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JAMES ALLISON & CO.,
PITTSBURGH, PA.

Presbyterian Banner.

VOL. XII. NO. 51. PITTSBURGH, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1864. WHOLE NO. 620.

THE PRESBYTERIAN BANNER.

Publication Office:
SINGERLY'S BUILDINGS, 74 THIRD ST., PITTSBURGH, PA.
SMITH, ENGLISH & CO., 23 NORTH-6TH ST., PHILA., PA.

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For the Presbyterian Banner.

Rev. Robert Johnston.

Seldom are we called to record a more serious loss to the Church, than in the death of this lamented brother. He died at his home—Peoria, Illinois—of dysentery, August 19th, 1½ o'clock P. M.—a sickness which lacked but one day of being a fortnight, which he bore with exemplary patience, and which terminated in a most peaceful death.

Brother Johnston was pastor of the First Presbyterian church of Peoria—that in which the Assembly of 1863 convened. For nine years did he sustain this relation, and between two and three hundred were added during his pastorate. Twice before had he been settled—at Corinth, Ohio, and at Gettysburg, Pa. He was the third of four brothers—all sons of James and Sarah Johnston; the former of whom lived to be eighty-seven, and the latter eighty-four. The mother's death preceded this son's only four months. He was named for his uncle, Rev. Robert Johnston, late of Newcastle, Pa. He had a younger brother in the ministry, Rev. M. E. Johnston, late pastor at Carlisle, Pa. This brother and he married sisters; they studied together, and were together licensed by the Presbytery of Steubenville, at Carrollton, Ohio.

Brother Johnston leaves a widow, and five children between the ages of four and fifteen. The widow was Miss Jane G. Waters, daughter of the late Rev. John Waters, of Galesburg, Ill. It is a fact worthy of record, that four Old School Presbyterian ministers married in that family, settled West, and have since all gone to their heavenly home, save one, Rev. Wm. F. Adams, of Washington, Ill. This esteemed minister of Jesus Christ, the present Moderator of the Synod of Illinois, was present at the melancholy decease we here record. Brother Johnston himself had been Moderator of that Synod, and was, at the time of his death, Stated Clerk, both of Synod and Presbytery. He was an influential and leading member of both these bodies, and the sad tidings which this paper conveys will spread heartfelt grief throughout the Presbytery of Peoria and the Synod of Illinois. He was a man of attractive social qualities, which rendered him popular in his congregation and city, and always made him a congenial companion with his brethren.

He succeeded Rev. Addison Coffey, at Peoria, and it is believed that only one Communion season passed during his pastorate of nine years, without some accession to the church, either by letter or upon profession. It was his custom to have new members stand before the pulpit, and receive special counsel and exhortation; in which exercise, it is said, he was particularly happy.

As a preacher, Brother Johnston was impressive and instructive. No one in the Presbytery, or perhaps Synod, was oftener called abroad to assist in special services or protracted meetings. He usually carried a manuscript into the pulpit, but was so little confined to it, and, on the contrary, preached with so much freedom and animation, that few would suspect he had any part of his sermon on paper.

Our deceased friend made a profession of religion at the age of seventeen, at Wellsville, Ohio. He was a child of the Covenant, and had its seal placed upon his head in infancy. He was a self-made man. Not until twenty-five years of age did he take up the Latin Grammar; and he was supported through his educational career from the proceeds of a farm which he had bought with his own labor. His personal address was good, and rather commanding. Of full medium size and stature, he carried the air and manners of a gentleman. His broad, fair countenance was so instinct with intelligence and benevolence, that he could hardly fail to strike you, in any circle or company. But after all, his humble, earnest, and sincere piety, was his crowning excellence. That was unquestioned, and produced its fruits of a correspondingly decided character, that gave him favor with God and man, and that will render him hallowed to posterity.

The subject of this sketch was born in Beaver County, Pa., Aug. 2d, 1813. He graduated at Washington College, Pa., in 1844, and studied Theology at Allegheny Seminary. His marriage occurred April 11th, 1848, between licensure and ordination. He was buried in Springdale Cemetery, Sabbath afternoon, Aug. 21st, with an immense attendance at his funeral. Men of all classes in Peoria evinced the greatest interest in his sickness, and lamented his death.

Rev. Robert Johnston was a man of mark. It will be difficult to supply his place at once, in his own particular church, and in the position he held in the Church, generally, at the West. In these trying times he was bold and outspoken for patriotism and freedom. Said a colored man in his town, of him, "If I were as good a man as he, I would give half the world."

