

# THE BIBLICAL RECORDER.

DEVOTED TO RELIGION, MORALITY, LITERATURE, AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.—T. MEREDITH, EDITOR.

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From the *American Presbyterian*.

## "BE UP AND DOING."

The times and the seasons admonish us all to "be up and doing." The times are truly eventful, and the seasons are rapidly passing away.—What our hands find to do, should be done with our might, whether it be for the good of man, or for the extension of the empire of grace throughout the world. At no period, at least in our own land of liberty, have so many conflicting agencies and interests seemed to agitate our whole body politic. The love of office simply for the sake of its emoluments, or the road which it opens for the rivalry of ambition or the exercise of power, never, perhaps, was more strong at any period, or in any country, than at present in our own mighty republic.

To the aspirants for popular favour, and for offices of profit and distinction, there is no need to urge the precept, "be up and doing." In their zeal for the attainment of what merely pertains to the pleasures, honors, or wealth of this world, no want of diligence or perseverance is ever manifested.—They are emphatically "up and doing." No obstacles seem to daunt their courage, or to paralyze their springs of action. All is life and energy in their onward march to wealth, and honor, and transitory power. How impressive the lesson which is thus taught "the children of light" by the children of this world! How strange is the fact, that those who contend for more earthly honors or rewards, should exhibit generally more zeal, and manifest more determination in their pursuit of things suited to their views of greatness and happiness, than multitudes of others do, who profess to be seeking "the honor that cometh from God," and the treasures of glory which he has bestowed! Why is it so? It cannot be from any want of value in the blessings and rewards which are the portion of those who are so running as to obtain the prize in due season. All must admit that this prize is far above all earthly compensation, both in its intrinsic excellence, and in the "exceeding and eternal weight of glory, which it secures to its possessors."

It is true, that a mighty contest is going forward in the achievement of many moral victories. The church, in her various branches, is exerting many powerful instrumentalities to hasten the time when "the kingdoms of this world shall be the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ." These we might specify all the grand moral enterprises, which she is now warring for the accomplishment of a time so certain and so glorious. They might each be described and the comparative value of them severally be unfolded, as to their intrinsic merits and preferable modes of action, in carrying out their different plans to successful issues, but this would not be in accordance with the object of this hasty article, which is only intended to hold up for a moment the precept "be up and doing." No one need be idle an instant, for want of room to work in some one or more of these departments of heavenly benevolence. Each division, in the great army of Zion's sacramental host, may be enlisted under a different name, and have its own distinctive modes of "being up and doing," yet all who have any claim of belonging to her banners must in some way and place be engaged to fight her battles and to win her victories.

Again: We would repeat the idea that the times and seasons admonish us all to *be up and doing*. No time should be lost in vain speculations or in unprofitable disputations. While such things may merely tend to engender strife or to cramp the energies of many in the great moral field of action, Zion may be left to mourn over her many wide spread desolations, and to weep that her forces are scattered in a cloudy and dark day.

To our Christian readers we would then say, be up and doing—work while the day lasts. If you who profess to belong to your great Captain's hosts will spend their time and energies in speculating, and in making experiments, as to modes of their own devising, for the cause they espouse, be it your care and determination to persevere in a straight forward course of Christian zeal and fidelity. Be fixed—be firm and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. You shall reap in due season, if you faint not!

From the *Journal and Luminary*.

## "I WILL THINK ABOUT IT."

Well, that is better than nothing, for thought often begets feeling, feeling conviction, conviction conversion, and conversion leads to God. You will think about it! And is that all you will do? Had you mountains of gold or hills of silver, they would be lighter than vanity, when balanced against the value of the soul. Its price is above rubies, whether it is measured by the cost of its redemption, the eternity of its duration, or its boundless capacities of pleasure or pain.

Had you half a million at stake, and it were doubtful whether you would gain or lose it, would you do nothing but think about it! Or

were you invited by an Angel to spend next week in heaven, there to eat of the tree, and drink of the water of life, there to behold uncreated glory, and sing the "new song," would you do nothing more? You have more than half of a whole million at stake, and the probability is that you will lose all. Next week you may be a glorified spirit or a spirit lost; and all you will do is to think about it!

Felix did just so. He thought while Paul preached,—he thought after he sent him away, and he thinks still. O, could you hear him think!—"How have I hated instruction and despised reproach!"

And so did the rich young man. Christ told him to sell what he had—to give to the poor, and follow him. But he thought of his morality,—of his money, and went away sorrowful.—He went away to think, and he is thinking yet.

