

Loss and Gain.

In this commercial age, the question is, "Will it pay?" The possibility of accumulating a great amount in a short life time, is a great stimulant, and men of great power are running a race, striving to excel. In this struggle for great wealth, and the power it brings, men are apt to overlook other interests, and especially the soul's eternal interests.

Reader, will you apply this question to religion? Ask yourself, Will it pay to be a Christian?

Once, when Jesus was on earth, he performed a stupendous miracle which seemed to interest the multitudes more than his other mighty works. He made bread, out of a few loaves, to feed 5000 persons; and as a result a great many followed him. Jesus perceived they had come because they had eaten of the bread, and he proceeded to teach them "to labor for the meat which endureth unto eternal life." But they persisted in the desire of knowing the art of making bread by this short process. They asked, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" Doubtless they reasoned, within themselves, that if they could only learn the art of making bread in this way it would pay big. They would not, any longer, be under the original curse, the necessity of eating bread by the sweat of their faces. If they had been in possession of scientific facts, as now, they could have reasoned; we are surrounded by an ocean of food. The air and water is food; a large percent is nutritious matter. Food is drawn from these great reservoirs by vegetation and assimilated for animal life; and now, this man has found out how to draw it directly from the air, and give it to us in a palatable and digestible form. We want to know how to work this way.

But Jesus taught them to believe on him whom the Father had sent, and they should have the true bread which came down from heaven.

On another occasion, Jesus called the people together and asked a question, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" "Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Here is the world's great question of loss and gain applied, in view of two worlds.

Wise business men often invest time and money with the view of gain in after years. The Savior only extends the time to the next world. He asks us to base our calculations on the whole period of life. We acknowledge the wisdom of sacrificing ease, and investing money now, for the benefit after years. All successful business men do this. The wisdom, which was greater than Solomon's, looks further. Solomon was a very wise man in the field which lay "under the sun;" and he is careful to tell us, in all his writings, that he is considering things "under the sun;" but Jesus came to tell us of things above the sun. He came to show us that true wisdom was a course of conduct with reference to the whole future. The wisdom of Jesus reaches on into eternity. This application of the world's great question of profit and loss, was new; men had not been accustomed to look further than the grave. The wisest of them shaped their business so as to cover this period. Or if they looked further, it was in the interest of their children in this world.

In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus we may see the whole field of human existence brought into view. We may see the answer to the Lord's question brought out by striking contrasts. First, we have a man who has the whole world, or at least, so much of it as he could enjoy. "He fared sumptuously every day." How much more can our money kings of to-day do? Then, "he was clothed in purple and fine linen." These were the finest fabrics of that age. Then he wasn't the man to take

trouble on his heart because of the poor suffering ones of earth. The poor starving friendless beggar at his gate didn't even move him enough to relieve his wants. This rich man died by and by. He died rich, and was buried. Lazarus died also, and now our Lord lifts the veil, and tells us to look yonder. There, the soul still exists. Jesus did not mean by "lost soul" annihilation. No, he had just before, in the parable of the prodigal son, presented a *lost soul*, which was found afterward. All the time he was lost he *lived* in that far off country, but he was away from his Father. He was *dead*, also, in the same sense. This death was not annihilation, neither will the second death be. This rich man now is in torment, so Jesus taught, while the poor man has changed sides; he is now comforted.

Here, then, is the answer, presented to view, to the question, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" The teaching of Jesus is peculiar in this; he makes us see, spreads out before the mind the truth. We do not arrive at it by a process of logic. He lifts us up, and draws aside the curtain and we gaze upon it. Seeing the truth, let us be wise, and convert the "unrighteous mammon" into the currency of the soul's country, before we go hence. Then we will have the true riches.

J. H. McCOLLOUGH.

"Empty Vessels Make Most Noise."

Polly Parker was a widow. She had been a widow longer than she had enjoyed the blessings of married life; but, if you heard her talk, (and had not previously had acquaintance with her), you would think "the dear departed" had only just bidden her farewell and gone into quieter resting places. Those, however, who had known Polly for the nine years of her widowhood, and had also known her during the three years in which she could claim Aaron Parker as her lawful husband, were apt to smile inwardly while she expatiated upon the virtues of the dead, and the one-time felicity which she had herself enjoyed. The facts would scarcely recognize their dressing if they were conscious beings, as they heard themselves described. And Aaron, if he could hear from that deep quiet which, after three years of incessant noise, he had happily gained, would be astonished even more than his surviving friends were, to hear of the wonderful excellent qualities which his spouse had always known him to possess; and to hear also of the deep and tender affection and exalted reverence with which he had always been by her regarded. As a fact, poor Aaron had passed to his rest with a sigh of relief that at last his much-enduring wife would be free from such a worthless, or even worse than worthless, companion as she had always insisted he was to her; and he himself would be free from the unwearied, unending, stream of fault-finding and petulant dissatisfaction with everything he said or did, or did not say or do. The truth was that Polly did not mean one-tenth of what she said to and of her husband when he was alive, and she did not mean one-fiftieth of what she said about him, and her married experience, and her present feelings of loss and desolation, now that he was dead. "Empty vessels make most noise." Polly is a representative of a very large class of persons of both sexes, and of social positions. There are, unfortunately, many empty vessels—human vessels—that ought to be full and running over. If I hear an individual who can scarcely get through a sentence without introducing the first person singular, I am pretty sure of an empty vessel, and am regretfully aware that I am in for noise. Selfish people are not full people, and their little insignificant

