

THE WINNER OF SOULS :

A NEW-YEAR

Ordination Sermon,

PREACHED AT

SAINT JOHN'S CHURCH, RED RIVER,

ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 1. 1856.

BY

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LORD BISHOP OF RUPERT'S LAND.

LONDON :

THOMAS HATCHARD, 187 PICCADILLY.

1856.

LONDON:
Printed by G. BARCLAY, Castle St. Leicester Sq.

A New-Year Offering,

TO THOSE OF

OUR OWN ORDINATION,

WITH THE EARNEST AND HEARTFELT PRAYER,

THAT THEY ALL

MAY EACH YEAR BECOME WISER

IN WINNING SOULS.

A SERMON.

“He that winneth souls is wise.”—Prov. xi. 30.

THERE is something very touching in those salutations, which are tendered by so many thousand voices to-day. However chequered and full of trial may have been the past year, there is the universal expression of the wish that happiness may mark the present. In an old and decaying world, the very term New Year speaks of freshness, and vigour, and youth. Even to those who have passed the meridian of life it would breathe the atmosphere of hope, and seem to whisper that they are spared yet a little, that they might “recover their strength before they go hence and are no more seen.” To ourselves, the recurrence of the season, the seventh among you, is associated with a feeling of deeper interest, because the present year, as it rolls along, may separate between us for a time : we are together at its commencement ; we may, in the providence of God, be far apart at its close. We are anxious, therefore, to gather around it all the solemnity

in our power, and we have thought that this could not better be effected than by appointing for it the more special services to which your attention is now invited, and addressing you, not only on individual, but also on ministerial responsibilities—by throwing, as much as possible, the shadows of eternity around the present hour, and making this a day of sacred remembrance, of prayerful resolution, and of plighted vows, both for ministers and people.

Nor is the subject, brethren, necessarily a gloomy one. There is much in the language of the verse of our text to cheer and encourage the Christian pilgrim. It would remind us of the Paradise from which Adam by transgression fell, and direct the eye of faith to that better Paradise prepared for the redeemed above. It would tell us that, even on earth, there is a pathway, along which may be found blossoms which never fade. "The fruit of the righteous," we learn from it, "is a tree of life"—the very same expression as that used by the Spirit in the opening book of Scripture. The fruit, then, of righteousness, the fruit of grace, is still a tree of life—a tree of life unlost, or rather replanted here, that can flourish even amid the storms and blasts of earth: a tree which, like that of which we read hereafter, would bear twelve manner of fruits, and yield her fruit every month; appropriate fruit in every season and condition of life,—in childhood, youth, or old age;

in the sunshine of prosperity, or the darkest night of adversity. And may we not add, that the leaves of this tree are for the healing of the nations; that grace, wherever it exists, will be diffusive; that the sweetness of the fruit of the tree of life would induce us to give to others that they might eat thereof, and lead us to cry to all, "O taste and see that the Lord is good!" Will not the saved soul seek thus to save others? and are we not forced to acknowledge the truth and excellency of the words of Solomon, "He that winneth souls is wise?"

Such, then, are the few and emphatic words, which we have chosen as a motto and watchword for all of us during the present year. It may be in your remembrance that the motto selected at the commencement of the last was, "Behold, I have set before thee an open door;" and it has been, by the confession of all, a year in which God has very remarkably opened doors of usefulness and doors of utterance in every direction.* Its peculiar mark and feature would be that many a barrier has been thrown down, and fresh kingdoms have been opened for the proclamation of the tidings of redeeming love. And, now that the breach is made, and the open door set before us, may we have grace to enter in and win souls! Oh that our text might form, in like manner, a distinguishing mark of the present year! Leave it not to the ministers of God to

* See Appendix A.

experience the blessedness of such wisdom, but feel that it is something in which all may engage, and all prove in measure successful. Gird yourselves for the duty of each passing day, with this assurance deeply engraven on your heart, that "He that winneth souls," and he alone, "is wise."

