able fully and freely to converse, to preach, and to discuss on any subject which may be brought under consideration. He must be prepared to meet the subtle sophistry of the learned Brahmin; to refute the ingenious arguments of the polished Mohammedan, and contend with the popular prejudices of the common people. And this is not all. He has to learn not only how to speak to the people, but also how to think as the people think. Their books are filled with figures, and even their common conversation abounds with metaphors. Nothing pleases them so much as apt illustrations, and no manner of preaching will interest them like the pictorial and parabolic. They call the ignorant man blind, and the learned man they say has a hundred eyes. If they wish to describe a man of good outward appearance with a bad heart, they will say that it is a golden cup full of poison, whilst the man with a poor outward appearance and good heart they will say is an earthen pitcher full of nectar. The liberal man is a well within reach of every thirsty traveller. The truly benevolent man is a tree which drops its fruits even to those who cast stones at it. The wicked man is a serpent that will bite even those who feed it and fatten it. The indolent man is a pair of bellows that breathes without life. Sin is a sea into which the wicked sink, and religion is a boat to ferry the good across. And thus they paint and picture almost every object and event they speak of. The missionary also must acquire this parabolic mode of speaking if he would have his preaching understood and appreciated by the people. He next dwelt upon the hindrances occasioned by heathen prejudice and Hindoo caste. The cultivation of the mind is a work to which no man will apply himself with vigour except under the force of some powerful inducement, and to the majority of Hindoos there is no inducement whatever to undertake this mental labour. Besides, each caste cannot broach on the privilege of the Brahmin, who alone is regarded as the owner of all knowledge, and who regards his knowledge as secret power to be used for his own profit and not for others' good. Oftentimes I have said to their holy and learned men, "If the Vedas and Shasters contain the word of God, as you say they do, why not translate them into the common dialect of the people, and give them a wide circulation amongst those who so much need Divine direction and heavenly light?" And the reply has been, "Ah, sir, that is bad philosophy; while the sick man is ignorant of the remedy which cures him he will consult the doctor and pay him; but once let him know the remedy himself, and good-bye to the doctor's fee." (A laugh.) On this principle the Brahmins watch and labour to keep the people in ignorance, and every inlet to light and knowledge is guarded as carefully as the caverns of the dead. The consequence is that the great mass of the people are dupes to priestcraft, and the easy victims of oppression to all who pretend to knowledge in any branch of education. As an illustration of this I might mention a fact of frequent occurrence. The Brahmins, who study astronomy, being able to specify the time when an eclipse of the sun or moon will occur, use this knowledge to serve a double purpose. In the first place, they tell the ignorant masses that nothing but direct communication with the gods can enable them to acquire this knowledge of the heavenly objects; and therefore the great power that the Brahmin must have with the gods. But, not satisfied with this, and wishing to turn this knowledge to some more practical account, the Brahmin goes on to say, "Did I not tell you this would occur? Did I not tell you when it would take place? And now I must tell you more. I must tell you why it has taken place. There is in the sky a huge dragon, that has power to hurt and destroy the planets; that dragon has now a portion of the sun in his mouth—do you not see it black? He will devour it outright unless you give gifts to the Brahmins, who alone have power over the sun." Gifts are freely and liberally made to rescue "the orb of day" from falling a prey to the great dragon in the sky. Tricks of the same nature are practised by others who profess a knowledge of astrology, and by others who are supposed to be skilful in charms, and incantations, and witchcraft. The Hindoo knows nothing of moral obligations, all the requirements of his religion being social and ceremonial. Vice and virtue as regarded by us have no place in his creed; he is at liberty to practise the one and to dispense with the other at his pleasure, without running any risk of damaging his character as a religious man among his fellows. Ask him of sin as we understand it, and he has no idea. Sin with him is to break caste, to eat and partake of food with foreigners, or that which has been touched by a man of low caste. To eat beef, to kill a cow, or to insult a Brahmin, are sins of the most heinous kind and blackest die, that would fill the heart of the Hindoo with fear and terror; but he will lie and deceive, he will oppress and defraud, he will forge and bribe, he will seduce and debauch, and rob and murder, without the least sense of guilt, without any twitches of conscience. Everything in the present aspect of Hindooism tends to deaden the conscience and foster the moral apathy of the people. The most licentious and the most cruel of the gods are the most popular, and are daily solicited to aid the darkest of deeds. The Hindoo would not think it wrong to cast his infant daughter into the Ganges; and the eldest son setting fire to the funeral pile on which his mother perishes, thinks it a very religious act. It is true that some of these abominations have, in a great measure, departed from British India. Why? Not because the Hindoo thought them wrong, but be-