ego rattles away like an empty kettle. The heart that opens itself to take in the suffering, the weak, the troubled, the desolate, has but little chance to sound much. Some persons are all say and no do. Jim Tomkins was a specimen of this class. I never heard Jim refuse to do anything; he was the foremost and most eager in accepting offered plans and calls for service. He held no end of honorary offices, but his favorite offices were secretariats; and somehow he got elected into them, for no man more fluently and warmly advocated any new scheme than did Jim. A man who saw so much good in it, and so many advantages to be reached by it—more far than the promoters dreamed of, in fact—surely he is the best we can find to fill the highly important and most experimental office of secretary. Alas for the confiding projectors of the new scheme! Jim unhesitatingly accepts the honor, and that is all. Jim undertook the collectorship for a society at a crisis in its history when, for its stability and credit, it was necessary that all the tardy, overdue subscriptions should be gathered in, and perhaps a few more new ones had best be secured. Sad to say that, when the next meeting came, when the members hoped triumphantly to wipe off the liabilities, and start afresh, without burden of debt or dishonor, there was no Jim present—only a short note brought by a lad from the new Band of Hope which Jim had been asked to organize, saying, that pressure of engagements had prevented the application to a single subscriber! Jim was on the Sunday school roll, of course, as a teacher. The patient, long suffering superintendent had, however, to find the class a teacher three Sundays out of five. The name of Jim Tomkins figured in the church book, and appeared upon the subscription list of every agency in the church's sphere of operation. But Jim's pastor was not long in noting that Jim was all *talk* and *no do*; his place in the church was as often empty as it was filled. In fact, Jim visited every church and chapel within a wide circle, and was as much at home in one place as the other. Jim was a very empty vessel, hence the noise.

There is not much noise where there is a real and valuable treasure packed away. I can not hear much sound, as I look upon the beautiful flower, gradually opening its perfume fountains and giving its fragrance to the gently whispering breeze. The ripening fruits that smile in the quiet sunshine make no noise as they prepare pleasure and feasting for the taste. All real growth is silent. True, deep, unselfish love needs no loud protestations, and could not utter them were they required. I have set a higher value upon the silent pressure of a dear hand than upon a whole volume of assurances and assertions that have come glibly from the lips of another person; for an empty vessel makes most noise. Loud professions of friendship are suspicious. True friendship reveals itself in unostentatious deeds, but will generally be confused and stammering if required to advertise itself in words. Sympathy is silent oftener than vocal, but you can feel its presence when no sound escapes the lips, and its soothing power in that quiet sacred calm is almost Divine. If a man is full of God he has not over much to say about his religion, the theme is too sacred, too precious, too great and awful, too real to be expressed in words; but there is a light in his eye, a calm on his brow, a joy in his smile, a beauty in his character, a holy power in his life, that silently but irresistibly glorify God.

The best service for Christ and his church is the least obtrusive. Those who make most fuss, and demand most notice, and claim most acknowledgment, are the least valuable of all the laborers in the vineyard of Jesus.

I have met with men and women who were not thought much of by the superficial and excitement-loving throng, who were never heard to blow their own trumpet, who were content to be misunderstood and falsely judged, so that they maintained a conscience void of offense both towards God and towards man; and their service for Christ, conducted patiently and in silence, has been the very life and salvation of the church and schools. I wish such pure unselfish workers were not in the minority. How much more noble would be all Christian labor, if every worker were so full of Christ and his will that the noise of an empty soul, the sound of self, could never be heard. As the sun rises, and the light of day calmly, surely, silently sweeps the chill darkness down the hill slopes, across the valleys, and over the seas, till day has taken the place of night over half the world at a time, so would the service of the church silently and irresistibly sweep back superstition, ignorance, selfishness, and sin, until the world was free and full of the glory of God if that church were itself full of the God of glory. There would be no noise, but there would be a blessed change seen and felt. Let us see to it that the warning note of the proverb may have personal and practical use, as we read that "Empty vessels make most noise."—*English Paper.*

"I am Not Known."

