

Work, for the Day is Coming.

BY BASIL MANLY.

I have often sung "Work, for the Night is Coming," and enjoyed it too. I feel that the counterpart is wanted, changing the figure and looking at this world as the night season. Here we toil in the dark; but it is to be followed by the cloudless, blessed day, in which the results shall be reaped and laid humbly, gratefully, gladly at the feet of our dear Lord.

Work, for the day is coming—
Day in the world foretold.
When, 'mid the scenes triumphant,
Longed for by saints of old,
He who on earth a stranger
Traversed its paths of pain,
Jesus, the Prince, the Saviour,
Comes evermore to reign.

Work, for the day is coming!
Darkness will soon be gone,
Then o'er the night of weeping
Day without end shall dawn.
What now we sow in sadness,
Then we shall reap in joy;
Hope will be changed to gladness,
Praise be our best employ.

Work, for the day is coming,
Made for the saints of light;
Off with the garments dreary,
On with the armor bright!
Soon will the strife be ended,
Soon all our toils below,
Not to the dark are we tending,
But to the day we go.

Work, for the Lord is coming!
Children of light are we;
From Jesus' bright appearing
Powers of darkness flee.
Out of the mist at his bidding
Souls, like the dew are born
O'er all the East now are spreading
Tints of the rosy morn.

Work, then, the day is coming!
No time for sighing now!
Harps for the hands that were drooping
Wreaths for the victor's brow!
Now morning light is breaking,
Day dawns in every land;
Night shades beset us no longer,
Jesus, our Lord, is at hand.

—Journal and Messenger.

Visitor Pulpit.

Christian Perfection.

A portion of a sermon preached before the Trenton Association, June 11, by Rev. W. Leggett Kolb, of Bordentown, N. J.

Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.—Matt. 5:48.

The words of our text undoubtedly teach Christian perfection; they can teach nothing else as serious words. On account of this obvious truth there have been many devout and honest souls who have not only believed that there is such a thing as Christian perfection, but that it is also attainable in its completeness while men are still the possessors of a mortal body. By some of those who believe that they have attained unto this epoch of holiness in Christian living, this "higher life" is described as the life of continuous faith or trust, and they illustrate their meaning by comparing the holy believer to the little child in a loving, earthly father's home. He is supposed to be a Christian who has attained unto the child-character, so often presented by our Saviour as the model of the believer's life.

But if we cannot believe as the Perfectionists do, why can we not? and where is their mistake? First, we are confronted by the fact of experience. We, who have been praying and struggling for years to attain nearer unto the example of our Lord, find daily that, although we may have "grown in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ," we are still imperfect, and still obliged to "watch and to pray, lest we enter into temptation." And should we be able to say that we have refrained from the committal of all positive sin, yet how stands the account of sins of omission? Can any one of us honestly say, I have done my full duty before God, in every particular; my life has been holy, I have done no evil; I have done every possible holy thing that a perfected believer can do? But then, you may quickly say, such an experience of holiness may not be yours or mine, and yet may be the possession of others.

We are told by Dr. W. E. Boardman, of a lady who was "happily converted to God, and clearly taught the precious reality that Christ is the Lord, our Righteousness. All doubt and fear as to her present acceptance and final salvation passed away, and she was happier than she had ever been before in her life. But one thing troubled her. She had her besetting sins, which she tried hard, but in vain, to conquer. She could suppress them, but she could not exterminate them. Another thing troubled her, too. Her service was more from duty than love, and her heart was not satisfied, neither was her conscience at rest in having it so. She wanted to have the wellspring of

life in her, as a fountain whence should flow forth rivers of living water. To attain this, she made vigorous and persistent efforts, all, however, under a sense that the responsibility of the thing was upon her. Her efforts resulted only in deepening conviction and increasing her burden of heart. At last, in a meeting, she heard of the better way of faith in Jesus, and left herself, burdened and all, in his hands. Light at once began to flow in upon her soul, and she became as happy as happy could be. When asked how it came about, 'O,' said she 'I just shifted the responsibility over on Jesus.' Now, such an experience of trust is a very pleasant and happy condition of soul; but how would it be on the morrow, when Satan again thrust his darts against her, would she not, of necessity be obliged to wage the warfare of the Christian soldier? How would it be when myriad duties to be done again presented themselves; could she keep saying, 'I'll shift the responsibility over on Jesus?' There is a sense in which we can "cast all our care upon him who careth for us," but our responsibility can never be shifted. We can faithfully perform the various duties which are ours to do, and then intelligently and wisely say, I have tried to do my duty, and now will leave the results with God; but we can never go dreaming along, shifting responsibility on Jesus, and being happy whether we do our duties or not.