Now, before approaching the words more closely, something may be gained in point of impressiveness, by contrasting for a moment the opposite picture. The course of wisdom is here presented to us—the wise man is the winner of souls. Contrast with this the state of him who loseth his soul. How shall we describe his wretched folly, his fatal blindness? The words of man are weak and powerless to do so. But He who created the world and knows what it contains, He who made the soul and can estimate its matchless worth, He hath placed the matter before us in the awful and thrilling 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?" How pitiably foolish, then, the conduct of him who loseth that for which a world would be a poor exchange! And if to lose be foolish, to neglect is miserable trifling. And yet, are there none of you, brethren, who are in this way foolish, and dangerously rash? Have none toiled through the days and months of another year, and lived without a comfort higher than the vanities of this perishing world; and when they review the

year, and weigh it in the balance of the sanctuary, it is but to feel the folly and wretchedness of a neglected soul!*

But we have not yet fully sketched the opposite picture: we have only viewed the condition of him who, in the full light of blessed and glorious promise, loseth his own soul. There is a folly of deeper dye, which would form the exact counterpart to the words of our text. Very uncommon is the case of one who loseth only his own soul. Sin is but seldom single, and it is because sinners "encourage themselves in mischief," that Satan's kingdom grows apace. We have, then, to think of the awful state of him who destroyeth souls: oh, surely folly is too light a word to characterise such sin. Here, again, we want words adequately to describe it; and yet how common is it, how sure the downward course, commencing in the neglect of the soul, and passing on to the ruin and destruction of the souls of others! There may, then, be some before me who have thus neglected the one thing needful, the concern of their souls; and if that be so, I feel very confident that they have also injured, more or less, the souls of their fellow-creatures. May God convince them, ere it be too late, of their awful folly!

* It is not a little remarkable that the expression, universally employed by the Indian, when speaking of one who refuses to embrace Christianity, is, "He is too foolish, — *Oosam kaképatissu.*"

In looking thus at the picture of him who loseth his own soul, and who beyond that destroys the souls of others, you feel, brethren, as if you were looking down into the gulf,—the lake which burns with brimstone and with fire. You recognise that the seeds of eternal death are sown by the sinner upon earth. His conscience, when he allows it to speak, would tell him that the years are not really gone, but only their records sealed up against the day of judgment. And, after this gaze into the depth below, we may perhaps the better arise to breathe a purer air, and comprehend the full force and blessedness of the happier path which the text unfolds.

We are now the better prepared to consider what it is that we are invited to win. It is the soul, which originally came from God, when He breathed into man the breath of life—that which was at first in the image and likeness of God; that part of man which is most akin to God, and which thus possesses the capacity of endless existence.* It is, however, this soul defaced and marred, bearing but little trace of its high glory, the soul under condemnation and the curse,—it is this soul that we are to win. Its value we best learn by the price paid for it; each soul

* On the subject of the Soul, we know not any works more worthy of general recommendation than two by living clergymen of our Church: "The History of the Soul," by the Rev. J. Hambleton; and "The Soul's Life," by the Rev. E. Garbett.

is the purchase of the Redeemer's bitter agony, the travail of His soul. Over each, so saved, He would say, "Deliver it from going down into the pit; I have found a ransom." And each one becomes then a jewel in the Saviour's crown: "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels." Over them and with them He will rejoice through the countless ages of eternity. With such a view of the soul in its original essence, in its ruin, its recovery and high destiny, how absorbing ought to be man's eagerness to save his soul; and, when once secure of his own salvation, and possessed of the glorious liberty of the children of God, how intense ought to be his desire to save others! Can he remain unconcerned while others float down the tide unawakened? can he behold them rush heedlessly to the brink of the precipice, and not stretch out the helping hand? The joy of having, under God, saved one soul, who can estimate? The parent knows the feeling who has rejoiced over a wandering child brought back to God; and the youthful minister, when the first case of a blessing having rested on the feeble words of his lips is brought to his ears, feels a thrill of unwonted pleasure, a new and peculiar emotion, which more than repays all past labour. But we need not limit expectation to a single soul; very encouraging is the fulness of the text, and we need not rest in that gush of feeling, which arises on the first felt consciousness

of usefulness under God. To win souls is our high endeavour. The parent looks around, and while he sees any of his children without the evidence of grace, he would adopt the language of the Patriarch and say, "I will not let thee go except thou bless" them. He brings yet another and another before the throne, until God graciously gives him the souls of all of them as his reward. And so, in a larger and more extended sphere, the minister of God marks the weak, the tempted, the erring, and seeks to bring them into the fold; and the changed life would prove the converted heart, the peaceful death-bed give token of ripeness for glory. Pass, then, beyond, and here are souls, not single ones, added to the throng of the redeemed—voices to swell the eternal song. To contribute to this, however feebly, is surely worthy of our highest ambition; it is worth living for, and is not confined to any, but open in measure to all. It would sweeten earth by the way, and would add to the very joy of heaven, when "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

