

CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

PUBLISHED BY A JOINT STOCK COMPANY UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE.

VOL. VI.—NO. 41.

RALEIGH, N. C., WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19, 1863.

TERMS:
THREE DOLLARS A YEAR, IN ADVANCE.

Christian Advocate Publishing Company.

Dr. J. N. BOARD, President.
Editors—Rev. W. H. CUNNINGHAM, O. G. FOSTER, Rev. M. J. HUNT, and Z. S. H. GARDNER.
Secretary and Treasurer—A. M. GORMAN, Esq.

TERMS.

The Advocate is published every Wednesday morning, at \$3 per annum, in advance. Our business is conducted strictly on the cash principle. All advertisements will be charged \$1 per square of 12 lines or less, for first insertion, and 50 cents for each subsequent insertion. All letters on editorial or business matters should be addressed to the Editor, and crossed thus: "Rev. W. H. Cunningham, N. C."

Communications.

For the Advocate.

Religious Principle and Religious Feeling.

Experimental religion is both theoretical and practical. It is a subject for the exercise of man's mental powers as well as for his emotional nature. It is applicable both to his intellect and his heart, and can therefore be understood as well as felt. Now, the effect of religion in the soul is first, religious principle, and secondly, religious feeling. The former is the product of an intellectual embrace of truths affecting the heart; the latter is simply an ecstatic joy, arising from an apprehension of the benefits resulting from an embrace of those truths, and may be counterfeited. The one is the "joys of salvation" which the Psalmist prayed for; the other is the spirit of Job's expression, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

If then this division of the effects of true religion in the soul be correct, it will at once be perceived that Principle is much preferable to Feeling, since it becomes a fixed energy of the soul, producing peace and charity; while feeling is only an effervescing and transient joy; but if possible, they should be united. Feeling belongs, if we may use the term, to the esthetics of religion, while Principle is the foundation of the practical and the useful. Feeling is the ornament and gilding of the splendid steamer, while Principle is the motive-power, the ballast and the rudder that propels, holds steady and guides her amid the angry waves. Feeling is the white canvass and gay streamers of the ship, when the "seas are smooth and the skies are clear;" Principle is the sheet anchor that holds her steady amid the waves when the storm-cloud rises with terror written in lightning upon its murky bosom—when the unchained winds break loose and come down upon the great deep for terrible deeds; and the sun and stars are hid for many days.

Religious Principle is a fixed purpose—some what will, happen what may—to serve God and get to heaven; its motto is, "Let others do as they may as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." This principle is always in the soul, and can therefore be relied upon, while Feeling is transient, and by consequence unreliable. Religion may exist in the soul without much feeling, but it cannot exist—or at least its existence will be very fitful and unsatisfying—without fixed religious principle.

Now, to these two divisions of religious effects, there are corresponding classes of Christians. The one, of principle, like the Great Eastern, ploughs the ocean of life heedless of the winds and waves and storms. The other, of feeling, like the *Ball Ball*, is tossed hither and thither by winds and waves—now mounting high upon some foam-crested wave of life's great ocean, with banners set, and sails spread, and prow pointing to Heaven—and now with torn sails, and broken masts sinking into the troughs of the sea, and floating far to the leeward a dismantled hulk. And this latter class, we think, constitutes by far the larger number of Christians. Hence it is that we see so much coldness and "falling away" in times of distress and trouble. Such persons only possess fair weather religion. They lack firm, determined principle. If everything goes well and they can spout, they express it by saying that they "enjoy religion." But "when persecution ariseth because of the word," or when distress and trouble, both private and public come, they see nothing to shout over, do not enjoy religion, and of course are fit subjects for the devil to strike a trade with. Now, we must not be understood as being opposed to shouting, when it results from principle, and properly accords with the three unities, "time, place and action." But what we mean to say is, that religious principle is much better than mere feeling, which produces shouting, and often nothing else.

There are times that try men's souls; and in trying their souls, they try their

religion; for religion is the great principle of the soul of the Christian. As gold is tried by fire, so war, public and private calamity, tries the principles of religion in the soul. The present war is trying the religion of the church. What is the result? Why, that many, like "Balaam the son of Bazar," are running greedily after the "wages of unrighteousness," and meeting with sinners in the ways of death. Their religion being transient, and consisting of mere feeling, they have laid it aside until the war is over, and have entered the lists with wicked men to get gain, and enjoy the pleasures of sin! And all this results from the want of a deep-seated religious principle. Members of the church who are becoming extortioners, who encourage balls and dances, and frequent bar-rooms, and who have forgotten the Church of Christ, and left it to take care of itself, were once Christians of feeling; and some were even known as "shouting Methodists." While those who cling to the ship and are weathering the storm, were always, and ever will be, Christians of Principle, building the great Temple of Christ with but little rattling of hammers and trowels.

