



"Every thing that's viewed on earth, Well pondered, leads the soul to heaven."

THEY WONDER WHY.

One of the things now being wondered at by elderly people is, why our preaching does not produce instantaneous awakenings as once it did. The reason is, because Zion doth not travail. There was a time which came far down into the years of my life, when the Methodist Church was all the time in religious travail for the salvation of souls. Methodists came out of their closets and groves of prayer to hear the Word, imploring the blessing of God upon it—came expecting the power of God to come down upon the congregation in answer to prayer, and almost always went home blessing and praising God for his wonderful goodness and grace. And it at any time they had a dark and wretched meeting, they went away full of fears that they in some way had offended their Lord and Savior—and there were great searchings of heart. They never rested until God restored to them the joy of his salvation. These souls, burdened for the salvation of other souls, and feeling that the Word could have free course when it was pledged with the Spirit's power—these souls—in travail for sinners, prayed for the gift of the Holy Spirit, and it was given, and revivals of religion came constantly on.

I have seen a faithful pastor hold protracted prayer meetings twice in every year, begging and praying his people to come together and pray for Almighty help; but four-fifths of his members never cut red one of these daily prayers during the four years of his acceptable pastorate. The few that attended were the same persons daily, proving that this four-fifths mass of drones did not even drop in, but persistently ignored the service. This has been the history of most of our city churches. We fear the woe pronounced by the prophet Amos is already a seal doom on these indifferent minds: "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion."

What God requires to be done by a Church cannot be done by a fraction of that Church. They are not the Church. Every member of the Church is individually bound to work in his Lord's vineyard himself; and he cannot have his work done by another. Common sense, therefore, tells us that when a majority of Church members voluntarily refuse to attend daily prayer-meetings for the gift of the Holy Ghost, or the preached Word and on the people that there may be a revival of religion in the congregation, they destroy the Church by a voluntary absence from her most pressing calls to duty. In these churches, while this neglect of Church order and of Christian life is indulged in, the gospel is virtually annulled.

Revivals of religion may not be looked for except in connection with a praying, entreating Church, when the Church, as the Church, meets, and by prayer and supplication beseeches the throne of the heavenly grace for the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Church and congregation, in its full demonstration and power, so unmistakably that the faith of the Church might stand in the power of God, might feel in its true sense that revivals of religion do not come of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.—Dr. L. Pierce

A PREACHER OF THE LAST CENTURY.

The Rev. William Grimshaw, about five generations ago, rose against a century more void of faith than any which Christian England had ever seen. He had struggled out of darkness into light. His parish—Haworth—was, therefore, the radiating centre of ceaseless Christian labor. The region around about him was the blackest in Great Britain. Wild as the gorse on their hungry hills, was the population that spread all over Yorkshire. Vice in every form stalked through the manufacturing towns. In country and town, on market days and

Sundays, at farmer's firesides and ale-house drinking-rooms; men and women, the most educated and well-to-do in the neighborhood, partook more of barbarism than of civilization. Against all this, William Grimshaw, single-handed, took up arms. With a slice of bread and an onion for a day's food, he would trudge over the moors from dawn to summer-dusk, in search of souls astray; and, after a night's rest under a grain-stack or on a hay-lot, day after day would continue his work. To visit the sick, he often, during the night, crossed the road less wastes in storms of snow. On preaching circuits, he was certain to be present wherever expected. It was no hardship for him to preach thirty times a week. He staid only to deliver his message, took refreshments in his hand and posted on his way.