And there was another rich man who thought. He thought about his farms, and his fruits,—of pulling down his small barns and building greater. He thought of much goods, and of many years,—of ease, of eating, and drinking, and being merry. And he thought of his soul just enough to promise it what was not his own—just as Satan promised Jesus. And God thought too. He thought to call him a fool, and to demand his soul that very night.

And you will think about it! I know you will. But when? While it is an accepted time, and a day of salvation? While God calls, Christ invites, the Spirit strives, and conscience warns—while

"Mercy is found and peace is given?" When? When disease has turned your cheek pale; dimmed the lustre of your eye, weakened if not destroyed your mind, and is fast cutting the cords of life?

You will think about it! I know it. And I wish you to do it while thought may be of some avail. A convict on being removed from one prison to another, was asked, how he liked his new home. Not at all, was the reply. Are you not clothed and fed as well here? Yes, better. Is your labor harder? No, not so hard. Are you not treated with kindness? Yes. Then why not like it? Because I am allowed to speak to no one. I go to the table and sit and think. I go about my work all day to think. And at night the iron door shuts me in my solitary cell to think! think! think!!! and I cannot endure it!

Ah! he should have thought before an iron necessity compelled him so to do. And so should you think seasonably, and act too. It will be sad thinking in the prison of despair.

"Death at the farthest can't be far." Ah! think before thou die!

From the *British Magazine*.

## A CHRISTIAN FAMILY.

"Still to the lowly soul,  
He doth himself impart,  
And for his cradle and his throne,  
Chooseth the place in heart."  
KEBLE.

It was a gloomy afternoon in February that we went together to visit old Isaac's dying wife. It was the first walk we had taken together for many months. The breath of the fresh air, and the feeling of retaining strength to enjoy it, will give pleasure at all times, and we enjoyed the walk, though yet there was scarcely a half opened daisy along the bank, or a bird in the hedge. The thrush (*starus-cobek*, as the people call him, because he sings in such boisterous weather) shunned this chill and cloudy afternoon not one robin greeted us, winter's bird though he be; nor could we discover that blush of red along the hedge, which, in a week or two more, will tell that spring, and her buds and blossoms are coming. But do you remember, on our way home, the glorious evening star, that shone out in the west before us, just where the sun had set?—What matter, if there should be but little of brightness along our path here, if we can but keep our eyes on the star that shall guide us safe home at last?

In the row of very poor houses to which we went, one was pointed out to us by its very neat garden, and its cut hedges of evergreen box.—Here will be daisies and polyanthus in abundance in a few weeks, and lavender and carnations for those who live till midsummer to gather them. Ah, frail flowers! Yet there are trailer flowers that you outlive. It is not only the yew of a thousand years, and the venerable oak, that laughs to scorn the mightiness of man; but the lowly spurns will spring up for fifty years together in the same spot, when he that first set it, and his children, are gone, and their place knows them no more.

But why repeat the same tale so often? Because I was thinking how short a time old Hannah has to live. We shall not see her any more stooping amongst the narrow borders of her little garden. But come up the few steps of the steep and winding staircase, here she lies in her clean white washed room, and from hence she will never remove till carried out for the last time. Her illness has been a very trying one; she was seized with paralysis seventeen weeks since, and her senses have been much affected. One side is rendered quite useless; her voice is altered, and her sight is gone. She is unable to feed herself, or to lift herself in the bed; and to the questions of her affectionate children, she can scarcely make a reasonable reply. The world and all its concerns are passing from her as if they had never been; but on one subject—the mercy of her Redeemer—her mind is clear and strong.—"That," says she, as if she felt the weakness of her memory on other matters—"That I shall never, never, never forget." At times, (but they are now more and more rare) a spark of intelligence seems to blaze up amongst the dying embers. As, an evening or two since, her husband, on his return home from work, asked his daughters if her mind had been more comfortable that day, she caught his meaning, and exerting herself to speak loud enough for those down stairs to hear her, said, that in that matter all was well—that she had a humble trust in him who will

