

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.

VOL. LXIX. NO. 49.

LANCASTER AND PHILADELPHIA, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1901.

WHOLE NO. 3661.

Poetry.

THE LESSON OF THE LEAF.

BY JOEL SWARTZ, D. D.

The frost-tinged, golden leaves again
Come sailing to the sod,
And Autumn walks the dappled plain
With rustling sandals shod.
When one surveys a single leaf,
So tinted, veined and fair,
The marvel is that life so brief
Should have such marks of care.
And wonder more, great Nature seems
To be in very haste,
When most her work with glory gleams,
To yield it up to waste.
For robbers from the frosty stars
Steal down to loose its hold,
And swift winds from their Northern bars,
Break through and steal the gold.
But yet in spite of wind and frost
And slight of autumn's sun,
The leaf its mission hath not lost,
Nor left its work undone.
It duly spread its grateful shade;
Its breath made pure the air;
Its building in the branch is laid,
In strength and fiber fair.
Though gone, it lives in Fancy's eyes,
Its grace is in my heart;
Here, too, its treasured lesson lies
And will not soon depart.
When I my clasp on life shall yield,
'Twill make the parting sweet,
To know that I have held a shield,
Where suns and tempests beat:
To know that I have builded, too,
Though small should seem the gain,
Something of goodness where I grew,
That may long years remain:
To know, when I cannot endure,
That still earth's atmosphere
Is made more vital, sweet and pure,
For my brief staying here:
That when I loose my trembling hold
On life's unsteady spray,
Still, all the season's inwrought gold
Shall with me pass away.

Devon, Pa.

"PEACE."

BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

Were half the power, that fills the world with terror,
Were half the wealth, bestowed on camps and courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error,
There were no need of arsenals and forts;
The warrior's name would be a name abhorred!
And every nation, that should lift again
Its hand against a brother, on its forehead
Would wear forevermore the curse of Cain!
Down the dark future, through long generations,
The echoing sounds grow fainter, and then cease;
And like a bell, with solemn sweet vibrations,
I hear once more the voice of Christ say "Peace!"
Peace! and no longer from its brazen portals
The blast of War's great organ shakes the skies!
But, beautiful as songs of the immortals,
The holy melodies of love arise.

Contributions.

TREASURES IN HEAVEN.

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

"Store away stores for yourselves in heaven." That is the rendering—in one of the earlier English translations of the Bible—of our Lord's injunction in his Sermon on the Mount. He had just told his hearers that the treasures laid up on earth were liable to be consumed by the moth and the rust, or stolen away by thieves. If they wanted to put what was dearest to their hearts out of the reach of the rust and the robbers, they must lodge them in God's keeping; there they would be safe. The shrewdest business man may often lie awake in uneasiness about the absolute security of his investments; the Master declares that what we invest in heavenly treasures can never be lost.

Did Christ mean to recommend a large bestowment of money for charitable purposes in order to secure a place in heaven? Some have twisted this passage into this selfish direction, and insisted that almsgiving in this world would purchase salvation in the next world. But our Lord never descended to such a mercenary morality; God is not to be bargained with for gold or silver. The scope of this divine injunction is infinitely wider, higher and holier than any pecuniary transaction for selfish purposes; it has an intensely spiritual significance. The treasures to which he refers are all those objects for which an immortal being ought to live, and the possession of which are the most pleasing in the sight of God. When any man gives his heart to God, and sincerely aims to give his life to the service of God, he then makes God his trustee. His property may vanish in the flames, or be swept away by commercial hurricanes, but what is dearest to him is secure. "I know whom I have trusted, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." This precious passage covers more than the salvation of a believer's soul. It embraces all the results and the fruits, and the outcome of a genuine Christian life. The moment that you are truly converted, that moment you begin to make spiritual investments, you begin to lay up heavenly treasures.

The servant of Christ has a different arithmetic from the worldling. He counts his gains by the earthly possessions that he accumulates. The Christian often gains by the losses of earthly things. "He that loses for my sake finds," is an assurance full of good cheer to many a tired and afflicted child of God. Grasping after earthly wealth or honor costs very often a sad loss of grace and godliness. It is not what we take up, but what we are ready to give up, that makes us spiritually rich. Giving up for the sake of our Master, honors him, and adds to our treasures in heaven. Therein is the peculiar glory of the martyrs; they counted not even their lives as dear, so that they might honor their crucified Lord, and glorious will be their reward among the crowned conquerors up yonder.

It is impossible to compute what treasures every

faithful Christian may be storing away for that celestial storehouse. There is a constant accumulation. There is a "laying up" day by day. God is a just accountant and a generous rewarder. A "book of remembrance" is kept, and God will give to every one as his work shall be. That record on high will read very differently from the assessor's tax-books in this world. Plutus and Midas are assessed in New York or London as millionaires. Up yonder a "certain poor widow" will outshine many of these colossal money-mongers because she put into the Lord's treasury the two mites that were all her living. That box of alabaster which Mary broke over the feet of her beloved Master will not lose its fragrance in heaven. Every act of self-denial for Christ is an investment for heaven. Every word spoken for him here will echo there. A precious encouragement is this for faithful parents and Sunday-school teachers and city missionaries and the whole army of hard toilers in the service of the best of Masters. Do you sometimes get discouraged, my brother, because you do not see more immediate results of your efforts? Don't worry. You are responsible for doing your whole duty; God is responsible for results. His "reward is with him," to give to every servant according as his work shall be.