Of course a man so much in earnest could not preach otherwise than well. Crowds flocked to hear him. All Yorkshire was stirred. In every company, by the roadside, in the fens, at the tables of the gentry,—never was man more on the alert for souls. He replied to the infidel nobleman, "The fault is in your heart, sir, not your head," he said in a shop, where among numbers was the Squire, a debaucher,—"The devil is busy in this parish: I can touch with my stick a man guilty of adultery: the end of these things will be death." Whitefield, Wesley, and all the reformers they were leading, crowded up the bleak hills of Haworth to hear Father Grimshaw preach. They took possession of his house on Saturday nights. Bare rooms and latten fare did not keep the curious away. And when they crowded him out of his sleeping apartments into his barn, and out of the church into the church yard, he was all in his glory and got up early on Monday morning to brush the shoes of the far-come travelers. Addressing exhortations to strangers, leaving his pulpit during the singing before sermon to drive loiterers into church, and by night and by day addressing himself to his Master's business, he at last so far conquered the heathenism of York-shire, that twenty-four dissenting churches were established within his itinerating circuit, and more than five hundred communicants often attended his administration of the usual sacraments.

His power over his parishioners grew to be extraordinary. "The parson is coming," was a cry that scattered gamblers and drunkards out of every ale-house. Mechanics dared not work, nor shopkeepers sell, nor cricketers play, nor business men travel, nor innkeepers furnish spirits, on the Sabbath. He reconnoitered the fields to do away with Sunday pleasure parties. He appeared in person at a Lord's day horse-race, and turned it into a meeting for prayer. Visiting in disguise an assemblage of young people for pleasure on Sabbath evening, he stayed their proceedings, took down every name, and made the occasion fitting for one of his most earnest sermons. Crowds attended his daily morning meetings, held at five in the summer and six in winter.

THE RACES STOPPED.

The Haworth people tell to this day,—one hundred and eighteen years since it happened,—how old Grimshaw put an end to the races by his prayers. There were in the parish two annual feasts. At one of these, innkeepers and sporting men were accustomed to make a subscription for a horse race. These races hindered Mr. Grimshaw's work. More than every thing else, they damaged good morals. They became scenes of gross profligacy. Mr. Grimshaw had endeavored to stop them. His expostulations and rebukes, personal appeals and preaching, influence as minister of the parish, and authority as magistrate in the ward-mote, had failed. He was heard with patience. His character was respected. The answers made were respectful. Nobody cared to provoke the parson's indignation. But it was determined that the old custom should not be abandoned. The subscription list was made up, and the announcement for handicaps made public. Unable to prevail with men, Mr. Grimshaw appealed to God. For two weeks before the fair he made it, in public and private, a sub-

ject of fervent prayer that these evil proceedings might be stopped. At the appointed time, the usual crowds came in from town and country. Booths were erected around the race course, horses entered, judges appointed, a grand stand built, and bets offered, taken and hedged. The morning was fair, and numbers of the gentry and nobility had driven in to witness the sport. All at once dark clouds began to gather in the heavens, lightnings flashed and peals of thunder followed, excessive rain poured down, and the multitude was dispersed. Three days there was no cessation. The clouds emptied their waters incessantly. Of course, the races did not take place.—N. Y. Observer.

FINANCIAL RELIGIOUS DEVICES.

BY DR. BOND.

A respected correspondent writes to know our opinion about the propriety of holding tournaments for the purpose of assisting to build Churches. We had not heard of tournaments in the character of financial religious devices. We had heard of benevolent balls and pious lotteries, and sanctified bazaars, but not of consecrated tournaments. Now we believe as St. Paul did about some common practices in his day, that tournaments are nothing at all to religion. If a number of young men think it worth while to spend months in training to compete with one another in the noble trial of poking a broom handle through a curtain ring, and if the contestants in this pretty game can call themselves "knights" and their play a "tournament," without a keen sense of the ridiculous; in short, if the burlesque of the old knightly contest can be enjoyed, we see no impropriety in it more than in any other juvenile frolic. When, however, balls are added to the tournament we have very great objection to them. We abhor balls, and particularly public balls. They are evil and only evil to body, mind and spirit. Dancing is the ultimate provision of exhausted society for the brainless. Philosophically, it is but a part of the grand enterprise of the human animal against the human being which is working itself out in practical demonstration in this world's great madhouse.

