

Peninsula Methodist.

REV. T. SNOWDEN THOMAS, A. M.,
Editor.

VOLUME XIII,
NUMBER 49.

FOR CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH.

J. MILLER THOMAS,
Associate Editor.

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1887.

ONE DOLLAR A YEAR.
SINGLE NOS. 3 CENTS.

THE LAST JOURNEY.

BY ROSE TERRY COOKE.

One other journey, oh my love!
One more for us to share;
Again across the blooming land
Together we shall fare.

The happy days come back to me
When first we went away;
We two, we only, side by side,
That blessed wedding day.

Ah me! how rapid were the wheels;
How swift the radiant hours;
How dear the shy and tender looks;
How sweet the bridal flowers.

Year after year we went again,
But never more alone;
With little links of childish life
That bound us to our own.

The clinging hands, the baby words,
The losses and the gain,
The anxious, faithful mother-heart
That solaced every pain.

No more alone, yet dearer far
Than tenderest solitude;
The gathering of that flock beloved,
The mother with her brood.

And now! How silent are thy lips;
How still, without their smile!
No word of mine, no thought of thine
That silence shall beguile.

How close those serious eyes are shut;
The white lids lift no more;
No living look of love or peace,
No glance at sea or shore.

Art thou not here? so near so far,
Thy face I cannot see;
Here, and yet hidden from my sight—
Oh God! how can it be?

Our long last journey. She and I
Together, yet apart;
Homeward and graveward; she at rest;
I with my breaking heart!

—Independent.
WINSTED, CONN.

Religious Life In Our Families.

BY MRS. MARGARET BOTTOME.

I think the question might be considered impertinent if asked of some whether there was any real religious life in their families. If they answered they would probably say, "I belong to church; I set a good example in my family in that way; I have family prayers; I ask a blessing at my table; and I make my children go to church." Now I say that all this you may do, and more, and yet have no real religious life in your family. What! be a member of church, have family prayers, insist on my children going to church—all this, and yet have no religious life? Yes; there may be such an absence of real life in all this that your children will not go to church after your authority over them has ceased, and no grace will be asked at their tables because associated with such a lack of grace in you; family prayers may have no sweet odor of love in them, as they think of them; and the Bible be associated with the absence of the spirit of it in our daily conduct. You see, we are speaking of religious life in the family, and not form. I remember very little that my own dear father said to us children on the subject of religion, but of all the associations with the first day of the week nothing has been so sweet to me as my father's whistle "Welcome, morning. He used to whistle "Welcome, sweet day of rest," to the tune of old Lisbon. I used to hear it early in the morning, and I knew then he was dressing for church; and his smile, as we children gathered around him for money for church and Sunday school, I can see for church and Sunday school, I can see now, though I have not seen it save in memory for many a long year. We had made considerable noise, too, when he was reading the Bible for him to notice it, because he was so intent on what he was reading. He had life; and a sun was in his life (it takes a sun to make life). I well remember when I asked

him if I might go to the theatre. He did not answer me at once; he seemed to be thinking. At last he said: "Daughter, I went once, but I was older than you are, and I never cared to go again. You wait a year, and then I think I will let you go once." I waited, and then asked him again. He looked at me, and said: "Well, my child, I have been thinking about you. I told you I went to the theatre once, and was satisfied; but I don't think you are quite like me; once would not satisfy you, and so I don't think it will be well for you to go at all." He did not say I should not go; he thought it would not be well, and so I never went. But we went to hear the "Messiah" together, and what with the grand music of that greatest of orators, and with him at my side, I quite forgot my disappointment. Why do I tell all this? Because deep principles are involved in these little reminiscences which he who runs may read. At the early age of forty-five my father died, and his prayer at the family altar (a rare prayer in these days) "Give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me," has been answered in each of his seven children he left behind him. In these days of skepticism, when the boys return from college they must find something very real at home. When they insist on the old-fashioned notions being set aside, we must let them (both boys and girls) know that there are some things which cannot be classed under the head of notions or opinions. They are convictions. We need the spirit of the beautiful woman who made an impression on me in my girlhood days, never to be effaced; who, when her husband came home and said to her, "My dear, Henry Clay will dine with us today," replied: "Not to-day, you know I never give dinners on Sunday." Greatly irritated, he replied: "I thought you would give up your old-fashioned notions for once, and for such an honor as the presence of Henry Clay at your table." "Tell him," she replied, "I have wanted for years to see him, but it is a matter of principle with me to have no invited guests on Sunday; but if he will do me the honor to dine with me on Monday, I shall be most happy." The husband much mortified, took the message to Mr. Clay, and the great statesman said: "I want to see such a woman of principle," and the acquaintance then began on Monday ripened into a friendship which only ended with his death. We need fathers and mothers who will be true to their convictions, whatsoever they may be. Dr. Wayland said of himself: "I am built railroad fashion. I can go forward, and if necessary, backward, but I cannot go sideways."