The difficulty, however, of the task has not yet sufficiently appeared; and recent events would prove that victory may be long delayed, and success itself endangered, by not duly considering the difficulties in the way, and neglecting in consequence the necessary preparation. We

must, therefore, notice from whose grasp we are to rescue and deliver the soul, and then the arduous nature of the entire enterprise will be obvious.

It is from Satan that we are to wrest the soul. As he tempted our first parents, so will he continue to tempt until the last saint is translated from earth to heaven. Now, the amount of his power may be seen, if we view his awful ravages from the hour of the fall. A deceiver, a destroyer of souls, a murderer from the beginning, six thousand years have not weakened his power, nor led him to cease from his work of ruin. His power may be seen in the many millions on the face of the earth, still held by him in cruel bondage, in darkness, and the shadow of death, without God and without hope. It may be seen, even where the Gospel reigns. Among nations the most favoured with light, how many are still his willing slaves! Against one then so mighty we have to enter the lists, and to contend, not in open or solitary combat, but in a dark and subtle warfare with him, assisted by the hosts of evil, the lost spirits, who own him as their chief and head. Fearful the conflict even with that "spirit which worketh in the children of disobedience;" but, besides him, there are those whose name is Legion, with one and all of whom we have to wrestle, — "the principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, the wicked spirits (marg.) in high places."

What a host — if our eyes, like those of the prophet's servant, were opened to behold them — all contending for the soul! If glory is to be measured by those engaged in the strife and the issues at stake, how noble the ambition to join in this warfare! While we feel that “we have no might against this great company that cometh against us,” our confidence would be that “the battle is not ours, but God's.” We see Satan vanquished by the Lord of life, and we behold herein the pledge, that the humblest child of God may overcome, if only strong in faith he say, “Get thee behind me, Satan.” We have the cheering promise of ultimate victory, that “the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered.” We trace a commencement of waning power from the Redeemer's words, “I beheld Satan, like lightning, fall from heaven;” and we can perceive ever since a crumbling and shaking of his kingdom throughout the world. To win a soul, then, is to assist in wresting it from the god of this world, and translating it from the kingdom of Satan into that of God's own dear Son.

But there is yet difficulty beyond; there is an ally strong and powerful, from whom also we have to rescue the soul. Satan has those who are willing to aid and abet him in his assaults, ready to deliver up and betray the citadel. The human heart, and all its corrupt desires, are in

league with him. Sin is an additional enemy on his side, enthroned within; and of this we have the evidence of the common language and confession of the world. How often do we hear it said, that such a man is his own worst enemy — the foe of his own peace — his higher interests — his eternal well-being! And thus Satan slays his thousands, and Sin his tens of thousands; and we are called to weep over lost and ruined souls. The minister of God is too often regarded as an enemy, because he tells the truth, while the real enemy is within, and the arch-enemy of souls is exulting over his victim, and holding him in galling chains. How arduous, then, when Self and Satan are ranged together! But even for this we prepare ourselves. We endeavour to strip sin of its deceitful covering, to unmask the man to himself, and show him the serpent he cherishes in his bosom, the poison which is preying on his vitals, and the promise which sustains us in the assurance of our God, “that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”

And this brings us to the further thought, which nerves us for any endurance in the struggle. It is from Sin and Satan that we would save the soul now, but it is from Eternal Death hereafter. The cup of intoxication is sweetened to the taste, but there is death in it; the path of pleasure is flowery, but it leads to

the abodes of darkness; “the way seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” And very awful is the declaration, that “wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.” Now, surely, it were a blessed task to proclaim deliverance to those ready to die, to go forth in the name of our God, and cry to the perishing, “Turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die?” and to lead them to the city of refuge. To rescue one from the bondage of sin and Satan, and from the place of everlasting torment,—what a mighty work! what a delight to the soul to think of here! what a matter of joyful reflection through eternity! “For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?”