As to his deathbed experience: he talked faithfully with his physicians; and, when they had abandoned his case as hopeless, it was his cheerful remark: "Jesus will not forsake me." Previously, the Doctor had intimated his danger and sought to draw out his views with respect to living or dying; his only reply was, "Good is the will of the Lord." To his wife he quoted John iii: 16, repeating, over and over, "Whosoever believeth—that means me—I do believe." "Him that cometh, I will in no wise cast out"—"I do come." At one time, he requested several brethren to "go and pray, privately, for one hour, that God would either raise me up, or give me an abundant entrance into glory." Wednesday night, when he was supposed to be dying, he called all his immediate family to his bed-side, kissed each one, and gave each one his parting counsel and blessing. To his brother at a distance he sent the message, "to be less worldly minded—to think more of heaven and less of earth, lest they should make shipwreck of the faith." On one occasion he said this: "I seem to see Brothers Marven, Marquis, Hibben, and others, standing at the side of the door, ready to welcome me; but Jesus is the principal attraction." Several came and sent messages to beloved friends in heaven. He nodded assent, and answered, "I will see them, and tell them all about you." Said he would preach so differently if he had his work to do over again—that faith seemed now so simple; that there are but three great points in preaching—the atonement; the offer; the acceptance!

To the writer of this sketch, he said: "I am a great, great sinner; but He will not cast me off, will he?" He requested me to pray with him: said, "tell the Church it is awfully responsible work to preach the Gospel: remember the words I spake unto you while I was yet with you, and all meet me in heaven." Tell sinners "they must have Christ, or perish." The last night of his life, he broke forth thus: "Lord Jesus, come take my spirit quickly; I have a great deal to live for, but I am ready to go." On the morning of his decease, he called for songs, and these hymns were sung: "Rock of Ages"; "Come, sing to me of heaven"; and "The shining shore." His last request for prayer was, that he might have an easy death. When, to appearance, in the very article of death, a minister of Christ whispered in his ear, "Almost there." "Yes." "All bright yet?" "Yes." Spectators agree that they never witnessed a more peaceful end.

Henry, Ill., Aug. 25, 1864. W.

For the Presbyterian Banner.

Six Weeks in the Potomac Army;

OR,

HOW THE SICK MAN GOT WELL.

No. X.

Leaving the Rapidan—Battle of the Wilderness—Hospital Retreat.

"Our bosoms we'll bare to the glorious strife,
And our oath is recorded on high,
To prevail in the cause that is dearer than life,
Or crushed in its ruins to die."

Up and be stirring, quickly! Do you hear the orders?

No; what are they?

"Be ready to start in fifteen minutes."

Short notice, this; what time is it?

Two o'clock—and the fifteen minutes will not allow us to prepare breakfast. We can but take some crackers and eat as we go; here, put these in your pocket.

Guess we might have made coffee. I see the ambulance drivers are at it—and more, a whole hour has passed since we were waked, and no sign of starting yet! Mr. H. proposes that you ask those drivers for some of their coffee.

Don't like to; think it probable that he will, however, rather than go without.

You are right; here he comes, having secured the beverage himself, and offers us a part—take some.

Willingly, for I feel in need of it. There, with a pint of hot coffee and two crackers, we feel prepared for the march.

Four o'clock! but be patient, the ambulances are "pulling out," and we are off at last. By-and-by we will learn that "be ready" differs from "forward march" more widely than we had supposed.

Five o'clock—and listen! With the early morning the artillery opens—on our right, and but a few miles eastward.

Eight o'clock—"Wilderness Tavern"—"Mine Run"—and there on that rise beyond are Gen. Grant's headquarters, indicated by that flag; farther on, the battle is in progress.

We have then reached "the front" and a battle-field at one and the same time. There is work for us now, and use for our stores. We must drive up to the left here, take position by our hospital, and, under direction of the surgeons, do all that we can for the relief of these brave wounded as they are brought in from the field.

In position are we?

Yes, and just where we are *needed* The hospital wagons have not come up; they probably got upon the wrong road two nights ago, as we did, only much farther; and the surgeons are in want of *every* thing. We must issue largely from our stores—must hand over even a wall tent and camp kettles. How happy that we brought two of the former and so many of the latter.

