

SUNDAY READING.

WAITING.

Deep clouds thy glorious throne enfold, Thou dost not yet make all things plain, Nor could we now, our God, behold The final issue of the right.

But on the front of time and space Thy burning prophecies appear Of vindicated truth and grace. And leave that casteth out all fear.

If now thy reasons are concealed And justice tarries on her way, All will at last be well revealed And recompense the long delay.

Abundantly, by word and oath, Our anchored hope is sure in thee, We trust, with fear and courage both, Thy full immutability.

Thou, Jesus Christ, hast entered there. Where cloudless light shines thro' and thro' And we to overcome must share Thy kingdom and thy patience, too.

—M. WOOLSEY STRYKER, in the Interior.

THE LAW OF GROWTH.

SERMON, PREACHED BY PASTOR C. H. SPURGEON.

"For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath."—Matthew 13:12.

Two great general principles are conspicuous in the gospel. The first is that God giveth of his grace to the empty—"He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away." The second principle is this, where God has given a measure of grace it is his wont to give more—"He give ye more grace." There is no stint with the Lord of love, and no limit to the abundance of the grace which those who come to him may receive. He giveth grace to those who have none, and more grace to those whom he has already favored. These two principles do not contradict each other, but help to make each other complete. In their order they exhibit

BOTH SIDES OF ONE TRUTH, giving instructions as to the Lord's dealings with two different stages of spiritual condition. Each principle has its own range. Are you as yet unsaved? Then the principle which you have to do with is this, that God will fill the empty and feed the hungry. When a man has received grace, or when he professes to have done so, he comes under the second principle. If I have received the light of heaven into my soul, however small its beginnings, the Lord will add a gracious increase, and as I follow on to know him I shall be as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. If I am a mere pretender I shall fade away, but if I am a sincere believer I shall become brighter and brighter. This last principle I shall endeavor to use at this time for our warning and instruction.

I. First, we shall study this principle as it is illustrated in parable of the sower.

You will not fail to observe that this saying of our Lord occurs in three evangelists in connection with the parable of the sower. Besides our text you will find it in Mark 4:24, and there it is at the close of the parable of the sower; you will meet with it again in Luke 8:18, still in connection with the same parable. Each evangelist has given a shade of difference to his record. In Matthew, whence we take our text, the words stand in connection with the hearing of the word,—not any mode of hearing, but hearing itself. Read the ninth verse: "Who hath ears to hear let him hear." There are some who hear not, for "their ears are dull of hearing"; and there are others of whom it is written, "Blessed are your ears, for they hear."

Our Saviour's first picture in the parable of the sower is that of the seed falling upon the wayside or the hard road. There was much traffic through the field, a footpath which was

TRODDEN HARD by many feet ran from one end to the other, and a handful of seed fell upon it. So the gospel falls upon men who are occupied with obstinacies, prejudices, pursuits, ambitions, cares, and these take so much traffic through their minds that they are hardened towards the gospel, and it never reaches the inner man, but lies upon the hard surface, a rejected thing. When they hear it they do hear it, and that is all: as the saying is, "it goes in at one ear and out at the other." The truth never enters the man. They would not like to absent themselves from religious services altogether, and yet they do much the same thing, for only their bodies are there, their hearts are far away, engaged with very different themes. What is

THE SURE RESULT of this hearing? The Saviour in the parable represents the birds of the air as taking away the seed which fell upon the roadside and devouring it, and he tells us by way of explanation that Satan comes and takes away the word, lest in any after time it should obtain an entrance into the heart.

In Mark 4:25 our text is used in reference to the doctrine which is to be heard. The Saviour in the twenty-fourth verse says, "Take heed what ye hear." I would press that important exhortation on you all as most needful at this time. Now days people do not care what they hear. If a man can speak fluently, if he can be rhetorical and sensational, if he can tell many pretty stories, if he can use clap-trap and bombast he will have many auditors. Time was with our fathers when if a man went half an inch astray as to orthodoxy they would have none of him; and though we would not have

you so censorious, for we are not to make a man an offender for a word, yet we would have you

JEALOUS FOR THE TRUTH. If an angel from heaven preach any other gospel than that which ye have received, I charge ye listen not to it. Be the good sheep of the good Shepherd, of whom it is written, "A stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers." You cannot expose the soil of your heart to a continual sowing of tares but what some tare or other will take root, and by-and-by, instead of having the good wheat growing in your soul there will spring up the tares whose end is to be burned, and you will have lost the harvest which should have been produced in your spirit. Therefore take heed what ye hear.