If such, then, be the difficulty of the task—such the great enemy of souls and his well-marshalled hosts—such the ever-active allies, on whose ready co-operation he can count,—if it be to rescue the soul from that everlasting misery prepared for the wicked and all who forget God, so as to be able to say of each, “Is not this a brand plucked from the burning?”—how, we may surely ask, can these things be, since any power or might of man must be as powerless as were the lamps and pitchers of Gideon, or the withes with which Samson was bound? Now, it might be sufficient to say, that if God has

told us, "He that winneth souls is wise," He will give to those who essay it in His strength a wisdom which all their adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist. If Christ has said, "I will make you fishers of men," He will see that we neither run nor labour in vain. But having set in array the battle that is against us, we ought perhaps, on this day, when a year, with all its trials, its joys, and sorrows, lies before us,—a year, with all its opportunities for gathering in souls into the fold of the Lord,—we ought, from this height and vantage-ground, to review, for our encouragement, the forces that are on our side, that we may have a lively confidence that "those that be with us are more than they that be with them."

How, then, we ask, can we expect to win souls? And we hesitate not to answer, By the Spirit. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." The only power that can resist and subdue the evil spirit is the Spirit of God; the only power that can expel the strong man armed is the stronger than he; the only power that can rescue the soul from the fire prepared for the devil and his angels is the Spirit that can make us the children of God, and heirs of heaven. It is the Spirit alone that can bless the means employed, and make them effectual "to the pulling down of strongholds, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God." Apart from it the earth

lies in desolation, and sin and Satan hold an undisputed sway, "until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field." The Spirit of the Lord, then, must work with us, and by us, if we are to win souls. It is for this reason that the question is proposed in our Service to those about to be ordained,— "Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this office and ministration, to serve God, for the promoting of His glory, and the edifying of His people?" It is for this reason that, in the case of all those to be admitted to the higher office of the ministry, we earnestly pray that they might "receive the Holy Ghost, for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God." It is because we trust that you have pondered over this, that your desire would be to serve God in the ministry of His Son, to be men of God, "full of the Holy Ghost and of faith," like Barnabas, ready to say with Paul, "Yet not I, but the grace of God that is in me," that we regard with hope and joyful anticipation the services of this day. If on all of us, my Reverend Brethren, the Spirit of the Lord were to come mightily, as on Samson of old, then, as workers together with God, what might we not accomplish? As ambassadors, we have our message, to pray men "in Christ's stead, Be ye reconciled to God;" as stewards, we have our treasure, our portion of food to distribute to each; as preachers, we have

the oracles of the living God to unfold, in demonstration of the Spirit and in power.

And this would bring out to view another agency, by which many souls are irresistibly overcome — an agency to which thousands and tens of thousands of those in glory shall through eternity trace the first seeds of grace — we mean, the Word of the living God. It was the weapon by which the evil one was foiled by the Redeemer, and it is the weapon by which the Spirit still acts in robbing Satan of his spoils. It is described as “quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow.” It pierces the soul to the very quick, but into the wound so opened it pours the oil and balm of heavenly consolation. It then feeds the soul with food convenient for it; it comforts under every sorrow, builds up and establishes in the faith; it is a word in season to guide and direct in every varying circumstance. It becomes “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” It is the armoury from which we draw our spiritual weapons; it is the wisdom of God, which makes foolish the wisdom of this world.

But, besides the Spirit and the Word, there is a human agency of mighty power, through the

blessing of God, in winning souls. Small in itself and mean, and oftentimes despised, it is the instrument to which God has attached precious promises, and to which He would give distinguished honour. When we think of the agents and the effects which follow, we can only ascribe the glory to God, and feel that the excellency of the power must be of Him, and not of us. We can only say, "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight; it hath pleased thee, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe." There is, however, a marvellous adaptation here, which commends itself to our finer feelings and our calmer judgment, and which, if duly contemplated, ought to lead us to the most untiring energy. Who should better preach salvation than the saved? Who should better warn the tempted than they who have suffered under temptation? Who should better declare the terrors of judgment than they who have felt the powers of the world to come? Who should better lead to the foot of the cross than those who have found there "joy and peace in believing?"