Darkness brings reflection; and how sad are these hospital scenes in which we have to-day mingled! Early in the afternoon the wounded are being brought in rapidly. Among the first is brave Col. Bartlett, previously mutilated by loss of his left leg in battle, now severely injured in the head, and his hip joint badly wrenched, it seems, in the fall. How quickly the attendants relieve him of his beautiful "Palmer." How gentlemanly his appearance as he lies there upon the ground! How uncomplainingly he suffers—and his countenance indicates that he *does* suffer. Soon the tents are all full, and the space before them is strewn with wounded men, as with the leaves of Autumn. Many wait, and wait long, before the busy surgeons can come to their aid; and the while are without the least protection from the direct rays of the hot sun. One poor fellow has his cap over his upturned face. But while a few are nervously restless, none complain, most suffer quietly, and some even *cheerfully*. Torn flesh, crushed bones, pierced lungs, clothes saturated and stiffened with blood, and pale faces begrimed with the dust and smoke of battle, constantly greet our eyes. The *ugliest* looking case is that of a little Frenchman—put up like a bullet, and looking as if he could be killed only by the hardest knocks. There is a hole through his left cheek in the form of a *triangle*, the two sides of which are probably each about one inch and a half long; the piece of flesh thus cut still hangs on the outside by the *base*. His tongue is nearly severed, and protrudes from his mouth. He is incapable of uttering articulate sounds—can call attention only by a pitiful moan, and by gestures partially makes known his wants. And there he sits by the hour, without any attempt being made for his relief. The surgeons seem to consider his case hopeless. Late in the evening, however, we saw him seated on the operating table. One surgeon held his tongue in position by a little hook inserted in the end, while another was fastening it together with stitches. They also fastened the triangle in its place, and the little fellow "looked like another man." How he will manage to get enough nourishment down to sustain life—or whether at all—remains to be seen But if there is any one who can "live it through," in such case, it is this little *bullet* of a Frenchman.

One of your "feeding cups," which you packed so carefully at Washington, might be useful to him.

Just the thing, I should judge, and I packed them carefully because they are scarce. Our Commission men have had a busy afternoon of it, and the surgeons seem to be not a little gratified with our work—will make one exception, however. Busily engaged washing wounds—*our* principal work—while caring for the body, we thought fit to drop a word for the soul, when, by one whom we took for a surgeon, we were promptly interrupted with, "We tont introtuce any relitgus converzatshun." If we had ceased work in order to talk, at such an hour, he might have plead at least some show of reason for his reproof. As it was, it savored more of German infidelity than of the Christian gentleman. This was our only rebuff, however.

By dark, the wounded seemed to be generally cared for, and placed under shelter of some kind, did they not?

Yes; but on a turn taken among the tents since nine o'clock, we found three, with the ground for their bed, and but the sky for their covering. Returning to the wagon we procured two comforts, one of which we placed under, and the other over two of them, and we are now waiting the return of a boy whom our Agent has sent over to the surgeons' tent to see if we can't get something to make the other poor fellow more comfortable—but what does all this mean! Agent suddenly orders a quick retreat—says our right wing is falling back, supposed to be pressed by Lee, that our hospital is in danger of being shelled, and that, gathering and packing our traps quickly as possible, we must leave with the van. Haste, boys!

"Pell mell!" "Helter skelter!" Why this must be a regular "*skedaddle!*" But how will our poor wounded stand such a bringing off as this?

Near midnight—on the Chancellorsville road—and now that we are considered "out of harm's way" for the balance of the night, we are halted, and must "turn in" just as we did last night, part in the wagon and part on the ground; *we* have lost so much rest for successive nights and days, that we have been "tumbling over" on the wagon seat every few minutes for the last hour, and expect to sleep soundly *anywhere*—the rebels notwithstanding—and here we go under the wagon again! "Pleasant dreams to you." C.

For the Presbyterian Banner.

A Remarkable Session.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—If the facts contained in the following extract from a sermon preached by the pastor of the O. S. Presbyterian church in Meadville, on occasion of the death of a Ruling Elder—Mr. Augustus Bradley—of said church, seem to you worthy of being so noted, will you please insert them in the *Banner?* V.

"It is a remarkable providence of God, worthy of being here noticed, that the death of Mr. Bradley, who was a Ruling Elder of this church for almost thirty years, is the first that has occurred among those who are, or have been, Ruling Elders of it for a period of not less than thirty-five years. If I am not mistaken, the last previous death of one who was ever a Ruling Elder of this church, was that of one of the brothers Cotton, which must have occurred nearly, if not quite, or more than, forty years ago.

"It is now within three months of a quarter of a century since I was installed over this church as its pastor. The death of Mr. Bradley makes the first break, or change, in its session—consisting of six Ruling Elders and the pastor—as it was at that time organized. There had been not a removal by death, nor by change of residence, nor by addition to its number, until this lamented death has broken into our little body. It may be doubted whether a parallel case can be found. It would be no easy matter to find another case in any department of life, where seven persons have remained associated together so many years without change by increase or diminution of number, especially when, as in this case, at the beginning of that period the youngest one of them was twenty-four, and the eldest fifty-seven, years of age.

"Another thing may be mentioned as making the whole matter more remarkable still. Twenty-six years ago, before the division of this church, the Session numbered eight Ruling Elders. Of these, two united with those who organized the New School Presbyterian church in this town, and both are living, and are acting Ruling Elders in that church.

"In the facts mentioned there is occasion for deep gratitude to God. There is room, too, for solemn reflection. One death, my brethren of the Session, has occurred in our little circle. How soon will the next occur? and the next? and the next? It cannot be expected as probable that it will be very long before one and another will be summoned hence. The interval was long between the deaths of Mr. Cotton and Mr. Bradley. According to the usual course of nature, those who remain may look that death after death will take place among our number at comparatively brief intervals.