Such a consummated experience of bliss can not rationally be reached in this land of sin. We must be warring Christians, and responsible Christians, confessing and growing Christians, so long as we count our lives by days and weeks and years. How would such a shifting system of living work in this world's matters, let alone the spiritual? Suppose, when the battle was raging in the field, a soldier should be found sitting so peacefully and happily in a tent, saying, I have become tired of this perpetual fighting, and now I have shifted the responsibility over on my general, and I am quiet and happy. True enough, is it, my brethren, that many of us often tire of this constant fighting with Satan and sin; true enough, that we feel weary of personal responsibility as Christians, but let us not be lulled to sleep by the opiate of a false imagination, while the world and our own souls need an ever-watchful struggle. A healthful Christian experience will always be found ever aspiring after, yet never reaching here, the full stature of manhood in Christ Jesus. Day by day, we may become more like the Master, but we shall not be completely like him, until we "see him as he is." But, aside from this testimony, from a rational experience, let us not the passages usually employed in defence of a complete earthly holiness. One that is referred to as expressive of the child-like trust, is: "That God may work in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." This, alone, would seem to represent us as the automaton of God's working-power, and we should have as little responsibility as the automaton of earth, which can neither see, hear, nor feel; but how is this passage employed by Paul, who penned it? What are the words which directly precede it? They are these: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," and then follow directly these words: "For it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." God and man must work together. When the believer works, God works in him and through him.

We have too much to do in our co-operation with the Almighty to dream of sitting peacefully down without responsibility. True enough is it that we are to be children, not children, humble, trustful, loyal, affectionate little children, free from vain pride, free from unholy ambitions, always deferring one unto the other, as unto an elder; but does not the same Word of God proclaim, in as definite accents, the stirring exhortation, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be ye strong?"

Another passage to which reference is made, as the assumed proof of the real existence of a "higher life" on

earth, is: Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; also, its kindred passage: "Whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not." These are the utterances of the Apostle John in his first Epistle. Now, let me read another utterance in this same Epistle: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The difference in these expressions are the differences between justification and sanctification. By confession of our sinfulness before God, and by a believing prayer for divine forgiveness, we have found free forgiveness in Christ's name; before God, those born of the Holy Spirit are as those who commit no sin; that is, in Christ we are justified before God; our unrighteousness is covered by Christ's righteousness; he has become our substitute and our advocate; our hope is faith in what Christ has done. But after we have been thus received, forgiven, and justified, we are yet to be sanctified, and conformed to Christ's image. This, the Holy Spirit working with us, not without us is daily doing. If we see no fruits of this inner work, we need fear that we are deceived concerning the change of our hearts.

Here again, the Holy Spirit and the believer work together. The healthful believing mind can never shift the responsibility of sanctification over on the Holy Spirit alone, for it is by the believer's use of God-appointed means that the believer is progressively sanctified.

Moreover, the passage of this same Epistle which reads: "Whosoever sinneth, hath not seen God, neither known him," signifies rather a desired and ideal state than actual perfected condition. The passage might be intelligently interpreted: "Whosoever loves and desires to sin, hath not seen God, neither known him;" in other words, the great proof of a renewed heart is its hatred of sin and its dislike to sinning. His sins grieve him rather than delight him, and his great expectation is that, some day, he will drop this body of evil and leave this home of sin, and reach the land where he shall be "satisfied as he awakes in God's likeness."

