



Bodleian Libraries

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

This book is part of the collection held by the Bodleian Libraries and scanned by Google, Inc. for the Google Books Library Project.

For more information see:

<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dbooks>

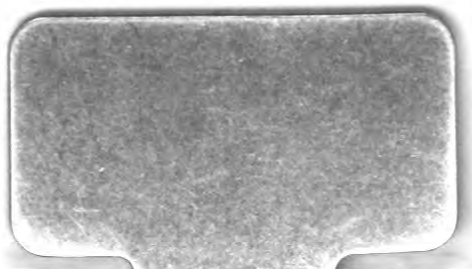


This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 UK: England & Wales (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) licence.

THE
GREAT PROBLEM
OF THE TIMES:

*Being the fifty Guinea Prize Essay
on the Churches Relation to
Evangelistic Work.*

EDWARD SMITH.





THE GREAT PROBLEM

OF

THE TIMES:

BEING THE FIFTY GUINEA PRIZE ESSAY
ON THE CHURCHES' RELATION TO
EVANGELISTIC WORK.

BY

EDWARD SMITH,

AUTHOR OF "AN EVANGELIST'S NOTE-BOOK."

LONDON:

T. WOOLMER, 2, CASTLE STREET, CITY ROAD, E.C.,
AND 66, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

—
1883.

1330. e. 2.



P R E F A C E.

ABOUT eighteen months ago a publication of the statistics of attendance, or, rather, of *non-attendance*, upon our places of worship in various large centres of population provoked much comment, and excited widespread alarm. As an immediate result of this the following offer was made.

THE CHURCHES' RELATION TO EVANGELISTIC WORK.

PRIZE ESSAYS OF 100 GUINEAS.

The Proprietors of the "Christian" offer Three Prizes, of Fifty Guineas, Thirty Guineas, and Twenty Guineas, for the best Series of Articles on the above important subject. Full particulars will be found below.

In view of the great work of Evangelisation now in progress in Great Britain, as well as in other parts of the world, it becomes a question of the utmost importance, How and where are the new converts to be housed and nursed and fed? To a large extent they are brought to God in tents, in the open air, in theatres, circuses, music-halls, and other neutral buildings not in connection with the Churches. But these are their proper home and school; for they are the living stones of which the Churches should be built up. But not all the Churches are prepared to take them in; while some receive them gladly, others make no provision for them, or offer them only a chilly welcome.

In order to the consideration of this vital question, and others

akin to it, the PROPRIETORS of THE CHRISTIAN offer three prizes of FIFTY GUINEAS, THIRTY GUINEAS, and TWENTY GUINEAS, for the three best series of ARTICLES on the following subjects, and others collateral thereto :—

The condition of the Churches and their modes of working in reference to Evangelisation. Are they adapted to the present circumstances, or are new departures necessary ?

The halls of learning in which young men are educated as ministers, and means by which these may be made more efficient in training students for evangelistic and pastoral work.

The qualifications of office-bearers, and the responsibilities of private members.

The Sabbath-school : means for securing the Christian character of the teachers, and the conversion of the scholars.

Prayer-meetings and Bible-readings ; social and conversational gatherings ; open-air and cottage meetings ; the recognition of strangers ; house-to-house visitation : and whatever other means can be employed for winning souls and training them to win others.

The improvement of present methods and the suggestion of new ones.

On these and collateral subjects, information and counsel are desired in the proposed ARTICLES. The mode of treatment is left to the writers, but experience and facts will be preferred to theories. The total number of ARTICLES to be about twelve, each in length equal to about two pages of THE CHRISTIAN. The decision as to merit will lie with the Editor and others who will assist him. Writers are requested to withhold their names, and to adopt a *nom de plume*, sending real name in sealed envelope, to be opened after the award has been made. The ARTICLES to be sent in, addressed to the Editor of THE CHRISTIAN, 12, Paternoster Buildings, London, *not later* than August 31st, 1882.

As, at that time, I was in possession of rather more leisure than is usual in a Wesleyan Minister's life, I, as I had fairly earned my spurs in various fields of labour and of conflict, felt it my duty to take place among the competitors, and in a few months received an intimation that out of the seventy essays sent in those under my motto of "Reconciliation" had been adjudged

worthy of the first prize. They have already been published in the pages of the "Christian," and now, by the kind permission of the proprietors of that periodical, I am putting them into book form. The paper at the end is on the same subject as are the articles that precede it. Some little repetition of thought was, therefore, all but unavoidable. In "saying my say" on the great problem of the times, I have the quiet consciousness that from the very commencement of my ministry I have been trying to practise the main thoughts and convictions to which I here give utterance. My one hope is that this little publication will do something to hasten the day when the Church shall put on the "garment of praise" for the "spirit of heaviness."

EDWARD SMITH.

FAIRFIELD, MANCHESTER,
October, 1883.



CONTENTS.

	PAGE
CHAPTER I.	
THE PREVALENT EVIL	1
CHAPTER II.	
THE POSSIBLE GOOD	11
CHAPTER III.	
ONE BY ONE	20
CHAPTER IV.	
BRITAIN'S MANHOOD	29
CHAPTER V.	
ADAPTATIONS	38
CHAPTER VI.	
THE TYRANNY OF REFINEMENT	48
CHAPTER VII.	
THE LORD'S IRREGULARS	58

	PAGE
CHAPTER VIII.	
COMBINATION	67
CHAPTER IX.	
RELIGIOUS ECONOMY	77
CHAPTER X.	
SPOILS SECURED	87
CHAPTER XI.	
SIDE HELPS	96
CHAPTER XII.	
REFLECTIONS	106

THE RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE EXISTING AMONG THE LABOURING CLASSES, AND THE BEST MEANS OF MEETING IT	117
---	-----

THE

Churches' Relation to Evangelistic Work.

CHAPTER I.

THE PREVALENT EVIL.

“The cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord.”—
GENESIS xix. 13.

“Mother! when, brief years ago,
You were happy in your child,
Smiling on him as he smiled,
Thought you he would perish so?”

IT is best to begin with facing the worst—at least as far as we can discern it; the *absolute* worst is to us unknowable. If we could compute the value of the inborn and possible glories of a redeemed soul, then could we estimate more accurately what is meant by its degradation and vitiation. As it is, however, we perceive but the faint colouring and dim outlines of the vision of sin, either as it appears in the world or in the separate soul.

A calm contemplation of the darker facts of modern English life, as far as they are ascertainable, is, just now, a stern necessity. The cowardice which would invite us to elude some of these facts is not without its plausible excuses, but, tested by the touchstone of “the practical,” such cowardice is un wisdom itself. In olden time, the authorities of a certain city threatened by enemies passed a law that even if the foe should be actually sighted, any inhabitant announcing his approach should suffer the penalty of death. There were local and political reasons for the edict, but the consequence

was that the city was captured and rased to the ground. So much for the policy which, from any motive whatever, refuses to recognise the *real* condition of matters.

Certain statistics as to the attendance on religious ordinances of this so-called "pattern nation" have produced a startling effect. The pride of the Church has been sorely wounded, and her boastings as to the efficiency of her methods have been stilled. Her worst fears have been more than realised, and her creed and constitution have become the butt for the mocking criticism of her enemies and pseudo-friends. She is now exposed to the double danger—on the one hand, of despondent fatalism ("things may even go as they must"); on the other, of feeling compelled to resort to desperate or questionable expedients. By viewing things as they are, without panic and without extenuation, we may succeed in propounding some methods which will be both eligible and successful.

The revelations of non-attendance have been principally confined to large and moderately-sized towns. London and the rural districts have not been tabulated. A census Sabbath for the metropolis would, we fear, be yet more suggestive of indifference, dissoluteness, and decay. "Is this the city that men call the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth?" And neither are the villages Arcadias religiously. Any man who has been employed as an evangelist in country localities has his own sad tale to tell. True, he finds that "the gentry" attend public worship with an amount of regularity and with comparatively few exceptions; but there is no disguising the fact that this habit of theirs is commonly little more than a sop to the properties. Week-day remissness contradicts Sunday observance.

The farming interest, too—the cultivators of the soil—present a heavy proportion of neglecters of moral cultivation. Among the labourers and rustic artisans that proportion becomes still heavier; and our quick-eyed evangelist cannot but perceive that non-attendance on religious services both implies and leads to much that is grievous to the Holy Ghost.

A lifting of the veil of quietness which hangs about everything discloses many grave offences against the law of God.

As soon as we approach the towns Satan's plots seem to thicken, and his followers more than ever outnumber those of Jesus. In the large centres the heart of each modern Babylon is almost forsaken by the saints. Godliness leads to sobriety and to additional power of mind, and so prosperity is secured. To the prosperous a great temptation is presented. Trams and railways invite a movement towards or into the suburbs, and thus the salt which once seasoned the thronging myriads extracts itself from them and goes where it is not nearly so much needed. Irish Papists, Jews, and foreigners join the lowest of the people in taking up the vacant places. Their influence on the English population is deplorable. They do much to disintegrate by their evil example the results of past Christian labour. The nominally Protestant either yield to an almost unbridled exercise of pernicious appetite, or become the slaves of lethargy, until there is found in these our fellow-immortals scarcely a remnant of past perception of God, or a vestige of thought about eternity.

Many out of the labouring classes also become part of the suburban populations, and so do numbers of clerks and warehousemen. They are prone to become unsettled and shifty, to change residences, and to break up newly-formed associations. They get away from the direct influence of the Churches, except in so far as they are affected through the Sunday-school attended by their children. Almost invariably their religious feelings shrink from long disuse into mere apologies for what once they were. The fires of true conscience are gradually stamped out and a false conscience is formed, which sheds about them a wild-fire light, until at last the pathway is cleared and illumined for many positive iniquities. Sunday gardening abounds; the holy day becomes a holiday, and nothing more. The dwellers in suburban resort or watering-place are changed rapidly for the worse through the ill manners or morals of the recent comers. The

women leave much of their cleaning and cooking until church hours. The men read the newspaper and visit the temples of drink. Just as some pious neighbour begins to draw the family towards God, a new house is taken, and the Prince of Wrong, all but unhindered, is able to throw over them an enchantment more than ever hard to be dissipated.

The conduct of the young people belonging to the Sabbath schools is far from what it ought to be. The world's lures are eagerly darted at by a large number of the elder scholars. The open shop near the school entrance has acted as an efficient decoy. The child who there buys his sweets and cakes on the Lord's Day has been led to lower his sense of right. A cigarette there purchased, and in the mouth of a boy in his teens, tells of the advance of the work of corruption within. These are only the first steps of a long pilgrimage through the realm of the aliens. Sunday evenings in summer are spent in walking the streets or roaming the fields. The morals are evilly conditioned. An existence, partly butterfly, partly fleshly, is entered upon. Frivolity changes into pronounced wrong-doing. It is quite natural that those who willingly become part of the *foam* of society should eventually help to form its *dregs*. Gilded youth means with most guilty manhood and womanhood. Thus are the fledgelings of the Church attracted away from her wing and her nest, and exposed as a prey to the hawks and the weasels.

The educated and semi-educated furnish us with a landscape, some of whose salient features cause the faithful soul to feed upon the bread of sorrows. If the speech be an index of the state of the heart, such state is indeed a deplorable one. Oaths, slang, innuendos, sooty phrases, are abundant among the male sex. Athletics—in themselves healthy enough—are turned into publicans' traps for the youth of the Churches. Bicycling and tricycling lend their aid to Sabbath desecration. The flatterer is hearkened unto, and vain fancies about "intellectual superiority," "the truthfulness of Christianity not demonstrable to a mind like mine," are widely entertained. Servant girls who do a little reading, mechanics who take in

the evening paper and glance through its reviews, half-taught scions of well-to-do-families, talk glibly about the "impossibility of certitudes in religion." From quarters least expected we hear suspicions expressed and assertions made which prove that a shallow and epidemical scepticism is spreading.

Now and again we meet with some shining disposition whose glory is dimmed by its questionings and hollow theorisings. It *has* a world without a God, and so *is* a world without a God—a star which has broken from its orbit and is rolling and plunging towards mad chaos. But in the great majority of instances cavillings against the Bible mean world-love, and objections to religion are just pretexts for sensuality and idleness. The young man who is the leader of the "advanced thinkers" in the market town is far too "advanced" to take a jelly to that bed-ridden woman who gets the parish half-crown; and the foundryman who jeeringly calls a minister a "devil-blacker," usually prefers the pothouse to the little kitchen in which he might hear his children say their lessons in the evening.

We may here vary this method of rapid review of the prevalent evil, and by taking the people as they make up socially class after class, may get a perception of it still more strong and clear, and, like Chalmers in his "Natural Theology," by travelling in paths which cross some of the old ground may reach the same point of regretfulness. Not that we can hope to describe, or even to touch, all the facts; and besides, there is much that is absolutely unmentionable. Our cause will gain nothing by clashing with modesty.

The landed proprietors, successful merchants, and moneyed men generally pass before us. What is said will apply chiefly to those who are now most closely associated with city and commercial life. We are almost afraid to say how large a proportion of these we believe to be distinctly out of sympathy with religion;—while of the rest a large number are only its faint supporters. Driving for pleasure on the Sabbath, to the incalculable detriment of servants; billiard-playing, and transaction of business on the sacred day; scarcely concealed

contempt for the Book of God, are among the common delinquencies. Unwholesome rumours about the private doings of some of the occupants of hall or villa are in extensive circulation. The souls of the young men hardly mount above the discussion of the merits of cigars or race-horses; the meditations of the young ladies are about balls, lawn-tennis, and flirtations; even the little ones pick up the current notions and speeches, and put themselves very early into training for future insipidity, and habitual forgetfulness of God.

The upper stratum of the middle class may next be considered. It is almost entirely made up of self-made men, and of the members of respectable country families. On the whole, these are well disposed towards the Gospel. There are not wanting signs, however, that a process of unriveting is going on. The number of half-timers on the Lord's day is growing among all the denominations. "Once a day is enough," is a sentiment farther and farther removed from rarity. The controversies of the times—or their dismal echoes—are drunk in. The boarding-schools to which the young people are sent are often "the form of godliness without the power." No great anxiety is shown to place the home offshoots under tuition really pious. This is esteemed quite a secondary matter. A thin covering of the lacquer of religion is admired, and that is all.

No wonder, then, that undesirable companionships are formed, and practices worse than doubtful indulged in. No wonder that a "school sweepstakes," quietly arranged, proves the initiatory step in the direction of gambling; and that the sensational novel, whose presence in the box is winked at, creates a taste in the girl's mind which threatens to destroy the peace and practicalness of her after life. Those who are thus "respectably brought up," but whose religious bias is hardly at all encouraged, are in great peril, and are not seldom discovered afterwards among the roués of the cities, and the female inebriates in private asylums.

As to the remaining part of the middle class, little need be said. Some of its members form, perhaps, the most pleasant

part of God's Conservatory. Yet here also evil alarmingly prevails. Political excitement is rife; political clubs abound; and much time and energy are unduly absorbed. The nets of profitless or harmful amusement are spread purposely to catch those who are "fairly well off." There is a good deal of Sunday visiting, and of Sunday drinking, among them. And in the lesser centres trade competition is especially severe. Among the tradesfolk jealousies are aroused, painful statements are made, offence is taken, and God's house is frequented no more. Any country town will afford too many illustrations of this. He who ought to be a revelation from God to man, becomes in many ways an obstruction and a snare to his fellow. And in the outland places, where each one knows all the rest, heart-burnings will arise. Injustice is done and suffered from time to time, and many a farmer and tradesman gets his eyes switched by the evil talk or wrong-dealing of his neighbour, till he is almost blind to the fair and the true, and is found in the ranks opposed to those of Jesus.

The upper grade of the working-class properly so called is far from being permeated by the Spirit of Christianity. Few dare to attract attention by being openly vicious, but many commit gross sins which they are careful to keep hidden from the "garish day." Immorality of various types is unearthed on scrutiny. Sporting publications are being multiplied. Every year witnesses some new ventures in this direction. The demand as usual creates the supply. Thousands of amply endowed men are race-mad. The windows in which telegrams are posted are besieged after a great race by crowds of working men and lads. Each is pecuniarily either a winner or a loser, and so the whole street is in a ferment.

Evils exist in firm alliance with each other. The prevalence of one signifies the power of many others, and so the passion for betting implies a great deal more. It implies the formation of collegueships which are poisoned with the breathings and infusions of perdition; assemblings late and early in the drink-shops; neglect of home; the deprivation of wife and children of many little luxuries and some neces-

saries ; disputes, accusations of treachery, and even purloinings. Said a wife not long ago: "My husband gave way to the passion for betting ; then he became dishonest ; then I had to work almost night and day with my sewing machine, so as to earn money to save him from exposure and ruin." To such desolating influences do so many who perform the skilled labour of Great Britain submit themselves. Among them are commonly found persons who once showed an inclination towards goodness, but they have allowed circumstances either to create a prejudice against piety, or to destroy their relish for heavenly things. These are often the hardest to be reached and saved.

Now we approach the lowest social depth of all. It includes the criminal classes, the street loungers, the debauched or impoverished denizens of back slums, the brass-browed women, and the children all but uncared for. Drink and debauchery are here close companions—sometimes parent and child. Unthrift and uncleanness abound. Sanitary precautions and regulations are laughed at.

Here is a house whose windows are broken. In a room on the second story is seen stretched out in the last stage of consumption an emaciated man. When the doctor comes, he finds the chill, wintry wind eddying about the apartment, and the wife of his patient lying helplessly drunk at the foot of the bed. He knows that this is quite the customary thing, and is not much shocked, for he says he has "got used to such sights." Upon another dying man next door whiskey is being pressed by two half-intoxicated companions who have engaged to stay with him for a few hours ; but he turns with loathing from the liquor he has loved too well, and is speedily in the death-spasm, while one of his former "mates" gaily swallows the draught which he had declined. Upon that door-step sits a mother with a pale, puling child on her knee. She jokes and chats with her neighbours. Her heart is evidently dead to the sufferings of her little one. She is "without natural affection," and surely can sink to no lower depth.