We have too many "sideways" Christians. A circumstance that occurred in a Christian household not long ago deeply impressed me. A young man said to his father: "Will you let me bring some college friends of mine to spend Sunday evening here, and let them enjoy sacred music?" "Certainly!" said the father, "if you cannot get them to go to church." The evening passed delightfully, and toward its close the father felt he ought to read a short portion of Scripture and offer prayer for these young men. He looked at his wife, but the thought was not evidently in her mind, and though so moved to the religious act his courage failed him, and he bade them all good-night without

doing what he felt to be his duty. After retiring he could not sleep, and his wife finally said to him: "What is the matter?" and then he told her of the opportunity he had lost that would never come again, and more than all the loss of an influence over his own boy that would have been more than gold to him. Then the wife saw how easy she could have made it for her husband; how naturally and gracefully she could have handed the Bible to him; and the thought came to them of their early days when religion had been an enjoyment to them before wealth had come, and together at the midnight hour they knelt and reconsecrated themselves and their family to the almighty Father. We have fallen on strange times, we have to meet difficulties of which our fathers and mothers never dreamed. It is very easy to command our children to do this or that; but if we have life our one object should be to bring them to that life, and not drive them from home. How well I remember my mother saying: "Boys, I would rather not have you smoke; but if you do, smoke at home." No doubt the lace curtains did not last as long as they might have done; but she kept her boys.

I feel the delicacy of the subject I am handling. I know there are difficulties in many a family which others little dream of, and one of the hardest things is divided counsel, where husband and wife are not one, and yet the one who has the deep spiritual life (and especially if she be the mother) will, I believe win in the end. I read sometime ago of a deeply devoted Christian mother, whose husband had become skeptical, and the mother endured untold agony as the father made sport before the children of what was to her most sacred and dear. Not one word passed her lips, however, as she would not lower him in their estimation. When they were in bed she took her New Testament, and read the life of the Saviour to them, making no comment on what they had heard from their father, and the truth was the effectual antidote. Three of her boys she lived to hear preach Christ, and all her children followed her into the church. She had religious life in her family. We may as well face facts.

If the preaching of the Gospel is wittily canvassed at the Sunday dinner-table, if the Sunday newspaper is enjoyed where the children feel that the Bible is only endured, do not be surprised if your family shows a real indifference to religious things. It is within our power as fathers and mothers to make our children respect religion, and say, as I know of a boy saying who had lost every line but one to the faith of his childhood, "My mother has a real God." I have striven mostly by way of illustration (and that drawn in a great measure from my own life, for which, surely, I may crave forgiveness) to make this matter plain and patent to all. This subject is so awfully serious. We are now making our mark on our families for weal or woe. Shall our children rise up and call us blessed? Shall we leave them an inheritance that can never be taken away from them? Then we must have life. We must be something like our Father who is in heaven. We must draw our children to God by being lifted up in character, by compelling them to wish to be like us. This is the religious life we need.—New York, Christian Advocate.

Fading Men And Unfading Word.

REV. ALEXANDER MACLAREN, D. D.

Did you ever stand in some old cathedral, or ruined church, where for centuries the Word of God had been preached? And did there never come over you, with a strange rush of feeling, the thought: "Where are all the men and women that bowed their knees here, beneath the vanished roof of this place?"

I remember once standing in the old church of Torcello, the mother Church of Venice built by the fugitives from the eastern coast more than a thousand years ago. And there were the bare, severe stone benches, on which the vanished presbyters had sat, and the simple, rude old church in which for a millennium men and women had worshipped. And there seemed to come out, from the caves of the past, a sighing wind that, as it whistled through the open windows, with their wooden shutters, asked this question of my text: "The fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?" Gone! gone! all gone!