never forsake them that trust in him. On subjects of temporal concern, however, she is completely lost. Her poor, heavy, useless arm, woman like, she thinks is a sleeping infant; and sometimes she says she is quite weary, and begs her daughters to take the dear child for a little.—Overhearing one of them giving her kind visitor this proof that her mental faculties were nearly gone, "Ah!" interrupted she, "I am going to Heaven!—I shall have right knowledge there!" She never complains of pain or poverty; all seems right to her. Though the small quantity of food, except what charity supplies, is coarse, and little fitting for an invalid, she always acknowledges it as her father's gift, and enjoys it as such.—Want and cold, and illness; seem matters of no importance to her; the hope of glory to be revealed seems to swallow up all concern for this life. "It is not a crown of gold," I heard her say, "nor one of silver; it is a crown of glory that is laid up for me." One expression of natural feeling I witnessed. As one of her daughters was mentioning the death of a sister, whom they lost about ten months ago, the aged mother burst into tears exclaiming, "She was a dear blessed creature," but she presently dried her eyes. "I am going fast, fast to her," she said; "I shall soon see her." It is, indeed, cause for great thanksgiving, when parents are permitted to see a whole family of sons and daughters treading that path which they themselves have found to be pleasantness and peace; and such I believe, is now granted to these old people. Their remembrance of this last daughter, in particular, are very delightful. She was nearly blind, very slow of speech, and exceedingly infirm, to outward appearance, yet, as Fox beautifully says, "Quick of understanding in the Lord's matters." O the wisdom that is from above; how independent, how superior it is to all outward aids! Quiet patient, humble and industrious, there she sat at her spinning wheel, day after day, and year after year—expecting nothing on earth, but with a heart set upon the things above, the poorest of that poor family; yet the first to be called to her inheritance; the lowest in her father's house, the foremost to take her place in those mansions, of which eye has not seen, nor ear heard the glory. She was suddenly attacked by some complaint in her head, so violent, that she feared she should lose her senses. "I pray," said she—and it was one of her last reasonable sentences—"I pray that if the Lord sees fit to take my senses, he will take my speech too; that I may not say words to grieve his Holy Spirit." Her prayer was heard. On Thursday her senses forsook her, and about the same time, she ceased to speak. On Sunday, her sister, standing by, thought she heard her articulate the words—"Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace," and so she reached her home.

But I must not forget the old man—the very picture of an English cottager—a little bent and toil-worn, but still retaining proof in his hale figure, clear eyes, and healthy complexion, that it labor is "the primal curse," it is yet "softened into mercy." He has learned God from his youth up; and his happy countenance assures you, at the first glance, that his heart realizes the promise, "Even to old age I am He; even to hoary hairs I will carry you." I was some time ago much struck by the remark of a clergyman, made in familiar conversation: "If a Christian is but a shoe-black, he ought to be the best in the parish;" and as far as my observation goes, it will certainly be the case. It was our old Isaac's difference, as he broke stones on the road, that first attracted a friend's attention to him. When the circumstance was mentioned to him—"I should be very sorry to need any human eye to watch me," said he; "if I rest five minutes, I know I am bound to make it up again." His language is frequently figurative and poetical; naturally so, because he draws from the two sources of perfect poetry—the book of God and the book of nature. From every surrounding circumstance his hungering and thirsting mind draws food. I remember his spiritualizing his employment the other day, when he was found scraping a very dirty lane. "This reminds me," said he, "of the ministers of the heavenly gospel; they are sent, as we are, to prepare the way, to make straight the path; and they toil and labor as we do. Now, a bit seems clean, and there 'tis a little smoother; but very soon 'tis all disheartening—all as bad again as ever." Well, we begin again— toil over it again; our work will be done at last; and they must wait in patience till the great Master comes to finish his own." His affection for his aged wife has always been extremely strong; and it is delightful to observe how the love of a Christian connexion can survive all the extraneous aids of youth, interest, or personal attraction. "She asks many times in the day, if he has not come home yet," said the daughter; "and, tired down as he is, he won't stop even to warm his hands till he goes up stairs to see her, and if she likes, to read or pray with her." The last time she was sufficiently in possession of her senses to enjoy the word of God, as he read it to her, she expressed herself with remarkable delight and energy, as to the pleasure it had afforded her. "It seems as if I was in Heaven," said she; "the room seems full of Heaven."—"What," said her daughter, "do you see any thing?" "No," she replied, "it is not to be seen or heard—it is to be felt." "O glorious Gospel, that shines thus in the dark valley and shadow of death!"

The old man's strength is labor and sorrow; and I think his toil is almost done. His spirits seem to excite him to exertions too great for his strength; and when he shall cease to earn his five shillings a week (for his wages are now no more), I wonder how he will be provided for? They have all lived very hardily this winter, for the young women (both sickly, and one nearly blind,) have almost laid aside their work to attend to their completely helpless mother. It would be a grievous thing to be sent to the poor house—that abode of misery and degradation—one, whose orderly and decent habits, and whose industry from his youth up, have surrounded his own little home with so many comforts. True, the rapid increase of his family, and the lowliness of his wages, never could allow for his making provision for these years of weakness; and even

