

Lutheran Observer.

Unless with proofs of Holy Writ, or with manifest, clear and distinct principles and arguments, I am refuted and convinced, I can and will recant nothing.—Luther.

In Essentials, Unity; in Non-Essentials, Liberty; in all Things, Charity.

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WHOLE NO. 3634.

Poetry.

SAID I NOT SO.

BY GEORGE HERBERT.

Said I not so,—that I would sin no more?
Witness, my God, I did;
Yet I am run again upon the score:
My faults cannot be hid.

What shall I do?—make vows and break them still?
'T will be but labor lost;
My good cannot prevail against mine ill:
The business will be crost.

O, say not so; thou canst not tell what strength
Thy God may give thee at the length.
Renew thy vows, and if thou keep the last,
Thy God will pardon all that's past.
Vow while thou canst; while thou canst vow, thou mayst
Perhaps perform it when thou thinkest least.
Thy God hath not denied thee all,
While He permits thee but to call.
Call to thy God for grace to keep
Thy vows; and if thou break them, weep.
Weep for thy broken vows, and vow again:
Vows made with tears cannot be still in vain.
Then once again
I vow to mend my ways;
Lord, say Amen,
And Thine be all the praise.

THE DYING CHRISTIAN TO HIS SOUL.

BY ALEXANDER POPE.

Vital spark of heavenly flame!
Quit, O quit this mortal frame!
Trembling, hoping, lingering, flying,
O, the pain, the bliss of dying!
Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life!

Hark! they whisper; angels say,
Sister spirit, come away!
What is this absorbs me quite?
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,
Drowns my spirits, draws my breath?
Tell me, my soul, can this be death?

The world recedes; it disappears!
Heaven opens on my eyes! my ears
With sounds seraphic ring:
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O Grave! where is thy victory?
O Death! where is thy sting?

THE AIM OF LIFE.

BY PHILIP JAMES BAILEY.

We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives,
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.
And he whose heart beats quickest lives the longest:
Lives in one hour more than in years do some
Whose fat blood sleeps as it slips along their veins.
Life is but a means unto an end; that end,
Beginning, mean, and end to all things,—God.
The dead have all the glory of the world.
—From "Festus."

Contributions.

OUR GOD AS A REWARDER.

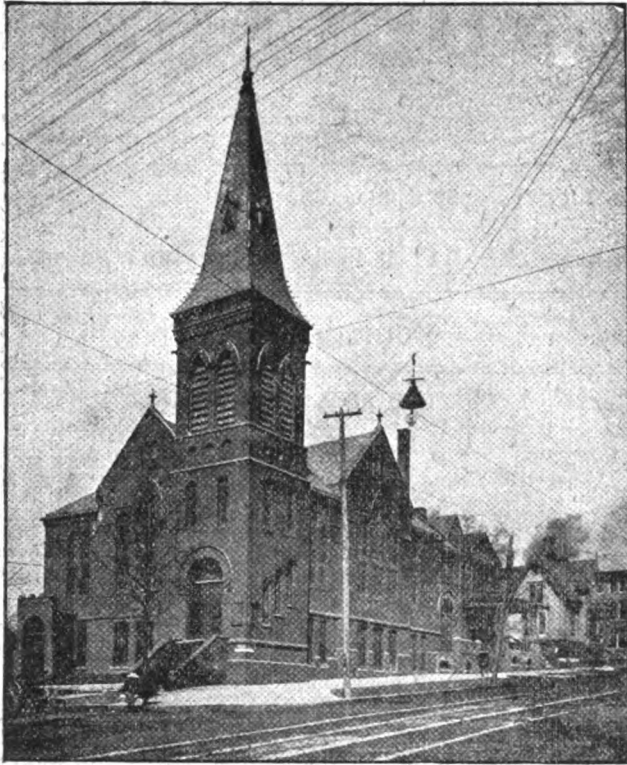
BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

Among all the names and attributes of our heavenly Father, that is a very endearing one that is contained in that glorious epic of faith, the eleventh chapter of the "Hebrews." We there read that God is the "rewarder of them that diligently seek him." That precious promise is linked with every earnest prayer and every act of obedience. God rewards labor. Does not every farmer act in faith when he drives his plough in springtime, and drops his grain into the mellowed ground! Every minister prepares his gospel message—every Sunday-school teacher conducts the Bible lesson, and every godly parent tills the soil of the child's docile heart, in the simple faith that God rewards good sowing with harvests.