What will just one wynd or alley reveal? Many a specimen of decaying intelligence; lustreless eyes on young faces; an old woman in a state of maudlin drunkenness, led home by two little girls, seemingly her grandchildren; a small boy with whose rags the night-breeze makes sport, and who will stand shivering in the thoroughfares at ten o'clock, hoping that if, through being pitied, he gets a few pennies for halfpenny papers he will escape a beating from his worse than brutal father; a company of roisterers who consider their revelry rather a virtue than a vice.

A crop of poppies, says the historian, grew on a Netherland battle-field during the following summer—as if the earth refused to conceal the blood of her slain men. Truly, if every locality connected with the draining away of the vitality of human souls were equally betrayed, the very multitude of apparitions would be enough to freeze with fright the currents of our lives.

Evil, in forms more coarse or more refined, is in all localities, and among persons of all ages and classes, prevalent indeed. Commercial immorality may be politely shrouded, but the facts are there. Secret percentages; Christmas gifts which are really bribes; “scamping” of contracts, big and little, very extensively prevail. An ordinary labouring man who will do nearly as much at day-work as at piece-work is a most rare exception. The Mammon of Wealth; the Moloch of Drink; the Ashtoreth of Sensuality; the Dagon of Physical Science; the Baal of Social Gaiety,—all have their votaries, many of whom had formerly a place in Christian schools and congregations. There are amongst us some Christians who have watched the central mystery of the existence of evil branching out into many mysteries, until the contemplation has almost maddened them; who have dwelt on the dark phenomena around them until they dared not think any longer; who have felt that the poetic words of him who gazed on the flaunting and fallen in Regent Street, and ruminated on the probabilities as to their earlier life, until he could bear no more and cried,

“ Only blind me in heart and brain
Or ever I look on the like again ! ”

have fitted best their own posture of mind.

Did Ezra, overwhelmed by the spectacle of national sin and unfaithfulness, sit astonished till the time of the evening sacrifice? Then surely it behoves all lovers of Jesus to face fairly and manfully the dark-hued facts which swarm around; and though for a while a stagnation of horror may seem to possess us, yet, like the stern old Jewish priest, we shall, in the end, rise to devise remedies and to apply correctives; we shall spread forth before God all that we have got to know of the prevalent evil, and of the dangers resident within it, and by way of holy challenge shall repeat the pathetic appeal in the day of calamity of warrior Joshua: “ What wilt Thou do to Thy great Name ? ”

CHAPTER II.

THE POSSIBLE GOOD.

“There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon *the top* of the mountains [where the soil is thinnest and a plentiful crop is most unlikely] : the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon : and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.”—PSALM lxxii. 16.

“The things impossible to men
Thou canst for Thine own people do :
Thy strength be in our weakness seen ;
Thy wisdom in our folly show !
Prevent, accompany, and bless,
And crown the whole with full success.”

AFTER the pessimist, the optimist ! They who look at both, accord most with what we are told of the inner life of Christ. All calculations as to the good possible to man must begin and end with God. His promises are made up of weighed and weighty words, and are purposely rich in meaning. His Gospel is an agent, and his Spirit a force, equal to all demands made upon them by our needs. His love and ability are limitless, and their manifestation on the Cross altogether stupendous. Our best thoughts about these things are but bubbles on the river of reality.

God has acted as if He expected all men to come to Him on invitation. Had He acted otherwise, who could have been sure of His favour ? If I were not certain that He loved all, could I feel certain that He loved me ? If His salvation be not suitable to all, perhaps I am one of those to whom it is unsuitable. It is evident, then, that possibilities of good are limited only by the number and capacity of the human souls in this enlightened land. And the properties of these souls are so worthy of the creative fiat of God. By man He may be mirrored

forth as by no other of His creatures. God's outflow towards man is His love of loves. Man's power of affection, reciprocal to that of his Creator, is a foremost proof of his immortality. So "the soul of man redeemed is dear to God as His own throne."

Reverence for the human is thus the counterpart of reverence for the Divine. He who glories in the *actual* holiness of God is expected to glory also in the *possible* holiness of man. Religion has been defined as "reverence for inferior beings." It is far more than that, but it *is* that. The most inferior of our fellows has in himself, through the sacrifice of Jesus, endowments and possibilities which ought to call forth our reverent wonder.

All this being premised, what are we to expect as the result of the legitimate use of the various means now at the disposal of the Church, and of the future products of her sanctified ingenuity?

But a new factor here demands our notice, and that is *the will of man*. This will has in itself a vested power of thwarting the designs of the All-loving One. Therefore is it that the record and recital of failures in Christian work are so abundantly saddening. All who hear *might* be saved if they would. The structure of the whole Evangelical Creed goes to pieces if we do not believe that. God ever lays the blame of non-salvation at the door of the individual soul. We dare not admit that some are born and allowed to live without the least "instinct" or "tendency" toward religion. The will is set awry and antagonises the will of God, and, as the result, many souls finally banish themselves from the presence of the Lord of Life and Glory.

Were, then, the Churches never so sedulous, active, and versatile, a larger or smaller residuum of all classes would remain unregenerated. After all had been done, and well done, some would persist in tempting God, and as the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches that as a consequence of relentless hatred of God a confirmed hardness sets in, precocity and stubbornness in evil would arouse the painful surmise that a just retribution had already begun.

Nevertheless, we can scarcely be too hopeful. To be over sanguine is an amiable fault. Though disappointment with the paucity of results of Christian self-denial does sometimes bring numbness, it need never cause petrification of hope. The truly loving labourer, though staggered for a time, ought soon to recover his equilibrium. And while we guard ourselves against expecting too much, we must keep a watch far more close against too *small* an expectation. The last despair a chivalrous soldier of Christ should feel is despair concerning the salvation of any one soul. The very fear that a sinner is given up should serve to quicken our proceedings on his behalf. Besides this, we know that the work of the Holy Spirit appears when and where we least expect it, and the uprising of a better nature in characters seemingly reprobate smiles away our gloomy suspicions and prophecies.

But even when men have openly taken sides with the Holy and Just One, and the wisest methods of keeping them in the ranks are employed, there will be some desertions. To say that the Churches can keep *all* their converts is to contradict everything we know of human nature. In them the tap-root of evil is still existent; the atmosphere around them is impregnated with death-dealing gases. They are not deprived of the mysterious power of will which is the birthright of every child of Adam, and, consequently, to the great dismay of those who have shown a tender solicitude toward them, their foliage and fruitage not rarely wither and disappear. However, we may be sure that Paul would not have refrained from his visit to Spain even if he *had* known the future history of that proudest and meanest of nations. Neither must the Churches hold back from service and sacrifice even though they are aware that much of what they do will crumble away, and that many will still stray from the fold. And, as the Eastern shepherd was certainly not content with the "two legs and the piece of an ear" which he snatched from the mouth of the sheep-devouring lion, neither are believers in general to be satisfied with just a conversion here and there, but are ever to be hankering and striving after more.

In the further and fuller consideration of "the possible good," an argument as to what may come to pass in the future may be logically based on the actual results, both positive and negative, of past and present religious toil. Nothing is gained by disparaging the kind of work that has been done, or by minimising the amount that is being done now. Who can read through religious subscription-lists and examine the various objects toward which time and money are freely given; who can glance through a weekly summary of "News of the Churches," and then proceed to accuse the whole body of Christians of inertia? It is true that the *average* of sacrifice is small, but nearly everywhere are found the few who are "the salt of the salt," and who are well-nigh unremitting in their efforts to aid the advance of the kingdom of truth. Bad as is the general condition of things, it would have been much worse but for the strivings and sowings of the Lord's people. These may be indefinitely increased. The power which caused them is operative in our midst. The unbroken prayer of Zion to the Lord of the Harvest will, perhaps, shortly be answered in the gift of true labourers. This is a part of the possible and probable good.

Neither can it be denied that socially matters are much improved, compared with what they were. Would Foote, the comedian, dare now to do as he did a century ago? Would his scurrilous parody of some saintly and well-known minister be acceptable to those of the "upper ten" and of the general public who frequent the theatre? Would the venality and open libertinism existing among Members of Parliament and Government officials in the early days of Charles James Fox be winked at in our legislators and rulers during this period of the nineteenth century? Would the inconsistencies which were thought little of among Church members before the Evangelical Revival be borne with by Church Courts at this stage of its development? Whence this awakening—this enlightenment of the national and ecclesiastical conscience? Would it ever have been if dependence had been placed only on the secular platform and press? It may be affirmed with

truth that this amendment of social ideas is almost entirely the product of the extensive religious agency at work in England and Scotland during the past hundred years. The law of rightness is more fully discerned on all sides, and restraints upon wrong practices are thus strong because a practical Christianity has insisted on being heard. It is within the range of likelihood that the conscience of society will be ere long more thoroughly illumined, and public opinion, capricious as it often is, substantially rectified and guided. If under the firm, genial, corrective influence of the New Testament spirit such more than *surface* reformations have already accrued, who shall prescribe the boundaries of their advance?

One more pleasant statement requires here to be added. The drinking customs of the country are giving way, year by year, before the weapons forged against them. Some time back, for instance, the Fen country was notorious for its consumption of spirits by the men and of laudanum by the women; but a competent informant, living among these very fens, assures the writer that the use of laudanum is fast dying out, and that the consumption of spirituous liquors is rapidly declining. Who can specify how sweeping and widespread will be the changes brought about by that great Temperance movement in which we behold one of the multiform outgrowths of our Christianity? There are encouraging symptoms, too, in all the Churches. Their rivalry is becoming more friendly and salutary. They are retrograding from the point of friction, and approaching the point of cohesion. Each is willing to acknowledge, "While there are some things *I* can manage better than you, in others *you* always excel." Looks more favourable than before are turned towards those who prefer greater independency of thought and action than is to be found in union with some one denomination. Among genuine defenders of the faith there are great searchings of heart, and there is much self-rebuke before God. We hear, constantly, of brotherly discussions by Christian friends in council, as to the best way of remedying a state of things so scandalous as that revealed by the late statistics.

All this is exhilarating, and we do not know to what extent these ponderings and mutual affinities may grow. Much good *must* come out of it all. About that we are positive. How much more extended may be the net-work of sanctuaries and missions throughout the great metropolis and its suburbs! The arrival of new populations may be anticipated, and their wants met as fast as they occur. And as for the old dingy localities—if Romanism gave motive-power to one of her priests by which he was led to shut himself up among the lepers of the Sandwich Isles, cannot Protestantism produce saints who shall be willing to give up advantages and even to shorten their lives by dwelling and working among the forsaken or criminal poor? In the city on the Tyne was one who gave himself much to this work. Though wealthy and refined, he went about among the lowest of the low, and took from some of them the fever of which he died. Mayhap God has even now in reserve many “vessels unto honour,” such as was that Christian gentleman.

Once again, in the matter of the transformation of individual lives, we may reason from the actual to the possible. Ever and anon aristocratic and literary circles are startled by the announcement that some one well known to them has accepted joyously the badge of experimental godliness. Members of county families are heard of who desert their old resorts and gladly submit to a social stigma for the sake of Christ. Can we doubt that means and methods may be employed in the Churches by the Spirit, which shall issue in the quick lengthening of these lists of high-born believers? In the Puritan times the letters of gentlefolk were filled with sentiments of piety, generally because piety was enthroned in home and heart; and such enthronement may yet be brought about in many a palatial residence and in the breasts of many of the noble and mighty. Loving and accomplished souls may recognise a call to toil unswervingly among such as are, socially, equal to themselves.

And to the great middle classes—the back-bone of our corporate Christianity—great good is possible. The ugly signs

of what has threatened to become the spinal complaint of Evangelicalism may disappear and a revulsion take place in favour of practical orthodoxy. God has many arrows in His quiver yet. He can send forth a hundred Charles Spurgeons and Joseph Cooks, whose teachings shall penetrate both the upper and lower strata of traders, professional men, and agriculturists.

Neither need we be the prey of despondency anent the lapsed and lewd. Among the select treasures of Scripture is found the Home Mission story of Onesimus. A poor slave, with the bad blood of perhaps twenty generations in his veins, with every inward and outward incentive to impurity, is fished up from the depths of the foulest of cities, and subjected to the regenerative force of the one religion. "The old philosophy had no word for the harlot and the dying," and the new is but the old vamped up to suit modern taste; but the central glory of the faith of Jesus is, that it has ever sought specially to rescue the corrupted and neglected ones. Its foremost champion well understood this when he turned away from the Jewish and classic populations, and among the rude, rough, sin-stained Illyrians won souls for his Master.

Modern trophies of like character are not few—only in reviewing the wide expanse of wickedness we are apt to ignore the purified lives which cluster under our own shadow. In most sanctuaries are to be found some who, noted once for reprobacy, have "passed from death into life." One of the two drunkards spoken of in the last chapter as trying to prime with whiskey a boon companion in his last hour, is now a solid and glowing Christian. Even in the worst neighbourhoods there often appears some luminous, pious soul, who not long before was "even as others."

In the town of G—— might have been seen a youth whose bringings up were bad, and whose nature was all in a tangle. He was induced to attend a Sabbath school, and there was truly changed in heart. His plodding study, untiring zeal, transparent saintliness, won the confidence of all. He gave himself to the ministry, and passed through a training process,

emerging from it a well-furnished, powerful preacher, with features all but seraphic. China's millions haunted him. He crossed the seas to do his part toward their conversion, and just as he had got the language, was mysteriously taken away by death. Loud was the wail of sorrow among those who knew and loved him—and this was he who, not a great while back, had been a wilful, unkempt lad. Surely, if this cactus was transformed into a laburnum, the same "God-like miracle of love" may be repeated many times over. There are among us more hidden, ungraced Ned Wrights than "mute, inglorious Miltons."

If some such natures are already enrolled among those in whom the Gospel has triumphed, why may not these be increased a hundred-fold? It is not uncommon to find a Working Men's Church whose members constitute a very menagerie of wonders. In nineteen years, in the wynds of Glasgow, 4,860 persons from the lower orders were received into Church-membership in connection with Home Mission operations; and no human being reflects greater credit on religion than does the typical British workman, if once truly converted. Conditions of labour vary, it is true, but if such large success can be secured in one locality, why should not notable victories be gained in another? Liverpool, Birmingham, Northampton, present no insuperable obstacles to a similar acquisition of spoils.

Villages might be cited which have been visited by a rich effusion of the Holy Ghost, where now a goodly number of the homes are, like those of Kidderminster in Richard Baxter's days, filled with the voice of prayer. Village character and society are the same in these places as elsewhere; and so what can forbid the hope that each rustic scene shall yet be peopled by godly persons, who, having incurred, by the reception of broader mental light, a debt to the towns whence it has emanated, shall pay that debt by sending to these towns a religiously educated offspring, who there shall act as a counterpoise to the infidel societies and the habits of licentiousness?

The possible good extends over a vast tract, and includes

many items. The Churches may be largely purged from that worldliness which is now their bane; and instead of their members, while *talking* of living for another world, *acting* as if they wished to squeeze out every drop of juice which lies within the rind of this, better thoughts and principles may prevail, and opportunities for selflessness of life be prayed for and grasped. The Sunday-school positions may be filled by mild and wise enthusiasts, by means of whose staunchness and tuition the schools shall be much more effective as nurseries for the Church. Strong-spoken righteousness may abound, until in the race for popularity the pure literature gradually overlaps the impure. The fascinations of gambling may be dispelled. In each street may yet be found a few godly women, who shall saturate their neighbours with blessing, and be living admonitions to the scornful and irreligious; and in each railway yard or engineering works, men of whom their fellow-employés shall say, "He's such a good fellow! It's a shame to hurt his feelings; so, lads, we won't use bad language as long as he's about." So the tone will be quietly raised, and many a soul imperceptibly influenced toward godliness.

As the Churches try new experiments, and profit by their very failures, the dogmatisers and systems which are awaiting for the shoes of a dead orthodoxy will have to submit to a grievous disappointment, for they shall hear her sing in the hour of her restoration: "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord."

CHAPTER III.

ONE BY ONE.

“Ye shall be gathered one by one.”—ISAIAH xxvii. 12

“The clouds of circumstance unite ;
The winds of love together roll ;
They meet ; there bursts a sudden light,
And consecrates—a soul !”

NO one individualises so much as does God Himself. He looks at the world of men as being made up, not of masses, but of units. We judge that He has distinct reasons for the special creation and constitution of each soul, and that with each soul He deals as with no other. His great “plan” for saving men is matched in ingenuity by His separate scheme for restoring each member of the family of man. Undoubtedly, according as Christian workers imitate their great Master in individualising, so will be the amount of good wrought. All spiritual harvestings consist really of gleanings of results, soul by soul.

The Church, perhaps, never depended so greatly as she does now on the attention paid to the units. If the last century was an age especially of preaching for the promotion of revivals, this ought to be an age in which private believers shall distinguish themselves by lovingly fastening on to men one by one. If we take care of the ones, the myriads will take care of themselves. Whatever else is remembered or instituted, this must not be forgotten nor neglected. This essay is purposely placed in order prior to those on organisation and united work. The organising faculty is useful *only* as it teaches us how to benefit by the individual labours of the

saints. Methods of Evangelism will be permanently successful just so far as they interest godly persons in the *ones*.

