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Parry.

THE SHEPHERD'S CARE.

DEAR BRO. MENA—
It is partly due to your salutary that I have just written the following hymns. I know not that they have any merit; yet, I know that if they had been in our hymn book, they would have been sung more than once, in public worship, during the few years of my ministry. It seems to me that the ministry is largely set forth in our book. I preach on education for the ministry, full of a year. I celebrate the anniversary of my installation as often as it returns. Ordinances and ministrations are not unimportant services; hence the ministry is a topic which claims some variety. The last of the four hymns in the Prayer Book ought to be in our Psalmist. Should you see fit to publish the lines I have written, they may possibly prompt some one to write a good hymn on some aspect of the general subject, and I think that any one of nine tenths of the volume in my library, is not worth one really good hymn; such, for instance, as, "My faith looks up to thee." I would rather be the author of this hymn, than the author of any one volume that any one of the three great "Stand up, Stand up for Jesus," is another meritorious hymn—we sing it almost every week in some of our meetings. Fraternality, H. W.

The pastor's life is peaceful;

His charge, the flock he feeds;
He feeds the flock with wisdom,
He lifts the voice of prayer.

He leads in reverent pastures,
And by the silver rills,
That murmur sweetly flowing
From everlastings hills.

How beautiful on mountains,
The herald's feet appear;
Proclaiming the glad tidings—
Salvation, peace are here.

So beautiful the pastor's,
In sandals wet with dew,
Beyond the bloom of roses,
Or sheen of lilies white.

The gospel's preparation,
And readiness for peace;
In these he journeys heavenward,
His footsteps never cease.

His change he folds,
Within the Savior's breast,
Or he with all his fathers,
Is gathered to his rest.

Till on the mount of glory,
Amid the holy throng,
He praises God, his Savior,
In one eternal song.

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chapters of Jeremiah, and the first and third parts of the fifty-first Psalm were sung.

During the precious revival, with which God was pleased to bless the church of Fairfield the winter before his death, his heart was so deeply in the work, that at all hours in the night, he might be heard pleading with God to carry on that blessed work. His spirit was so much in the revival, he was so much absorbed in it, that he really thought that his bodily presence had been in it. Hence he would at times tell the family, how he and the pastor of the church had conversed with the inquirers. Dear man of God, it was not his fault, that he was not personally in the work, pleading with sinners to be reconciled to God, and pointing the inquirers to the Savior. His spirit was willing, it was only his flesh that was weak. P. perhaps no one entered more heartily into the work—perhaps no one prayed more fervently for it. Weak, infirm and afflicted as he was, his intense interest for perishing souls drove sleep from his eyes, and caused him to spend the silent, lonely hours of the night wrestling with God. The burden of souls caused him to spend many a sleepless hour. May we not have the pleasure to believe, that in those sleepless hours, "as a prince he had power with God, and prevailed?" There may have been the secret of some of the church's power with man.

It is mysterious, why one, who could not remember any thing worldly for five minutes, should have remembered God's glorious work in Fairfield so well. It shows where his heart was—what lay nearest to it. The worth of souls, and their salvation, had an interest to him far transcending all earthly things. The glory of God, and his blessed cause, could not be forgotten by him. They were too deeply engraven on his heart to be effaced in time or in eternity.

We are informed, that "for some months before his death, his heart was wonderfully drawn out in prayer, for his neighbors, his church, the neighboring churches, and for ministers; and many times through the night his low voice could be heard, pleading for them with tears."