God rewards obedience. He enjoins upon every sinner repentance and the forsaking of his sins, and the acceptance of Jesus Christ as his atoning Savior. Every sinner that breaks off from his sins, and lays hold of Jesus Christ, does it on the assurance that our truth-keeping God will reward obedience. "By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, prepared an ark to the saving of his house." An unbelieving generation hooted, no doubt, at the "fanatic" who was wasting his time and money on that unwieldy vessel. But every blow of Noah's hammer was an audible evidence of the patriarch's faith in the Lord as a rewarder of obedience.

God rewards believing prayer for right things, when it is offered in a submissive spirit. "Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find." Humble, childlike faith creates a condition of things in which it is wise and right for God to grant what might otherwise be denied. We grasp the blessed truth that he hears prayer and gives the best answer to prayer in his own time and way; upon these two facts we plant our knees when we bow down before him. Oh, the long, long trials to which we are often subjected, while our loving Father is testing our faith, and giving it more vigor and volume! We are often kept at arm's length—like that pleading Syro-Phoenician mother—in order to test our faith; the victory comes when the Master says "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

Godly wives are often left to press their earnest petitions through months and years before the answer comes in the work of the converting Spirit. There was an excellent woman in my congregation who was for a long time anxious for the conversion of her husband. She endeavored to make her own Christian life very attractive to him—a very important point, too often neglected. On a certain Sabbath she shut herself up and spent much of the day in beseeching prayers that God would touch her husband's heart. She said nothing to her husband; but took the case straight up to the throne of grace. The next day, when she opened her Bible to conduct family worship, according to her custom, he came and took the book out of her



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hands and said, "Wifey, it is about time that I did this," and he read the chapter himself. Before the week was over he was praying himself, and at the next communion he united with our church!

Verily, God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. That praying Hannah who said, "The grief of my heart is that of all six children not one loves Jesus," was not satisfied that it should be so. She continued her fervent supplications until five of them were converted during a revival. They all united in a day of fasting and prayer for the sixth daughter, and she was soon rejoicing in Christ. The victory that overcame in that case was a faith that would not be denied.

Sometimes the prayers of parents are answered long after the lips that breathed them are mouldered into dust. When a certain Captain K— sailed on his last sea voyage he left a prayer for his little boy written out and deposited in an oaken chest. After his death at sea, his widow locked up the chest, and when she was on her dying bed she gave the key to their son. He grew up a licentious and dissolute man. When he reached middle life he determined to open that chest, out of mere curiosity. He found in it a paper, on the outside of which was written, "the prayer of M— K— for his wife and child." He read the prayer, put it back into the chest, but could not lock it out of his troubled heart. It burned there like a live coal. He became so distressed that the woman whom he was living with as his mistress thought he was becoming deranged. He broke down in penitence, cried to God for mercy, and making the woman his legal wife, began a new life of prayer and obedience to God's commandments. And so God proved to be the rewarder of a faith that had been hidden away in a secret place half a century before! I have no doubt that among the blessed surprises in eternity will be the triumphs of many a believer's trusting prayers.

My friend, if you are not a Christian, I entreat you to put the divine promise to the test. Jesus Christ's invitation to you is "Follow me!" He calls on you

to forsake your darling sins and offers you pardon. He calls you to self-denial, and offers you peace of conscience. He calls you to His service, and offers you more solid joys than this world can give or take away. He calls you to a clean, pure, useful life, and offers you grace sufficient for it. He calls you to follow him through sunshine or storm, up hills of difficulty and through some sharp temptations—to follow him implicitly, gladly and heartily to the last hour of earth, and then in heaven you will acknowledge that the "God of all grace" is the eternal rewarder of all who obey him.

CHRIST AND ÆSCULAPIUS.

BY PROF. W. H. WYNN, D. D.

If the direct methods of Jesus in healing the sick are perennial, and must be held as in some sort a church function to-day, what have we to say of the medical profession who take science as their guide, and deal with disease by remedies introduced into the system, or by the surgeon's knife when nothing else will do?

Science has, indeed, wrought wonders in this line, as in every other, in our day—hunting down disease far in ward in a wilderness of tangled tissue, which aforesaid, it was thought, no human ingenuity could ever unravel—catching the very blood-corpuscles in their internecine battlings for the life of man. It has much the appearance of a miracle, to see the opaque chambers of the body lighted up by a strand from the sun's rays, which the scientist has released from the spectrum, and sent on its luminous way down through all the lurking-places of disease; and it is presumable that the skill that gave him the discovery will serve him when he takes the intruder by the throat.

The physician in our day is a bacteriologist—he looks upon the germ of disease; he sees it wiggling and propagating in its habitat of filth; and panoplied in antiseptic armor, he follows it bravely through all its infectious windings and brewings, until happily he may witness it go down before some foe, native



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