cause the Government made them penal. How can he think that wrong which his god practices, which his holy religion sanctions, and which the Brahmins say is good and just! The great difficulty is to persuade the people that sin is sin, that every moral evil is a curse, that it cannot escape the righteous punishment of God. Again, the missionaries in India have to contend with very serious misrepresentations of the Christian religion by the Pagan policy of a professedly Christian government, and the loose and immoral conduct of many nominal Christians in India. What the policy of the late Government was is too well known to need explanation. It was of such a nature as to impede the progress of Christianity in the country. How futile must have been the efforts of a few missionaries to recommend to the millions of India a religion which was practically and studiously ignored by a professedly Christian Government in all its dealings with a heathen people! The Hindoo looks on every Englishman as a Christian. He knows nothing of such distinctions as the world and the church, the professing and the real Christian, and he takes the conduct of nominal Christians as a criterion by which to judge of the nature and character of Christianity itself. And, alas! what a wretched distorted notion he has of our holy religion in such a view as that!

SOME OF THE ENCOURAGEMENTS.

Thank God that the picture has a bright side as well as a dark one. But let it be remembered that there is only one missionary in proportion to 400,000 of the inhabitants. There is Rajpootana, with 15,000,000 people, and not one missionary; and there is Hyderabad, with 10,000,000, and only one missionary. Can we reasonably expect the conversion of a country, a large portion of which has never heard the Gospel? The happy change that has taken place in the Government of the country may be regarded as a token for good. The unholy alliance of a professedly Christian Government with heathen prejudices will now be broken, and the powers that be shall no longer be permitted to uphold and sanction idolatry. And further, there is a growing desire in India for knowledge and education. Many Brahmins in Bengal are becoming proficient scholars in English literature; while others, who are medical students, do not hesitate to dissect the corpses of the polluted Sudras. We have not only Government colleges in large cities, but in almost every district throughout British India village schools have been established. Sir Robert Montgomery, the pious Governor of the Punjab, is taking the lead in female education; and that noble movement will, no doubt, be warmly supported by Sir John Lawrence. Even public works are doing a great deal for India; for when the great Ganges canal was cut by the English, hundreds of Brahmins, on their bended knees, prayed that Ganges would not go. But it went, and they now say that if England can lead the Ganges where it likes, she is no goddess after all. The Brahmins, also, prefer mixing with other castes in railway carriages to walking; and even caste itself favors us for once. Let a large number of Hindoos from any caste become Christians, and the rest will follow as a matter of course. If Satan's strongholds in India have not been abolished, the outworks have been attacked, and are giving way. May God hasten the great ingathering in his own good time.

IS THERE A HELL?

"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Ps. li. 7.

Two men were sitting one day in a public-house, the one said to the other—"I hope you are not so foolish as to believe that there is a hell—a place composed of fire and brimstone." "Of course not," said his comrade; "the ministers themselves are not preaching so much about it now, but just a few bigoted ones of the Free Church preach that doctrine."

Reader! are you one of those who believe there is no hell? You believe there is a heaven, because it is a place of happiness; but you desire to follow your sinful pleasures here, and go to heaven when you can follow them no longer. But were God to permit you to do so, it would be no heaven to you. The song of the redeemed would be a strange language to you: "If you cannot enjoy the company of saints here, you would find their company even more a cause of misery to you there. If your wicked heart will declare there is no hell, then let conscience speak. When sickness seizes you, and when you are brought face to face with death, what does conscience say? Does it say all is well with your soul; do you find Christ with you to lead you through the dark valley? Ah, no, conscience thunders, there is a hell, and thither are you bound; there is a God, and a just God too. His hand long knocked at the door of your heart, but you have refused to hear his call; you have refused to believe the terrors of the just law, and now he comes to execute vengeance on you, and that justly. O sinner! will you dare to trifle longer with that great and Almighty God? Turn, I beseech you, while his mercy lasts; come as you are, with all your sins, though as high as a mountain; come to that blessed Saviour who has shed his precious blood that you might have eternal life. It is through his blood, and through his blood alone, that you can find acceptance with God. He bore the curse of God for sinners, and all who rely upon this great fact are not only saved from going down to that awful place, but are reconciled to God and made heirs of heaven."

Come, then, poor sinner, and come now. It is not to-morrow. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." "Today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Do you say, I do not know the way to come? Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up." You may be in life and health to-day, and to-morrow you may be in eternity. What says the wise man? "Blest not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." (John iii. 14; xiv. 2; 2 Cor. v. 2; Heb. iv. 7; Prov. xvii. 1.)