E. A. Y.

Profitable Reflections.

The following excellent extract from a private letter to the Editor, from a valued female friend, gave us so much pleasure, we give it to our readers, hoping that the writer will excuse us. We never forget a friend, but the writer supposing that we did not recognize her as a subscriber, wrote to remind us. She says:

"In these times of peril and excitement, when we cannot begin to take in, in all their force the stupendous events, being so rapidly enacted around us, it seems presumptuous to seek to direct thought for a moment, toward so small a subject as a single individual. Still you will excuse me for simply declaring my identity, and expressing my thorough appreciation of the efforts you are still making for our precious Saviour and his cause. If we are true Christians, how much more firmly should we cling to the cross now than ever before—how deeply realize what we have always admitted, the instability of life, friends, wealth, fame, or pleasures, when each has had the truth brought to them so forcibly, that they can no longer apply it merely to others. Has our Christian character as a nation been deepened, and energized by these trials? Have we gone back with a quickened desire, after the simple truth, to the elementary, but still fundamental principles of faith and love? Above all, has denominational bitterness, and rancour been swept away by these waves of fierce trial, until apart and aside from all church preferences, we are willing to be spent in the salvation of souls? Oh, for the time when the inexpressible sweetness of a soul converted from the error of his ways, shall swallow up the desire to have him embrace certain creeds; or conform to rites, which seemeth good to each distinct sect. One brother, a strange Presbyterian brother you call him, has set us a good example. How I felt the beauty, and force of his letter, and the spirit pervading it, which bore a relationship close and intimate to that of the Holy Nazarene, who went about doing good.

For myself, dear brother, how I long to be doing something for God—for the spread of that Christian love which will constrain us to step over church creeds, and recognize a co-worker in the Lord's vineyard, wherever His image may be stamped upon the life. Even, ere we quit these mortal shores, when time is receding from us, and we trembling stand at the threshold of eternity, how these barriers will be broken down, and so gratefully will fall upon the dying ear the earnest prayers of a true Christian, whatever may be his belief upon controversial points, which will find no entrance into Heaven. In this great Catholic spirit our church has professed to lead. Oh! that she might receive a fresh baptism of grace from above, quickening all her energies to every good word and work; that now while our country mourneth, she would put on the sackcloth of genuine repentance, and learn us her first lesson, that "God is a spirit and must be worshiped in spirit and in truth."

Christianity is not standing forth in these perilous times clothed in her robes of power. What can you or I, or each and every earnest Christian do toward establishing her glorious principles? Surely by a careful examination of our own hearts, and at the foot of our blessed Redeemer's cross, having them filled with peace and joy which no words can express, and which will flow out in active

efforts, to save the precious immortal souls around us. The day will soon be past, and the night cometh in which our work will be done. Oh, that we could be stirred up to renewed diligence, and zeal in that great work of living for Heaven. In the fulness of my heart have I continued to write, and to a Christian minister, and friend there is no need of apology. May the Lord prosper, and abundantly bless your labors for Him, is my earnest prayer.

Yours in the love of Christ,
S. E. G.

A Dialogue.

MR. EDITOR:—A minister was on his way to a certain school house, to preach the gospel to dying men and women. As he passed a little house near the road, he saw a young lady walking up before him in great haste. When he overtook her, the following dialogue took place, which I ask you to publish for the benefit of your readers.

Minister:—Good evening Miss, you seem to be in a hurry. Who is sick?

Lady:—Nobody aint sick. (Very emphatically.)

M.—You seemed to be in such a hurry. I feared some one of your family was sick. But as "nobody aint sick," why are you in such haste?

L.—I'm going to — School house, to hear them noisy Methodists holler, and to laugh at cousin Sue S—, and cousin Sal T—.

M.—Ah! is there meeting there to-night?

L.—Yes.

M.—Who preaches?

L.—W— W—.

M.—Take care you are not down there "a hollerin'" with cousin Sue S— and cousin Sal T—.

L.—It'll take more'n W— W—, to make me holler. (Very emphatically.)

M.—Do they expect any other preacher there besides W— W—?