There are many who, when they hear the Gospel, are, according to our Lord's second picture, mere superficial hearers. They take some heed to their hearing, but not to what they have heard; for if they regarded the value and dignity of the word they would take it more thoroughly to heart, and it would permanently effect their lives. These are they who receive the word in stony places. When the Gospel comes to them they catch at it without much consideration; they are hot and eager for it, and rejoice because it has come in their way, "Anon with joy they receive it."

THEY SING AND SHOUT at once, "Happy day! Happy day! This is the Gospel for me. I have found peace and heaven, and will never be anxious again." These people have not counted the cost, or weighed the truth, or entered into its inner meaning and spiritual certainty. There has been no repentance of sin, no sense of guilt, no humbling before God, no brokenness of spirit, no inner conflict, and no work of the Holy Ghost in the soul. It has been a sort of happy-go-lucky business, in which they caught at what came in their way and promised them fair. They will soon fling away that which they have so inconsiderately embraced.

In Luke 3:18 this grand principle is used in reference to taking heed how we hear. Our Lord gives us this in the picture of the seed among thorns. The soil received the good seed after a fashion and then it received the nettles and the thorns; and these nettles and thorns and wheat all began to grow together—a happy family some would say, but a devil's garden is nearer the truth. In these days such a garden is projected on a large scale by some of our public writers and speakers. The Church and the world are to become one, and saints and sinners are to blend together in one universal round of play-going. We are actually urged by persons who suppose themselves to be Christians to renew the old league which was established in the days of Noah, and brought on the Flood, when the sons of God and the daughters of men joined in alliance, because the sons of God thought that they should greatly improve the world by uniting with it. At this time we are told that it is wrong on our part to forsake the debasing amusements of the ungodly, for if we would join in them we might improve their tone and quality. If heaven would go down to hell, hell would be greatly improved. See how benevolent Satan has turned, and how anxious to be reformed.

A CALL TO SEPARATION. Hear ye the voice of God which runs in another manner. "Come ye out from among them, be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing." If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Let thorns be thorns, and let not wheat attempt to grow among them. See you that plot of ground, how charming is its aspect, wheat springing up with its green blades among the thorns and thistles! Is it not a delightful compromise? What was the end of this conglomeration? Why, the wheat died; it was choked and could not grow in such uncongenial society. Take care, then, how ye hear the Gospel; hear it, knowing it to be the only word which can save your soul. Receive it into your being, to become everything to you; for if you do not there shall be taken away from you that Gospel which you think you have, since you have not afforded it the reception which it demands and deserves. If you say to sin, and self, and all else, "Begone! my heart is

FOR CHRIST ALONE, this good seed must not be cumbered with such weeds as you are," then the truth is in you, and shall be more fully apparent within you, bringing forth fruit abundantly after its kind.

In connection with this parable, then, the sum and substance of our text is this: the word must dwell in us truly, and then it will dwell in us richly; but if it enter not in very deed into the heart we shall lose it altogether before long. Men hear the Gospel, but they do not receive it into their hearts, and therefore after awhile they grow weary of it: they are tired of being perpetually reminded of a danger in which they do not believe, and of being invited to a feast which they despise, and therefore they turn upon their heel and go. If from force of habit they remain, the Gospel seems to have lost all power over them, and they have no appreciation of its ministry. Here stands the inevitable decree: he who has shall have; he who is a mere pretender, and has not shall lose even his power to seem to have.

II. Let this suffice; and now, dear friends, let us try and bring out the same principle in reference to the

EXPERIENCE of all gracious souls. Our experience verifies the truth of the text, "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance." In the world among men it is commonly observed that see a sheep there is generally a flock. Money makes money. Poverty remains poor. Want of capital brings bankruptcy. Ordinarily, prosperity is a hen which likes to lay where there is a nest egg, and when

one swallow of success comes others will follow it. Certainly we have found it so in the things of grace; where grace has been given more grace comes; spiritual capital well worked multiplies the stock, and spiritual wealth is realized where there is a solid basis to begin upon.