Many times persons do things because they are almost certain that they are not known. They would be ashamed to do the same things in the town at their own homes. "It will not be found out, and therefore I will do it," has been in the minds of many persons. How is it that men can go to places, and engage in business that they would scorn at home, I cannot understand.

A story was told me not long since of a prominent preacher and editor attending a circus in Chicago. He opposed all such things at home and in his paper. For a quarter of a century his voice had been raised against such innovations and wickedness. But when he was away from home, where "I am not known," he spends "the Lord's money" and patronizes the circus during the day, and at night takes another with him. If he had thought the dear people would have known it—well, he would have stayed away. I suppose he did not think while listening to the foolish harangue of the clown, "I am now doing this, all in the name of the Lord Jesus; that Jesus, if on earth, would He patronize a thing of this kind?" He may have gone to see the dear animals? But then I cannot understand his position, and this circus going. He either sinned in going, or his teaching that others should not go to such places was untrue.

Another man, a preacher, goes to one of our cities and patronizes the theater, or some place of amusement. He is away from home and "I am not known," and what harm is there in it? He would hate to see the members of his church patronize such institutions. He would much rather they would not go there; but when he is away from home he can go, and enjoy the play with a great deal of solid comfort.

Here comes a temperance man, a brother in the church, to the city; he does not feel very well, and he thinks a little brandy or wine will help his head! He has lost his appetite since leaving home! It will cost a dollar or two to get a prescription from an M. D., and therefore he just steps into a clean, decent saloon, and pays over a dime or so for his medicine. At home he would not condescend to be guilty of such a mean thing. At home he talks of the evils of intemperance and draws drinking. And so

we might specify other cases, but these will suffice.

There is a principle involved and disregarded by these men in such conduct. "I will do a thing if I have full assurance that it will not be found out on me," seems to be the dominant rule with such men.

The whole thing is untrue and sinful in the sight of God. They fear men more than they fear God. How these men can preach one thing and practice to the contrary, and be good Christians, I do not understand.

If a man intends to practice a thing it is much better for him not to condemn it. "I swear, but I will not allow my boys to swear," is a want of manhood. For a man to do a thing that he knows to be wrong, is for him to sacrifice his manhood and his religion. He is not honest with himself, nor with his fellow man. He cannot therefore be honest in his religious life. The profession is a sham, a solemn, hollow mockery.

Men forget that God knows them, and that they will be held accountable for all their deeds, whether man knows their true life or not. We cannot conceal our evil deeds from Him, the Searcher of all hearts. What we really are, we ought to be before all men. All shams and hypocrisies ought to be cast away forever. We ought to show our colors, and be true to men, or assure our places on the other side.—*Ec.*

The Seven Wonders of the World.

The ancient world had its seven wonders, which were much talked about, and which people traveled hundreds of miles to see. But the seven wonders of our time are more useful and quite as remarkable.

The seven wonders of the world were:

First, the Egyptian pyramids; the largest of these is 693 feet square and 460 feet high, and its base covers 11½ acres of ground.

Second, the Mausoleum erected to Mausolus, a king of Caria, by his widow, Artemisia; it was 63 feet long and 35 feet high.

Third, the Temple of Diana, at Ephesus; this was 526 feet in length and 220 feet in breadth.

Fourth, the wall and hanging gardens of Babylon; these walls are stated by Herodotus to have been 87 feet thick, 250 feet high, and 50 miles in length, and the statement is deemed credible by modern antiquarians.

Fifth, the Colossus at Rhodes; this was a brazen statue of Apollo, 105 feet in height standing at the mouth of the harbor of Rhodes.

Sixth, the statue of Jupiter Olympus, at Athens, which was made of ivory and gold, and was wonderful for its beauty rather than its size.

Seventh, the Pharos of Ptolemy Philadelphus; this was a light-house 500 feet high, on the island of Pharos, at Alexandria, in Egypt; a wood fire, being kept burning on its summit during the night to guide ships into the harbor.

The seven wonders of the world now are: The art of printing; optical instruments, such as telescopes and microscopes; gun-powder; the steam-engine; labor-saving machinery; the electric telegraph; and the photograph.—*Ec.*

Consumption Cured.

An old physician retired from practice having had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy, for the speedy and permanent cure for consumption, bronchitis, catarrh, asthma, and all throat and lung affections, also a positive and radical cure for nervous debility and all nervous complaints, after having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, has felt it his duty to make it known to his suffering fellows. Actuated by this motive, and a desire to relieve human suffering, I will send, free of charge, to all who desire it, this recipe, with full directions for preparing and using, in German, French, or English. Sent by mail by addressing with stamp, naming this paper, W. W. Sherar, 149 Power's Block, Rochester, N. Y.