L.—Yes, they said if they got up a "vival Mr. D—", would come.

M.—I dun no nothin' 'bout him.

L.—Are there many Methodists about here?

M.—Yes, right smart—and they are the meanest folks in the world too.

L.—They are? What do they do that you think so bad?

L.—Well, if you dun no, I shant tell you.

M.—My friend let me give you some good advice. You have a soul to be saved or lost. Now to-night when you go to church, don't laugh at others, think about your own soul, and pray God to make you better; and when penitents are invited, go to the altar and seek salvation from your sins, for you are a dreadful sinner, and if you die as you are the Devil will get you certain.

L.—I shant do it, I'm not afraid of the Devil's gettin me nuther.

M.—Now if you knew that you had to die to-morrow, would you not seek religion to-night?

L.—No, I wouldnt.

M.—Then if you die to-morrow, you will be lost.

L.—If I'm to go to the devil, I'll go that and if I aint I wont, no how.

M.—I suppose you believe "what is to be will be, if it never is?"

L.—Yes I do.

M.—You were raised by Methodist parents, were you not?

L.—No they aint.

A word or two more and the dialogue ended. The minister preached that night and the nondescript was a listener. "The Greeks are at our doors!"

For the Advocate.

Letters to the Soldiers.

MY DEAR FRIENDS:—That noble Christian hero, Stonewall Jackson, conversing about religion, remarked "When a man sees that anything is the best he can do, I cannot understand why he does not do it immediately." And surely it is astonishing that a being so devoted to his own interest as man, should knowingly and constantly act contrary to what he is convinced is his most precious interest. Yet this is done by you so long as you refuse to become a servant of God. In sincerest love for the soul you are destroying, I ask you—why is this? Is it better to be a sinner than a Christian? Is anxiety and fear of eternal death better than sweet peace, and the assurance that you are safe forever? Is it better to live with a sense of condemnation pressing upon your heart, and the troubles of an uneasy conscience

often afflicting your soul, than to enjoy the tranquility of mind which the Christian enjoys, and to feel the love of a merciful God gently stealing over the happy spirit? Is it better to have tempting friends hovering over you, than to have holy guardian angels encamping around you? Is it better to injure the souls of others—to lead dear friends to sin and hell, than to exert a redeeming influence upon them by your words and examples, and assist them in overcoming their spiritual enemies, and securing eternal rest and glory in Heaven? Is it better to commit capital suicide than to work out your salvation? Is it better to challenge the wrath of the Almighty than to win His everlasting love and blessings? Is it better to walk the burning shores of perdition, than the golden streets and beautiful fields of glory? Is it better to wait forever in darkness and agony, than to sing and shout forever in celestial joy and rapture? No, no! no! Then why do you act so? How long will you seek destruction? Will you not change now? God waits to be merciful, if you will ask Him in the name of His Son.

A. W. M. M. M.

Selections.

A Vision of Peace.

The character of war is not less incompatible with the genius of the gospel, and an advanced stage of intellectual refinement, than that of despotism. It is a relic of barbarism which would long since have disappeared from human society, had the laws of nature, in their progress and ultimate perfections, kept pace with the positive statutes which govern the political and social compact.

But the spirit of war must expire. By two guardian angels, Christianity on my right hand, and Science on my left, I am conducted to an eminence from which I survey the surrounding and subjected world. The freshness of Eden covers the scene, and the smile of heaven gilds the prospect. The trumpet of carnage is blown no more; nor shall the crimson flag ever again unfurl itself to the breeze. The demon of vengeance, ever hungry for human flesh, is unchained and commissioned no more to imprint his bloody footsteps upon the earth; nor do the sighing zephyrs ever again utter the death-cries of murdered victims. The ensanguined field is no more covered with the mangled bodies of the slain; nor shall the broad streams of blood ever again pursue their dark and deep and melancholy course amidst the shouts of victory, and the agonies of despair. The wife is no more hastened into widowhood, nor her babes consigned to orphanage.—The bow of victory is broken, the spear of death is cut asunder, and the chariot of conquest is burned in the fire.

Blessed prospect! a consummation devoutly to be sought; an enterprise which may well command our most vigorous efforts while we live, and the successful termination of which will deserve to be perpetuated by a monument high as heaven.

Why Men are Unhappy.