So too, Enoch did walk with God, and walked so closely that he pleased God, and yet Enoch was not a perfect believer, for "there is none good, no, not one," in the sense of complete holiness on earth. Zacharias and Elizabeth were indeed, blameless, so far as all Jewish requirements were concerned, and yet can we believe that their lives were free from all sins of omission, and that they never offended even in one point in the higher law of God? Their very need of a Deliverer, as well as ours, was the cause of the birth of their own Son, as the fore-runner of the Redeemer.

If then, from reasons of experience and of knowledge of Scripture teaching and usage of terms, we can not accept the reasoning of the Perfectionists, what is their mistake? and what does the textual exhortation mean? The mistake which the "higher life" thinkers make is not in their expression of a strong desire to attain unto holiness; it is not in the belief in a need of an abiding trust in Christ; it is not in the thought that the Holy Spirit works within us; but it is in believing that we are passive in God's hands, and that there is a certain time when holiness is reached on earth. The fact is, there is no stopping-place in this life between regeneration and holiness, it is a steady, progressive work, only completed when we enter the beautiful gate of the holy city. We must keep on the battle field, and wage the conflict between truth and error, righteousness and sin, so long as we sojourn on earth. We are "called to be saints," but saints who are active and growing and advancing. We can never "staak arms," and think our part in sin's battle done. The Scripture ever urges us to be diligent and watchful. When weary of watching against the attacks of Satan, we are proud to consider ourselves safe, and to "shift the responsibility" of temptation upon "the angel of the Lord that encampeth round about them that fear him," we do well to heed the Apo-

tle's exhortation: "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

When having spent many or few years in Christian service, we have come to believe that we have attained unto perfect obedience in spirit and in form, let us remember the wise words, "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do."

When we are inclined to believe that we have fully succeeded in maintaining a character before God utterly free from divine reproach, let us listen to Jesus' statement of piety: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

If we ever are led to conclude that we are "sanctified," "perfected," "made holy" on earth, let us take this fifth chapter of Matthew and read it over and over, and I fancy we shall discover heights of holiness herein described that human, earthly feet have never reached, save the feet of the Holy One of Israel.

Of what significance, then, is the exhortation: "Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect." Is there a mockery of words? Does God again mock us when he says, "Be ye holy, for I am holy?" Is the requirement enough to deter any man from attempting to walk in the narrow way?

Let us not be dismayed by the injunction of perfection, let us not give up our attempt to live aright. The truth is, there is such a thing as Christian perfection; and there is such a thing as a higher life; but the perfection is something towards which we approach by steady, constant progress, reaching it not here, but above; and in the progressive higher life of which every genuine believer is a partaker, the Spirit of God performs an active and important part. We can never wisely resist the Holy Spirit's promptings, the Holy Spirit's power; his is a work that no man can perform for himself.

So far as his work is concerned, we are instruments in his hands, and we must yield ourselves to his working power; but we are not inanimate, lifeless instruments, as cold and lifeless as the steel instrument of the artisan. In the achievements of this rational higher life, we have much to do, as the Spirit prompts us to act, and to lay hold of the means of spiritual growth. This part that we have to do as Christians, who are every day seeking to be perfect, even as God is perfect, involves a great deal. It involves much of the beautiful theory of the "life of faith" which Perfectionists teach. We are to be as little, trusting children, confident of our Father's love, aid and power; we are to yield ourselves up to God that he may work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure—but it involves a great deal more. They stop by the way and think the heights have been reached, looking only back over the lowlands they have left behind them, while the believer can not so rest. "There remaineth a rest for the people of God," but it is not among the heights of earth. Let him, instead of looking back over the lowlands of his spiritual life, and thinking how high above them he is, and with his back to the future, imagining that there is nothing higher beyond, let him, instead of this, turn his face towards heaven, and while he, by faith, may see the high peaks of the celestial country, he will also see myriad heights between, each higher than the preceding, each forming a beautiful step in the great stairway leading from earth to heaven, from sin to perfection. Thus, when Jesus says, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect," it is as if he said: Come up higher in Christian living! Come up higher in righteousness! Come up from the lowlands of sin to the height of salvation! Come from salvation to the range of sanctification, whose peaks tower one above another until they blend with the heaven above!