What a blessed view of Preaching this, that it is God's ordinance to win souls! How anxious ought the preacher to be "to find out acceptable words," even words of delight (marg.). There are some admirable sermons, of two centuries back, which bear the title "Words to

Win Souls :”* now let us remember, that this is but the definition of what all sermons should be, words to win souls. It is the exhibition of the Saviour, His love, His pity for lost souls, His death, His intercession, His glory in and with His people through eternity: it is this which wins souls. He that does this with most of unction and persuasive power, wins gently, as “with cords of a man and bands of love;” attracted in his own heart to the cross, he acts as a magnet to attract others. It was told me by more than one of him with whom I first laboured in the Gospel,† that it was his winning and loving exhibition of divine truth which first led them to the cross; and it is, I believe, this affectionate tenderness, this yearning for souls, breathed from lips touched by the Spirit, which is most eminently blessed by God. Yet let us remember that it is the whole counsel of God which is to win souls; we are to mingle the terrors of the Lord with the gentler entreaty; we are to imitate the Saviour, one while weeping over Jerusalem, at another moment boldly rebuking the Jews; we are to copy the Apostle, with his milk for babes and stronger meat for the more matured, becoming “all things to all men, that he might by all means save some.”

* “Words to Win Souls.” Twelve Sermons, preached 1620–1650. Edited by the Rev. T. S. Millington.

† The Rev. John Jones, for thirty-five years minister of St. Andrew’s Church, Liverpool; now Archdeacon of Liverpool.

Study then, beloved brethren, this heavenly art of winning souls, for it alone is true wisdom. Wise, surely, it is to have the Lord on our side, to be engaged in doing battle for him against the hosts of evil; wise to labour for eternity rather than time; wise to lead another to cast his crown at the Redeemer's feet, to secure thus another and another partaker of endless joy; wise, God aiding us, to diminish the number of the wretched and those eternally lost, and fill heaven with worshippers from redeemed and saved souls.

In conclusion, remember that this, brethren, is incumbent in measure on all; for example is very winning, as well as the exhortation of the pulpit. Let others see that you have been with Jesus by the graces of a holy life, and you will soon be made the blessed instrument of winning some soul. Enter, then, on this blessed course, and make it a growing principle of your renewed life. If all who bear the name of the Lord Jesus regarded it as their high privilege, how many would be added to the number of God's believing people in a single year! Let, then, parental example become a living power, active and energetic for the Lord; let friendship be more than a bare name, let its highest pleasure be to bring others to the Redeemer; and then the present year might be one of holy endeavour, and we doubt not of sure success. Then our hope and ambition would centre not on the objects with which we are encompassed here, but on those unfading glories

which are at God's right hand. We should be laying up treasures in heaven, and each year would only carry us nearer to the land where our heart and affections are already fixed.

In the past year you may have experienced losses. Such is the case with many; they look back, and, though surrounded with unnumbered blessings, they cannot banish the thought that one is not, that their little circle has been lessened, a familiar face wanting. Such is the lesson and warning of each year, teaching us better than the preacher's voice the wisdom of saving our own souls, and seeking to win, if God permit, the souls of others.

Each year proves how uncertain are both the time and the manner of death. The last gathered into this churchyard was a little one, whose cheerful face had gladdened us but a short time, who had been brought hither in the fond hope that his strength might be renewed by his native air, and yet a few weeks' illness carries him off.* And you surely have not forgotten how, during the course of the year, the swift messenger of death, which might have overtaken any of us, took one away on the evening of God's blessed day, who had learned, with eagerness, his hymn that morning, and then joined in the worship of the sanctuary with God's people. In a moment his spirit was called home,† and, in the interval

* See Appendix B (1).

† See Appendix B (2).

between these deaths, our feelings of Christian sympathy were awakened by the loss of one, coming to settle in this land on an errand of mercy, anxious to cast in her lot with those who forsake all for Christ, borne in safety over the perils of the mighty deep, and yet, within but an hour of reaching the spot where one was anxiously waiting to take her the final stage of her journey, the hand of death arrests her. As in the former case the lightning, so here the tempest, the strong gale at sunrise, carries her away, and her body lies in the lake until that hour when the sea is to give up the dead that are in it.*

These cases we mention, because in each we may believe that death was gain; their souls, we humbly trust, are saved, and there is hope, yea, abundant consolation in their death. But surely these cases would teach us, as we enter on a new year, that in it the youngest present to-day may be the first taken, that in such an hour as we think not the call of death may come to any.