"Two weeks ago, the Rev. Mr. Van Liew, who was pastor of this church forty-four years ago, and by whom the present pastor was baptized and for whom named, preached in this pulpit while on a short visit to this, his former place of residence. His text was, "And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him."—Acts viii: 2. How almost prophetic of the death we now so greatly lament, was a portion of the very solemn remarks made in that discourse of the venerated and much loved minister of Christ. Let us, my brethren, strive so to live, that our deaths will be such as to leave hope and comfort on our account for surviving friends, and also will be felt to be so severe a loss to the church that 'great lamentation' will be made over us."

For the Presbyterian Banner.

Pastoral Visitation.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—As the season of the year most suitable for pastoral visitation is again approaching, allow me, through the columns of the *Banner*, to offer a few thoughts upon this important subject.

Do we, as ministers, talk to our people at their own firesides, about eternal things, as we should?

Do we sufficiently realize the vast amount of good which might be accomplished in this way?

Do we even realize the benefit which *we ourselves* would derive from pastoral visitation, in the impulse which would be given to our thoughts in preparing for the pulpit?

I am persuaded that oftentimes the difficulty we experience in choosing a text would vanish, if we would go out among the people, and talk and pray with them about their souls' salvation. I am also convinced, that the difficulty which we sometimes feel in writing upon a subject, would be overcome by coming in contact with our people. But while we, as ministers, would be benefited by pastoral visitation, the people of our various charges would be *still more* benefited. Some errors can be more successfully combated at the fireside than in the pulpit. Some troubled consciences can be more easily brought into contact with the truth in private than in public. Doctrines can be better explained to *some* at home, than in the sanctuary. Every minister can find out the truth of these remarks for himself, if he will faithfully attend a pastoral visitation. He will, perhaps, meet with a man who believes that the "end justifies the means"—that the Christian, if he only means to do good in the end, has a very wide margin to go upon. He thinks he may sell his rye to the distiller, provided, he intends to give the proceeds to support the Gospel. Or, he may raffle at the Fair of the Sanitary Commission, provided he intends to give his ill gotten gain for the comfort of our brave soldiers. Such an error the minister can often rebuke better at the man's own house than in the sanctuary; though it should be rebuked in both places.

Again, the minister needs to mingle with those who are in distress of mind, in order to give them proper counsel; yet, some are so diffident that they cannot be brought to visit the minister—hence the necessity for him to visit them. Once more, some have difficulty in understanding certain doctrines of the Bible, and yet have not anxiety enough about the matter to lead them to the minister's house to inquire for themselves. Now such need to be visited by the minister, and to be encouraged to open their minds to him in order that their difficulties may be removed.

For the sake of the aged and infirm, pastoral visitation should be kept up by every minister. Such rejoice to see their pastor's face and to hear his prayers.

For the sake of the young, every pastor should visit his flock. In no way can the pastor win the affection of the youth of the congregation better, than by treating them with kindness at their father's house. Their affection once gained, he wields a power by which he may lead them to Christ.

Once more, there are those in every community who seldom or *never* enter the house of God, and yet who may be influenced to come to the sanctuary by a call from the minister. How blessed, to look back and feel that a kind word spoken to such, or, a prayer offered in the house of such, has been the means of leading them to the sanctuary, and ultimately into the fold of Christ. Then let it not be said of us, my brethren in the ministry, that while we have "taught publicly," we have neglected to teach "from house to house."

BEAR CREEK.

[Selected.]

Rest.

When shall I be at rest? my trembling heart
Grows weary of its burden, sickening still
With hope deferred. Oh! that it were Thy will
To loose my bonds, and take me where thou art.

When shall I be at rest? my eyes grow dim
With straining through the gloom; I scarce can see
The way-marks that my Saviour made for me:
Would it were morn, and I were safe with him.

When shall I be at rest? Hand over hand
I grasp, and climb an ever steeper hill,
A rougher path. Oh! that it were thy will
My tired feet might tread the Promised Land.

Oh that I were at rest! a thousand fears
Come thronging o'er me lest I fail at last.
Would I were safe, all toil and dangers past,
And thine own hand might wipe away my tears.

Oh! that I were at rest, like some I love,
Whose last fond looks drew half my life away,
Seeming to plead that either they might stay
With me on earth, or I with them above.

But why these murmurs? Thou didst never shrink
From any toil or weariness for me,
Not even from that last deep agony;
Shall I beneath my little trials sink?

No, Lord, for whom I am indeed at rest,
One taste of that deep bliss will quite efface
The sternest memories of my earthly race,
Save but to swell the sense of being blest.