There is nothing so transient as the words that are spoken by Christian teachers. Of all the seed that is sown, our Master taught us that three-fourths, at least, were likely to perish. And even where the Word takes root in men's hearts, how swiftly the speaker of it passes and is forgotten! No workers so soon have their work covered with oblivion as preachers. As long as the living voice sounds, there is some chance of our being remembered, and but for a very, very little period thereafter; like some great singers whose reputation must needs die as soon as the generation that heard the sweetness of their tones has passed away.

And in another way, too, the prophets fade and perish, inasmuch as new circumstances rise about which they know nothing, new phases of thought which antiquate their teachings, new difficulties in which their words have no counsel, new conflicts in which they can strike no blow. So that when I can go into a second-hand book seller's shop I find lying in the rubbish box at the door the books of men that in my younger days were the guides and teachers of the Church. "The prophets, do they live forever?" Their word is but for a moment.

And yet, in all these fleeting and mingled human utterances, does there not lie an immortal and imperishable germ, even the Word of the living God? Much ingenuity is expended nowadays in trying to discriminate between the permanent and the transient in Christian teaching. I am old-fashioned enough to believe that that line is to be drawn between this Book and men's conclusions from it; and that whatever lies on the pages of the New Testament, the completed revelation of God to man—whether it be in the record of the incarnate and eternal, personal, Word, or whether it be in what I consider the authoritative teaching of his apostles—is the permanent element in Christianity. "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth," the human systems and institutions based on the revelation of God in Christ, as recorded and expounded in Scripture shall break up and disappear. "But the Word of the Lord endureth forever" and this enduring Word is that story of Christ's incarnation, death for our sins,

resurrection, and ascension, which by the gospel is preached unto you.

Therefore, we have to look beyond dearest of human teachers, and to those to whom we owe most. We are at the best but lights kindled, and therefore having but a season to burn, during which any can rejoice in our light. But he is unkindled, uncreated, and unconsumable light, who forever and forever will be the guide and teacher of his Church. Christ is the truth, which is with us and shall be in us forever. The clouds that are painted roseate and lovely by the sunshine melt and disappear into the blue, but the sun abides. "The prophets, do they live forever?" "They truly were not suffered to continue by reason of death," but this Man continueth over our Friend, our Prophet Priest, and King.—Ex.

Old Aeg.

Dean Bradley, successor of Stanley in the deanery of Westminster, tells an anecdote of him as he neared his sixtieth year. He was traveling in Germany on a Rhine steamer, and getting acquainted with a boy, who asked him his age, which being answered, he said:

"Why, all your life is over."

"No," said the dean, "the best is yet to come."
"You must be on the wrong side of sixty," said one acquaintance to another.
"No," he replied, "I am on the right side."

Old age is cheerless enough to one lacking faith in God and Christ, but bright with divinest hopes when one has for his portion the Christ, whom to know, with the Father, is eternal life. Let every man mourn as old age creeps upon him if he be without faith in the Holy One.

Let every man rejoice as age comes upon him, if he trusts in him who said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Life here is only the state of infancy.

A plain London lighterman, only a navigator on the Thames, was in the Abbey, standing before the monument of John Wesley, and, as he talked with the dean, knowing he had been to Palestine said:

"It must have been beautiful to have walked where the Saviour walked."

"Yes," and, with a saintly look, he said, "beautiful to walk in the steps of the Saviour."

Stanley's words as he spoke of death are so beautiful, we quote them:

"There the soul finds itself on the mountain ridge overlooking the unknown future; our company before is gone; the kinsfolk and friends of many years are passed over the dark river, and we are left alone with God. We know not in the shadow of the night who it is that touches us—we feel only that the everlasting arms are closing us in; the twilight of the morning breaks, we are bid to depart in peace; for, by a strength not our own, we have prevailed, and the path is made clear before us."

Great and many are the compensations of advancing age.—Selected.

One who believes that every dollar belongs to God, and is to be used for Him, will not imagine that he has discharged all obligations by giving a tenth to the Lord. There are multitudes in the land who, after giving one tenth of their increase might fare sumptuously every day, gratify every whim, and live with the most lavish expenditure. Would that fulfill the law of Christ, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me?"