But, while it is incumbent on all to win souls, and to be as epistles of Christ, known and read of all men, it is, brethren beloved, who are about to bind yourselves to the service of the sanctuary—it is your very calling, the element of your daily life. May the prayer of the excellent writer on the Christian Ministry be imprinted on

* See Appendix B (3).

your memories, and fulfilled in your experience :
 “God grant that no minister of Christ may spend
 a day without labouring to win at least one soul
 for heaven !”

We send you forth, then, to win souls ; how
 many may be given to each of you we cannot tell ;
 O Lord, thou knowest. Much of your future
 success may depend on your earnest and effectual
 prayers this day. Let your cry be for many to
 that Saviour, who sees in them of the fruit of the
 travail of His soul and is satisfied. Let the
 return of each new year be a period of solemn
 reckoning. You cannot forget the day on which
 you pledged yourself to the work of winning
 souls ; each anniversary will force itself on your
 recollection, and perhaps the words of our text
 may arise up before you, and suggest the question,
 Where are the souls won ? Can I point to them
 on earth, the seals and tokens of my ministry—
 can I point to them in heaven, gone before to the
 rest of the Lord ?

To each of you there is a separate sphere.
 We send you forth again, beloved brother, to
 your own countrymen, and God Almighty give
 you favour in their sight.* We send you forth
 with a higher commission, and more adequately
 furnished with a larger portion of God’s word to
 lay before them. Twice you have endeavoured
 to fix and plant yourself, and twice the effort has

* See Appendix C (1).

proved unsuccessful. Now there may be a providence in this; God may be carrying you about to bear testimony in each spot. He may yet be unwilling to chain you down, and if so we fetter you not; but as you go, preach to each and all saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

To you again, my beloved brother, who, after a year of faithful and laborious occupation, come before us for deserved promotion to-day, a double vineyard is intrusted.* Your contact with souls is unceasing. With the little ones in the week, with those of every age, and rank, and condition on the Sabbath; blessed opportunities of scattering the good seed! I cannot doubt that in so large a school, the affectionate explanation of the first principles of divine truth, the breaking the bread of life into fragments as they are able to bear it, will win some of them, who will at the last day arise to call you blessed. Nor is there a better preparation for usefulness in the pulpit, than that necessary simplicity forced upon you through the week. Those are often found the most effective preachers, whose experience has been much drawn from intercourse with the young.

More solemn still is the occasion for you, my younger brother. You lay hold for the first time to-day of the ark of the living God; you go to a new, but not altogether an untried work.†

* See Appendix C (2).

† See Appendix C (3).

Follow out the method already adopted this winter. On arriving at the Saskatchewan, an Indian parish will be before you, the means and appliances ready to your hand,—the church, the school, the lively oracles. Others have laboured, you will enter into their labours. Lest it should weigh too heavily on you, you will be associated for a time with one of long experience and full knowledge of his countrymen. Your great work will be to build up the living stones, as a spiritual temple. You have inherited a certain amount of medical knowledge and skill; regard that as a special gift, for you will be many hundred miles from any physician. The knowledge has been of signal use, especially in the Chinese missions; it has opened the way to many hearts, and it is not too much to say, that instrumentally it has led to the winning of souls. Be it so in your case. Labour, however, for the body only with a view to the soul; promote the temporal good of the poor Indian in every way, but let the condition of his soul through the long ages of eternity be the one thought lying nearest to your heart.

And now, beloved, when we all go hence from the house of God to our respective duties, let us feel that we have one common work, one contest in which each and all may obtain victory. It is because of this warfare that God still spares our earth, and adds one year after another to its duration, that some souls may yet be gathered in

before the great day of final judgment. May, then, the Lord bless and keep you through the present year; and may He sanctify you, body, soul, and spirit. May He give you in it increasing happiness in Himself, and of worldly happiness what He sees expedient, so that all things may work together for your present and everlasting good.