Then lay on me whatever cross I need
To bring me there. I know thou canst not be
Unkind, unfaithful, or untrue to me!
Shall I not toil for thee, when thou for me didst bleed?

For the Presbyterian Banner.

Prayer.

If Christians neglect one duty more than another, it is to pray. Oh, how little do we improve this our greatest privilege! Perhaps twice a day we repeat our formal round of words, like a school-boy's task, never looking for an answer. Oh, fellow-travelers to Eternity! let us ever onward pray as for the life of our souls; pray without ceasing, and expect an answer.

Our privilege is very great, yet how little improved! Christ prayed all night on a mountain; but a man in these days would be considered a fanatic, if not suspected of insanity, who would go alone into a mountain and spend a whole night in prayer.

Christians should pray more and most importunately, for the conversion of their unregenerate friends. Pray for them *individually*, fervently, earnestly and continually; then God will answer. If this were universally done, how soon would the number of Christians be doubled. How soon might the world be converted to God!

The followers of Christ should ever remember each other at a throne of grace. I would rather have the prayers of a single Christian, than the richest legacy on earth. Let those whose eyes meet these lines, pray for me, their writer.

Are the people of God acting well their part in this our great national struggle? The fourth year witnesses the ravages of an unparalleled war. It has no equal on the pages of history. Two millions of men have already entered the field, and five hundred thousand more are called. But the end is not yet. Onward! and ever onward! whirls the desolating tornado of civil war! the sun of our political liberties, staggers and falls back, threatening to set behind eternity! Oh, Patriot Christian! is it not high time to PRAY for your native land! Ask the weeping millions of the North; calmly survey the last resting place of five hundred thousand fallen brave; and then ask yourself, Is it not high time to put forth the poet's prayer,

"Oh God! my bleeding country save."

Some may say we had a day of prayer not long ago. One day! Why not have a week? a month? The great trouble is, that as a nation we are not yet prepared for peace. If the rebellion this day was utterly crushed, God would not have the glory; but it would be ascribed to our great generals, our brave veterans, and invulnerable ironclads. Then pray that we may be humbled and suitably prepared for a speedy, honorable and permanent peace. I am fully persuaded, if all the Christians in America would make one united effort, and most earnestly beseech the Father of mercies to turn from us the scourge of war, the rebellion would not last a single month. In thirty days the war would close, peace would be restored, and our army friends returning home. What a happy consummation! What Patriot or Christian would not hail it with joy! Might not thus be hastened that glorious and happy period, when the nations shall learn war no more? That day may not be far distant. May it come quickly. A.

For the Presbyterian Banner.

Allegheny Seminary in the North-west.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—We had an unusually interesting ordination service at a called meeting of the Presbytery of Winnebago, at Neenah, Wis., on the 19th of August.

Mr. A. A. Dinsmore was ordained as an Evangelist. Rev. Joseph Vance presided and proposed the questions to the candidate. Rev. Wm. M. Paxton, D.D., preached the sermon and made the ordaining prayer, and Rev. F. R. Wotring gave the charge to the Evangelist.

What gave peculiar interest to this occasion was the relation all the persons engaged in the service, as well as the excellent young brother ordained, sustained to the Theological Seminary at Allegheny. One being a professor, and all the others recent Alumni of that institution.

To those who are familiar with this region, and the channels through which we have usually obtained our supplies of young ministers, there will be found something more than ordinarily suggestive in this statement. Allegheny is making a decidedly aggressive movement in this direction. She has already gained a firm foot-hold in Winnebago Presbytery, where we have now five young men, recent graduates of that institution, all filling important positions and making nearly one-half the active force of our Presbytery; and the prospect is, if things go on at this rate a while longer, we shall be completely *Alleghenyized* in this region. But it is surely some comfort to know that the invaders come from no worse a region than Western Pennsylvania. R.

National Pride and Punishment.

If we should designate that peculiarity of our nation which, in its proper workings and under due restraints, has been the source of her energy, her independence and her progress, and which yet, in its exaggeration and abuse, has become the source of ruinous evils, and of ruin, we would say, it is her spirit of self-reliance. True self-reliance, is, indeed, a noble trait, when it rests on the divine promise, and feels strong in itself, because God, its refuge, is strong. Its feet are beautiful upon the mountains, because on the pathway marked out by Jehovah it is fearlessly treading. A geneaal confidence in her own institutions and in her own strength; a noble self-respect which will not lower itself to so base a thing as crime, however tempting may be the lure; the movement of an ardent heart which throbs for something higher, better and greater, these are the life and glory of a young State:

"A spirit is in the world
That causes all the ebbs and flows of nations,
Keeps mankind sweet by action."