A great burden of his prayers, until a few weeks previous to his death, was for the salvation of sinners; but then God seemed to say to him, it is enough—your work is done—let them alone—prepare to come home. His prayers henceforward, were mostly for himself, that he might be freed from all sin, and fully prepared for his heavenly rest. His last burden for others had been borne—his agonizing prayer for them had been put up—his work for others was done. He seems to have heard the call, come home, come home. He appears to have been in the peaceful harbor heaving in sight, and he prepares to enter in. Also the storms from the adversary, which usually assail the heavenly mariner as he nears the port of peace, began to descend upon him. The powers of darkness, knowing that they have but a short time, give vent to their malice. They do their worst, before he is forever beyond their reach—worry him, whom they cannot devour. Those malicious fiends are unwilling to let a single soul pass through the dark valley in peace. (It seems to be a valley peculiarly haunted by fiends. Hence it is so fearful to pass through it; and fearful indeed is it to that soul, who has no Jesus with him in the valley—no over-arching arms around him and underneath him.) He who has fought those fiendly fiends many a hard battle by the way, may expect another at the end of the way. "It is enough that the servant be as his master;" the master had to endure "the hour and the power of darkness," just at the end. Father O, had his dark hours, when near the end of his race. Like his Master, the powers of evil assailed him. He must have one more victory before he enters into his rest. But He, who had been with him through the long journey of life—He, who had said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," did not forsake him in his last conflict with his malignant foes—Jesus was with him in the valley; and hence, he soon came off victorious—overcame them through the blood of the Lamb, and could

"Soul at Satan's rage."

Father O, had conquered Satan, but he had not conquered death. Before that relentless enemy he fell; but fell peacefully, joyfully, and in full hope of that morning, when he will triumph even over death. The agonies of dissolving nature were very severe, but it was only nature that felt—death had no terrors for him. His body was racked with pain, but he had great peace in his soul—the everlasting arms were underneath him.

We are informed by that friend, who had so long, so kindly and tenderly watched over him, "that on the last Sabbath of his life he was very restless. On Monday he was better, and quite cheerful; but as usual a restless night was appointed to him. On Tuesday morning, after taking some breakfast, he slept till toward noon. When he came out of his room, he looked unlike himself; his face was full, without a wrinkle, his eyes bright, and he walked erect, singing and repeating, 'O happy, happy, my happy home! Oh, what a glorious King is Jesus! What words can express the blessedness of the saints in glory! The apostle John saw them stand on a sea of glass, which was both pure and safe, perfectly transparent, yet they would not sink; and they sang a new song.' With a great deal more in the same happy strain." Another individual speaking of that same happy day, said, "He was singing all day, just like a bird."

"After dinner he sat with his head, and his eyes fixed upward, singing for two or three hours, loud and clear, without regard to time, but all the words were praises. He sang the following verses, and with great power.

Praise, everlasting praise be paid
To Him who earth's foundations laid;
Praise to the God whose strong decrees
Sway the creation as he pleases.

Praise my Maker with my breath,
And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers;
My days of praise shall ne'er be past,
While life, and thought, and being last,
Or immortality endures.

Joy to the world, the Lord is come,<
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing.

Join all the glorious names
Of wisdom, love, and power,
That ever mortals bore;
That angels ever bore;
All are too mean to speak his worth,
Too mean to set my Saviour forth.

O glorious hour! O blest abode!
I shall be near, and like my God;
And flesh and sin no more control
The sacred pleasures of the soul.

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"Occasionally he repeated passages of Scripture in the same tone of voice; one of which was the language of Stephen, 'I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.' He took but little notice of any thing, until he was invited to supper, when he promptly replied, 'Yes, willingly and thankfully.' He drew his chair to the table, and after having asked a blessing, he sang, (a thing, which he had never known to do, when at the table.)

"My flesh shall slumber in the ground,
Till the last trumpet's joyful sound;
Then burst the chains with sweet surprise,
And in my Saviour's image rise."

"During the evening he continued in the same happy frame, and several times requested a favorite hymn to be sung: such as,

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say than to you he hath said!
You, who unto Jesus for refuge have fled."

Afterward, when racked on a bed of pain, this same hymn was sung in his presence, and he at once became calm and peaceful, as though enduring no pain, and continued so during all the time of singing the hymn. It seemed to soothe and ease the agonies of the body.

On that happy Tuesday evening, "Having retired to bed, he repeated the words of Watts, in his Divine Songs,

"Not more than others I deserve,
Yet God hath given me more;
For I have food while others starve,
Or beg from door to door."

"He then for some time spoke of the many blessings he had enjoyed through life, and closed with the words: 'My early home was a very pleasant one, and since I left my father's house, the lines have fallen to me in pleasant places.' Through the night he slept but little, and often spoke of his children and relatives.