Great evangelists will fulfil their life-work only as they encourage their converts to concentrate love and influence on separate lives. Says one famous Mission-worker to his personal friend, "Between ourselves, I get credit for more than I have myself done. The fact is, I have not overworked myself; but it has been my habit, in starting a new movement in a depraved neighbourhood, to utilise my winnings as soon as I obtained possession of them. Each has been at once set to work to pick up others. Thus have I crowded several newly built sanctuaries in localities on my advent religiously destitute, and have filled my diary with incidents relating to remarkable conversions to God."

And those who have had much to do with jubilant meetings for personal testimony bear witness to the same truth. Mission services and kindred agencies have been but secondary causes; the primary cause of the religious decision of the speakers is found in the past effective operation upon them of single souls.

"I was led to think by the example and earnest warning of my good old grandfather. I never could get over the quiet grandeur of his life."

"The tract lady was not content with leaving her little messenger at my house. She managed to call when I was at home, and requested to see *me*. If she had spoken to me in the presence of others, *my* pride would have been too strong for *her* zeal, but by having a 'corner talk' with me she drove me to my knees."

"My minister sent me a note, asking me to come to tea. I went gladly, expecting to meet others there, but I was the only guest. After tea we went to his study, and there he told me of his anxiety about me, and his strong desire that I should embark my fortunes with Jesus. Up to that time I scarcely believed that Christians were *really* anxious about those whom they termed 'sinners;' but this act of a good man quite broke me down, and during our late Mission all has been settled between me and God."

“I was leaving a place of worship after an earnest sermon, not only undecided, but actually *callous*. At the door I met a person whom I much respected. He grasped my hand, and, seeing how indifferent I was toward religion, said, with tears in his tones, ‘May God make you the most miserable man in this village.’ I tried to get rid of the words, but they followed me everywhere, until I became quite wretched, and in my agony came to Jesus for relief. When in the inquiry-room, I asked to have as my counsellor the one whose words had struck me, and, as he opened to me the Scriptures, I got what I wanted.”

“Meshes were spread around me. I know it now, but did not know it at the time. Two ladies came to my house to see my wife, who, by the way, had just become a Christian. I felt sour and out of temper about the whole business. But they said they wished to go two miles on that dark evening to hear a very fine preacher, and had no one to escort them. Would I go? I was somewhat taken to, and, secretly, rather complimented. So I went, and heard that night a sermon which powerfully impressed me. Soon I entered into a new life, and since then the ladies have told me frankly that they had arranged the whole purposely to bring about my conversion.”

“A gentleman of good position took me one day familiarly by the arm, and walked along with me. As I’m only a working-man, this open kindness greatly pleased me. He gradually got the conversation round to the subject of personal religion. Then I saw what he was after. At first his appeals were not direct, but at last he stopped short, and, with a break in his voice, besought me to yield myself to the love of God. I was taken by surprise, and deeply humbled. My will became flexible in the right direction, and now I rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

Personally, I can vouch for the truth of the assertion that the best triumphs are those won by a loving dealing with separate souls. As one to whom large success has been granted in the ministration of the truth, and in the elevation of many

sinner, both "respectable" and "reprobate," I can candidly say that the instances of renovation of heart and life which call forth the warmest gushes of thankfulness are those which have been brought about by heart to heart work in streets and homes. Any power in the public ministry has been made trebly effective by reason of the private seeking after souls. An analysis of inquirers and a collection of data derived from their own statements have perfectly convinced me of this.

"Pardon me for asking, but is your heart right with God?" "God has given you these darlings; will you begin to lead them in the right way?" "It is hard for me to speak thus to one so intelligent and cultured as you are; but have candour with yourself: is it not a fact that your perpetual acquisition of knowledge which you refuse to consecrate to the Lord's work is just so much refined selfishness?" "You are older than I, but I have a grave fear that you are not in the Way of Life. Do, please, allow one younger than yourself to tell you how troubled he feels about your continued indecision." "I know you are gentle and amiable, and I do not wish to intrude upon the privacy of your soul's life-path; but O, my friend, is it well with your soul? Do you wonder at my asking this? Should you not rather be amazed if I did *not* ask it, since my profession of belief in certain verities and responsibilities is what it is?" Such questions and affirmations as these have wrought effects which no pulpit generalities could secure, have helped to stock many an inquiry-room with "good cases," and have brought to a true Christ-likeness many who turned away from mere pulpit endeavours without being at all affected.

If, then, the Churches have been so largely replenished through one-by-one work, the amount of such labour performed by Christ's members should be ever on the increase. Satan's emissaries focus their energies upon *persons*, and only with weapons similar to their own can they be met. Let us make up our minds that the invention of new and ingenious designs will count for little except as behind them and within them is found the burning wish on the part of many of the religious to be *individually* winners of souls. Fairbairn never spoke a

truer word than when he said, "It is not the happy world which makes the happy man, but the happy man who makes the happy world." All social and religious improvements must begin and end with the individual.

A few remarks, some of which may also be taken as hints, may now be formulated.

Personal piety must lie at the foundation of all acceptable and beneficial work for God. Only they who have themselves been healed by the leaves of the Tree of Life can partake of its fruit; and as they eat the more of its fruit they will the more earnestly strive to press the healing leaves upon those bruised and bleeding natures which make up the nations of men. Hence in all consultations about evangelism, robust godliness must be regarded as the human source of successful toil. Conventions for the promotion of *true* holiness cannot but act in the direction of enlarged sympathies. But in all means used for the edification of the saved we must keep in view the outpouring of sanctified energy upon the lost. No expenditure, of any kind whatever, is wasted, if only it issue in the renewed enthusiasm of the saints of the Most High.

Let each believer steadily consider what is meant by the *loss or gain of one soul*. St. Paul's passion-cry that, for the sake of his brethren, he was willing to be anathematised from Jesus, means all the more when we remember how much Jesus was to him. "I cannot sleep for thinking of souls and their danger," ought to be an experience by no means unheard of among readers of Paul's Epistles. Thus shall many a dead soul be "touched with a living brand from the fire of the altar of life."

The personal piety once realised, the next thing to be understood is that *every soul is worth a great deal of trouble*. Only "one talent" is not Scriptural. God never says "only," even about the nature least endowed. The word "talent" to a Jewish mind conveyed the idea of a great sum of money. Christ surely taught, when He used the word, that God's least investment in the shape of a human creature is vast beyond all description.

And when by the timid, the simple, and those of type normally low, salvation has been received, the "ones" are still to be watched over and nourished. God's babes are worth more to the world morally than are even those giants in mind who have not yet sworn fealty to Jehovah. And as some will never be anything but babes, the Church ought to furnish an unstinted supply of nursing fathers and mothers. To watch over the weak and ill-informed is an honourable task, to which even a seraph might aspire.

Moreover, we never know *what manner of soul* it is which we are helping to bring to the full redemption. Loutish youths have precious veins in them sometimes, which yield great recompense for all the boring and shaft-sinking. Listless girls may be trained by grace into active, religious women, who, as hospital-nurses and head-servants in great houses, will shed the lustre of heaven around and across their sphere. The future progress of some, just now despised, will be brilliant enough. Said a friend the other day to me, "When that man left the inquiry-room, I wouldn't have given twopence for all the religion he had. But he has pleasantly disappointed me, has turned out quite genuine, and is now acting as a missionary to his fellow-cabmen." That venerable disciple who for thirty years has conducted a class for domestic servants, adduces for our information at least a few examples among her old scholars of those who, having married pushing, prosperous men, are now worthily filling the most influential places in strong congregations. But for her care over them, one by one, their wealth would have been worse than squandered, whereas it is now tithed for Jesus.

And even though some of our converts be dull and insignificant, their children may be bright. The Roman Catholic Church knows this, and acts upon it, bringing into prominent positions the educated children of "cloddish" parents. Neither ought any possessor of religion to dare to assert that *his* powers are too few, and his faculties too dwarfed, to allow of a one-by-one dealing with souls. It is notorious that most of the Lord's work is performed by people whose gifts are below

mediocrity. The highly favoured do but little as a rule. Soul-saving is entered upon chiefly by those deficient in natural ability and acquired polish.

" Somehow to simple eyes
God opens the secret door of the shrine
That is closed to the learned and wise."

Of the mediocre men is he who makes it his practice to speak every day to one or more persons as to their attitude toward God. No doubt a zealot of this kind will get obtrusive and professional if he does not take care, but the habit itself is praiseworthy. Of the same class is the man who says, "I am so glad I've got the office of inspector of the gas-meters; for there are presented to me such chances of telling about my Saviour." The good done among the more frail of the converts by such godly men is great indeed. There are plenty of stones flying about which might injure beyond remedy some of the brittle beings who help to make up the churches, but these prosaic, half-furnished persons, who are yet full of lofty purpose, act as wire-work netting, and screen them from damage. No saint is too mean an agent for the King of kings.

Those who are ambitious to excel in one-by-one work may get into the way of seizing opportunities. Presence of mind and promptitude will be attained by practice. The student of men will soon learn when and how to speak and act. A letter will sometimes effect what could not be managed even by the living voice. I wrote once to a youth who had gone to Germany to finish his education. His mother prayed for him at exactly the same hour every day, and I wished to do my part in aiding her prayers. Faint and weary was I during the composition of that letter, but in a few days came the joyful news that my poor epistle had been the immediate cause of the answer to the mother's daily pleading. The "always ready" soldiers are to God's militant host what Havelock's were in the Burmese war—the very flower of the whole army.

Besides, a larger number of the godless *expect* to be personally

confronted, and some are even pining for faithful speech and wise direction. Many an iron-faced man reveals by the twitching of his facial muscles how much he feels, and is grateful for the words uttered by a Christian associate. Many a young man is sick at heart, and is longing for the intervention of some loyal soul who can do for him more than can a ministering angel. Resentment may be shown at first, but respect for the interviewer is deeper than the resentment. The one man of all others of whom I was most afraid, and who appeared indignant when I pressed home upon him vital questions, broke down in his opposition and became one of my fastest friends. Another, whose heart depths I had tried to sound, said to me, "I've mixed up with religious circles from my boyhood, but you are the first man who ever spoke to me about my soul;" and then the one who had been thought entirely unimpressible cried like a child.

One by one; and the cheery benignant maiden-aunt has mixed with the circles of the giddy and the gay, and has succeeded in attaching nephews, nieces, and their young companions to the word of truth and soberness. And only by this means can the gentry of this land be impelled in large numbers toward the Cross. Drawing-room meetings, held on models constantly being improved, will do something; but the bulk of the work must be done by little bands of true disciples who shall agree with each other to be ever throwing among genteel society the love-lasso of heaven. By thus taking in hand the individuals they may gain many noteworthy recruits. One by one; and the tradesman in whose goodness every customer believes has jerked over his counter a few seed-thoughts which will spring up and ripen in due time. One by one; and by leading her servant to the Redeemer, that elect lady has added one more item to the cause of good. One by one; boys to boys, girls to girls, professional men among their fellows, the wealthy among their social clans, will be able to perform the functions of light-bearers better than could any others. So will "many mickles make a muckle;" and by the constant addition of the *ones* shall the Churches have perpetually "the

joy of harvest." If each will consent to cultivate a small plot, a large area will be reclaimed. If each shows his heart to those whom his Master designs him to influence for their eternal good, he will soon hear the response, "My heart is as thy heart; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

CHAPTER IV.

BRITAIN'S MANHOOD.

“*Men*, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, which could keep rank, and who were not of double heart.”—1 CHRON. xii. 33.

“ Was ever giant's dungeon dug so deep,
Was ever tyrant's fetter forged so strong,
Was e'er such deadly poison in the draught
The false friend mingles for the trusting fool,
As he, whose willing victim is *himself*,
Digs, forges, mingles, for his captive soul? ”

THE soul of the woman is as precious in God's sight as is that of the man. In Jesus were found the feminine graces as well as the masculine, and therefore the members of the gentler sex have as large a range for imitation as have those belonging to the stronger sex. The narrative of the occurrences at Pentecost does not allow us to doubt that the tongues of fire were as broad and active above the heads of the Marys and their sister disciples as over those of the brethren. It is, too, a generally acknowledged fact that in most of the Churches the female adherents outnumber the others by nearly two to one. That proves that a goodly proportion of Britain's manhood have married in the faith, or have had the privilege of springing from a pious motherhood. This gives a good leverage to those who attempt to raise their fellow-men. I spoke most earnestly to one whose antecedents were of this kind, but who had fallen so low as to keep the worst public-house in the town. While reminding him of the prayers of his mother and of the associations of his youth, he wrenched his hand from mine, saying, with a convulsive shudder and not in anger, “ Let me

go, Mr. Smith, *it's like sawing a man's head off with a brier!*" I could not but feel hope as to his ultimate repentance.

But the preponderance in our ranks of females over males proves also that, to use a common expression, "a dead set" ought to be made at once on Britain's manhood. The records of war and of discovery show plainly that for sterling practical qualities there is no manhood in the world equal to that of Great Britain. There is none which has had or will have so great an influence over the nations. We have our share of what is gruesome in character and fantastic in opinion, but the specimen Briton, with all his faults, owns a mental and physical constitution vigorous and serviceable. Then to gain *men* should be more and more our specified aim.

And this is usually difficult enough. Women, as a whole, have fewer temptations, and seem to have an innate disposition toward godliness more than have men. But if a man be won, *much more is won*. The house-father's decision often means that of the household. The conversion of an elder son not infrequently leads to that of sisters and of younger brothers. Upon the manhood of the land, then, there ought to be concentration of study and force.

And the alienation is not so great as some have stated it to be. Prejudices which appear strong and hard of removal sometimes vanish at a touch. A quick tactician will find an avenue of approach to most. There is among the men a good deal of latent susceptibility. It is quite common for a rugged workman never to have spoken to a minister or lay missionary for half-a-dozen years, and yet for just one kindly speech to take him by storm. And every such man thus captured becomes a new bulwark around the institutions of order.

In striving to win our manhood in all its grades and variations, certain principles must be accepted. And as the queries of to-day relate mostly to the labouring classes, statements of such principles will have an almost exclusive reference to them.

Among the poor, gifts should not take the shape of doles and bribes. The Gospel of self-help is part of the great Gospel. If self-respect be injured, there can be no true elevation of

character. Mission-room movements, conducted under the auspices of wealthy religious communities, and aided by indiscriminating generosity, furnish their own illustrations of simulation and failure. The high-class workman stays away, and leaves the plunder to his weak-kneed or unscrupulous brother. No mission work with the incubus of such a reputation can hope to be successful. All help should encourage self-help.

Neither the attractions of that full-blown Ritualism, which has been termed "posture and imposture," nor the allurements of "people's entertainments," will effect any prominent improvement in the robust manhood. The curious and the invertebrate may be drawn together, but the little good they get is nearly always preventive of the greater good which they might get through another order of things being brought to bear upon them.

And we must not talk as if the removal of *one* temptation, or the crushing of *one* evil, were sufficient to accomplish the great work which lies before us. The crusade against the drink traffic is well worthy of the earnest advocacy of the servants of Christ. Intoxicants are the baleful cause of much irreligion. Many of the absentees would regularly share in the blessings of the Lord's Day, were it not that they are enthralled by strong drink. But mere sobriety is no assurance of religion. Those who say, "Disband the promoters of the traffic, and your churches and chapels will be soon filled," understand not of what they affirm. Depravity has many forms, and enmity to God many outgrowths; and if even Satan loses one favourite agent, the very loss furnishes a vacancy for occupation by another.

How, then, are we to increase the number of bare heads in the sanctuary? By what modes of individual effort and methods of Church labour? And here is needful a reservation—that any pretence at an exhaustive answer is carefully disavowed.

Unpaid agents have the advantage. The Chinaman says of the native catechist, "He eats the foreigner's rice, and so he

preaches the foreigner's doctrine." In the same fashion is apt to reason the British workman: "This man in the black coat makes a good thing out of his business. He is better paid than I am. Talk is cheap, and so he can find plenty of it for the money he gets." But if a visitor enters, or a preacher stands up at a street-corner, who is known to do all "gratis," that is so much in his favour. Yet persistent laboriousness on the part of those who accept remuneration will, in the end, extinguish all sneers, and will win the confidence alike of the hard-handed, hard-headed, and hard-hearted.

All agents should either have had experience, or try to get it by personal observation as early as may be. No amount of tuition or idealising will make up for a want of the knowledge of the practical. Many a theory looks pretty and practicable, but, like the flying machine which landed its inventor in the middle of a pond, it fails at the critical point. The fatal flaw in many religious speakers and workers is, that they have their own platform, and are not in full sympathy with their hearers and clients. They live in one world, while those to whom they would bring glad tidings live in another. It is a great advantage to be able to say to a broad-shouldered artisan, "Friend! I know both sides of life—the rough as well as the smooth;" the man will listen then.

That is one reason why working men make the best missionaries to their fellows. No class of Britain's manhood is so accessible as are those who earn their bread by the lavish use of their muscles; but they are only to be reached by agents who understand their foibles, and who can listen to a few strong speeches without losing wits or temper. He who would cut a thorn hedge needs leather gloves, and he who would mix with brickmakers, factory-workers, and mechanics, must fortify himself against scratchings, and against jarrings upon his mental sensitiveness.

A good physique goes a long way. A strong voice is no mean endowment for duty of this kind: womanishness in any minister or missionary precludes all hope of special effectiveness. Independence of character, rapidity of retort, an acquaintance

with the oddities of speech in vogue, homeliness and heartiness, a willingness to shake hands with sweep or costermonger, are all qualifications for real power over working men.