in the best of times he often fared hardily. But there, ornamenting the white washed wall of the house in which he has lived so long, are still the colored prints from scripture history, in which he used, now and then, to indulge himself; and there is his poor wife's assortment of various glass and crockery ware, making the blue corner cupboard look so gay; and the jug of early primroses on the dresser; and this kind daughter sees that the hearth is swept, and the fire irons bright, because he likes to see it so; and they put his own arm chair in the chimney corner; and if the meal is scanty affectionate care prepares it for him, and sets it before him. How different would it be at the poor house! But "I will never leave thee; I will never forsake thee," says the word of promise. What shall we ask more? Will the God of Heaven and Earth compass about his servant with his mercy, and draw near to him in loving kindness? and does it much matter where? Not all must be well with you, poor old Isaac! A little longer to toil; once more to weep at the grave of a friend; a few more difficult and dark steps to make; and then—as you said this evening when we wished you good night—to be in that land where we shall never say "Good night" again.

E. H.

From the *Christian Watchman*.

## "THE FASHION OF THIS WORLD PASSETH AWAY."

Yes! it is passing, and full soon will pass entirely away. A little while, and then, perchance, no trace be found and space be clear, where this vast globe now stands, peopled with rebellions. No monument of brass or marble shall then endure, to tell of mortal greatness. The chronicle stone shall live in Heaven's past chronicles. Yes, all must perish, but the "Book of Life" to tell of deeds done here; and name, will yet be found, (unlike the tablets here) in tracings deep. The stones, too; and then how poor will be, The high reward, or awful penalty Attached to earth.

Our Father, is it so!

The infant in the bed, manhood and age,  
Ambition, power, all, all, but thy pure  
Truth perish and pass away! Thy blessed  
Revelation answers—all!

Yes, it is so,

And, yet we live, as though we deemed time  
The eternity to come. The feeling,  
Passion, paramount to all below, seems  
Self and its earthly weal, and, thus, it is,  
Man seemingly forgets his lofty  
Destiny, and strives, and pants for nozzel but  
Earthly good; though it corrupts, destroys for  
Long, long, endless years (which no soul can  
Compute) the bitter part.

M. S. L.

From Hall's *Treatise on Education*.

## TO PARENTS.

Some pious parents seem to entertain the idea that inasmuch as peculiar promises are made to them, as Christians, in behalf of their children, they have little else to do than trust to promises, without any special effort on their part to learn, or to fulfill the condition on which they are made. They commend, as they ought, their children in prayer to God, and appear to overlook the duties which he has devolved upon themselves, as growing out of parental relation, and without the performance of which his aid would be little less than miraculous. They may teach them many important religious truths; inculcate on their minds the necessity of virtue and piety; exhort them to the practice of all that is lovely, and of good report, and set before them, in our own persons, an example of holy living, and yet fall short of the demands of duty and the reception of the promises. All these things may have been done without any authoritative efficiency, by way of counsel, advice, and recommendation, but without insisting on the performance of a single item, with none of that urgency of manner which characterizes a demand which cannot, must not be denied.

We have, in well-authenticated history, the example of a pious man, whose counsels and advice to his children were in all probability as salutary and as urgent as those to which I have just alluded. Yet his sons were impiously abandoned characters, and drew upon themselves the signal displeasure of heaven. For aught that appears, the pious Eli prayed as fervently for his sons, and as much desired their best welfare, as any other parent. We have the highest evidence of his devotion to the honor of God and the cause of religion. After all, he had one grand defect; and that defect brought ruin to his family, and hastened his own departure from the world. It is said of him, "that his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." It was an aggravation of his fault, as it further appears that he knew their "iniquity," while he failed to correct it. The difficulty with this good man was, he did not exercise such a control over his sons as was sufficient to keep their evil propensities in check. They had their own way, and maintained it in spite of the knowledge and authority of their father. Now, had it not been possible for him to control his sons, he would not have received so severe a rebuke from Him who exacts nothing from men which they cannot perform, nor punishes them for an omission of duties which they cannot fulfill. Yet we have reason to believe, that, at this period of their lives spoken of in their history, this parent, had, indeed, no power to control his sons; for what authority, at their age, was any father ever able to exert over sons who had successfully set it at naught through the season of childhood and youth? His error, then, commenced further back; it must be dated from the first opportunity which he carelessly lost of controlling their base propensities, and was continued and aggravated so long as such opportunities were offered and neglected. On the admonitory character of such an example I forbear to comment. It speaks a plainer and more powerful language than any at my command, and most forcibly illustrates the importance of an early correction of children to obedience and duty.