But there is a natural result, and in the present condition of human nature, if unrestrained, an almost inevitable result of continued prosperity which may turn the impulses of the national heart, originally so generous and exalting, into sources of crime and destruction. Into this condition our nation not only entered, but had advanced to an alarming degree. We were verging fast toward a reckless and arrogant trust in ourselves; a sentiment, practically, that we were the source of our own blessings, that we would prosper at any rate, whether God favored us or not. No land may safely teach her sons to say, "Our country, right or wrong." This feeling tends to an atheistical presumption, a rushing toward destiny, in which conscience and humanity are trampled beneath the feet.

All the annals of our race confirm the Biblical teaching, that nations, as such, are visited with the chastenings of God. Many epitomes of universal history have been written, but the records of all the dead nations were perfectly epitomized long ago in a single sentence of the prophet: "The nation and kingdom that will not serve Thee, shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly destroyed."

There are times in the life of a people when all hearts bleed with "wounds immedicable;" when a whole land becomes a Bethel, filled with the weepings of Rachels, who refuse to be comforted, for their children. There are times, when, as in Nineveh, the prince and the beggar are alike in sack-cloth and ashes; there are times when the hand upon the wall traces its awful characters so vividly, that the atheistical revellers themselves, in the midst of their banquet, are frozen by fear into ghastly muteness. God smites the nations. Reverently would we speak of His judgments, for they are "a great deep." We would not put forth our hand to unveil His secret counsel. But, as we would not assume the revelation of what He hides, neither dare we pry to find what He reveals; and it is His declaration, that, as with individuals, so with nations, He "will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the work of their own hands."

What mean these lurid clouds, which hang over us; the defacing of the fairest works of nature and of art, the letting loose the infernal passions of the vilest men, the unchaining of lust and murder to glut themselves at will; over large portions of our land, the earth lies neglected, the plough share rusts in the furrow, and is hidden by the weeds, the vines are unpruned, the hedges overgrown, the villages in ashes, the cattle, wantonly butchered, lying about the fields, loading the air with noisome malaria? What mean these willings from the stricken border of our own State, where the hapless victims of atrocious cruelty gather weeping around the scarce extinguished embers of their own once happy homes? These are but the attendants upon the great central scenes of horror, where the blood of thousands swells the dread river of death which deluges the battle-field. These tell us, that an awful guilt lies back of this awful suffering These teach us, that, not in the counsels of the wise nor the strength of the brave, is our hope. Nothing but the fervent prayer of penitent hearts, forsaking sin, can avail, for this will move the Almighty arm, which alone can save us.—*Dr. C. P. Krauth.*

Select Sentences.

See the vanity of the world and the consumption that is upon all things; and love nothing but Christ.—*Wilcox.*

The world will be burnt up in the day of Christ's appearance. And why should night-dreams, and day shadows, and water-froth, and May-flowers, run away with your heart in the mean while? When we come to the water side, and set our foot in the boat and enter on the river of death, we shall wonder at our past folly.—*Rutherford.*

Earth, earth is what worldly men think they never have enough of until death comes and stops their mouth with a shovelful of earth digged out of their own grave.—*Gurnall.*

As Abraham dealt by his concubine's children, so doth God by the Ishmaels of the world; he gives them portions and sends them away; but the inheritance he reserves for his Isaacs; to them he gives all that he hath, yea, even himself; and what can we have more?—*Cole.*

Seeing men can not get the doctrine of God's justice blotted out of the Bible, yet it is such an eye-sore to them that they strive to blot it out of their minds; and they ruin themselves by presuming on his mercy, while they are not careful to get a righteousness wherein they may stand before his justice; but say in their hearts, the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil.

Often a horse on a journey has been so affrighted at a heap of hay on the wayside as with difficulty to proceed, but on being brought up to it, finds it, instead of an object of terror, delicious and nourishing food. It is precisely so with fearful believers, in respect of death.—*Goodwin.*

There is much sweet and efficacious intercourse between Christ and his people in little time. Mary was distressed, and wept. Jesus said Mary, and Mary said Rabboni, and all was well.—*Ib.*

Lysimachus, for extreme thirst, offered his kingdom to the Genæ to quench it. His exclamation, when he had drunk, is wonderfully striking: Ah! wretched me, who, for such a momentary gratification, have lost so great a kingdom! How applicable this to the case of him, who, for the momentary pleasures of sin, parts with the kingdom of heaven.—*Horne.*

He who seldom thinks of heaven, is not likely to get thither; as the only way to hit the mark, is to keep the eye fixed upon it.—*Ib.*

Bees never work singly, but always in companies, that they may assist each other. An useful hint to scholars and Christians.—*Ib.*

Card Playing.