"The next day he slept easy during the most of the forenoon, after which his restlessness returned with a difficulty of breathing. His physician gave him medicine, which relieved his breathing, but nothing could ease his distress. About twelve o'clock that night, he expressed his belief, that he should soon have a happy release from pain and sin; and spoke words of comfort to his family. From that time, though he tried to speak, we could only distinguish such words as, 'Jesus—triumph—joyful—heaven—opened—sins in bliss—mysteries revealed—glorious manifestations,' and other expressions of like character, showing that though he had intense bodily sufferings, his peace was as a river. At one time being heard to say, 'The valley—the shadow—he was asked if the Shepherd with you in the valley? He replied at intervals, 'Yes—good Shepherd—Jesus—Deliverer—faithful to the end.'

"Friday morning, he expressed the desire to depart and be with Christ. He then made a strong effort to address those around him, saying, 'My Christian friends, for the last time—' but nothing more could be understood."

"Doubtless, God, angels and spirits of just men made perfect, understood more. It was his last address, short indeed, but the will was taken for the deed, and he was taken home. Truly 'his ridding passion was strong in death.' And what was that passion? It was the passion of a Christian. His last audible words showed what lay nearest his heart.

In view of his happy, triumphant death, who is not ready to exclaim, 'Let me die his death, and let my last end be like his; let my last utterances be like his.' Reader, would you not rather die his death, than that of the greatest statesman our country has ever known? Would you not rather have your last words like his, than like any of earth's great ones? Would you not? To die his death, you must live his life.

He was a Christian. It was his greatest honor, that he was a Christian. As the Christian ministry was the greatest honor that could be conferred on him on earth, he delighted in it, and in its duties. It was his delight to preach Christ, and him crucified—to warn men to 'flee from the wrath to come,' and to lead them to submit to Christ. Hence that Jesus, whom he delighted to honor in his life, did not forsake him in death, but sustained him, comforted him and honored him in death, and will honor him in eternity. Reader, would you have the same honors in death, and in eternity? If so, follow him as he followed Christ.

JAMES BOGGS.

For the American Presbyterian.

REGENERATION.

The inspired definition of this great change of moral character and disposition, which our Redeemer has assured us is essential to entering the kingdom of God, (John iii. 3-5), is, that we are "Born (or begotten) not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John i. 13; James i. 18.) As "the carnal mind (or will) of the natural man is enmity against God," (Rom. vii. 5) if he is not considered as opposed to that power which consists in reconciliation to God's law. How, then, can we consider "this birth (or begotten), in part at least, 'of the will of man,' which is contrary to John i. 13? If this change is voluntary on the part of the natural man, as the change is of a holy nature, the will of the natural man must be holy, which is to suppose that a corrupt tree can yield good fruit. To will or desire a holy change, is itself holy willing or desiring. It appears to be both most rational and scriptural to consider the carnal will as opposed to the change, until actually changed by the Holy Spirit of God. If otherwise, what necessity is there for a change?

Every Christian, indeed, is "willing to be such," but no man is willing to be a true Christian until the day of Christ's regenerating power. (Ps. cx. 3.) The unregenerated may have a selfish desire for what they suppose to be necessary to their salvation, but a willingness to be a real Christian is a willingness to be holy, and can never be the exercise of an unholiness. As no animal exercise or function can precede the principle of animal life, so no spiritual exercise or function can precede the principle of spiritual life, imparted in regeneration by the Holy Spirit of God. The carnal mind, so far from co-operating with the Holy Spirit in the simple act of regeneration, acts in opposition, if at all, until it is actually regenerated. As the moral character of the human mind must be

either carnal or spiritual, we suppose the change effected by the Spirit to be instantaneous.

In this case, the infinite and sovereign grace of God precedes. "We love him because he first loved us," and chose us in Christ Jesus, "before the foundation of the world." (Eph. i. 3.) In harmony with this precious truth, we are informed that some of the hearers of the gospel at Antioch believed rather than others, not because of their own superior virtue or willingness, but because "they were ordained to eternal life." (Acts xiii. 48. See Acts xvi. 14.) Lydia's willingness to receive the truth of the gospel in the love of it, was the effect of the Lord's opening her heart to do so. It is true, indeed, that we have no evidence that the Lord has chosen us, until we, by renewing grace, have actually chosen him. Yet, such is our depravity, and the enmity of the carnal mind against God, if the Lord would never choose us, to save by regenerating power, until we choose him, we should never choose him. Our carnal minds are so at enmity with God, we should always prefer sin to holiness, and the world to God, to our just and eternal condemnation. "If any man is in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new; and ALL (the) THINGS ARE OF GOD." (2 Cor. v. 17, 18.) Respectfully submitted.

