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The Christian Visitor.

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

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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. Address all Communications to the Editor, Box 194, St. John, N. B.

The Christian Visitor Is emphatically a Newspaper for the Family. It furnishes its readers with the latest intelligence, RESTORES AND SECULAR.

ONCE A CURSE BUT NOW A BLESSING.

A SERMON DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, DEC. 6, 1863, BY REV. C. A. SPURGEON.

And it shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing; fear not, but let your hands be strong.—Zechariah vii. 14. (Continued.) II. But secondly, here is a gracious promise made that they shall be a blessing.

Dear friends, the true christian is a blessing temporarily in the world. If there were no life to come, yet is a converted man a blessing; since he arrests the judgments of God.

Does not the christian aid in every good work? He is no christian if he does not. If there be an hospital, does he not delight as much to contribute towards the relief of sickness of the body, as for the removal of disease of the soul?

And as for eternity, truly a christian is a blessing there. If his example shall lead men to seek after God—if his words shall teach the sinner his need of a Saviour—shall point him to the cross—shall show him the flowing wounds—oh! if his prayers shall be heard, and the Spirit of God shall descend, and his family shall be converted, and his kinsfolk shall be reclaimed, then eternity shall know the music of the blessing which he scattered among the sons of men.

Remember, this is to be done for you, not by you. You cannot make yourself a new man. It is impossible for you to work regeneration. One look at Jesus will take away past sin, and will kill the power of sin for the future.

A minister, on descending from the pulpit at the conclusion of an evening service, was met by a lady in a very friendly manner, who reaching out her hand, said, "Well, Mr. — we have been very much entertained this evening."

It is quite possible, to be sure, that this lady used the word "entertained" without any perception of its peculiar significance, and may have meant by it "interested," or even "profited."

ROUND SHOULDERS.

By H. L. BOLANDER, M.D.

I speak of "round shoulders," hollow chests, and stooping forms. There are, perhaps, not three persons in any school of fifty pupils, but have them. It is so among people of nearly all professions and occupations, sexes and ages.

Now what are the causes of this deformity, the consequences, and the remedy? First, and in general, round shoulders are caused by the prevailing practice of doing everything in a bent-over position from childhood up.

The positions which we assume in our work tend to produce stooping. The chairs we sit in are mostly made for deformed people. Persons with square shoulders are pained and made uneasy by sitting in them.

A NEW THOUGHT FOR OLD BARLOW. "So you won't give me anything?" "You needn't have put it in that way; I've got nothing to give," said Allan Barlow.

"You needn't have put it in that way; I've got nothing to give," said Allan Barlow. "Nobody gives to me," said Allan. "I've got nothing to give, but what I pay for, and what I get for it."

Many years ago a pious Scotchman of my acquaintance had a neighbor who professed to doubt God's electing love, and railed against predestination.

Turning the Tables.—Bishop Burnet, at one of his visitations, when the name of a very old clergyman was called over of whom a private complaint had been made that the parish could not endure him, he gave such bad sermons, gravely chided the poor parson.—"I am told, Mr. — that your parish is very well satisfied with you in many respects, but they are much discontented with your sermons."

Some talk bravely about death, and of encountering it with great natural courage, or upon philosophical principles. They may indeed feel or meet the sting; but they can neither suffer nor take it away.

THE SPOILED MILK.

THE VALLEY THAT IS BOUNDED BY THE L— AND S— hills is remarkable for its beauty and fertility.

The valley that is bounded by the L— and S— hills is remarkable for its beauty and fertility. A sluggish stream winds slowly in its serpentine course through the midst of it, and waters a succession of well-cultivated farms.

The domestic arrangements of his family seemed also, in all respects, befitting his Christian character and profession. And his wife, endowed with singular prudence and other Christian graces, seemed a true help-mate.

But of all the sorrows which befall a Christian, that which comes nearest to his heart, paralyzing his mind and drinking up his joys, is the outbreaking of wickedness in his children.

It has been unfeelingly asserted, particularly by some who are unfriendly to religion, that "pious parents have generally very wicked children."

But facts do not warrant the assertion. On the contrary, the fact of an eminent Christian, whether minister or layman, having a profane child, always calls forth marked attention on something which the public did not expect in such a family; whereas it is never a wonder with any one, that wicked and profane children should proceed out of wicked and profane families.