But it cannot be denied that most agents, both paid and unpaid, fall far short of this standard. As it regards the former, there is a lamentable dearth of men of the right kind. Because the manhood of the country is insufficiently approached and moved upon, there is a scarcity of eligible applicants for the position of evangelist. We have to put up with men who are of inferior adaptation, scant fervency, poor physical basis, or emasculated piety. Some of them have offered themselves because they have failed in everything else which they have tried, and others, if engaged in almost any line of business, would have had their names full soon in the *Gazette*. If we can only manage—a feat not impossible by any means—to get a growing proportion of the genuine working men converted, we shall have a better chance of choosing wisely. And if to these can be added some thousands of persons of higher social status who shall deliberately set themselves to acquire fitness for this Mission, the outlook will be much brighter.

Of whatever kind or sex the agent may be, calls should be made when the *men* are at home. The evening hours, especially in winter, are the golden hours for home Mission work. If the “lords of creation” are to be accosted by strong-souled, whole-hearted Christians, some evenings in each week should be stately set apart for this duty. Alas! the evenings are extensively consumed in attendance on meetings, and hardly any margin is left for minister or layman who longs for opportunities of getting eye to eye with the male denizens of ten-pound cottages.

Nevertheless, meetings can be used as helpful allies. The central figures of domestic life may be savingly impressed by their means. In one of the suburbs of the great city a pastor conducts a working men's Bible-class. He makes them feel that it is *their* class, not his. His initiation and teachership of it he wishes to be considered a mere accident. They are consulted about everything; are responsible for the

bringing in of new members, and week by week are stimulated to take their part in the friendly conversations. They choose their own secretaries, and have their own picnic in the summer, taking wives and children with them. My friend the minister acts simply as the self-constituted president of a little republic. In two years he has filled his free seats, and gone very far toward trebling the number of names in membership within his church. As so many owe their religious happiness to it, no wonder that "Our Working Men's Class" is their pride and their joy. Yet the leader, when he commenced this meeting, was told on all sides that his attempt to get hold of the working men of *that* locality was little better than folly.

In a Lancashire town, some cellarage underneath the Sunday school has been utilised for a workmen's club. A few simple, innocent games are provided; publications are furnished, and harmless beverages sold. The club is thus made counter-active of the public-house, and of the political and social clubs where intoxicants are provided. By the management of a well-ordered committee it has proved the entrance-door to the sanctuary, and when in a Blue Ribbon meeting it was incidentally mentioned, a man in the gallery arose and testified as to the blessing it had been to his life and his home.

Are pastors and leading officials to give countenance to the young men in their athletic pursuits? Each had better judge for himself, and judge in accordance with what local circumstances would dictate. But one thing can never be out of place. Its voice will penetrate where the preacher's voice has never come. That one thing is the exhibition of a happy Christian life. Then will the honest confession be extracted from the lips of salesman and manufacturer, of gardener and petty shopkeeper, of fitter and farm servant: "Dear me, I'd no idea that these religious folks were such nice cheerful people as they prove to be!" The spectacle of a glad, straightforward life has often acted as a successful forlorn hope, achieving a conquest on the very ground where other forces of heaven had suffered defeat.

A few hints from experience as to modes of dealing with

individual specimens of British manhood may not come in amiss.

As a general thing, it is unwise to let a working man perceive at once that you are "after him." There is danger lest his self-will should be aroused, and then he may resent interference. There is a guile which has upon it a holy anointing.

Feeling may lawfully be used. Most people like it. Manifestly this is so among those classes about whom the Churches are now the most anxious. They like the truth to be served up *warm*, and with an amount of vocal and muscular display, for such display is just what they are used to. Plenty of soul in an address is exactly to their mind.

We must drop into the tones and ways of the men whom we seek to save. A spice of familiarity may be put into the conversation. We need not fear undue presumption in their speech and demeanour, if even we *do* condescend to occupy common ground with them. I have stayed by the half-hour, with secret impatience, listening to long-winded narratives about the past history of the man I had in hand, and in a few days have had the joy of seeing him an earnest inquirer after personal religion. The other day a letter came from one who believed himself dying, and who bade me a loving good-bye, promising to hail me on my approach to that City "whose Builder and Maker is God." I first saw him by his own hearthstone. He was a notorious wife-beater, a neglecter of God's house, a nuisance to his neighbours, quarrelsome to a degree, and seemingly in a spiritual condition all but hopeless. He had treated others as *brutes*, I treated him as a *man*. The harsh features softened before my eyes, the tears came, and in less than a fortnight the former bully meekly sought pardon from the One against Whom so long and grievously he had sinned. No one could have been more consistent than has this reclaimed profligate. But if I had commenced by scolding and spurning him, he would have taken harm from my visit.

An appeal to the better nature is pretty sure to meet with

a ready response. "I've come to see you, and it's only fair that you should come to see *me*," will be answered by, "Well, that's about right!" and very likely next Sabbath a face unfamiliar to most in the congregation will appear in your place of worship. "Shouldn't you like to do a bit of good before you die?" may call forth the prompt rejoinder, "Why—yes! I see what you mean; if a man's to *do* good, he must *be* good, eh? You've about got me there!" One of the staunchest men I ever knew—and once one of the most reckless—was led to thought and prayer by hearing a sermon on "One sinner destroyeth much good." He said he couldn't bear to think of his wife and two boys and two girls being thrust down to the eternal darkness by his evil example.

Treat a working man as if you had some belief in him, and he is mollified before he knows it. When I want to rebuke a ring of blasphemers or Sabbath-breakers I invariably take my hat off in token of respect, and stand among them bare-headed. Likely enough, as I turn away, the expression will be, "There, that's something like a parson! He is not above speaking to a poor fellow." Ask any slouching man the way to your destination, and accompany the question with a pleasant look and a smile, and almost to a surety he will put himself out of his way, and will show undue elaboration in directing you, because you trusted him and said "Please."

A black-whiskered man sat by my side in the train, and claimed acquaintance by a hand-grip that made my fingers ache. Said he: "You don't know me, but I know *you*. You came to my house. I ran out at the back door for fear of meeting you. You said to my wife, 'Give my kind regards to your husband, and tell him that I hope he'll some day give me a hearty shake of the hand and inform me that he's started for heaven.' I never could get rid of those words. I'd been a wicked, careless man, but they brought me to Jesus. And that's why I gave you such a hand-shaking when we met to-day."

I went into a house cursed by drink. A flaxen-haired but dirty-faced child trotted up to me. Quite naturally I kissed

the little thing. The mother saw it, and told her husband about it. It awakened in them a new sense of self-respect, and I heard that through that kiss they were drawn away from their fateful habit and toward their Redeemer.

Who says that Britain's manhood cannot be reached and won? The faces that fill the leaves when I use my memory as an album assure me of the opposite. Men who have high intelligence; men who cheerfully take above their share of the friction of life; men whose naturally noble qualities were only little better than "splendid sins" for lack of the "one thing needful;" men who had formed the unhappy habit of discounting heavily every assertion about religion; men whose powers were stultified by a base servitude to passion and crime; men to whom a well-accredited human love was of yore as startling as was the great steamship to the untutored Africans on the coast; masters and workmen; gamekeepers and poachers; card-players and farmers; sons well brought up; colliers and pigeon-flyers—have all their places as Christ's converts in this prized memory-album of mine.

And if the engrossing duties of a busy life did but leave a greater margin of time for personal contact with my fellows, the number of faces there might be wonderfully enlarged. Britain's manhood, spoken of generally, is salvable. If we "quit us like men," we shall gain on every side the "men of might" who shall always be able to "find their hands."

CHAPTER V.

ADAPTATIONS.

“For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”—HEB. v. 13, 14.

“Somewhere down deep
In each natural soul,
Sacred verities sleep,
Holy waterfloods roll.”

THEY who seek to adapt their methods to the characters on whom they operate must be content with nothing less than *spiritual* reformation. Changes in outward habit are more noticeable, and may excite more thanksgiving, than changes of inward life; but these latter are *the* changes after all. To bring men into downrightness of godliness ought to be the great end of all Christian adaptations. Social virtue, in itself, is only a secondary benefit. True piety must go down to the very roots of the being. Union with Christ, meditation on God, consultation of the Scriptures, actual performance of deeds of devotion, are at the foundation of all real personal righteousness.

Nevertheless, while stately keeping this before us, we must be careful not to occupy too high a platform of expectation. Toilers among the sunken myriads sometimes expect more than God Himself does. While religion is a long endeavour after perfection, it is actually far more *improvement* than it is perfection. The question at the great Test-day will not be so much, “What art thou?” as, “How much improvement of soul didst thou secure?” Estimated by this standard,

one person who is abstractly not so good as another may in God's sight be better, because the struggle against evil has been more intense, and the heart-deep amendment has been greater. If the Holy God makes allowances for vitiated physical frame, for bad bringing up, for unhappy antecedents, we may proceed on the same principles. While not degrading high doctrines to comfort low lives, we may freely bear with the foibles and negligences of those who, being religious after the New Testament fashion, are surely, though perhaps secretly, on the line of improvement.

The most that can be done in this article is to lay down principles, and to fling forth a few hints as to practicable methods. In choosing spheres for Christian labour we must have an eye to our own special suitability for one more than for others. No doubt, all classes and conditions of the English people may be largely permeated by Christian Evangelism. Providence intends kindness to all alike, and has already provided the agents. But those agents should consult their own common sense, and yield to the impressions produced by the Spirit of God. He certainly intends that a fair proportion of religious zeal shall be consecrated to each class and each condition now existent in this land.

What do our training and disposition say? In my own case, I could make no mistake. Mental constitution and earlier life alike pointed to a dedication chiefly to the working classes. For several years I had an enforced companionship with rude, wild men, and now, as its result, I am "at home" among even the lowest and wildest. In one house I am having a meal with a company of "illiterates." They feel honoured by my presence, and have provided a sumptuous entertainment in the shape of coffee and egg (nearly as much egg as coffee), and plum-cake (the plums weighed more than the dough). The very look of the table is sickening to a man of plain tastes; but, for the sake of saving those colliers, I face the business, and take almost my share of the dangerous dainties provided. Again I find myself in a dirty house. A cup of "teetotal" beer is pressed on my acceptance.

To refuse will be to offend. I am informed by the presiding genius of the household that it contains ten kinds of "yarbs." The compound looks suspiciously like what I imagined the famous Spartan "black broth" to be; but the cup is drained, and I am at once invited to come to that home again. On another occasion I discovered an old man getting in coals. "Can you use a shovel either hand first?" "No," he replies. "Let me have it then;" and then with quick changes of hands I make the coals fly. "You must have been a fireman," says he. "No, I've not; I'm an educated man; but I know how to handle a shovel, and I want you to come next Sunday and see if I can do anything else besides." The majority of believers would feel awkward in such circumstances as these, and so *I* should be equally awkward in scenes amid which *they* would be familiar and effective. Well-nigh all adaptations are devised and carried out by those who are by nature and education competent for the work they have taken in hand.

In all matters that have to do with adaptation, we need not fear to consult expediency. Expediency is more frequently the friend of rectitude than its foe. The Acts of the Apostles is the best commentary on the Gospel and its work, and that book teems with instances in which expedients were considered. This may suggest to us adaptations somewhat grotesque. But we have often to cater for those who in morals, information, power of mind, are below the average Jew of Ezekiel's time. Yet *he* was commanded to teach the errant people by means of the cutting off and weighing of hair, of daily digging, of a mimic siege. Children are taught by the pictures and make-believes of the Kindergarten system; and what are many British adults but children so far as their religious conditions are concerned? Of what use is it that we speak to them as a minister did, not long ago, to a motley crowd in the open air on the subjects consecutively of "theology," "anthropology," "soteriology," and "eschatology." Much the wiser were they for his diatribe.

No, we must fly to the other extreme of simplicity, and must not shun even odd ways of heralding forth the good

news. If we laugh at one who in giving a Sunday-school address simplifies and explains the word "proverb" by terming it "an occult sententious aphorism," much more should we *admire* the courage and ingenuity of those who meet new obstructions of evil with new expedients of good, who apply to new growths new methods of consolidation and extension. We may proceed to the work of dovetailing appliances into ever-changing modern conditions with clear conscience, and with sanguine belief that, as of old, the disciples shall be multiplied.

And, in all efforts at adaptation, a habit of balancing good with evil and evil with good is pre-eminently needful. In this strange world the frontiers of the two kingdoms of evil and good are hard to be defined. The very method which helps some is nearly sure to hinder others. Human nature cannot be trusted far in any direction. Constant supervision is needed. Elasticity may easily become laxity. If class legislation is bad, so may be, in some cases, class Evangelism. Vulgarisms may reach the vulgar, but may also breed contempt for the agent. A refusal to transfer Mission-hall converts to a regular Church organization may foster in them the love of a cheap religion, and so be for the impoverishment of the soul; while, on the other hand, if such transference be carried out, the new atmosphere might not be at all suitable for these reclaimed ones.

Sensationalism, no doubt, may be both permissible and laudable, but what is sensational to-day is commonplace to-morrow. And it is so easy in certain minds to create or nourish an appetite for that which is new. Then the old will be condemned just because it *is* old. There will be a perpetual straining after new sensationalisms until extravagance takes the place of sober reason. Playing with edge-tools is safe work compared with the using of startling methods. Unless these methods be kept under strict surveillance, it may be discovered by well-meaning workers, as the voyagers in the *Odyssey* found to their bitter cost, that it is easier to loose the wild winds from the bag than to get them back again under restraint.

There must be an exercise of calm judgment on these matters. God's counsels should be earnestly sought for. The evil ought to be looked at with the good. If it be said, "Such an individual or such a stratum of society must be made at least ostensibly religious *at all costs*"—the religiousness may be brought to pass *at too great a cost*. "How far is it right to expose some to pain and offence for the sake of saving others?" is a question intricate indeed. The stumbling of the fragile, the bewilderment of the truth-seeking, the exposure of the zealous to a spirit of mutual censoriousness, would be, perhaps, too heavy a price to pay; and a dangerous reaction might set in, until a true and wise Evangelism was condemned indiscriminately with that which was ill-advised.

The writer once took a piece of chalk at the close of a Mission Service and wrote around the doorway of God's house, in large letters, the word "Eternity," telling the irreligious persons present that if they *would* persist in treading the downward road, they should walk over that awful word. Most likely this novel procedure aroused new thought in some, but a review of the whole matter convinces me that the deed was, *just then and there*, an indiscreet one; but, in *some* circumstances, the good might have vastly outweighed the harm. In the use, then, of new or "sensational" means, no thought and no search for light can be superfluous. By as much as we lower our self-respect, by so much *eventually* do we detract from our power.

And again, as we strive to adapt and re-adapt our agencies to our great ends, there must be no giving up of the one Gospel. He who adds to it subtracts from it. No sentiment of Scripture has been more perverted than that of being "all things to all men." It has been made the plea for card-playing on the part of ministers, for unholy truckling to heathenism on the part of Romanist missionaries, for delirious expression of artificial feeling on the part of various modern religionists. Lectures on the Poets on Sunday evenings, manufactured excitement, secular entertainments for the young under the patronage of the Church, unrepressed gyrations in Christian

assemblies, raffling in bazaars with loud apology that it is "for the good of the cause," the lavish use of worldly paraphernalia—what of it all? Does it not mean that any results achieved can be accounted for from a standpoint merely human? Is not the *super-natural* eliminated? And what is the Gospel without the supernatural? Can there be greater facility given for the hatching of the dragon's eggs of scepticism among the communities of the righteous? After some, at least, of these devices in village or city, the membership of the churches dwindles in numbers and godliness, and after others any increase is simply inflation. If we defend measures which are neither more nor less than additions to the Gospel, we can no longer impeach Xavier because in his East Indian labours he turned to account the customs and observances of the heathen.

But extremes should be avoided. Outgrowths of earnestness are not at once to be branded as excrescences. God deals with human nature as it is, and not as it might be, and so may we deal with it. It is the old idea of expediency again. This is ever-recurrent in all speech relating to adaptation. The religious grow mentally as well as spiritually. They get into the way of fancying that all are as they find themselves to be. They argue from their own tastes to those of others. But let any one who goes through the back streets of a city on a Sabbath afternoon in summer keep his eyes open. He will see women rushing to the gin-palace to get their favourite liquor before closing-time, men in shirt-sleeves with short pipes in their mouths standing about in knots, youths gambling, withered crones sitting on the door-steps: and most of these persons have, withal, stunted growth, sloping foreheads, small craniums. And if conversation among the roughs who go to race-courses or cricket-grounds is listened to, what is it like? Is it not shallow, insipid, would-be-witty? Plenty of profanity there is, but nothing in the talk sensible or meditative on the sterner facts of life. All this is a fair sample, and so a true index of the mental and moral condition of the unsaved millions. Much is being said

about the "intelligence of the labouring classes," whereas it ought to be apparent to all who speak on the subject that the major portion are *not* intelligent. Whatever school-boards may do in the future, they have made little difference as yet. The ideas of most move in very narrow circles, and they must be dealt with accordingly.

What *will* find favour may be inferred from what *does* find favour. Are Wordsworth and Longfellow found in the low music-halls? In the songs sold at a hundred a penny are there included any pieces from Tennyson or Browning? Tawdry sentiment, maudlin love-talk, simpering smartness, make up these precious compounds. And yet the crowd enjoys and applauds, and reads and digests. Can such people be reached by the hymns of Keble, or Lyte, or Heber? No; these are too poetic, too profound, for any such purpose. Both poetry and tunes must be something like and only *somewhat* above those to which they have been used, or else there will be no affinity between mind and hymn. Within the limits already prescribed there is abundant room for manifold adaptations.