TRUTHS IN THEIR ORDER.

When a man believes the Gospel in its most elementary form that man will soon be taught the higher truths. When we begin with some people by telling them the plain way of salvation they raise doubts and squabbles. "But" is their favorite word. They cry, "I cannot see his and I cannot understand that." We never thought they would see it or understand it, for they generally want to understand the most difficult parts of the Gospel first. Half the difficulties of unbelievers are the result of unreadiness to be taught. When a man saith, "I understand very little, but I know that I am a sinner, and I perceive that Christ came into the world to save sinners, therefore I will trust him to save me," that man has something, and he shall have more. Dear friends, if you cannot yet follow the Lord into the depth, he will save you if you follow him in the shallows as far as you can. If you are staggered by anyone truth, do not therefore reject your Lord, but be willing to accept that which does not stagger you. Touch the hem of his garment if you cannot reach his divine person, and you shall soon find that your faith in the elementary truths of the Gospel will, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, lead you to an understanding of the deeper mysteries. Use your starlight and you shall have sunlight.

GROWING REPENTANCE.

As it is with faith so is it with the possession of any zeal, genuine grace. Take repentance, for instance; a man may say, "My heart is hard, and I can not repent as I would." No, my dear friend, but do you really hate evil, and do you labor to avoid the faults into which you formerly fell? Do you mourn and regret mistakes, and errors, and transgressions of which you are convicted? Well, then, this repentance of yours will deepen: you will come to be very sensitiveness which you long for, yet, if your repentance be real, though it be weak at first, to him that hath shall be given, and your repentance shall grow. If there be in your heart an evident love of sin it is idle for you to hope that your repentance will increase, for you have none. It is so with love to God, Who among us loves God as he would wish to love him? But the point you have to watch is not so much the possession of the flaming love of a Samuel Rutherford or a Madame Guyon, as the making sure of even the lowest degree of genuine love to Jesus. See that it be

TRUE EVEN IF IT BE FEEBLE.

A spark of fire is true fire, and is quite enough to begin with. It turns everything with which it comes in contact into its own nature, and it spreads by the force of its own intensity. The like is true of love. If you have real fire it will burn, but if you have only a painted fire, it will not increase. A painted love to Christ, by which I mean the mere imitation of love to him, will not increase, but will eventually disappear altogether.

You, then, who hope that you have a little genuine grace in your soul, may well take courage. Let the truth contained in the text cheer you—unto you shall more be given, and you shall have more abundance. Do you think because you have but little faith you are always to be doubting and trembling. You shall grow out of it, my brother, as your faith becomes established. A dead post which we saw in the ground twenty years ago, is the same post still, no bigger, no smaller, and only altered by becoming rotten underground; but the tree which you saw twenty years ago, what a difference there is in it. It was then a sapling which you could bend, but now it has become an iron pillar, and there is no moving it. So ought it to be with us, and we must aspire to have it so.

III. I must now conclude with the other side of the truth as exemplified in the experience

THE INSINCERE.

Insincere men and women find that what they had taken away from them. I will illustrate this point very rapidly. It is in this way. Many who hear the Gospel have been brought up to do so from their childhood; but if they do not heartily receive the Gospel they in many instances give up attendance upon the outward means of grace when they get away from the restraints of religious society. They find it dull work to sit so long and listen to drowsy prayers and dull preachings. They find it uncomfortable to get into crowded congregations, cold to be in small ones, and unhealthy to sit in the close atmosphere of a meeting-house. They see many faults in the service, and grumble quite cleverly. At first they stop away one part of the day. Once is quite enough for them, they say; they cannot stand twice. Then, by-and-by, every excuse is made for stopping at home. Sometimes it is wet, at another time they feel a little out of sorts; these things would not keep them from business, but a very little suffices to excuse a man's staying at home on Sunday. At length they do not go at all. Thus there is taken away from them what they really did not have: they did not really hear, and now they

DO NOT NOMINALLY HEAR.