Now to give balls for Church purposes is simply to profess to do evil that good may come. But it is not true. Nobody holds tournaments for Church purposes. The effort is only to tax the Church for the tournament, not only by getting money for the tournament that would not otherwise be given, but in bringing the Church to sanction amusements of doubtful propriety. We are opposed to all these proffers of aid from the opposite party. There are no communities in this country too poor to provide themselves with places of worship. For many years the house where we are writing was the only Methodist preaching-place for this neighborhood. The house was not large, yet it was large enough, for Asbury and the great men of old to do the work of their apostleship in. Any community can build a comfortable log cabin or shed in a few weeks that would accommodate them in hearing preaching. But people are not satisfied with the necessities of life in religion more than in other things. We all want to have Churches finer than we are willing to pay for.

There is another thing on our mind about Church building. We are measuring our success by the number of Churches we are building, oblivious of the fact that we are starving the preachers to build them. It would be a curious calculation, and the result of it would be startling, to estimate how much of the small salaries allotted to our preachers in the Baltimore Conference has been held back on account of the expense of building Churches. Now we would be glad to see Churches built wherever they could be used. But we protest against building them at the cost of the preachers. The first necessity is not a Church, but a minister; and the minister should be adequately supported. We know circuits where the ministry are so pinched that their life is intolerable, and they are preparing to leave the work, yet the people are building Churches, and building them with the money due to the preacher. Dear friends, let us be plain with you. God owns the ministers. They are his servants. He hires them to you for wages, the amount of which you fix yourself; and you owe that money to man and God. It is not optional with you to pay or not to pay. The official members who promise it are bound to use all possible efforts to procure it from the people. We confess we are more concerned about the support of the ministers than we are about building Churches. They are for the convenience of the people and will be provided. But the preachers are to a large extent forgotten. Their wants are not obtrusive. The people are not made uncomfortable by their privations. But we may rest assured, that if a congregation should build a church as big as St. Peter's and neglect a proper provision for their preacher, the splendid place of worship would be of little use to them. "Do unto others as you would that they should do to you," is a very large part of religion, and the part about the genuineness of which there is least difficulty in decision. Depend upon it, if we do not love (not sentimentally—for the Bible does not know anything about sentiment separate from facts)—if we do not love our minister whom we see, we do not love his Master whom we do not see; and when we send away our preacher in debt and destitution, because we have not paid what we promised him, inasmuch as we do it to the least of these we do it unto Him. Many will say in that day, "Lord, Lord, I have not built Churches, we raffled for dolls, and went to tournaments, and danced at balls, and starved preachers for thy sake." But the King shall say, "When I was hungered ye gave me no meat."—Baltimore C. Advocate.

the world. It is not the preachers who do more than their duty, but it is others who do less. They are not to be checked and pitted who set upon the principle that "it is more blessed to give than to receive; and their generosity is a converse to those who come far short of the Scriptural measure. Wesley's example in this direction was no more than just and expedient; and Asbury was never more apostolic than when he parted with his watch to help one poor brother and gave his shirt to aid another.—St. Louis C. Advocate.

LIVING EPISTLES.

How important that Christians, as living epistles, which walk and trade and stir about in public places should be correctly printed! Yet how many of these living epistles have been printed from battered type, from mixed fonts, on spotted paper, and in dim ink. But after all, orthodoxy is safer in the consecrated heart, than in the theological library.

BORROWING TROUBLE.

How many thousands are there, whose energies are paralyzed by borrowing trouble! If they are not very unfortunate to-day, they will be so to-morrow. They spend so much of their time groaning that they have but little left for the performance of the duties of life. Such are not the persons who accomplish much.

TROUBLE.

I compare the troubles of a year to a bundle of faggots. God unties the bundle and gives us first one stick. This we might easily manage if we could only take the bundle appointed for us each day; but we choose to increase our trouble by carrying yesterday's stick over again to-day, and adding to-morrow's burden to our load before we are required to bear it.

THE CLOCK STRIKES ONE.