And equally thus is it as to excitement. The evil *incitements* may be crowded out by the good *excitements*. Pietism and quietism should not be represented as invariably cause and effect. The lower the caste of man, the more dependent he is on excitement. The discipline and elevation which will make him independent of it will probably be a long time in coming, even after his adhesion to the Church. Most welcome to him, therefore, is the exuberance of speech, and the responsive rush of emotion, and the quaint irregular expression. The analysis of all great movements among "the residuum" in the past reveals a dash of fanaticism—and what else could be expected? We must "honour *all* men," says the Book, and so must thoughtfully humour some whom we honour. So, spasmodic excitement, while kept under proper restraint, may be freely permitted; chronic jubilancy can be enjoined, new habits and pursuits among the recently enfranchised should be forwarded, the new ingenuities of the kingdom of darkness ought to be more than matched by those of the kingdom of

light. The next hundred years will witness some remarkable products of the combined wisdom of those who lovingly conspire for the salvation of "publicans and sinners."

Adaptations are as essential in one place as in another. "How shall we get hold of the hundreds of life-wasters who never help to fill the sanctuary?" Such was the question asked in a Notts market-town. The reply was, "Let us for these carry on a service in the schoolroom, while the regular attendants worship God in the duly authorised sanctuary not many yards away." There was no opposition to this. In that town there is a singular dearth of "strait-laced" professors. To that Sunday evening service God has been pleased to measure out much blessing.

"And what shall *we* do in the same direction?" asked some godly men of each other as they gazed upon the crowded public-houses of a large sea-port. Well, they arranged to have a homely fiery week-evening meeting, into which was brought a great deal of variety. To this they invited neighbours and casuals whom they met in the streets. These found the meeting a capital way of spending their leisure time; and all concerned are filled with gratitude to Him who infused this thought into their minds.

Yet another Church has been bold enough to depart from the practice of giving the *inferior* positions and *less* comfortable seats to the poor. The free seats are made the most cosy in the place, and as this gets known its popularity grows. What is financial loss when compared with spiritual gain?

And in country places tents are being used with good effect. The people inhabiting some of these localities may be twenty years behind the times, but, for all that, they are appreciative of modern religious expedients. These tents become useful not only on anniversary occasions, but for the usual religious gatherings. Many are decoyed to hear the truth in them who would not be found within walls of brick or stone. There is a sense of the absence of formalism; the variety is agreeable; and if the experiment becomes quite the usage in some rural regions, all the better. Tents are bad to

preach in, but the breaking down of social distinctions, the breeziness, the happy feeling of strangeness, more than compensate for the disadvantages.

Why should we be afraid of giving up sometimes the somewhat high and dry ordinary services for the sake of drawing within our influence the habitual neglecters of public worship? Striking methods are often owned of God. One foggy night the writer sang alone in the streets of a colliery village. A man who was recognised as the veriest wretch in the place heard the singing and also the invitation which followed. To that invitation he consented, and listened to a sermon from two texts: "Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off," and, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." He was told of the different treatment offered by Jesus to that which he would at last suffer at the hands of his present master. Greatly moved upon, he went home, played his cards into the fire, gave up his drink and his evil associations, and turned fully to God.

Months afterwards I saw him again. He was well dressed, but flurried and heated. He had come four miles to see me as I left a certain station, had lost the way, and ran in just as the train was going out. Pressing my hand, he gasped out, "I wanted to tell you that if I never meet you again on earth, I will meet you in heaven." Could that notorious sinner have been so well reached in any other way? It *did* look undignified for a minister to sing a solo in the open air, but a number of other cases, similar to this, have convinced me that, while in some neighbourhoods it was inexpedient to do this, in others it was just the thing.

In this chapter I have referred almost exclusively to ways and means of reclaiming and purifying the classes most written and talked about just now. They lie within my own peculiar province. There are many of my fellow-workers who are as capable of propounding schemes for the spiritual welfare of merchants, and high-born ladies, and children who are "above" going to Sunday-schools, as I am of prescribing for the low-born and half-instructed. Observant readers of religious

weeklies may pick up many relations of successful work in all departments, and may imitate what they read about.

If England's manhood *does* require more skilful adaptation to its needs than England's womanhood, the essentials for a successful dealing with its necessities are at hand. If there *are* "hid treasures," they have been hidden with a view to our seeking after them and our discovery of them. By finding a platform common to ourselves and to those for whom we live and labour, we shall, sooner or later, get at them successfully.

Finally, all may be summed up in the words of Dr. Dykes : "That can scarcely be bad Mission work which saves a multitude of souls." And no other example is needed beside that of him who said : "Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews ; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law ; to them that are without law, as without law, that I might gain them that are without law ; to the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak : . . . that I might by all means save some."

CHAPTER VI.

THE TYRANNY OF REFINEMENT.

“And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power : that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.”—1 COR. ii. 4, 5.

“ I will not shut me from my kind,
And, lest I stiffen into stone,
I will not eat my heart alone,
Nor feed with sighs a passing wind.”

“ **W**E thank Thee, O Lord, that we have a love for æsthetics!” Thus did a good minister, the other day, inaugurate the public devotions of his people. Many of them were factory operatives, and perhaps thought that æsthetics were a new kind of vegetable! The symptom, however, is suggestive of unhealthy and troublesome facts. Æsthetics, either with or without the *name*, are more and more the rage in the Churches. Faber has shown how much and how subtly the Church is affected by the movements prevalent in the world. They are somehow reproduced in her. The forms are modified, but the substance is there. Nowhere is the tyranny of refinement so harmful and obnoxious as among communities of Christians. It there becomes sometimes the very refinement of tyranny. At its door must be laid much of the blame of the neglect of God’s house by the working classes.

Let the case be fairly stated. *Refinement is of God.* He ordains that humanity shall work away from coarseness and toward refinement. He made the ear for all the harmonies it can perceive, the eye for all the harvests it can gather, the

mind for all the high-toned sensitiveness to which it may attain. Music is a fragment of heaven, though melted down and interfused with the baser metals of earth. Beauty is always a "wayside sacrament," and the sense thereof a boon from Him who broods over "the chaos dark and rude" of an originally vulgar nature. Mental culture produces growths into which may be grafted branches out of the garden of the Lord. Happy the well-instructed perception, which

" Sees in every hedgerow
Marks of angels' feet,
Epics in each pebble
Underneath our feet ! "

No less happy the intellect which can enter into a junior partnership with other intellects, massive or agile.

But the ultra-refined are by no means to be envied. They are exposed to strong temptation. Their sensibilities are easily offended. Their tastes find much which grates upon them. *They* suffer much, when others, whose pitch is lower, do not suffer at all. Discords, disorders, irregularities of any kind, afflict them grievously. A homely simile in strong Saxon they are apt to deem unwholesome. An unusual method of wrestling with surrounding evils is held to be worse than heresy. Anything which is at all smirched with the material taken from the pot of a common house-painter excites disgust. Sermons must have balanced sentences and rhythmic feet. These modern Laputans desire to have each human shrub clipped into graceful or fanciful forms. Nature's wild growths must be improved upon, even if under the shearing and correcting they are improved out of being. If anything ruggedly demonstrative is proposed, it is stigmatised as part of the tyranny of vulgarity. So that, while the artistic and philosophic have their peculiar privileges and pleasures, these are all but balanced, in a multitude of instances, by peculiar prejudices and pains.

This is a world a great portion of whose inhabitants have fallen passionately in love with the prosaically utilitarian, and

so the extremely refined, both in the Churches and out of them, are exposed to a good deal of mental suffering. This exposure is apt to produce in them a soft-spoken but strong-handed selfishness, and this in its turn leads to the exercise, when at all feasible, of that tyranny of refinement which holds, as with a corpse-hand, the struggling vitalities of some of God's people and will not let them escape.

Not only do the truly refined support this tyranny, but they obtain a large mass of auxiliaries from another quarter. Those who *imagine* themselves to be æsthetically cultured are worse than are the persons they imitate. Said a draper to the writer one day, "'Ladies' do not take nearly as much pleasing as ladies' maids;" and this is an appropriate illustration of the truth that the imitation in Church life of high-class tastes is more to be dreaded than are the tastes themselves. Mr. Spurgeon's observation is just: "We are much troubled with Lisp, which is the son of Simper, which is the son of Affectation; the same is the father of many sons." If some, instead of dipping into Reviews, and then posing as pure precisians, would review their mental range of lumber-rooms, full, and of cupboards, almost empty, there would be some hope of bringing them to reason in their claims. If those who have a smattering of art would but study that science of man, which has been justly styled "the sum of all sciences," they would repent of their arbitrary fastidiousness.

Sham gentility is bad: sham intellectualism is worse. Macaulay soundly lashed the world's false purists and sentimentalists, but the work needs doing over again—especially within the boundaries of the Churches. Against the tyranny which is exalted by the camp-followers of refinement, many rough-and-ready natures are just now rising in fierce rebellion.

Now, the refined and their imitators have dominance in many congregations. They naturally follow the devices and desires of their own hearts. Either an oligarchy, or something approaching it, holds the reins, and the oligarchy itself is often under the power of a few æsthetic ladies. Sanctuaries are built without any reference to the claims and preferences of

the poor, or any definite idea of the usefulness of the ministry. The qualification of saints for service and the pulling of sinners out of the fire are scarcely regarded. If the definite design were to *frighten away* the working classes, *could* many of the erections be fashioned more to the purpose? No wonder that these classes feel and say that they are not wanted.

A famous elocutionist stood among a number of theological students in a newly-built house for worship, which had cost nearly twenty thousand pounds and only seated five hundred people. He pointed out the fact that, owing to the construction of the building, effective speech was next to impossible. If the voice were raised a little louder than usual, it broke into meaningless echoes. Said he, "Gentlemen! if either of you has the misfortune to possess a *soul*, be wise enough, before you take a service here, to leave it behind you in the vestry. If you don't, it may betray you into some expression of emotion, and this place was not built for any such exhibition." Caustic certainly! but not more so than the occasion warranted.

The remedy lies, not so much with the architects as with those who employ them. Professional men should be quietly told that, since it is practicable to combine grace and homeliness, beauty and utility, they must either present the right kind of plans or lose their much-coveted honours. O for combinations of simplicity and elegance such as shall allure those whose bringing up has been rough, and whose notions of propriety are crude!

And is the general "get up" of our services arranged with a view to the requirements of the million? What appears delicate or tuneful to the *élite* is stiff and mummified to them. There is, too often, in the order and form of worship, in the mechanical and unvarying usages of the house of God, something that interferes with the sense of freedom which most of the untutored possess. And so, for the most part, without intending it, preachers get into the way of providing for such as themselves instead of for those of smaller calibre and lower grade. Thus, in places innumerable, the services seem, to ordinary minds, bald and passionless—utterly deficient in heart

—until an air of unreality settles about everything. Does not all this look as if outsiders were not welcome, and as if a half-filled building with seats well let were the one end of all the cogitations of those in authority? The policy is altogether bad, and it is because of this tyranny of refinement that many Churches are turned into “shrines whose pillars are fallen, and through whose ruins the winds of disappointment rave.”

An organist, well paid, but with no sympathy with lively, hearty religion, is not uncommonly installed at the head of the musical department. He collects around himself others after his kind. Old tunes are discarded; “they have not enough music in them.” Congregational singing is voted boorish. Whether conversions occur or no, we must have plenty of French polish on the performances. “Decently, and in order,” becomes a much-abused passage of Scripture. The minority keeps the government on its shoulder, even though the consequence be the dwindling away into worldliness, or into a half-caste condition, of numbers of the congregation. The many are sacrificed to the few; and cultivated taste becomes very much to the taste of Satan. Who can marvel at the fact that faces are seen inside the walls a few times, and then vanish, to be seen no more? Ask their owners the why and the wherefore, and, likely enough, only after putting on the considering cap will they be able to reply. They know they were repelled, but had not fully detected the reason; but, after thinking awhile, the answer comes: “Well, the fact is, the whole business was too rigid and too fine for me.” It would be preposterous to expect any other result. Quite on a par with this is the further truth that ministers are persuaded to drop into the position of domestic chaplain to a few families, leaving what are significantly termed “the herd” uncared for.

If a very plain-speaking Christian were listened to, he might add to all this, and say, “These tyrannous and ultra-refined people are apt to clique together. They are social almost to the extent of being convivial. They feel as if the Total Abstinence movement fixed a brand on them, and so they are either obstructively passive in Temperance efforts, or else they indulge

in unworthy allegations against the cause and its supporters. They speak evil of any religious earnestness which takes this shape in the presence of friends and of children. They keep intoxicants on the sideboard and on the table, and then rail both at fervid piety and aggressive 'Teetotalism.' No experience the writer has ever had, either as pastor or evangelist, would warrant him in contradicting such statements as these, though he would be very glad to do it if he could. "Refined" minorities and anti-temperance are often closely leagued together; and both alike, whether they recognise it or not, are giving new nerve to the arm which would snatch the crown from the head of Jesus.

Are those who constitute this tyranny amenable to reason? No doubt numbers of them are. Those who are superficial and coarse, but who desire to be "in the swim" with their "betters," are the worst to be dealt with. Rational pleading has specially hard work to gain its point in so-called mission-rooms and in village sanctuaries, where the practices of the art-loving Churches are most ambitiously copied. But the thoughtful and high-strung are selfish more *unconsciously* than consciously. They do not intend to indulge in tyrannous coercion or repression. They would not willingly disfranchise, unjustly, the mass of their less-talented fellows. And so firmness and mildness of appeal will often suffice to break up this pernicious despotism. At any cost it must be broken up. It is verily and enormously blood-guilty. That word is not a whit too strong and sweeping. Things would not have been as they are now but for the tyranny of refinement; and they can only be mended by that tyranny being in some way crippled or quenched. Withal, the hope of thus reducing its power is all the stronger when we remember that its best constituents are approachable from the side of loving argument.

Let the refined consider! Can they expect one who has been used to the ranting, roaring chorus of a public-house, to enter into the sweet-sounding minor or the weird Gregorian? The tunes born in past revivals of religion are most suitable for the lowest strata of the land to-day. Compositions such as

those which excite an American camp-meeting will go with a swing, and will delight the natures in which strong feelings are habitual. They enjoy a banquet of melody. They will swallow much unpalatable truth if only it be sweetened with music. That pathetic tune set to "Come, birdie, come," has been made use of most ingeniously by being sung to "Come, Jesus, come," and, no doubt, the euphonious yet glowing lines of the adaptation have come with novel force to many a soul. Those who do not understand music as an art are profoundly moved by it. Even as was Dr. Guthrie, who said, "Though I have never composed music, music has often composed me."

Religiously, moreover, numbers of English people are very little above those poor slaves with whose inartistic but emphatic rhymes the Jubilee Singers have made us familiar. And if refinement denies them such psalmody and insists on using exclusively the measured productions of great musicians, then such high-handedness must be attacked as being just so much inexcusable selfishness. The armies who first chanted the Marseillaise *shouted* rather than sang it, and its stormy strains helped them to many a victory. Let, then, every facility be afforded in some parts of Church life, and notably in some neighbourhoods, for resonant, vehement, inartistic singing. Let newly converted men and women be exhorted to find out the treasures of their voices and to employ them in bursts of such harmonies and sentiments as best fit into the mind and the soul. So shall many a reproach be removed and many a trophy gained.

No need for the formation anywhere of two parties. There is nothing more to be dreaded and avoided. Such a formation soon gets chronic, and is fatal to any advance. Compromise can be tacitly agreed upon. Let the æsthetic have a portion of the Church service and the Church meetings, but, if there be any giving way, it ought to be on their side, because they are the more enlightened; and then let the others have their fill of what pleases them best. A poor man was once informed that "he was not in tune." His answer was, "My heart was so much in tune that I really did not know my voice had got

awry." Can any condemnation be too pronounced for the Church opinion which interferes with the utterances of "tuned hearts"?

And can the refined who help to make up building committees refuse to choose sites and structures with the design of giving the hearthstone feeling to those who attend? Cosiness, and the crowding of the audience around the speaker, should be aimed at. But if the Gothic is to be insisted upon without any modification or any adaptation to the needs of our countrymen, why, let such tyranny first be remonstrated with, and then, if it relent not, be somehow brought to share the fate of the Tarquinian tyranny at Rome.

We need, too, in most churches a new flexibility. Variations may be largely introduced. They will be grateful to most attendants on the services. The less developed a mind, the greater its craving after variety; and most minds are but poorly developed. The millennium of mind is far distant. We shall never hasten it by declining to meet the present wants of the population. Let charity be had both in thought and in practice. Some of the most powerful prayers I have ever heard have set all grammatical rules at defiance. They have been literally the out-pourings of the souls of men, once brutalised, but now regenerated. What if the quantities *are* false, and the expressions painful to cultured organisms? Would not any complaint about them grieve that Holy Spirit who has dictated the *petitions*, if not the phraseology? The tyranny that would prevent certain variations of service and the public exercises of illiterate men, ought to be looked upon as factious opposition to the behests of God. Liberty for testimony and prayer, bands of singers in the streets, responses aloud to the Mission-room addresses, boisterous utterance of the songs of Zion, are all within the lines of the Spirit's work, and any formal or informal combination that would reflect upon them is of Antichrist.

The tyranny of refinement refuses the emotional its fair place. But God gave man his emotional nature, and the Christian religion has ever striven to give it proper vent. The

basis of religion is rational, not emotional, but to have and to display feeling is a sanctified luxury. Our fathers had sense enough to recognise that. When Bishop Burnet preached in the great cathedral two hundred years ago, loud "hums" of approval arose from his audience. Let place be found in every church, in or around which are the uneducated and effervescent, so that they may display their feelings in their own way. Kingsley—himself one of the most classical and refined of men—has affirmed, "I wish for no heaven but what pot-boys and navvies may share with me." And who was more refined than our Lord? He was more sensitive to all manner of discord than is an aspen leaf to the wind. Yet in illustration of one of His profoundest teachings, He used the figure of an old leathern bottle; and in restoring the blind man, He anointed the sightless eye-balls with a mixture of spittle and clay. And to-day God fills with the Holy Spirit the ignorant as well as the literate.