Family Reading.

THE SOLDIER'S CONVERSION.

"Where were you wounded?" "At the last Bull Run battle." "Is your wound a bad one?" "So bad that I never expect to get up again," he replied, with a cheerful voice. "What! and you so calm?" I said, quite taken by surprise. "Of course I am calm. I'm ready to go now, thank God! I've got nothing to do but wait."

"Did you feel so when you first went into battle?" "How, madam?" "Why, so—I can hardly express it—so calm as you appear now?" He smiled faintly. "If you had seen me going into battle, madam, you would have seen a miserable and desperate man. That is, if you could have had a bare, not a blessing, and two dear children. I left a good blessing. I was clothed in broadcloth, and was gay and jolly—but under all I carried a heavy heart. Why? I had been intemperate for years. My wife had borne everything from me but personal abuse, and I felt as if I were leaving a home made miserable, for the free and easy life of a soldier. I went out as second lieutenant, and looking back from this dying bed, I hardly wonder, madam, at the reverses we have met. It is not known to the public, it is not dreamed of, to what an extent not drinking, merely, but drunkenness, exists in our army. I have seen lieutenants, captains, majors, colonels, and even generals, drunk—and so have I seen the little drummer boys. I did have a jolly time till the first battle, which came upon us rather suddenly, and in which I felt more like a wild tiger than a human being. But fortunately—or I should say, providentially—in that battle I was wounded, and badly wounded. I was shot through the lungs, and suffered more than I can describe, for it was as a prisoner, and in rebel territory."

"Fourteen of us laid in a room not quite fourteen feet square, with no food for a day or two, and miserable attendance. We were not treated with open, absolute cruelty, but to what amounted to the same thing, saving its brutality, with carelessness and neglect. I wish you could have seen the rations of those poor sick men. But no, you would never forget. In four days seven of those fourteen were carried out for burial, and then we had room enough."

"On the fifth day, after we had eaten our miserable food, the door opened, and it seemed to me as if heaven opened also, for a woman came in. She was dressed like a Quakeress; her countenance was sweet as that of an angel. I can never, never forget that woman. The condition in which we were at that time I will not attempt to describe. A strong man might have revolted at the filth, stench and vermin. Not so that saintly Quakeress, or perhaps I should say, Christian woman, who braved the pestiferous vapors, and knelt beside us in that wretched straw; to comfort the poor, wounded, heart-sick, wretched soldier. Never shall I forget my feelings after she had bathed my face and hands, brushed the matted hair from my forehead, and then made up a fresh bed in another part of the room, and helped me to it—nor the soft voice with which she said:

"Friend, thee shall not be neglected, if I can possibly get to thee." "If you knew how the presence of a woman, as such a time as that, lights up the soldier's heart! I cannot describe the emotions of awe and reverence I felt towards her. I began from that moment to hallow the name of woman. The image of my own neglected wife came up before me, and could I have seen her, I would have gone on my knees to her. All women grow sacred in the presence of this one ministering angel. She might have laid what commands she pleased upon me, I would have obeyed her. In the course of a week we had all improved wonderfully. Our blessed visitor brought us the food we languished for, and many a not forgotten delicacy. But better than all this, in her sweet, unobtrusive way she would say, before she left our miserable quarters for the night:

"Friend, I am going to leave a text of Scripture for thee, that thee may think of after I am gone." "I remember all of them, and very sweet and precious are they to me now. At first, the boys seemed disposed to throw some ridicule upon the proceeding, but it did not last long. I can see her now, the door open, and her thin form defined against the waving sunshine, her gentle face lighted up with a beauty that is not of this earth, as she said, 'Friend, I shall leave this text with thee to-night:'

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust." "That was all—no comment—the pure, simple words of Holy Scripture. It often happened after he had gone, that we fell to work discussing the subject, and many a time during the night, in my wakeful hours those words occurred to me, each time bringing a balm. And now I will tell you what directly caused my conversion. It was when I had so far convalesced that I could walk about a few steps at a time. She did not come till late that day, having been detained at home by sickness in her family. It was soft moonlight when she bade us good night, and with more than ordinary solemnity turned towards us. The bright moonbeams came in, and shone on our pallets, and streamed over our faces. We saw her countenance, unusually grave, as well as sweet, as she said, in the clearest voice I ever heard:

"What shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation—or distress—or persecution—or famine—or nakedness—or peril—or sword? I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

I cannot tell you how those words penetrated to the very core of the heart. I could not sleep—I could not join in the usual comments, which were fainter and fewer that night. I was in mental anguish till the morning broke, but before light the Almighty was pleased to show me His salvation. We never saw our blessed visitor again. That very day on which God spoke peace to my soul we were conveyed away, paroled, and sent North. I, after languishing a long time in a Washington hospital, had a furlough granted, and returned home, to tell my wife what God had done for me. She received me most tenderly, forgot and forgave all the past, and nursed me so well that in a month's time I was ready for battle again. But not as before did I go back. O no, no, but with the peace of an exquisite happiness so warm at my

THE WHITE LIE.