Here is another form of the same thing. The man keeps on hearing, but not having received the Gospel he loses all power to appreciate it. "I do not know what has come over our minister," he says, "I used at one time to feel something when he was preaching, but it is not so now. He is getting old, and has about spun himself out." Other people do not think so, however, for they have been converted and blessed under his ministry. What has happened? Why, this man has lost what he seemed to have. Nothing affects him. Tremble, my hearers if that is your case, for you are going fast to perdition, with nothing to stop you.

You are dying at the root and will continue to lose all sensation until death ends in corruption.

One more version of this same truth and I have done. Some appear to receive the Word even further than those in whom it produces an

EXTERNAL REFORMATION,

for they make a public confession of faith in Christ: they pray, and perhaps they preach: their voices are heard in Christian assemblies, and they appear to live the lives of Christians. I have seen them even become eminent for supposed sanctity, but if they have not received the Word really and truly what a miserable life theirs must be? They do not get the secret comfort of true religion, and yet they have to keep up an appearance of it. Surely, the poorest people in the world are those who have to keep up appearances and have not the means to do it with: they are always getting in debt, and yet they have to look everybody in the face. Just as with a man who continues to live beyond his means, there comes a time when he must be bankrupt, so there comes a time with the spiritual deceiver when he cannot keep it up any longer. Others become grosser sceptics and vile haters of Christ than others,—their hypocrisy has curdled into blasphemy. Others have settled down in utter indifference, callousness, and carelessness. Where the cheat is kept up till the end, what a waking awaits the deceiver! God save us from such a doom, for his name's sake. Amen.

WIT AND WISDOM.

If thou art a master, be sometimes blind; if a servant, sometimes deaf.

Some people give much thought to the poor. That is as far as they get.

More people laugh at us than with us, however it may appear at the moment.

When a thief has no opportunity to steal he considers himself an honest man.

Why is a blacksmith a very wicked man? Because he is acquainted with all kinds of vices.

Why is the letter "O" the most charitable? Because it is found oftener than any other in "doing good."

If a man be very sound in theology, and only gives me nineteen shillings in exchange for a sovereign, I will not think much of his theology.

The most careful man in the world was about to be hanged recently—we forget for what crime. Before stepping on to the platform he enquired anxiously—"Is it safe?"

Chappie—"Do you think your fathaw will look with approval on my suit, Miss Grace?" Miss Grace—"Not the one you've on. It's too loud. I heard him laughing at it the other day."

Judge—"What have you brought that thick stick into court for?" Defendant—"Well, everybody told me that I must come provided with a means of defence, and I fancy I've brought it."

Evidence of Good Health—Female Caller—"And how is your father, Mrs. Birch?" Hostess—"Real well, thank you. I don't remember the time that father snored as healthy as he does now."

A Scotch judge once addressed a jury thus—"Gentlemen, having shown to you that the case made for the plaintiff is absolutely impossible, I shall now proceed to prove to you that it is in the highest degree improbable."

A parish clerk was taxed with having misappropriated some of the offertory money. "You know, John," said the parson, "that only you and I have access to it." "Then, sir," replied John, "you pay the one half and I'll pay the tither, and we'll say no more about it."

Content—Young Lady (to newly-engaged friend)—"I have come to congratulate you, dear. I have only just heard of your engagement. I hope you will be happy." Friend—"Oh, yes, I think I shall be. You see, George has got plenty of money, and—no mother! What more could I wish!"

The Churches.

METHODIST, Cambridge St.—Rev. T. M. Campbell, Pastor. Services at 11 A.M., and 7.00 P.M. Sabbath School and Bible Class at 2.30. Classes at 10 A.M. Prayer Meeting, Wednesday at 8 P.M. Young People's Christian Endeavor Society, every Friday evening at 7.30.

METHODIST, Queen Street.—Rev. Newton Hill, Pastor. Services at 11.00 A.M., and 7.00 P.M. Sabbath School at 2.30 P.M. Prayer Meeting Thursday at 7.30 P.M.

BAPTIST, Cambridge Street.—Rev. W. K. Anderson, Pastor. Services at 11.00 A.M., and 7.00 P.M. Prayer Meeting Sabbath morning at 10.30 A.M. Sabbath School at 2.30 P.M. Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor Monday at 7.30 P.M. Prayer Meeting Wednesday at 7.30 P.M.—All seats free.