The day will come when all who have sincerely followed the Lord will

reach the city that stands upon a mighty hill, where Bunyan's pilgrims have gone up with ease, because supported on either side by the ministering angels of a heavenly welcome. Like his travelers towards heaven, we shall leave our mortal garments in the river, and then be clothed in the robes of spotless purity, when our feet, at last secure, shall stand on Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, where dwell the innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. Till then, the warfare must be waged, the difficult pilgrimage must be continued, the hunger and thirst after righteousness must continue. Soon we shall fight no more; we shall journey no longer; we shall be perfect "even as our Father in heaven is perfect."

SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS NOTES.

MR. MOODY'S labors in London have been arduous and successful. Nearly 400 meetings have been held in eleven districts, thirteen meetings being held every week. It is estimated that 1,500,000 persons have been present. Peers and paupers have sat side by side, listening to the messages of salvation. Six male choirs have been organized and six bands of reformed drunkards. The converts are numbered by thousands, and among them several persons who were pronounced sceptics. Two large halls are in process of erection, one at Stratford and the other at Wandsworth, in order to continue the work in those places. The cost of the mission has been about \$75,000, which has been raised by subscription. Messrs. Whittle, McGranahan, Pentecost and Stebbins have rendered efficient help in this work. What is remarkable is that there has been little or no opposition, and the meetings have been uniformly orderly.

RUSSIA is still at its old game, from which Baptists have suffered so much in the past. The *Record* remarks:—A resident of St. Petersburg writes confirming the *Times* telegram which we published last week, and supplying the following details: Colonel Paschkoff, who has again been banished for holding religious meetings, has done as much as any man of his generation for the good of his country and the benefit of the poor. For many years he has spent the greater part of a princely income in seeking to help others. Count Korff, who has also been ordered to leave, is the son of one who was raised to a higher rank among the nobility on account of the services he rendered to the Government. On receiving the order to leave his country, Count Korff appealed for a few weeks' respite owing to the fact that his wife was near her confinement and in a delicate state of health. This was refused. Hence they must leave in a few days, though it be at the risk of the lady's life. The shop of Mr. Grote in the Litanya has been closed by order of the police. Henceforth it is illegal to distribute the publications of the Religious Tract Society, though, strange to say, they bear the printed permission of the censor. A more stringent law has also been passed respecting the children of those who cannot conform to the Greek Church. They may now be taken and shut up in a convent without even an appeal to the Emperor.—*The Baptist*.

"A common error," writes an East Indian correspondent of the *Presbyterian*, "into which many Christians have fallen, is that of supposing that mission work in India originated with William Carey, a man held in honour by the entire Christian World." The Baptist *Watchman* very sensibly remarks, in reply: "Although we need to make large allowance for the risks of inaccurate and exaggerated statements, it is uncontestedly true that William Carey was, in the proper meaning of the term, the pioneer of modern missions. He was not the first Protestant missionary in India. He was not the first missionary in Bengal. Ziegenbalg and Swartz had preceded him, and had succeeded in gathering, Swartz especially, a considerable body of Christians. The Moravians had begun their remarkable enter-

prises. It was nevertheless true that the Protestant churches in Great Britain and on the continent of Europe were almost wholly asleep over this matter. Carey initiated the missionary movement which is so characteristic of our time—a movement penetrating the churches, compelling the recognition of the truth that a true church of Christ must be a missionary church."

Our contemporary then continues:—"Ziegenbalg and Swartz worked on individual responsibility, with no general support from the ecclesiastical bodies at home to which they belonged. When Carey went, as he said, down 'into the mine,' he stipulated that his brethren at home should 'hold the rope,' and it is the distinctive quality of the modern missionary work that the whole church is held in duty bound to be engaged, either to go or to sustain those who go. Work on this principle began with the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society in 1792, under the inspiration of Carey's zeal. Then came the London Missionary Society in 1795, the Church Missionary Society in 1800, and the movement went on in Europe and America with ever-increasing energy. The honour due to Carey in this relation is no disparagement of his predecessors in India, and gives no occasion for jealousy. Only let us honour him in the way he would have wished to be held in remembrance, by emulating the zeal and self-denial with which he gave himself to the extension of Christ's kingdom in the earth."

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