"O, Jane," said I, "how grieved I feel that you should tell a lie."

"A lie! Why Miss Hart do you call that a lie? I did not speak a word." "I know you did not, Jane, but yet in the sight of God it was a lie. We may act a lie as well as speak it. God sees the heart and knows just what we mean there. We read in the book of Acts of a man and his wife who were struck down dead for just such a lie."

Jane held down her head with shame, and I could see the tears fall on her slate. I felt sad for her. "I will tell you," I said. "When Ann came up in the class to spell, she left her book on her desk. I saw it there; and then I saw you take it, that you might learn your task; for you had left your book at home. Then you let a drop of ink fall on the page, and when you saw the blot you were scared for fear Ann would scold you. So you shut up the book, and pushed it off to the next desk where Ruth sat. When Ann came back, she cried, 'Oh, where is my book?' You did not tell her. You did not seem to know. You were as smart as could be just then with your work. Stitch by stitch you put in, and did not look up, or seem to hear what Ann said. At last she spied the book on the desk in front of Ruth. Why, Ruth has got it, Miss Hart. Won't you speak to Ruth, and tell her she must use her own book?" said Ann. Then, as soon as she took the book in her hands, her eye fell on that dark blot; and you knew how she felt. Ann is neat and nice, and tries to take care of all her things; and to see that great black spot on her clean book was too much, and she cried right out. You heard her cry, and heard her blame Ruth for it, and you heard Ruth say she did not do it, and could not tell how the ink got on the page, and yet you did not speak a word. You tried to make us all think that you had not done it. Now Jane, was not that a lie! God looked right down in your heart, and did not he think it a lie?"

Jane wept; "I did not know it was so bad, Miss Hart. I will not do such a thing from this time." "I hope not, my dear child. This is what some folks call a white lie. If Ann had asked you, and you had said right up and down 'No, I did not get that blot on the book,' they would have called it a black lie. But I think all lies are black in the sight of God."

PRAYSE YOUR WIFE.

Praise your wife, man; for pity's sake give her a little encouragement; it won't hurt her. She made your home comfortable, your hearth bright and shining, your food agreeable—for pity's sake tell her you thank her, if nothing more. She don't expect it; it will make her eyes open wider than they have these ten years, but it will do her good for all that, and you too.

There are many women to-day thirsting for the words of praise, the language of encouragement. Through summer's heat, through winter's toil, have drudged uncomplainingly, and so accustomed have their fathers, brothers and husbands become to their monotonous labors that they look for and upon them as they do the daily rising of the sun and its daily going down. Home every day may be made beautiful by an appreciation of its holiness. You know that, if the floor is clean, manual labor has been performed to make it so. You know, if you can take from your drawer a clean shirt whenever you want it, that somebody's fingers have been in the toil of making it so fresh and agreeable, so smooth and lustrous. Every thing that pleases the eye and the sense has been produced by constant work, much thought, great care, and untiring efforts, bodily and mentally.

It is not that many men do not appreciate these things, and a glow of gratitude for the numberless attentions bestowed upon them in sickness and in health, but they don't come out with a hearty—"Why, how pleasant you make things look, wife!" or "I am obliged to you for taking so much pains!" They thank the tailor for giving them "fits"; they thank a man in a full uniform who gives them a seat; they thank a young lady who moves along in the concert room—in short, they thank every thing out of doors because it is the custom; and come home, tip their chair back and their heels up, pull out the newspaper, grumble if their wife asks them to take the baby, scold if the fire has gone down, or if everything is just right, shut their mouths with a smack of satisfaction, but never say, "I thank you."

I tell you what, men, young and old, if you did but show an ordinary civility toward the common articles of householding, your wives, if you would give them the hundred and sixteenth part of the compliments you almost choked them with before you were married, fewer women would seek for other sources of affection. Praise your wife, then, for all the good qualities she has, and you may rest assured that her deficiencies are fully counterbalanced by your own.

THE PATERNAL HAND.—When we see God's hand in any passing trouble, the pain is not gone, but the bitterness is; for there is positively something allied to pleasure in feeling His hand near us, even though it hold a rod.