To all this the churches ought to wake up. The tyranny so repeatedly spoken of is of secret growth. Men see not at the beginning to what it will attain. At last its proportions are great and its features grim. He who dares to assault it must make up his mind to do so at the risk of being personally unpopular. He who insists on a give-and-take system may expect an ugly reputation in some quarters. Any disturbance of an existing *régime*, however palpably harmful that *régime* may be, is sure to be met by the accusations: "Thou art a divider of the brethren; a lover of novelty for novelty's sake; a person of coarse grain, without sympathy or breadth."

But the issues at stake are too great to permit of our being lightly frightened out of our duty. Let the weapons of reason be employed to the utmost extent possible, and then there will be the less necessity for the hand of iron. But if the labouring, suffering, sinking populace is to be seized and ennobled, the tyranny of refinement in the Churches must be upset. Agitation will force the question upon the attention of the great public assemblies. They are already looking at it. Mission hymn-books, containing tunes often despised as "ranting" and

“jiggy,” are being compiled and sent out under the official stamp of great denominations. There is more and more a disposition to acknowledge any agent or method, however irregular, whose operation is productive of good.

But other steps should be taken at an early date. The bold counsels, daring deeds, fixed determination, quiet banding together of the haters of this gross, though often unconscious, tyranny, will do much to effect its partial or total overthrow; and the thoughtfully refined will say: “I will consent to give up some of those public æsthetic pleasures that are meat *to me*, but by which ‘my brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.’”

CHAPTER VII.

THE LORD'S IRREGULARS.

“And when Ápollos was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him : who, when he was come, helped them much who had believed through grace.”—ACTS xviii. 27.

“Our little systems have their day ;
They have their day and cease to be ;
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.”

“**I**N England there are twenty religions, and there is only one sauce.” The Frenchman who made that comment intended it as satire ; it is really a compliment. It illustrates our sturdy independency of thought, while it more than hints at a national contempt for condiments and delicacies. During the period which has elapsed since the observation was made, we may perhaps have degenerated in the matter of bodily appetite ; but as to our continued use of our privilege of thinking for ourselves, there is no “perhaps ;” we are as fond of freedom of opinion as ever we were. The British character, then, as expressed by the Churches, is sure to portray itself in ways irregular, as well as regular. In doing so, it rejoices to be in accord with that Bible which constantly asserts and cherishes the right of private judgment.

We are thus not at all surprised at finding that in Great Britain, and especially in England, the Lord's Irregulars are very strong in numbers and in energy. How can they best be utilised ? That they *ought* to be utilised is all but self-evident. Did Paul hesitate to reap profit from the irregular labours of Ápollos ? Worldly policy, as well as scriptural precedent, would lead us to such reaping. Frederick the Great

did a very prudent thing when he organised his famous "Free Corps." In it were found the dashing, daring men who were competent to carry the war into the enemy's country, and, by rapid marches, swiftly executed enterprises, deft manœuvres, to keep the foe in a state of perpetual alarm, and to effect diversions invaluable to their warlike king. Equal wisdom may be shown by the Evangelical Churches, in their employment of agencies distinct from the stereotyped ones, and in their careful absorption of the results of irregular efforts to save souls. Nor must it be forgotten, that much that now falls under the heading of "routine" was *once* striking and exceptional; and much that to-day excites notice and surprise will yet resolve itself into ruts in which the ecclesiastical wheels will laboriously move onward. What poets are in the region of secular thought, religious hobbyists often are in that of Christian duty—the pioneers of a great army yet to follow. Godly nomads are multiplying. They go everywhere preaching the word. No badge of sect is worn by them. And the word "unsectarian" acts as a powerful magnet. Many who do not attend regular services are brought under the influence of the truth. The message is all the more mighty because, to many ears, it is strange. In town halls and temperance halls, in disused warehouses and large upper rooms, in theatres and market squares, God's proclamation is trumpeted forth. The divergences of creed among these Gospellers are not great. Sin, Love, Atonement, Salvation, Responsibility, Judgment, are the staple doctrines descanted upon. On these words the changes are rung.

As a consequence, numerous souls are awakened and saved. Here is a case in point. An Evangelist took a large room in a Lancashire town. Among the hearers was seated a well-known character, who, though the son of a lay preacher, was a drunkard and a gambler. He had witnessed the imprisonment of some of his companions and the death of others without disturbance of heart. His freaks and evil doings would make up a narrative as curious as sad. His latest iniquity had been to curse God at the grave of his child.

That very man, through that series of services, was seized by the invisible hand, wrenched from his evil ways, led to join the Church of his father, and is now a devoted and prominent Christian.

Now the inquirers and converts in such meetings may be "beads without a string," but they *are* beads, and jewelled ones too; and there is no reason why they should not be strung together in Church fellowship with others who have been threaded into unison by the regular ministry. The Christian teacher who has been so useful to them has soon to go to another locality. To him, and therefore to his methods, they are naturally attached. And so the danger is that, when the emanations of his will are removed, the souls illumined will relapse into a sort of twilight condition, and the fruits of his consecrated labour disappear like winter's snow from Snowdon's summit.

How can these precious souls be preserved from evil and led into good? Let them be regarded aright. Who says, "It is thankless work taking care of another man's converts: you have always the feeling that they are making comparisons highly uncomplimentary to you"? That may be true, but are they not *Jesus Christ's* converts? And ought not that to be sufficient to silence all cavillings? It is, perhaps, the most difficult of all religious work to follow up the toils of a nomadic Evangelist, but, if patiently pursued, it yields rich reward. This is testified by many who, after the great central services of our American friends, got the lists and ferreted out the individuals. It is practicable to solicit these newly-enlightened ones to join the Church which seems most suitable; and if that Church be worth joining, they will be eagerly welcomed.

No doubt each Evangelist has his preferences. He would be worth little if he had not. But he should ever look at the *actual state* of a Church, more than at its comparative approach to what he believes to be exact orthodoxy. A slight variation in the code of doctrine is overweighted by a greater spirituality and liveliness. While the agent of good leaves each one to his own choice, yet if his advice be sought he should prompt the

inquirers to a union with the community which, in that particular place, is, religiously, in the best condition.

Generally, the Evangelist will be met more than half way by pastor and officials. One of the happier signs in Church life now is the drawing together of extremes among ministry and people. On all sides we hear it said, "I cannot myself go in for just your kind of work, for my mental constitution forbids it; but I appreciate it none the less, and will do my best to help you." Thanks be unto God for this greater breadth of feeling. Any minister or officer who does not help it on is indeed blameworthy. Almost certainly an interview or correspondence will end in the extension of the brotherly hand to those impressed in undenominational services. If this be not done, some will give up their profession, and others will wander from place to place until their faith suffers from chronic debility. "Unattached," unless in *very* robust souls, means "impoverished." Too much must not be expected from those who settle in organised Churches. Change of air and diet is troublesome to God's tiny children, but, after a time, they become "seasoned vessels."

And if the objection be made that these irregular labourers are irresponsible as to actions and character to any Church Court; that "a proportion of them have sown seeds of discord in the Churches;" that they "ought to be content to work in narrower spheres and in duly authorised fashion;" the answer is not far to seek—most of them have not the requisite qualifications for concentrated and successful labour, and those who do possess these would have to twist and almost to strangle their conscience in order to desert their present vocation. Many illustrations of this occur to me as I write. And if God chooses to glorify His name by saving souls through the agency of angular or even of inconsistent men, shall the Church decline to profit by such choice on the part of its Head? The happy penalty of witnessing in one place is often the command to witness in another, even as Paul was directed to succeed his testimony at Jerusalem with a new testimony at Rome.

In the Churches themselves is to be found a large aggregate of persons who easily enlist among the Lord's Irregulars.

Church life *will* get into grooves; exceptions are rare indeed: whereas the great mass of outsiders will *not* be rescued just by routine work. With such a state of things a varying proportion of members becomes dissatisfied. They are haunted and taunted by the ideal of a more active Christianity. While clinging fondly to the system under which they have "got their good," and declaring that, with all its faults, they can find nothing to excel it, they are as restless as storm-birds. Their eyes are opened to the peril of the ungodly and to the sin of lethargy in the Church. From giving vent to their ideas in prayers and private conversations they at last proceed to action, and either attempt to cultivate ground long lying fallow, or else break up ground entirely new.

If the authorities be utterly unwise, they will discountenance such proceedings. If, however, they be discerning as to the rightness of things, they will take advantage of any success gained by these guerillas. Did Ferdinand and Isabella decline to profit by the victorious advance of the Marquis of Cadiz into the Moorish country, because he had gathered together, unauthorised, a motley band of knights and men-at-arms? Did Victor Emanuel refuse to possess himself of the Italian kingdom, because the red-shirted Garibaldians who aided the Sicilian revolt were only a species of banditti? Neither can the Churches afford to ignore the results of the independence and ingenuity of some of their constituents. It may be truthfully affirmed that, when members get impatient of restraints and of the stationary condition of matters, it is usually a product of healthy meditation. Either an outlet should be formed for their energies, or they will be apt to make one for themselves. But if, through the remissness or over-caution of the majority in a Church, the active minority have initiated schemes of their own, let all discretion be used and due sympathy be shown.

Times without number have natures impetuous, and natures quietly fervid, protested against the prevalent torpor, and

commenced new Missions in neglected neighbourhoods. Virgin soil often pays well for the working, and Providence, even more than Fortune, favours the truly brave. The ground has afterwards been occupied by the regular machinery, and a thriving branch Church has been the result. In the town of O——, a few faithful ones were pressed in spirit because so little was being done. Ignored, if not heavily frowned upon, by some of their more apathetic brethren, they held grimly by their resolve, and took a room for religious purposes. By their faith and self-denial many working-men were changed in heart and habits. The work spread to the larger sanctuary, and the long-standing reproach of barrenness is now rolled away.

New converts quite commonly start work in irregular ways. Let no man stay them! They are under the guidance of the Teacher of Teachers. Their zeal is fresh and fragrant. They thrill magnetically some whom they accost. Who can tell what will be wrought by their means? How was brought about during the past winter a prodigious revival among the pitmen at F——? A young man who had been a prize-fighter was solemnised by the warnings of a dying mother, and the abiding prayerfulness of his sisters. Once renewed in spirit, he broke away from all formality, and commenced a system of personal appeals to sinners. Those who held the joint pastorate of the Church to which he allied himself smiled lovingly on his erratic procedures, and encouraged the fervency which caused them, and have, since then, added hundreds to their Church roll.

The King's free horses should be allowed to choose their own loads. Set-work is not so pleasant as love-work. For love-work they will need neither blinkers nor bearing-rein. Native originality may be cheered on until it displays itself in new methods of arousing the impassive. Enthusiasm will prove itself contagious. By the valiant conduct of the Lord's Irregulars, victory will the sooner fold her wings upon our standards.

No doubt a kindly, pastoral, and official supervision may be exercised over "out-of-the-way agencies." All experiment is risky, and demands attention and revision from time to time.

But by no means let there be hindrance or coercion. If good is being done in irregular meetings, we can surely put up with a temporary thinning of the audience at our more orderly gatherings. These will be fed by the others before very long. And when believers cease waiting for the example of others, and begin to put themselves into shape for newly-devised efforts; when members of different classes of mind and coteries in society are driven into union for purposes of strife with evil, we may applaudingly cry out, "We wish you good luck in the name of the Lord."

Mission services, too, may be classed among the irregular means. Most of the denominations are now employing both ministers and laymen to itinerate as Evangelists. Even the religious bodies which have not yet revived this old order of workers are being compelled to a consideration of the question. These "Missioners" purposely enter into the labours of others. Both pastors and people would prefer that there should be no need for this, and that a satisfactory amount of religious decision should be manifested under the ordinary ministrations. But many of the undecided need to be reached from a new angle. They have been for years nearly at the decision point, but have not passed it, and are even in danger of receding from it. A competent Mission-preacher gives a last impulse to some who have been thus slowly matured for the kingdom of heaven. But he does more than that; for if elaborate preparations have been made for his visit, if, as in the great Leeds Mission of 1875, there has been much prayer, and visitation, and printing of wall-bills and hand-bills, the curiosity of the general public will be aroused, and so will be the deep sympathy of the religious portion of it. And may not curiosity be sanctified? It is of the Divine gift, and nothing given by God is superfluous in His vineyard. It may be legitimately aroused by Mission placards and visits. And whatever stirs up the sympathies of the saints is a positive and unalloyed gain to the world.

After all this, it is tolerably certain that the Mission preacher and his helpers will see the inner circle invaded by those who

have stood in the outside ring. Among these the best sheaves will be gathered. Blow after blow will be struck upon hearts long hardened against God. Consciences which seemed seared will quiver again. Old memories will be aroused. The scenes of Pentecost will be repeated, and many a tongue shall be "filled with singing."

Upon such a preacher the strain is intense. Only a man furnished for the purpose can bear it, and only if anointed from above will he be able to keep up his power. His nerve-force is drained away; sleeplessness infests him; peculiar temptations assault him; he is imperilled anew every day by the very conditions of his labour; only by nestling close to the promises of his Master can he persist in thus endangering his life for the sake of the enslaved myriads. Such a preacher alone knows what he has to give up for Christ's sake.

This being the case, he ought to be left unfettered, and allowed to propound his own terms and arrangements for labour. He has the great advantage of knowing by experience what is needful. He occupies a strong vantage ground, and may apply truths closely without being personal, and may take methods which would not be permissible to those who belong to the Lord's Regulars. Let him have a fair field and plenty of favour.

In these Missions are converted many who never would have been if they had not been held. They emerge by whole families from this "Crisis of Being." Only, great care must be taken not to hold such services frequently in the same locality, else we shall have a new phase of an old ailment—that of saving souls by deputy—said deputy being the one who annually conducts the Mission services. Like other agencies they lose their effect, and may have a harmful reaction connected with them. Neither, taking matters generally, should one Evangelist follow quickly on the heels of another. Each has his own peculiar fashion of doing things, and even when the first has got a good hold of the population, the services are almost sure to run down under the second, however suitable and successful he may beforetime have proved himself to be.

In some villages the various Evangelical Churches would have been all but denuded of their congregations had not Evangelists been employed. But the visit of a fervid, holy preacher is quite an event in village life. Susceptibilities toward godliness are unexpectedly revealed. The village inn is forsaken. The slatternly housewife begins to delight in cleanliness. God's house is frequented by new hearers. Faithful ministers are gladdened. No longer do they lament,

“ Lord, in Thy field I work all day,
I read, I teach, I warn, I pray,
And yet these wilful, wandering sheep
Within Thy fold I cannot keep.”

A few months back a godly but unlettered collier obtained a fortnight's leave of absence, and went to conduct meetings for village congregations. He never professed to preach, but just gave warm addresses interspersed with experiences. The two weeks extended to eleven, and during that time among those scattered populations there were *eleven hundred inquirers*.

By all means, then, let Mission preachers and all others of the Lord's Irregulars take the place in the esteem of the Churches which they occupy in the economy of the Holy Ghost. By the judicious use of these, the ranks of the frivolous, the malignant, the vicious, the indifferent, shall be perceptibly thinned; and exemplified anew shall be the wisdom of that saying of Jesus, “ Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in My name, that can lightly speak evil of Me.”

CHAPTER VIII.

COMBINATION.

“And Joab said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me : but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee.”—2 SAM. x. 11.

“Their heads all stooping low, their points all in a row,
Like a whirlwind on the trees, like a deluge on the dykes.
Our cuirassiers have burst on the ranks of the accurst,
And at a shock have scattered the forest of his pikes.”

RESOLUTE patriotism, fiery valour, copious blood-shedding, great sacrifice of human life ; and yet, the attack failed—the battle was lost ! Why was this ? Ah ! the same verdict has been written about the failures of the armies of the first French Republic, and of the armies of the North in the great American war, and of many another army, both before and since—“Failed for want of combination.” The various divisions which went to the fight did not act with each other, and so all their display of courage and discipline went for nought.

The comparative ill success, in some directions, of the Christian Church is partly attributable to the same thing. We have numbers, talent, efficient weapons, magnificent appliances, enthusiasm, and yet the millions of our redeemed brethren lie imprisoned in the arms of the wicked one ; his positions are not captured, his arsenals look almost impregnable.

“Want of combination” does something toward accounting for the fewness and smallness of our victories. (1) Individuals do not enough unite their powers against the common enemy. (2) The various movements in single Churches do not sufficiently aid each other. (3) Those Churches which have different

names and polities, but whose *real* variations of creed are all but infinitesimal, do not combine as they well might. This latter fact has been an eyesore to the profoundly and broadly godly, a rock of offence to many an anxious inquirer, and a handle to a prejudiced world. Combination, then, is highly essential to success.

Individuals may agree to do work in common. What a number of units separately could not achieve, they may accomplish by a clubbing together of their powers. It is within the knowledge of the writer, that certain young men have uttered first of all thoughtful vows before God, and then have gone out *in companies* to help Him to create good in human souls. Among them are University graduates and undergraduates; but they do not despise their humbler and less fortunate co-disciples. Some half-dozen will go on the Sabbath, and sometimes on the week evening, to a sleepy village, and, once there, will commence visiting, speaking, and praying. This they have done night after night, until the whole place has been in a ferment, first of astonishment and then of real religious concern. Or else they will hire a room in a low part of the town, gather a few children, and then some adults. They take pains to show a genuine interest in the well-being of the neighbourhood, and in the end are permitted to enjoy the consciousness that they are saving souls from death.

It is also within my knowledge, that in a Yorkshire town a band of ladies has undertaken a very onerous task. This band is made up of Christians from all the orthodox Churches, and its members take or assist in services held during half-an-hour at dinner-time in those factories and workshops whose employés are chiefly made up of women and girls. Their disinterested labours have received tokens of the Master's approval. The *indirect* effects have been confessedly greater than the more direct ones, but without a combination of energy neither could have been secured.