No wonder men are unhappy in this world. There is always rushing when the machinery is out of gear. There is always trouble when the wheels are off the track. Man seeks to live for himself.—God made him to live for others. How swells that mother's heart in joy when she can make her children happy! What a thrill of delight comes with that look of gratitude, that look of joy, and that one of love—all that the widow and the orphan can render to their benefactor. That cup of happiness is an overflowing cup.—It is like a bubbling fountain, ever pouring forth its blessings to refresh the weary and fainting, and make pure only by its own overflow. It is like the quiet meadow rill, fringed all along with flowers, yet concealed by the very exuberance of beauty and verdure itself doth nourish.

Christian Inconsistency.

I knew a case, once, of an individual who was very anxious, but one day I was grieved to find that all her convictions were gone. I asked her what she had been doing. She told me she had been spending the afternoon at such a place, among some professors of religion, not thinking that it would dissipate her convictions to spend an afternoon with professors of religion. But they were trifling and vain, and thus her convictions were lost. And no doubt these professors of religion, by their folly, destroyed a soul, for her convictions did not return.

Secret Devotion.

It is important that you should have stated seasons for secret prayer. Without this, it will be exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to be faithful in the discharge of duty. In every pursuit of life, system is important to ensure success. Prayer must be a part of our business. Communion with God must be the essential duty of every day. Set apart some portion of the day in which you can withdraw for a few moments, with the least difficulty, and perseveringly adhere to your resolution.—This is a point which requires more decision than is generally supposed. But be decided. Determine that you will serve God, whatever else you neglect.

The cultivation of this devotional spirit, is the first great duty of life. Here must be laid the foundation of your Christian character. Here must be found the source of all your efforts to do good and to get good. In the silence of the closet, as your soul communes with God, you will obtain almost supernatural strength to triumph over temptation and go on your Christian way rejoicing. Do you need argument, to satisfy you of the truth of these sentiments? Need I point your attention to the injunctions of the Bible; to the example of the Saviour; to the habit of the early Christians, and to the testimony of the eminent good of every age? This argument, direct and simple and conclusive as it is, is still unnecessary. The mind that sees not the propriety of secret prayer, that feels not the necessity of this confiding intercourse with its Maker, is beyond the influence of argument. There are some truths so palpable that they need only to be stated, that they may be felt. Are you anxious for the salvation of your soul, seeking peace and finding none? Frequent your closet. In secret prayer lay before God all your sorrows, and all your desires. There surrender your heart to your God, trusting in the atoning sacrifice of his Son, for pardon of your sins, and you will assuredly find peace. He who has said, "ask and ye shall receive," will lend an attentive ear to your prayer, and will accept the offering of a penitent heart. It is in the closet that you must commence your journey towards heaven; it is in the closet, that you must daily obtain strength to encounter the trials and the temptations of the way.

Particular Providence.

Mr. S. had by diligence and prudence, (with the blessing of God) raised himself from the situation of a dependent, fatherless boy, (at the age of sixteen,) to a lucrative situation, as the head of a large commercial house in one of the most important cities in Europe. Business calling him, as it frequently did, to travel in the stage, he found all the seats at one time pre-occupied at the stage house. It was in vain that he endeavored, by the offer of double the fare, to prevail upon some one of the passengers to relinquish his seat, but was obliged to wait until the next day before he could pursue his journey.

This was a trifling event in itself, and probably hardly would have found a place in his memory, after the accomplishment of the business which called him forth, had it not been for circumstances connected with it. But a day or two after, while pursuing his journey in the following stage, the attention of the passengers was arrested in passing a house, by the roadside, on observing a number of coffins brought out of it. The sight was so unusual that they prevailed upon the driver to inquire the reason; when he learned that the stage had upset the day before, just in the vicinity, and these persons lost their lives by this means. This stage was the same in which he had made earnest efforts to obtain a seat. Till this time he had lived without God, and with only such a hope as he now would fall him, and he says that the first thought that crossed his mind was, Had you secured that seat where would you now have been? IN HELL, was the spontaneous feeling in his heart, and the answer of his conscience. Mark the result: the man was led immediately to devote himself, with such talents and opportunities as few men have had to devote, to the advancement of the cause of Christ in Europe, France, especially. Through his influence, thousands and tens of thousands of Bibles, Testaments, and tracts, were scattered over the country, and the heart of many of the descendants of the persecuted Waldenses were made glad. He still lives, and his influence is felt in a thousand ways, and he gives direction to some of our most important benevolent associations. Say, then, ye that deny a Particular Providence, was it by chance that he was hindered on his journey?