In vain, however, have our words been spoken this morning, unless they lead you to pray very earnestly for yourselves, for us, and for those still in darkness. Watch over the pearl of inestimable value committed to your keeping. Is your own soul safe? If not, let there be no delay; let the opening year arouse you to give attention to the one thing needful; and rest not, until you have made "your calling and election sure." But, if this is already your great concern, pray for a large increase of grace, that you may live adorning the doctrine of God your Saviour, and reflecting His glory; so that, whenever death may come, your soul may be found without spot and blemish at the day of His appearance. And pray for us, for a heavier weight is laid upon us, for we watch for your souls as those that must give account; we have to save ourselves and those who hear us. But, if you are fellow-workers with us, our burden is lightened, and the pleasure of the Lord prospers in our hands. Pray also for the heathen, for the time is short

during which their souls can be won ; let us be more active to win than Satan to destroy ; and let us think of that blessed time, when, with some saved souls, we hope to enter for ever into the joy of the Lord.

APPENDIX.

A, page 7.

THE following passage from a sermon preached in London during the earlier part of the year, describes in very forcible language that which may be termed the characteristic of the year, and on which we had dwelt in anticipation at its commencement:—

“ God has given to us, in the present day, opportunities which would have filled the minds of the Apostles with praise and wonder. The day may be characterised as the age of openings; for never since the creation have there been openings so manifold, or so magnificent, as in this year 1855. Vast continents which, a few years ago, were sealed against the Gospel, are now open to it. It is scarcely fifty years ago that Wilberforce was called to contend for liberty to send missions forth to India; but now nearly the whole of those vast dominions, with the Punjaub and Burmah, are open without impediment. It is scarcely ten years ago that China was sealed against us; but now old barriers seem rapidly to be breaking, if not already broken, and the Chinese Wall is no longer able to exclude the Bible. Even Turkey seems to be giving way; and we begin to see as one result of our present anxieties, that the whole Ottoman empire is being rapidly laid open to missionary effort.”—*Gifts of the Kingdom*, Lect. x., REV. E. HOARE.

B, page 23.

1. John, youngest son of John Swanston, Esq, Chief Factor, Hudson's Bay Company, Fort Garry. He had only arrived in the Red River in October, and had scarcely attended the Collegiate School a week when he was seized with severe illness, which carried him off in less than a month.

2. George Horsfall, a young Indian boy of great promise, from Fort Pelly. He had lived on the establishment for upwards of a year; and was on his way from St. John's to my own house, when he was struck by lightning on the footpath below St. Cross, on the evening of Sunday, July 15th. He appeared to have died instantaneously, and was only slightly scorched along the breast. A picket of the adjoining fence, within a couple of yards of him, bore the marks of fire having passed over it.

3. Miss Greenleaf, sister-in-law of the Rev. W. Stagg. She had come out to join and assist her sister by the Prince of Wales, and had reached York Factory in safety. On her passage thence, when crossing Lake Winnipeg, within an hour of meeting her brother-in-law, who was waiting to convey her to Fairford, she was drowned by the upsetting of the boat on the sandy bar off Berens River. Her body never rose to the surface, and every effort to recover it proved at the time ineffectual. The lake then setting fast, the search was necessarily abandoned; and it was not until six months after the delivery of this sermon, and nearly nine after its immersion in the water, that the body was found by an Indian, and brought to Mr. Cummings the post-master, who carefully interred it for the time in the

small burying-ground near the Fort. It was comparatively but little changed, having been preserved during this long period by the intense frost and the low temperature of the water.

C, page 25.

1. The Rev. James Settee, admitted to Priest's orders. He had been first appointed to commence a station on the Red-deer's River, but the height of the water rendered this impracticable. He then attempted to settle near Shoal River, but the Indians did not gather around, so as to give sufficient encouragement. He is now placed at Fairford as his head-quarters, from which he is to itinerate, and undertake missionary tours to Berens River, Shoal River, and Fort Pelly.

2. The Rev. W. West Kirkby, formerly of the Metropolitan Training College, Highbury, ordained Priest. He is master of the Church Missionary Society's Model Training School, and assistant minister of St. Andrew's Church, Red River.

3. The Rev. H. George, son of Henry George, Esq., Surgeon, Kensington, ordained Deacon. While preparing for orders, he laboured as a catechist at Fort Alexander. Owing to my approaching departure from the diocese, he was subsequently ordained Priest on June 1st. He then proceeded at once to take charge of the Indian Station at Christ Church, Cumberland, where he is for a time associated with the Rev. Henry Budd.