These agreements to unison may be increased twenty-fold.

We may have more societies *without* distinct names than with them, societies which shall own no other basis than that

of a mutual understanding. We may have plenty of "Aaron and Hur societies," without the title being attached; and so with others. In nearly every city and market-town there are some devoted saints. The touch of a master-mind, or even of a timidly loving mind, might crystallise them into a unity which would flash forth light on every side. It is the faithful few always on whose shoulders the great burdens are laid, and they must link arms and hearts if their proper mission is to be consummated. All this can be done either with or without reports, financial statements, and all the *et ceteras* thereof. Informal cohesion is sometimes the best.

And as with work, so with prayer. I agreed once with three or four more to pray for times of refreshing. Circumstances seemed to say that such a baptism was just about impossible. Nevertheless, in a few months it came, and in our talks we ever traced it back to that Sunday morning prayer-meeting. Some one *must* suggest and work up such unions as these. Modesty and self-distrust ought not to stand in the way of outspoken suggestiveness. While each one is waiting for the rest to begin, the myrmidons of evil are riveting the chains of their captives. If God has given a word to any soldier of Jesus, by all means let that word overleap all barriers.

And among the different agencies of the same Church there is much isolation. This may be remedied. A Young Men's Improvement Society is formed. There is grave danger of vaporous discussions, conceited declamation, irritability, the exaltation of cleverness to the pedestal which ought to be occupied by purity alone. And yet it is hard to avoid the formation of such a society, and none can doubt that it may be worked to the benefit of those united with it. But wise men have manipulated this institution, and have shaped it into a Home Mission Society also. They have welded into one the pair so long disjoined—the *mental* improvement of self, and the *moral* improvement of others. Each has had its share of time and attention, and each has been amazingly helpful to the other.

Here is a Mothers' Meeting conducted on the most approved

methods—religious singing, almost jaunty in its style, extracts from bright or pathetic books, an exchequer into which small sums are paid with the certainty of liberal interest; a pleasant visit from minister or leading layman; stitching, talking, a little presentation to some lady conductor now and then; a general drawing together of life to life. But the trouble is, the mothers' meetings in most Churches have no affiliation with the other and older working agencies. What about the fathers, brothers, sons, of these women? When the day for the annual trip or tea-meeting comes, all these male members of the family are invited, but hardly any present themselves, and those who do seem unhappy among so many females, and wear a somewhat sheepish look.

Now, if domestic visitation were practised, partly by the help of the associations of the mothers' meeting, great good would come of it. Among the best specimens of the power of Grace are some to whose homes I gained admittance, and with whose lives I obtained fellowship, by means of such a meeting. It is a treat to hear those men, once uncouth, and almost demoniac, speak and pray in public. But because there is so little combination, the loving work of a little set of good women brings but a poor return in many places—at least as far as the men are concerned.

It is the same with open-air services. They tax the voice, exhaust the bodily powers, and expose those who are forward in them to the risk of contumely. By them are influenced hundreds of thousands whose path of sin would otherwise have no hindrances upon it. Wisdom is shown in the manner in which these services are conducted. Popular music, aptitude of speech, cogency of appeal, are there. But they begin, and are ended; and, if impressions are produced, who tries to deepen them? After having taken a prominent part in numberless open-air preachments, I assert emphatically, that, as far as my experience goes, they are not adequately remunerative, except where they can have some base of operations to which an after-meeting can be transferred. The feelings aroused in the breasts of the unconverted *outside* the

sanctuary walls are brought to a fitting climax within. But failure of combination between the regular and irregular work is fatal to the latter and injurious to the former.

A Band of Hope meeting draws many together. Some come there who would on no account lend their presence to the ordinary worship. They wish to hear the recitations of the children, or, possibly, of their *own* children. What an avenue for usefulness is here presented! Who will accost, and propitiate, and invite these stranger souls? Who will take advantage of their appearance at a semi-religious gathering to secure their attendance at the meetings statedly and altogether religious? Many chances are missed here. Temperance reformers, who are supposed to be, first of all, *religious*, ought to be the most wide-awake of opportunists. Temperance and religion ought always to help each other.

Of some places of worship it may be currently reported, that whoever goes may feel sure of being well treated. But unless there is a constant "touting" for strangers, a request for the address, and an expressed desire to make the acquaintance of the owner of the unknown face, all the kindness is too vague and resultless. In growing neighbourhoods it is well to have Church members on the watch for newly-tenanted houses, and if to these a neat card of invitation can be taken, all the better. It is by the combination of a number of *little things* that many a house of prayer has been filled to the doors, and for lack of this others, with possibilities equally good, are half empty.

For any Christian to be able to gain the instinctive confidence and beaming smile of the children, is something out of which much can be made. There is no better introduction to a home than to say truthfully, "I am your child's friend, and I want to be yours; and, besides, I want to introduce you to One Who desires to be our mutual Friend, and Whose name is Jesus."

It is celestially politic to take advantage of a call upon the sick, or a visit in the day of bereavement, for the purpose of giving to the hale and Christless a solemn reminder of eternity.

We lose much because we do not let our varied methods work into each other's hands, and because we do not allow one opportunity to give birth to others of a different kind. That Church is most to be envied which cunningly weaves into each other the various branches of its Evangelism.

Cottage services afford another illustration of this. If discreetly ordered, they will commence at the fall of the leaf. A small committee of trusty men should supply the motive power. No need for ostentation, for the blast of trumpets and the piling up of names of prayer-leaders. Else they may, like other new brooms, sweep clean at first, and then fall into disorder and neglect. They should be accompanied by open-air singing and door-to-door applications. If *only* the pious are there, their end is not fully answered. If the unrighteous are to be got in, the utmost care should be taken to obtain houses whose inhabitants are in good repute with their neighbours. Many cottage meetings are spoiled because this is forgotten. But, withal, they should be considered as the vestibule to the more important services of the preaching room or the church. If not, it may be found before the winter is over that the gains are of the most nebulous and vanishing kind. For lack of this combination between the cottage and the assembly-house, much that promised well has appeared to dwindle into nothingness.

Testimony also is important. By it, as given from the lips of the poor and simple-hearted, as well as from those of the erudite and well-to-do, many are convinced, upon whose minds preaching would bring little weight. The most complete collapse I ever saw of an infidel meeting succeeded my own plain narrative of what I owed to Christ. I declined to argue, but just asked, "What have you which could change such an one as I used to be into what I now am? This very Christianity, on which you have been trying to pour contempt, has wrought all this for me and in me." That reasoning from experience was felt to be unanswerable, and the forces of the enemy were scattered. Testimony is scriptural. The Acts of the Apostles is full of it. It has been highly honoured of God. Room

ought to be found for it in all Church life, and in all outside labour. Nothing can take its place. Introduced into a sermon, it wonderfully freshens up both preacher and congregation. There is in all this a peril of pharisaism, and another of sameness of speech; but these by watchfulness may be escaped. But it is not to be made always, and everywhere, and to everybody, paramount. The humble in life, the newly-restored, the tenderly solicitous but scantily endowed, must have a place assigned them, but must act in combination with other means. Exposition, preaching proper, the consecrated treasures of secular lore, must be made to the audiences of to-day what they were made to those who listened to the Apostle of the Gentiles. Testimony, in *unison* with other ordained means, will eventuate in great triumphs. But if they be separated, each will fail in gaining its proper acquisitions.

And in this great business of combination it is most desirable that the pulpit should be rightly occupied. A minister who presents cold abstractions, or a number of pretty symphonies of thought, and *nothing else*, will mar more than he makes. A lay-preacher who takes to a Mission-room a fifty-minutes' discourse composed in his youth, and smelling of the drawer, had better have stayed at home. By dint of perseverance, a Christ-like enthusiast has got a number of strangers into the service. They are compelled to watch mental gymnastics, or to listen to lengthy disquisitions delivered in an unimpressive manner. How wretched feels that Christian worker amid surroundings such as these! Preachers who go straight to the point, use the language of everyday life, acquaint themselves with the real needs of their hearers—these are the men who best combine with the agencies for reclaiming the lost.

Sometimes, merely from omission to spend effort in a specified direction, expenditure in other channels is rendered all but abortive. As an instance of this, may be cited the Churches' neglect to spread good literature among the people. In all my journeyings I have only met with *one* society for the sale from house to house of pure literature, and that was in a small village, and was worked undenominationally. Every Church

of any size ought either to form such a society, or to give its quota of workers to a central and comprehensive one. What is most needed now is the employment of the rank and file of our membership; and here is something most suitable for them. Those who can do scarcely anything else can help in shutting out the bad publications by means of the good. Many who read the evil and senseless stuff now poured out in tons by the printing press would quite as soon con good books and periodicals, if sufficiently diluted and variegated. Many who are slaves of impure productions might, if canvassed and solicited, have yielded long ago to the fascination of healthy and interesting reading. For lack of such an agency as this, many of the effects of our Home Mission operations and Sunday-school labours are but short-lived. Pernicious prints, to an almost unlimited extent, are being circulated. Only those who have gone among the homes of the labouring classes and have made friends with the news-vendors; only those who have had quick observation and have got important "by-the-way" questions answered, have any idea as to the harm that is being done, and the manner in which the toils of the saints are rendered nugatory by this many-fingered evil. It works quietly, and so is little noticed. It gives an unhealthy stimulus to many young minds, and so leads to drinking and to theatre-going. Surely this little-employed agency for the scattering of pure-toned literature would combine most harmoniously with all other agencies of good. Each worker, then, is to acknowledge the value of the work done by the rest. No man ought to seek to monopolise the monetary or spiritual resources of a Church in pursuance of his own speciality of labour. There should be a sharing out of these resources, and then a combining of those methods of soul-winning in which they flow. We cannot afford to lose the fruition of so much skill and expense just for lack of combination.

And now, what about the united efforts of the Evangelical bodies? Judged broadly, these have had only a modified success. No doubt they have shown the *real* unity and sympathy prevalent among Churches and ministers. But as far

as it concerns positive additions, and the attraction of large crowds of non-attendants, there has been little to encourage. The meetings held by Messrs. Moody and Sankey stand almost alone in their efficiency.

There are reasons for this disappointing result. The preachers of the denominations concerned, and who have acted as conductors, have been a little afraid of each other's members, and have been afflicted with a feeling of strangeness. They had fears of exciting the prejudices of some whose manner of worship differs from their own. And in many cases the Christians themselves have not felt at home. There has therefore been a dearth of pungency and power. Too often the whole affair has got to look like a Turkish plum-pudding. But what of that? The motive was right, and Divine guidance must be given to sincerity. Experiments nearly always break down at first. A repetition oft renewed will surely bring pastors and people nearer to each other. The general public will be influenced and overawed. *Partnership, not competition*, will be the rallying cry. Instead of a rivalry as to who shall spend the most in decorating the walls with many-coloured placards, there shall be the "provoking of one another to love and good works." There will be an interchange of pulpits as far as is practicable. Names and sects and parties will be pushed on one side. Instead of each being weakened by the weakness of the rest, each will be strengthened by the strength of the others. An example of successful united services as they have already been held in London will be imitated in the provinces. At any rate, as in R——, there may be a united prayer-meeting at an early hour on the Sabbath, and which shall rotate among the different sanctuaries.

What a boon all this would be, especially in country places! What gaps in social life would disappear! How much religious people would rejoice in the lately-discovered excellences of their fellow-believers! If this combination between Churches be once assured, the words "For Christ and for souls" will have a new meaning. This will then prove to be

the Heroic Age for Home Missions, and posterity shall possess itself of incentives flowing from the present deeds and harmonies of the righteous. More than ever, in days as yet unborn, shall unity be regarded as "the precious ointment on the head," which same ointment "runs down to the skirts of the garments" of our Great High Priest.

CHAPTER IX.

RELIGIOUS ECONOMY.

“ It shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge : so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.”—EXOD. xviii. 22.

“ And nothing walks with aimless feet,
And not a worm is cloven in vain ;
And not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivelled in a fruitless fire—
Or but subserves another’s gain
When God hath made the pile complete.”

THE God of Nature is a great Economist. Nothing exists simply for the sake of its loveliness. Each creation, however tiny, is made to travel toward many ends. A horror of waste everywhere prevails in physical laws. Christ showed plainly the oneness of the God of nature and of revelation when He said, “ Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.” A thoughtful economy in all sorts of pious expenditure is an evident duty, and merits well our earnest study.

“ Political economy is the science which treats of the management and regulation of the resources of a nation, and of its productive property and labour.” In like manner may religious economy be spoken of as a science, and this definition appropriated and adapted. The gravity of the issues at stake ; the magnitude of the resources of the Church ; the danger lest they should remain undiscovered or recklessly squandered—all justify the application to it of the name “ science.”

Each Church should steadily keep in sight the fact that it exists for purposes of aggression. It is part of God’s invading

army. A feeling of indebtedness should be cherished, and most carefully exhibited, to those who dwell within the nearer circumference. No Church ever loved too many populations, or loved them too well, but to each Church the call that rings the most loudly is the command to bring good to those placed by Providence at its doors. About the only exception to this is, where the congregation is wholly aristocratic, and where there are scarcely any poor close at hand. Then a *protégé* may be taken up with, in the shape of some needy, struggling cause miles away, in city or village, and large—but not pauperising—donations sent to this. Anyhow, the debt to humanity is a debt of honour, and God expects us to pay to the suffering and sinful something of what we owe to Him. The passion for conquest is to have a foremost place amongst the militant host, and the outgrowths of that passion ought to occupy much of our counsels. Just because this is not recognised, there is not nearly enough encouragement given to the evangelistic spirit. If all Churches would but return to the point of their first formation, re-consider their responsibilities, and make aggressiveness a first necessity of their constitution, well would it be for the semi-heathen of this land! Every Church needs to be frequently stirred up on this great subject.

To this end each religious community of large or moderate size, as well as some of the smaller ones, should have a "committee for extension." The *name* of this body is quite a secondary matter, and the thing signified should be shaped and well based. Whether formed from both sexes, or from one only, the utmost discretion should be shown in the choice of members. There should be enlisted into it a variety of experience and character. Let its office be clearly understood. No finality should be allowed to it—or there might be jealousy and dispute between it and the older accredited courts. If these were galled into opposition, it would be most unfortunate, for some who would not actively oppose might become dead weights. But if such a committee were discreetly conducted, and quietly kept within its own province, suggestions of high value would be yielded by it, and, through its advice, initiatory movements

entered upon which would end in the reclamation of the bruised and ruined, and of the hitherto careless as well. The reply may be given, that "the Churches have already committees enough, and that the time of their prominent members is too much taken up by them." That is quite true, but, sad to say, these exist for purposes of conservation for the most part, and by their means aggression has been deprived of its claims to our time and thought.

Any economy which will not find room for aggression is false and self-destructive. If complexity of polity stand in the way, it must be interfered with at all hazards, though, to be sure, it is vastly easier to *add* to methods for conservation pure and simple than to lessen their number. But to take the initiative, and, neglecting the merely defensive, to plunge at the heart of the assailant foe, is sometimes the wisest course, as was plainly testified in the Seven Years' War.

If religious economy is to be formulated, and worked on right principles, the governing body of each Church ought to be made up of capable persons. We may *set out* on right lines, but if the guide be unskilful, or inimical, we shall soon find ourselves on wrong ones. Ill-considered directions spoil wise expedients. Incapable officers mean a demoralised army. Now, very much depends on the minister of any Church. Of course he is acted upon by his people—being in one place well-nigh swamped by worldliness, and in another pleasantly incited to new passion for souls. But he also acts upon his flock, and, by virtue of his very call, is supposed to be greatly above the average Christian in knowledge, spirituality, and force of heart. No amount of money spent in procuring and properly educating good pastors is ill-spent. At the same time, "We must have somebody polished and social," means mischief. If *all* the stress be laid upon these qualities, and the higher qualities which the Holy Spirit delights to honour are ignored, then a bad economy has prevailed. If the main-spring act wrongly, the wheels and leverages will prove erratic. How much better that an agreement should be made between pastor and people! On his side the question goes forth, "Will

you release me from some of the duties of the pastorate, and relieve me of some of the smaller and less important evening meetings? Will you be content with fewer pastoral visits for the sake of those around you who neglect public worship? If you will consent to this, I will go out into the highways and hedges." On their side the answer is given, "We will endeavour to keep up our organisation even though some of your care be withdrawn. We will cheerfully part with a slice of your time so as to give you opportunity to do the work which lies near your heart, and, more than that, we will follow your leadership, and will help you in any way you may think fit to dictate." As a part of religious economy such an arrangement would be praiseworthy, and, if this had been generally done, we should not have had to bewail the smallness of attendance as loudly as we have been doing.

A wise use of the resources of a Church depends also upon its office-bearers. Talkative, ambitious, forward men push themselves into official positions, and sometimes the money qualification is absorbingly looked at. Lucre becomes the key of office. It is notorious that men of wealth are prone to rank themselves with those who are "at ease in Zion." A plutocracy is little better than a mobocracy. If the second unduly excites, the first unduly stagnates. The select men, whether they belong to the ambitious or the wealthy class, have often curbed unwisely the aggressive spirit. They are prone to do all they can to monopolise the leisure and some of the work-hours of the pastor. If he breaks from their own little circle, all the worse for him! How can inroads be made on the empire of sin under such conditions? No! let there be an honest effort made to secure for the chief places men who have thought painfully on the problems of the times; or men who, though naturally self-contained and reticent, are content to sacrifice for the good of others what they relish the most, and to accept much that does not accord with their tastes; or men who have fulness of faith in the adaptation of the Gospel to all classes of mind and life, and who dread nothing so much as being unhelpful in the work of filling the land with Christian truth.