Gail Hamilton recommends card playing as a wholesome amusement for young men. A Washington correspondent of the Springfield *Republican*, who writes like a man knowing whereof he affirms, makes a vigorous and earnest reply to Gail Hamilton, from which we clip the following extracts:

"It keeps them from dissipation." It may be; but it also narrows down their capacity to one round of thought, and diverts them fearfully from elevating reflections and tendencies. I put no stress upon the inducement to gambling, from indulgence in this game. To me its crying evil is its greedy eating up of the precious hours which were given for worthier usage. My observation, large taught, tells me that it is a deadly foe, amongst young men, to all spiritual tendencies. It is singularly absorbing in its nature; and there is no form of amusement to which they become so easily and firmly attached. To almost every recreation nature has set reasonable limits, through weariness of the flesh. Not so with card-playing. Its devotees never seem to grow tired, never cry hold—enough. I see young men here whose brows are broad enough to work out for themselves a noble destiny, playing whist every night with unwearied assiduity; and when the Sabbath comes, I see them lounging about the hall and piazza, yawning and listless as a child without its playthings. I do not see that their "observation," or their "memory," or their "reason," is strengthened by the process. On the contrary, I see in their vapid conversation, in their utter lack of reading, their indifference to passing events, their thorough ignoring of responsibility to God, the dissipating and belittling effect of their constant and unvaried pastime.

I have all my days had a card-playing community open to my observation, and I am yet to be made to believe that a game which is the universal resort of the starved in soul and intellect, which has never in any way linked with itself tender, elevating or beautiful associations, the tendency of which is undoubtedly to absorb the attention from more weighty matters, can recommend itself to the favor of Christ's disciples. The use of culture and genius may embellish, but can never dignify it. I have this moment ringing in my ears the dying injunction of my father's early friend: "Keep your sons from cards; over them I've murdered time and lost heaven."—*Watchman and Reflector.*

[Selected.]

Prayer.

Prayer is the weary heart's desire,
The sure relief of care:
It is to plead with God his Word,
And find deliverance there:
It is to whisper every wish
To him who can fulfill:
A beggar coming to a King,
To ask whate'er he will.

The weakest saint may thus o'ercome
The strongest of the foes:
He prays—his God a wall of fire
Around the supplant throws:
He prays—and all his enemies
Away like smoke are driven:
He prays, and to the fainting one
JEHOVAH'S strength is given.

Is sin the burden that he feels,
While struggling to be free?
Helpless he prays, and grace divine
Gives him the victory.
Is holiness the prize he seeks?
He can obtain it there:
For nothing is impossible
To wrestling faith and prayer.

The Spirit teaches him to plead
The merits of the Lamb:
And feeblest prayer acceptance gains,
When perfumed with his name.
Prayer, ushered by that precious One,
Enters the court above,
Whence shining hosts the answers bear,
On rapid wings of love.

Believers Should Not Fear to Die.

Death, being the punishment of sin, and, considered in itself, a great calamity, is naturally an object of terror to mankind, and there are not a few who are all their lives in bondage to this feeling. But believers in Christ, being justified through his blood, and sanctified to God by the power of the Holy Ghost, should rise above this fear, and meekly resign themselves to a sentence which no one is able to escape. On this subject Robert Bolton, a good practical writer of a former age, justly observed:

1. That there is scarcely any man who has not, at one time or another in the course of his life, suffered more pain than is ordinarily felt by people when they die. The pang of death, says the excellent Mr. Ward, is often less than that of the tooth-ache.

2. The covenant of God is of force with his people when they lie in the dust of the earth. Ages after the fathers of the Hebrew tribes were dead, the Almighty said, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."—Matt. xxii: 31, 32.

3. In death their union with Christ is continued; just as the personal union with the Divine and the human natures remained in him when his body lay in the grave. When dead, they are "the dead in Christ," (1. Thess. iv: 16.) and still "live together with him." (1. Thess. v: 10.)

4. To them death is but a "sleep;" a temporary state, and a state of rest. Stephen "fell asleep," (Acts vi: 60,) and all who, like him, die in faith and love, "sleep in Jesus." (1. Thess. iv: 14.)

5. Christ has taken away the sting of death, and thus deprived it of its terror to all believers. He assumed the human nature, "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. ii: 14, 15.)

6. Death is but a sturdy porter, opening the door of eternity and letting us into heaven; a somewhat rough passage to eternal pleasures.

7. It is but a departing out of this world unto the Father in heaven. (John xvi: 28.)

8. In the Old Testament it is called a gathering of the people to their fathers.

9. Jacob made little of it. "And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold I die." "And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet unto the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people." (Gen. xlviii: 21; xlix: 33.)

Let believers in Christ, then, as the time of their dissolution draws near, put on a cheerful courage, and meekly yield their immortal spirits into the hands of their Almighty and compassionate Saviour, to whom they may confidently say:

Me for thine own thou lov'st to take
In time and in eternity;
Thou never, never wilt forsake
A helpless worm that trusts in thee.

Peculiar Ministers.