It goes without saying that, as they who turn many to righteousness will shine as stars in that celestial firmament, there are some favored servants of Jesus who will come into magnificent inheritances in heaven. We can imagine Robert Raikes surrounded by a multitude of those who were the spiritual trophies of his Sunday-schools, and Spurgeon welcomed by the happy souls whom he led to Jesus, and our own Moody finding his heaven all the more joyous for the number of those whom his untiring labors won to the life everlasting. Consecrated talents will then blaze as crowns of rejoicing. What an inducement is this to every young man and woman who is raising the question: How shall I employ my brains, my culture or my money to the best advantage? Even one talent, if not hidden or wasted, shall make some very humble Christians rich and radiant when they come into their heavenly inheritance.

In these days, and especially in our own country, there is an astonishing increase of men of immense wealth; the word "million" is almost as common as the word "thousands" was in the days of my childhood. Haste to be rich is the prevailing mania; yet only a very, very small proportion of all the most eager seekers after wealth will ever attain it. But every one of my readers may become "rich toward God." The secret of it is to get by giving. This is the true paradox in the economy of grace. He that refuses to give his whole heart to Christ is doomed to perish without Christ. He that saves for self only loses; he that loses for Christ's sake is sure to save. Would you secure treasures in heaven? Then learn to give, and give bountifully. God loveth the cheerful giver. This is not to be limited to gifts of the purse: for the offerings of silver and gold are only a part of what our Master has a right to; we must freely give of everything that we have freely received.

If you have the heart to pray, give your prayers; answered prayers will be a part of your heavenly inheritance. You that have acquired wisdom and experience, give your counsel to those who need them. Give your personal labors for Christ and the salvation of souls; no wealthy Christian ought to compound with his Master by drawing a bank-check in lieu of personal Christian work. Those who have not much money or counsel, or Christian work to bestow, can afford the blessing of godly living and a holy example. And so a Christly life may be a constant expenditure; even as the noonday sun overflows his golden urn of radiance, and is none the poorer in warmth and brightness.

Such a life is a constant accumulation of heavenly treasures. It is a laying-out here for Christ, and a laying-up yonder. Every good deed is recorded; every victory over sin has its crown; every service for our Lord is remembered; for he hath said, "the reward is with me, to give to every one as his work shall be." Labor on, pray on, suffer on, battle on, O faithful servant of the crucified Jesus! Every day will add to your treasures in heaven; and so shall you be made meet to be partakers of the glorious inheritance of the saints in light.

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EVANGELICAL AND CATHOLIC INCREASE IN GERMANY.

BY PROFESSOR J. W. RICHARD, D. D.

While residing in Germany in 1892 we sent several articles to the *OBSERVER* on the growth of the Catholic Church in Northern and Central Germany. The facts and figures then given evoked a small amount of incredulity; but, so far as we have learned, no serious effort was made to show that the facts and figures were incorrect. Indeed, as a rule, German official statistics must be accepted as final.

There came into our hands a few days since, in its second edition (1900), Pieper's *Kirchliche Statistik*. The author is "emeritus evangelical pastor in Geresheim," and his book is one of the series on *The Theological Sciences*, published in Tübingen and Leipzig by Mohr. As the author is an evangelical pastor emeritus, it is not likely that he will be accused of "tendency," and as his book belongs to a scientific series it is not likely that he will be charged with inaccuracy. We think that his figures, taken as they were from official documents, may be trusted.

Unwelcome and alarming, from the evangelical standpoint, as some of the figures before us are, it is nevertheless our duty to ponder their significance. In the second chapter of the book, entitled: *Condition and Movement of the Evangelical and of the Roman Catholic Confession: The Relation of the Two to each other*, the author presents, among other things, the per cent. of increase of the two Confessions (Churches) from December 1871 to 1895 as follows:

	Evang.	Catholics.
Prussia	26.87	33.02
Saxony	49.42	161.52
Bavaria	22.16	18.06
Württemberg	15.32	12.27
Baden	29.85	12.19
Hesse	18.92	27.94
Elsass-Lorraine	31.41	0.98

The significance of this table lies in the facts (1) that Prussia contains about two-thirds of the entire German population, and in many of its separate states and great cities, has been regarded as the veriest stronghold of Protestantism. Yet in the space of twenty-four years the Catholics increased on that territory more than six per cent. faster than the Protestants. (2) That in the Kingdom of Saxony, which was almost the very cradle of the Reformation, and in Hesse, which was its valiant defender, the Catholic per cent. of increase is in the one case nearly four times, and in the other about one and a half times, as great as that of the Protestants. (3) That the Protestant excess in Bavaria, where the Catholics are nearly twice as numerous as the Protestants, and in Württemberg, where the Protestants are more than twice as numerous, and in Baden where the Catholics have nearly two-thirds of the population, is relatively less, and is both relatively and absolutely less significant.

As for the much larger Protestant increase in Elsass-Lorraine (356,458 Evangelicals and 1,234,686 Catholics), our author explains the Protestant excess as due to the removal of the French, that is, the non-Protestant elements of the population after 1871; to