## THE HEART—THE HEART.

The heart of man is his worst part before it is regenerated, and the best afterwards; it is the seat of principles, and the fountain of actions.

The greatest difficulty in conversion, is, to win the heart to God; and the greatest difficulty after conversion, is, to keep the heart with God.

It is not the cleansing of the hand that makes the Christian; for many a hypocrite can show as fair a hand as he; but it is the purifying, watching and right ordering of the heart.

A Christian's heart, though measurably rectified by divine grace, is so often discomposed by sin, that it is like a musical instrument, which, though it be exactly tuned, a small matter brings it out of tune again; yea, though it abide but a little, and it will need setting again before another lesson can be played on it.

There are some people who have lived forty or fifty years in the world, and have had scarcely one hour's discourse with their own hearts; it is a hard thing to bring a man and himself to geth'er on such business.

It is with the heart well kept as it is with the eye; if a small dust get into the eye, it will never cease twinkling and watering till it has wept it out; so the upright heart can not be at rest till it has wept out its troubles, and poured out its complaints before the Lord.

He that will keep his heart, must eat & drink with fear, rejoice with fear, and pass the whole time of his sojourning here in fear. All this is little enough to keep the heart from sin.

To shuffle over religious duties with a loose and heedless spirit will cost no great pains; but to set thyself before the Lord, and tie up thy loose and vain thoughts to a constant and serious attendance upon him, this will cost thee something.

## THE LITTLE GIRL AND THE DARK GRAVE.

There were, in the southern country, a father and mother who had a lovely little daughter of three or four years of age, their only child. After some time her health declined. She began incessantly to pine away, and all efforts employed by her physician seemed to be unavailing, until at length he was constrained to communicate to her distressed parents his conviction that the child could not long survive. The little one herself began to suspect the same thing, and one day, as her father sat by her bedside, she fixed her eyes on his face, and said, "Papa, does not the doctor think I shall die?" The father did not conceal from her the truth; and on learning it, her little countenance immediately fell. After an interval of silence she said, "Papa, the grave looks very dark. Oh, it is very dark indeed! Papa, won't you go down with me into it?"

The father was much moved, but endeavored, as well as he could, to make her comprehend the impossibility. She then said,— "Papa, won't you let mamma go with me?" To this question he had to give a similar reply, on which the little sufferer turned her face to the wall and wept. But while she wept like Hezekiah, she had also learned to pray like him; and after having in her own simple way, poured out her heart to God, she turned to her father with a cheerful countenance and said, "Papa, the grave is not dark now, I know that you and mamma can't go with me, but Jesus will go with me into the grave."—N. Y. Ols.

## STORY FROM THE MISHNA OF THE RABBI.

During the absence of the Rabbi Meir from his house, his two sons died—both of them of uncommon beauty, and enlightened by the law.—His wife bore them to her chamber, and laid them upon her bed and spread a white covering over their bodies.

When Rabbi Meir returned, his first inquiry was for his sons. His wife reached to him a goblet; he praised the Lord at the going out of the Sabbath, drank, and again asked, "Where are my sons, that they too may drink of the cup of blessing?"

"They will not be far off," she said, placing food before him that he might eat. He was in a gladsome and genial mood, and when he had said grace after the meal, she thus addressed him:—

"Rabbi, with thy permission, I would fain propose to thee one question."  
"Ask it, then, my love," replied he.  
"A few days ago, a person entrusted some jewels in my custody, and now he demands them, should I give them back to him?"

"This is a question," said Rabbi Meir, "which my wife should not have thought it necessary to ask. What, wouldst thou hesitate or be reluctant to restore to every one his own?"

"No," she replied, "but yet I thought it best not to restore them, without acquainting thee herewith."  
She then led him to the chamber, and stepping to the bed, took the white covering from the dead bodies.

"Ah! my sons, my sons!" loudly lamented their father, "my sons! the light of my eyes and the light of my understanding, I was your father—but ye were my teachers in the law!"

The mother turned away and wept bitterly.—At length she took her husband by the hand and said, "Rabbi, didst thou not teach me that we must not be reluctant to restore that which was entrusted to our keeping? See, the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord!"

"Blessed be the name of the Lord!" echoed the holy man; "and blessed be his holy name forever."

A *Decent Spirit*.—Without this, your imagination may be charmed, your sensibility excited, and your mind enriched; but your heart will continue at "enmity with God," and your life uninfluenced by his precepts. The waters of the sanctuary may flow over your soul, yet fail to fertilize and refresh; the manna which would serve for food will give no nourishment; your spiritual knowledge, like the carved cherubim and palm trees of the temple, will breathe no life and yield no fruit.