The Christian parent, however, in the hour of sorrow, for the waywardness of his children, will make great searchings of heart into the causes of it. The promise of God is full before him, he seeks not to pervert or modify its import: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

When they were thus engaged, the only son of Mr. C—, a lad about seventeen years of age, approached to mock; he groaned, and made singular grimaces, or laughed aloud, as he walked immediately behind his father; and at the end of the ride next to the house, having caught up a young animal, he contrived, by tormenting it, to make it utter one continued yell.

This abolition of youthful fury had been caused, it afterwards turned out, by the father's presumptuous refusal of the usual supply of money. Like too many parents foolishly indulgent, he had yielded to the dominion which his only son possessed, as he had, and had given liberally and often. His only son, thus created an appetite for more, he soon found himself compelled to yield, and was obliged to get up the importance

HOW FARMER ALFORD GOT RELIGION.

"I never knew how it happened that Farmer Alford got religion," said an old acquaintance of his, who came to visit in the new house which his friend had made at the West.

"I never knew how it happened that Farmer Alford got religion," said an old acquaintance of his, who came to visit in the new house which his friend had made at the West. When I lived near him ten years ago, he was an old scoundrel, and seemed hardened against all religious influence.

"Why don't you ask him, then?" said the storekeeper, where Mr. Alford's old acquaintance was lounging away the morning. "Why, it seemed rather personal to put such a question to himself," replied the other.

"Oh, you needn't fear; neighbor Alford is very free to tell the story; and here he comes to do it now." Father Alford, continued the storekeeper, as he turned to address him: "Your old friend, Mr. Milton, has been asking me some questions about you which you can answer better than I. He wants to know how you got religion; I am sure you will be willing to tell him."

"Yes," said the old man promptly; "my story ought to be told, if only to show the wonderful goodness of God to an old sinner like me. You knew me, Milton; and know how unlike a subject I was for grace to work upon. Well, it was just the same here. My wife used to go every Sabbath to the little school house where the Sunday meetings were held; you see there was no church here then, and I roamed the fields in dry weather, and when it was stormy, read the Farmer's Almanac and the newspaper in doors."

"My two boys generally went to meeting with their mother; for though I despised such things myself, yet I liked my wife too well to plague her by keeping the boys at home; and besides, she had a way of using the Bible, and the preaching, and such things, to make them behave as they ought."

"Well, one Saturday evening, she was telling them about a new minister that was to preach the next day. His name was Clark, she said; and he had been settled some years since in the place where her brother lived, and had attended him upon his death-bed. She made his acquaintance at her brother's funeral, and thought him a very uncommon preacher. So she expected great pleasure in seeing and hearing him on the morrow. All this I heard with my usual carelessness. But when I found next morning that the school-house had been burnt to the ground over night, I did feel a little sorry over Polly's disappointment. We were talking about it at the breakfast table; and one of my boys said that Deacon Jones had been round among the neighbors, (some of whom were church members) to get a chance to hold a meeting that day in a private house; but none of them seemed willing to have the trouble of it. A bright thought struck me. I would show them that a man who didn't make any pretence to religion was more generous and accommodating than they were. So I said to my wife, 'they might have the meeting in my new barn to-day; it's nice and clean, and big enough to hold the whole town.' Polly looked up brightly and said it was a capital idea, and bade Jamie run right over and tell the deacon about it. The good old man lived in a small shanty himself, and had no accommodations for anything. But he was mightily pleased about the barn, and while the boys went the rounds of the village, to give notice of the matter, the Deacon and I carried in some shavings and fixed them up for seats."

"Well, it was a nice place; and the meetings were held there all summer. Mr. Clark, my wife's old acquaintance, was persuaded to stay, and preach. I had a little curiosity to hear him, and I rather wanted to see how a meeting would seem in a barn. So I used to steal round the house to a bad apple-tree, where I could look and listen without being observed. I heard some home truths in that way; but I shut my heart against them as much as possible."

"One Sunday in August, just after my barn had been filled with hay and grain, so that it was difficult to make room for the meeting, I overheard the minister pray that the Lord would protect the beautiful harvest which I had gathered, and would reward me for my kindness to His people by gathering me as wheat into the heavenly garner. I was a good deal touched by the prayer; and when that night a furious storm came on, and two barns in the neighborhood were consumed by lightning, while mine escaped unscathed, my emotions were deepened into awe. I felt encompassed by the presence of God. He seemed very near me. And instead of coming as an avenger, to repay me for my long course of scorn and impiety, he appeared to me as a kind, though injured friend waiting to be reconciled, and longing to bless me."