"We want a peculiar man at our place." Yes, and in the next town the people want a peculiar man, also. There is a growing demand everywhere for *peculiar* ministers. Even the older churches, that have had the reputation of being staid, and not carried about by every wind, have caught the idea. They have found out that they must have a peculiar man for their young people. And the tastes of the people have become so various that it does require a singular man to meet them all.

But what is to be done with ministers who are not peculiar; men of common sense, sound judgment and sound learning; sober, prudent, pious men; men who are able to teach others, and are suited to be wise counsellors; whose character and influence are unequivocal? We are aware that an eccentric man, who is given to saying odd and strange things, is more amusing and attractive to the young; and that common sense and refined taste are not commodities that secure great *eclat* in the world. But ought it not to be considered whether the influence of the former is equally salutary, and as well suited to secure the salvation of souls? Doubtless God has called ninety-nine sober-minded men to preach the Gospel where he has called one peculiar man. If so, it is by their instrumentality in the main that the cause of Christ is to be carried on, and sinners saved, peculiar ministers being the exception, and not the rule.

Did not good sense and eminent fitness in things characterize our Saviour and the religion he taught, rather than oddity and eccentricity? Would not the churches of Christ have more dignity, and exert a more salutary and saving influence, by educating the young to pay greater deference to the ordinary and divinely appointed means of grace, than by attempting to gratify their desire for novelty and entertainment? a desire which the more it is fed, the less is it satisfied. Though the young might be less highly pleased, would they not be more contented? Though few were attracted by human means, would not more be drawn by the Spirit's power? We do not object to peculiar ministers in their places, but do protest against a growing depreciation of, and discontent with the ordinary ministry of the Word as God has appointed it; a depreciation and discontent which have been greatly fostered by the novel reading and popular lecturing of the day, and which are sadly affecting the stability and spiritual usefulness of the churches.—*Watchman and Reflector.*

Christian Humility.

If the Lord saw fit to place you in a position most obscure, or to assign to you a service the most menial, not calculated to catch the eye or win the applause, but rather the oversight and the slight of your fellows, it would be one of the sweetest tests of the reality of your love to Him. When Morrison—the Chinese missionary—the man of God who first gave the Bible to China in its vernacular—offered himself to the directors of the London Missionary Society as a missionary to the heathen, his appearance was so uncultivated and unpromising, that, hesitating to accept him as a candidate, they inquired if he were willing to pay as an *assistant* in one of the missionary schools? "Gentlemen," was young Morrison's noble reply, "while the temple of Christ is building, I am willing to be a hewer of wood or a drawer of water." In a moment they decided that a man who so loved his Saviour, who was willing to undertake *any* service for Christ, was the fittest for the higher office of a missionary to the heathen. They accepted him as such, and the result proved that they were not mistaken in their judgment. If you love Christ, you will be willing to undertake *any* service your Lord and Master may appoint you. Love will make drudgery for Jesus pleasant and welcome.—*Dr. O. Winslow.*

Dr Backus's Conversion.

In the life of Dr. Backus, of Somers, Conn., the following account of his conversion is given by himself. Having been for some time under serious impressions, he says:

As I was mowing alone in the field, Aug. 24, 1741, all my past life was opened plainly before me, and I saw clearly that it had been filled up with sin. I went and sat down in the shade of a tree, where my prayers and tears, my longing and striving for a better heart, with all my doings, were set before me in such a light that I perceived I could never make myself better, should I live ever so long. Divine justice appeared clear as condemnation, and I saw that God had a right to do with me as he would. My soul yielded all to his hands, fell at his feet, and was silent and calm before him. And while I sat there I was enabled by Divine light to see the perfect righteousness of Christ, and the freeness and richness of his grace, with such clearness that my soul was drawn forth to trust in him for salvation, and I wondered that others did not also come to Him who had enough for all. The Word of God and the promises of his grace appeared firmer than a rock, and I was astonished at my previous unbelief. My heavy burden was gone, tormenting fears were fled, and my joy was unspeakable.

Yet this change was so different from my former ideas of conversion, that for above two days I had no thought of having experienced it. Then I heard a sermon read which gave the characters of the children of God, and I had an inward witness that those characters were wrought in me; such as a spirit of prayer, a hatred of sin, an overcoming of the world, love to the brethren, and love to enemies; and I concluded that I then had the sealings of the Spirit of God, that I was a child of his. New ideas and dispositions were given me; the worship and service of God and obedience to his will were the delight of my soul. I found such happiness therein as I never had in all the vanities of the world.

Special Prayer.

The *Cumberland Presbyterian* remarks that some ministers fall into the singular error that prayer on special occasions should be long; longer than usual, at least, whilst in most instances the reverse is true, the circumstances calling for prayer for a specific object. The following illustration is from a well-known work on "Prayer," by Dr. Samuel Miller:

"I once knew a member of one of our Presbyteries who, when called upon to make the ordaining prayer at the solemnity of setting apart a min