St. ANDREW'S (Presbyterian), William Street.—Rev. Robert Johnston, B.A., Pastor. Services at 11.00 A.M., and 7.00 P.M. Sabbath School at 2.30 P.M. Prayer Meeting Wednesday at 8.00 P.M. Young People's Christian Circle Sabbath Morning at 10.15.

St. PAUL'S (Church of England) Russell Street.—Rev. C. H. Marsh, Rector. Services at 11.00 A.M., and 7.00 P.M. Sabbath School at 2.30 P.M. Prayer Meeting Wednesday at 7.30 P.M.

St. MARY'S (Roman Catholic) Russell Street.—Rev. Vicar-General Laurent, Pastor.—Rev. Vicar-General, Curate. Services at 11.00 A.M., and 7.00 P.M. Sabbath School at 3.30 P.M.

Y. M. C. A., Rooms Cor. Kent and Cambridge Sts. Open daily from 9.00 A.M. to 10.00 P.M. Prayer Praise meeting Saturday at 8 P.M. Young men's meeting Sunday at 4.15 P.M. Short addresses. Good singing. Young men always welcome. Dr. W. H. Clarke, President; C. K. Calhoun, Gen. Secretary.

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THE MARCH OF IMPROVEMENT.

Art in the household and beauty in the ordinary surroundings in life was the gospel propounded by the late Professor Ruskin and other elevators of the human mind, and to realize what progress has been made in this direction it is well worth while paying a visit to the magnificent show rooms of the old established furniture house of Messrs.

OWEN MCGARVEY & Son. 1849-1853 Notre Dame Street.

MONTREAL.

A walk through those spacious show rooms is a revelation; in fact they really amount in themselves to a Montreal Industrial exhibition in their line. Such must necessarily be the reflections of anyone who pays a visit to this firm's prominent establishment and makes a tour of inspection through their attractive warerooms.

Everything in the furniture line is to be found there, from a twenty-five cent chair to a fifteen hundred dollar bedroom set, and prices to suit everyone.

No one need despair; the millionaire can furnish his house from top to bottom with the finest and most costly, and his junior clerk can fill his little tenement with useful and pretty articles at prices to suit his more limited means.

On entering the well-known and extensive warerooms on Notre Dame street, the visitor is struck by the excellent display of

Sideboards, Dining Tables, Hall Stands, Bookcases, Wardrobes,

Library Tables, Writing Desks, and Easy and Combination Chairs of all descriptions.

On reaching the second floor a beautiful assortment of

PARLOR FURNITURE

meets the eye, such as 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 piece parlor suites. Odd piece suites, gilt chairs, corner chairs, ottomans, divans, tete-a-tetes, piano and foot-stools in plushes, brocattelles and silk damasks of all the newest and latest shades; also a full line of fancy centre, card and work-tables, statuette-stands, ladies writing desks, music stands and easels.

On the third floor a fine selection of Rocking, Easy and Reclining Chairs claims particular attention. The celebrated bent wood furniture imported from Vienna, Austria, and of which the Messrs. McGarvey make a specialty, also occupies a prominent position on this floor.

On the fourth floor bedroom sets in profusion are to be found from the cheap ash wood to the elegantly carved set valued at fifteen hundred dollars. Brass and iron furniture, of which they have just received a very large consignment from Birmingham, England, is an especially noticeable feature; handsome solid brass bedsteads and pretty cots for children from \$30 up to \$125—these they are of the newest designs; neat iron bedsteads as low as \$5, and rising to much higher figures, can also be found here. A great advantage in this house is that the price of every piece of furniture and article is marked in plain figures, but owing to the widening of Notre Dame street west, which will necessitate their removal next spring, they are now offering special inducements in the way of Discounts off the marked prices. The entire establishment is a model one, neatness and order prevailing everywhere; all available space is taken up to accommodate the enormous stock which they carry, and from which purchasers can select at their liberty. Their new passenger elevator will be found not only a great convenience, but also a luxury in its way to carry their customers to any of their six flats of show rooms.

The firmly established reputation of this well-known house is a sufficient guarantee that outside show is only the last thing aimed at and that stability and good value for money are to be found in the old established firm of Messrs.

Owen McGarvey & Son. 1841 and 1857 Notre Dame Street, corner of McGill street.