A young gentleman in one of the fashionable circles of British society, was, on a gay occasion, attending a splendid ball. In the midst of the music and the dance, he was as light-hearted and thoughtless as the throng around him, when as though a messenger from heaven had been sent to him, the clock struck one. That fine passage of Dr. Young immediately flashed upon his mind:

The bell strikes one. We take no note of time, But from its less. To give it then a tongue Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke, I feel the solemn sound. If heard aright, It is the knell of my departed hours; Where are they? with the years beyond the floor? It is the signal that demands dispatch. How much is to be done! my hopes and fears Start up alarmed, and o'er life's narrow verge Look down, on what?—a fathomless abyss; A dread eternity.

Conviction seized the youth. He left the gay circle, and retired to his chamber. The result was a saving change, and for the rest of his life—thus far—he has found, in the pursuit of holy and heavenly pleasures, higher joys than the world of fashionable folly and sin ever gave him, when he was its most ardent votary.

QUESTIONS FOR THOSE CONCERNED.

Is it decent for a man to let the hair of his face grow to such a length, and in such a direction, that he is obliged, repeatedly, to pull it out of his mouth with his fingers while at the table taking his food?

Is it decent or religious for a minister or member of the Church to conform so far to the fashion of the world in letting the hair of his face grow so that he is obliged, at the sacramental table, to dip it into the cup?—West. Meth.

BUT TO BE BEATEN.

A good story is told in "Kirk's Life of Charles Wesley." Illustrative of the keen, quick ear of Charles Wesley, just as he was commencing an out-door service with a hymn, a number of half-drunken sailors joined the company and struck up a song called "Nancy Dawson." The hymn was drowned, but Charles was not to be beaten. A hymn was instantly composed and at the very next service, when his Mac-jacket friends were ready to repeat their coarse opposition, he gave out:

"Listed into the cause of sin, Why should a good be evil? Music, alas! too oft has been Pressed to obey the devil; Drunken, or lewd, or light, the lay Flowed to the son's undoing; Widened and strewn with flowers the way Down to eternal ruin."

"Jesus the soul of music is, His is the noblest passion; Jesus' name in joy and peace, Happiness and salvation; Jesus' name the devil can raise, Show us our sins forgiven, Fill us with all the life of grace, Carry us up to heaven."

There are seven stanzas to the hymn. The tune of "Nancy Dawson" was instantly set to these chery and telling lines, and the poor mariners finding "all the wind taken out of their sails," gave up the contest as hopeless, and allowed him to finish the service in peace.

MUSIC—ITS MEANING.

Music begins where speech leaves off through it the inmost spirit—all that is inexpressible and yet of most account in us—can give sign of itself. Hence, the loftiest poetry, that magical something which distinguishes the utterances of genius in its high hour, is analogous to music, and sets the fine chords vibrating somewhat in the same way.

Did you ever step within the portal of a vast and crowded Church in the hour of prayer? In vain you sought to catch the syllables of the far off, pale, spiritual looking man. What if you could not hear them? You heard him; his spirit, his tones, took possession of your spirit, till, losing thought of self, it went up with the rest. Of that sort is the eloquence, the influence of music.—Dwight.

THE LONELINESS OF CHRIST.

Did you ever think of Christ when he spoke of being alone and instantly said that he was not alone? You will find, in the Berlin gallery, one of Raphael's pictures of Madonna, in which there is an exquisite seizing of one of the most fugitive passages of time. The mother has a book, and she is reading and the child is putting its hand in her bosom, and she has the expression of being absorbed in the book, and yet of having sufficiently noticed the child to look up. Her expression is caught just at that subtle moment of time, when she is thinking of the book which she is reading, and yet not quite thinking of it, but thinking of the child. The whole picture presents that thought, and you see it clearly. And where Christ speaks of himself in this instance, it is one of those subtle transitions where he is speaking of himself in his relation to the world, and he speaks of himself as being alone, and yet, instantly lifting his thought to God, says, "Not alone." This sublime discrimination, how full it is of meaning and comfort, and consolation to us, in our various relations of life.

The first lesson of the devil with a boy is to get him to be ashamed of his innocence; and when he succeeds in this he gets a young lad to be ashamed of his good habits, and the maxims which his father and mother have been for years endeavoring to fix upon his mind, that led him in terrible and imminent peril.