G.

CONVERSATION AND READING.

An English writer, from whom you published an interesting extract in one of your late issues, Mr. Editor, complains of deficiency in the conversational faculty among the women of our time.

This deficiency is an obvious fact to many minds, and his attributing it to the studies at home after school hours, to which young women are often subjected, is, to a certain degree, doubtless just. But there are other causes operating against the acquirement, on their part, of conversational ability; and one of very considerable potency, we take to be the unfortunate disposition and practice with young women to devote most of their spare time to works of fiction.

It will surprise him who for a moment reflects how large an amount of this substance or shadow, may be taken into the mind without any perceptible increase in its growth. The literature of fiction fields, unquestionably, a large amount of excitement of a certain kind. Like some other stimulants, however, it leaves its victims in a state of mental vacuity. If it happens at times to partake less of the sensation-type, we shall find it still wanting in all those qualities best calculated either to enlarge, to invigorate, or to enrich the mind. Fiction is essentially unsuggestive, and instead of stimulating the thinking or the reasoning faculties, actually disposes to somnolency and languor.

In the "Book Table" of one of our public journals, we find the following remarks on a new work of the class to which we allude. "The incidents of the story are fitted to each other with much skill of literary joinery, and inasmuch as the author is a merciful man, and has readers also who ought to be merciful, and can make his characters turn out as he pleases, we have always the comfortable assurance from the start, on taking up one of his books; that all the persons to whom we are introduced will come out right, and that whatever the complications and catastrophes may be or may threaten, the curtain will descend at the last page on at least a dozen most blissful weddings with spinster aunts and bachelor uncles; all rich and good-natured, and overflowing equally with love, friendship, and felicity; so it is in the book before us, and if the people who are therein described did not live together comfortably after he left them, it was not because our excellent author had not done them the very amplest justice, in making them all both good and lucky before they passed from his hands."

This certainly hits off most happily the prominent features of a vast number of the books which so engross the leisure, unfortunately, of the young women of the present day. It is plain that books of this character are better calculated to satisfy, than to stimulate the mind.

The reader finds in their perusal everything finished to his hand. All is performed by the author, and that so thoroughly, that the reader has only to keep his eyes open; it will be just as well if his mind goes fast asleep.

There may be, and doubtless are exceptions, but as far as we have observed, we have generally found those minds the most insipid and hollow which have imbibed the most of this food.

Fiction even if it does not contaminate, in other words, if it be what is called moral fiction, brings little indeed, we think, either to warm the heart or elevate the sentiments.

That class of fiction termed the best by some, we mean that which is based on the actual persons, or events of historic record—yields but meagre returns for his perusal, who seeks to enrich his memory with topics safely adapted to the purposes of conversation. For on a subject of real knowledge, he will find that the license usually taken with facts, and the false lights which it throws over characters and scenes, but lead to bewilder and dazzle the mind; and this to such a degree as to make it scarcely doubtful if it is not a serious misfortune, that the actual facts, events, and personages of history should ever have been pressed into the service of fiction.

It has been wisely and truly said, that no watches so thoroughly deceive us as those which pass to be interested. We do not suffer our own consciousness to come to the light even of our own consciousness—if we can help it. But when we find ourselves parrying off some appeal for kindness, giving way to some prejudice against others,

scenes, by repetition, soon fall on the minds of those to whom, from previous perusal, they are already familiar; and we can scarcely conceive of a more dreary punishment than that of two confirmed novel readers, condemned exclusively to each other's society for any length of time, with no other mental aliment than the re-hashed which their memories might be able to reproduce from this unsubstantial source.

The readers of fiction, as a general thing, surrender themselves entirely to its dramatic personae and the scenes described, while the author of the illusion with all his creative power, holds nothing like so important a place in their estimation as the puppets, in relation to his puppets, in the minds of his auditory, or the cook, who furnishes savory viands, in the mind of the epicure.