Rich men are not *always* unsympathetic; and sometimes, and especially in working-class Churches, it is good to put into office two or three who, either in wealth or in mental caste, are head and shoulders above the rest. "All on a level" may mean "All in a quarrel."

And again, if religious economy be properly dwelt upon, there will be an avoidance of waste. This is not sufficiently regarded in our counsels and arrangements. As soon as business men get out of the sphere of the secular into that of the religious, they are often perceived to have left their business faculty outside. Many of these successful traders have reached their table-land of prosperity by a diligent watching against waste of time and expense. Would that they were equally careful when they take part in ecclesiastical councils! The Church would be a great gainer if her unseemly extravagance were brought to an end.

Some Christians are like the people in the Galilean city, who wished Jesus to stay always with *them*, as a sort of living specific against all bodily disorders. No matter what the diseased in *other* cities suffered, if *they* were only kept all right. And modern believers disclose an equal selfishness. They ask for sermons which shall "build them up;" and as to the unregenerate, well, they must be content with what crumbs of energy remain after the saints are served. A religion which is always crying out after being "built up" is, self-confessed, a poor *tumble-down* affair. At the same time we *must* expend a good deal of our available capital in the conservation of results already gained. We are somewhat pent up and put upon the defensive. Our children and converts are solicited on every side. Satan's pet agencies are employed to plunder us of our precious possessions. It will never do to neglect what we have in order to secure what we have not. While we are storming some citadel of Satan, he may take advantage of our withdrawal and storm one of ours. And so institutions which do little more than conserve, may rightly claim a wide and deep outflow of Christian effort. Yet should there be a large reserve of strength, money, and inventiveness, which shall be consecrated

entirely to extension. Envidable indeed is the Church which has learned the art of dividing rightly between conservatism and aggression its manifold riches! But how rare the spectacle! By most the energies are frittered away; duties are performed half-heartedly and therefore wastefully, and other duties are gone through awkwardly. Altogether we are forced into a belief that the waste of labour in the Church all but equals the waste of money in the nation. More precious than the world's stores of jewels and gold is its wealth of Christian love, and there is no waste so calamitous and inexcusable as that of the products of such love.

And while the squandering of our *realised* resources is guarded against, equal care must be shown in the discovery and utilisation of those as yet unrealised. Every Church ought to take an inventory of its goods with a view to utilising them. Then will it waken up to the great quantity and high quality at its disposal. It will be amazed at the extent of the surplus beyond what has hitherto been seized and dedicated. Every type of disposition and every species of knowledge can be made in some way useful. Doubtless "Every one doing his duty" belongs to an ideal Church rather than to a real one, but each Church is to work *toward* that. Fertility in devising methods by which each willing soul can be employed is a valuable faculty either in person or community. The reproach flung at early Christianity was the best praise that could have been given to it; it was said that "this new religion was promulgated chiefly by women and children." Every disciple turned propagandist. According as a modern Church approaches that point does it become a model Church.

It pays, then, to advise Christians, even the timid and young among the rest, to tax their own ingenuity in the finding out of new methods of influencing and winning souls. Many schemes will thus be inaugurated, most of which will fail. But the lessons from failure will not be lost, and there will be a "survival of the fittest" among these schemes. Those which contain in themselves the elements of success will be taken up by other workers also. The great apostle understood this well.

He had joy in directing others, but he always liked to leave them, to some extent, to their own discretion. He advised, "Fulfil my wish in having a weekly subscription for the Judean poor, but use your own powers in making choice of the persons by whom you will send the money." But it must be perceived that most believers who wish to work, and are even *greedy* after chances of self-sacrifice, have not sufficient resolution or knowledge to discover the widest and wisest channels. They will stand close to an open door, and will either not see that it *is* open, or will be afraid to enter it. They would gladly place themselves under the orders of some born leader of men—of some well-informed and God-anointed nature.

"What general directions shall we give to the lay missionary employed by us?" Tell him candidly that he is not to throw away his evenings at a number of *small meetings*, either in cottages or elsewhere. If he goes at the right time into the houses of the labouring classes, there is no telling what gems he may discover, and what jewels he may aid in polishing. Only a few weeks ago I found in a humble home a child of seven, pale, stunted in his growth, and *blind*, but literally *all music*. Not a lesson has he had, and yet he can imitate on the piano the tuning of fiddles and the peculiar tones of hand organs, he can bring a tune out of a potato-scale, and can play difficult compositions after hearing them just once. Who can overdraw the possibilities of usefulness in the consecrated future of that boy? This is only a specimen of many treasures which undoubtedly exist in the meaner localities, and which, by economic arrangements, may be readily laid at Jesus' feet.

"How many speakers shall we ask for our annual gathering?" Don't ask a large number of men who, if not at your meeting, would be usefully engaged elsewhere. Each speaker *can* only have a short time given to him, and in that time can neither do justice to his audience, his theme, nor himself. As a rule, a multiplicity of speakers is resorted to, just for the sake of making the circular or poster attractive and powerful. They are deluded or drawn into giving a promise, and thus are

withheld from other soul-saving work which would pay well the kingdom of Christ.

“How much are we to spend on certain neighbourhoods and individuals, when, for some time, we have had no signs of success, and we might, seemingly, be better employed in some other quarter?” That depends. Natures hard to be won prove sometimes more than worth all the trouble; and so it is with localities; when the breaking-up *does* come, it is thorough indeed. Better stay too long than give up too soon. The nations of Northern Europe at first repelled Christianity with ferocity. Her missionaries, for some scores of years, had to walk over the martyred bodies of their predecessors. Yet those nations once gained, how great that gain was!

There is work for all.

“What shall *I* do?” says a delicate girl. You can visit the poor. No minister’s face will be as grateful to their sight as yours, for your simplicity and sincerity will carry with them a special charm, and you will be free from the professionalism which too frequently clings to a minister, in spite of himself.

“And what shall *I* do?” asks a youth, who, though he will never *sparkle*, may yet keep up a steady shining. You may give up something more for Jesus. Perhaps it is tobacco. “O, but that does *me* no harm!” No, but it may do harm to Christ’s little ones; and surely we ought not to grudge what we give up for our Saviour. And then, apart from this, you may be able to collect some middle-aged men who cannot read, and teach them the art, and make the Bible a living book to them.

Asks a sturdy worker, “How shall *I* reach this Papist population? They won’t take my tracts.” I knew of one who “caught them with guile.” They had refused his tracts with scorn, but he used the thorns as pins, and left the messengers of grace and truth on the hedges, until, actuated by curiosity, and ignorant of the device, the unwary Papists took them down and read them. He who *would* be wise is often half-way to wisdom, and the Omniscient Spirit will teach that one new way of affecting the deceived souls.

“How shall *I* gain these young people in my class?” interjects a teacher. Don’t choke your feelings when you talk with them, but, on occasion, let your feelings choke you. And say to one in whose life ugly signs are disclosing themselves, “I should like to sit with you to-night. I’ll meet you at the door, and we’ll be together during the service. Will that do?” Most likely it will.

“What bold thing can *I* do?” Well! some acquaintances of my own have gone into the public-houses on Saturday evenings, and have plunged in among the rabble rout of Sabbath-breakers, and, by firm bearing, courteous demeanour, and kind words, have got a fair hearing, and, after shaking hands all round, have retired without a single insult having been offered.

A godly merchant presents his question. He may be told that there are men like himself who are going to Mission-rooms and are talking in a straightforward way to the mixed congregations there.

“I shrink from notice, and love the background.” Then glean after the reapers. They leave plenty of profitable work behind them. Some ears of corn which have escaped the notice of others may lie across *your* path.

“I have a good voice, and that is all.” And a very blessed “all” it is. Sing for the sick and aged, and you will find that the truths which comfort one sometimes arouse another, and by caring for the ailing you will haply ensnare the healthy and the young.

If we thus try to utilise all our resources, we shall not long have to complain of leanness and barrenness. The very children will prove efficient home missionaries, and will lead their elders to the Friend of sinners. The atmosphere of God’s house will be steeped in odours as pleasant to the higher sense as, to the physical sense, are those of a bean-field in flower. No more shall we have sanctuaries built in poor neighbourhoods in which at least 25 per cent. is spent beyond what is necessary, and which money might have been devoted to purposes purely evangelistic, but we shall rather have each

member trying to lift the average of thoughtful liberality, of holiness and power. So shall the principles of religious economy be handsomely acknowledged and obeyed, and the saints shall realise that those who perform common duties get *uncommon* blessings, in like manner with the Bethlehem shepherds, who, while dutifully watching against thieves, obtained a vision of angels.

CHAPTER X.

SPOILS SECURED.

“I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.”—ACTS xx. 35.

“When faithless ones forsake thy wing,
Be it vouchsafed thee still to see
Thy true, fond nurslings closer cling,
Cling closer to their Lord and thee.”

EACH scholar in the senior classes of the Sabbath-school may be looked upon as part of the spoils of the Church. It is something to have kept these scholars so long. They have been kept in spite of the diligent and repeated attempts of the Evil One to displace them. Each represents the legitimate fruit of much bestowal of thought and painstaking. And so also must we regard the converts of the Churches. They have been fairly won from the enemy. Each convert embodies the results of an amount of self-denying labour on the part of the Lord's people. They are, consequently, lovely and precious in our eyes, and are quite worthy of a new expenditure.

But much of this immortal spoil is not permanently secured. The confessions of those who possess the secrets of the different religious bodies are painful in the extreme. There is no denomination but seems to think that its losses by leakage are the greatest of all. A minister rises up among his brethren, and says, “We had a nice work some six months ago among the families belonging to our Church, but, to my surprise and grief, I cannot discern much remnant of it now.” And then a second minister has his say: “I don't marvel at your being

surprised. Had the work been among the *uneducated* and the *mentally stupid*, I could have understood it, for I have invariably found that those who have known little about religion most easily part with their impressions of truth." These lamentations in Church circles are made more shrill by what is known of the perishing multitudes. House to house visitation exposes troublous facts. Large numbers of those who are now "dead in trespasses and sins" were once closely connected with religion. Men and women are come upon who are the offspring of homes of piety, whose relatives even at this present time are well-known religionists, but who themselves are alive only to iniquity. How families split asunder!

" From the same father's side,
From the same mother's knee ;
One to long darkness and the frozen tide,
One to the crystal sea."

Again and again is the visitor told that the person he has in hand was once in some famous Sabbath school, and enjoyed the teaching in one of the upper classes there. And, oftener than they care to tell, our town missionaries hear that such and such an individual was in time past a member of the Church, but is now neglectful of everything that is good.

Some of the causes of all this are on the surface. The habit—sometimes hereditary—of excessive drinking; early or unhappy marriages; misfortunes in business; sudden falls by reason of an alliance between an evil unsuspected within, and a temptation unexpected without; the wrong practices of another with whom the earthly lot is linked; past betrayal by some who wore the garb of godliness:—from these, and other causes, much of our prized spoil is lost. Our strength is shown in that we gain so much, our weakness in that we allow to be torn from us so large a portion of our gains. How are we to fence about our young people? How is "holy childhood" to be trained into holier manhood and womanhood? How is negative purity to receive its complement of positive obedience? "These fragile beginnings of a mighty end" are

placed in charge of the Churches. God would have them ever feeding among the lilies. How can we work with God so as to make sure of success in conserving the young people to rectitude?

Their *true position* should be detected and action taken accordingly. Toward the termination of the days of scholarship the youths and maidens have reached a transition stage. They are ever wakening up to new thoughts. Life then has to them most of romance and least of stern realness about it. O mystery! that in the days of least experience and discernment sin should be permitted to look most attractive, and these unsophisticated ones most easily beguiled. A little thing now will set the young lives adrift. Because they desire to bribe the conscience with a plausible reason for absence from the class, they are very ready to take offence. Sunday walks with members of the opposite sex are pleasanter than the services of the sanctuary. There are skilful purveyors of amusements after which the carnal mind feels a hankering. The baits of ill are voraciously taken. The elder scholars are soon seen to be more easily lost than regained. The first symptoms of restlessness should be noted, and counteractive measures taken at once. The next year or two make up the crucial time. Patience manifested now will bear rich fruit afterwards in the souls of these scholars thus beset. Some who have, underneath, the most vigorous tendency toward righteousness, are most mischievous and provoking. Fuller says, "A tenant who knows he has to be ousted sometimes does all the harm he can before he is forced to depart, and so it is with Satan and the soul." I have known many a time that the first to present themselves for instruction during a special work of God have been scholars of both sexes whose conduct for months has been of the naughtiest character when teaching hour came. To bear with such under the hope that a good process is going on within is most needful. For the young are *destructive* often before they commence being *constructive*. Severity might breed resentment, and resentment impel towards ruin.

If amusements are provided, they must be furnished providently and prayerfully. The elder boyhood and girlhood can hardly be too much reminded of the value of time, of the fact that recreation is only right as it prepares for the more effective performance of duty, and that this world is not constituted only for purposes of human pleasure. Without this, the amusements in chess-room, cricket-field, and conversazione will but defeat their own end. To do without them, if possible, is the wiser course; but, if there is no avoiding them, let restrictions be applied with firm hand. If not, the whole matter will be like the letting out of water.

Officials and teachers can scarcely say too much to their young charges about the habit of reading. The "how" and the "what" of reading may be dilated upon. A large-hearted care should be shown towards the library and its young patrons. If possible, let some skilled Christians be delegated as "tasters" of books. This habit will be a strong safeguard.

If the "commonwealth" feeling prevail, all the better. The schools in which this is most marked are usually the most prosperous. "*Our* school, in whose counsels *I* have some share, and to whose success *I* am bound to contribute," is a most helpful idea.

But, above all, there must be distinctness of object before the workers. Preachers and teachers work under much the same conditions, and are exposed to much the same dangers, and this peril of losing definiteness is common to both. The authorities and subordinates who say they dare rest at nothing short of the *true religious decision* of the young people, are truly to be admired and copied.

And yet, there are so many teaching who are either themselves unconverted, or are forgetful of their solemn accountability to God for the souls under their trust. Prayer-meetings, for teachers only, ministerial addresses to them, pamphlets bearing on their work spread amongst them, will not be more than sufficient for their great need.

While we can scarcely be too anxious, we may be *over-impatient* after these desirable results. There is a tendency in

some schools to force on the work of the Holy Spirit. He is not accustomed to hurry, nor will He be hurried by us. There is a broad difference between quickness and hurry. The fruit may be plucked before it is ripe. Our duty is to work with that Spirit, and to act according as we perceive the tokens of the inward operation. The after-history of Sunday School Revivals is too often quite painful. Much was made of them at the time, but, somehow, the eventualities are not what we could wish. This arises mainly from some zealous toilers not having been content to wait as well as to labour.

But, if the requisite care, love, patience, be provided, the hæmorrhage from the schools will be greatly lessened. Some will be converted, who, if not turned round in early life, never would be at all. Circumstances being propitious, and the right turn being taken, there will be henceforth no swerving, however long the pilgrimage may be.

The young people once saved, every facility should be afforded for union with the Church. Only by this can the bad be dwarfed through sheer inactivity and the good be developed by being constantly appealed to. The School is tempted to form a corporation totally independent of the Church, with its own funds, laws, and demands on the time. A gulf between itself and its parent is slowly formed, and the transference of the converts is not properly forwarded. This is a fatal mistake. There cannot be too many covered ways between the school and that Church with which it should be vitally united. The passage of converted scholars into Church membership ought to be quite a natural procedure.

Sunday-schools do not reach *all* the children. Markedly those of the "better" classes are outside this sphere of work. Can they be claimed and conserved for Jesus? At least one man has solved that problem. Residing in a suburb of a populous city, he carries on a children's service on Sunday afternoons for the young people in families whose social position is the same as his own, and also for some who are a few steps lower in social degree. Much singing, sparkling addresses, an *esprit de corps* among the younglings, a prize-giving and

summer outing—such is the curriculum followed; and, as the result, an untold number of those dear young hearts have been yielded to God and kept in God. My friend did not say, “If they won’t go to Sunday-school, let them alone,” but he rather girded himself for what he felt to be his special work, and now he rejoices “as one that has found great spoil.”

As to the younger members of pious households, a word or two will be in place. While all unchristly freedom is eschewed, there is no less need that undue stringency be avoided. Let sacred music take its position in the usage and interest of the home; let family devotions be conducted with cheerfulness; let all speech against Christian people and ministers be disallowed; let domestic piety be free from cant on lip and cloud on brow, and there will be scant fear of defection from the faith of the younglings of that household. Past prayers and self-forgetfulness will in them find ample recompense, and these jewelled and embroidered spoils will be kept for the Master’s use.

And now the important topic of the conservation of new converts generally claims attention. Only those intimately related to the Lord’s business have any idea of the percentage of loss. Let any list of inquirers be scanned a year after it was made out, and the likelihood is that many names will require a stroke of the pen through them. Some have not been heard of again; some have declined to join in fellowship with God’s servants; some have already proved themselves stony-ground hearers. Stragglers are somewhat numerous, and are soon snapped up by the wily foe.

Not that there have been no attempts made to keep and utilise the fruits of past victories. It is clearly understood that the sheep recovered from the winter’s storm must be housed and cared for. The tracts and pamphlets headed “Counsels for Young Converts” are ever multiplying. The attention of pastors and office-bearers has been lavishly given to the whole subject, and not in vain. But much remains to be done, both for those who drop in quietly and for those who are noticeably impressed in some special effort to do good.

Now, new converts cannot *live on excitement*. Excitement is all very well in its place, but we are not to depend upon it or to mistake it for religion. The perpetual drainage of nerve-force will, in the end, militate against healthy happiness of mind and soundness of moral sense. The writer has tried the experiment, and has seen it tried by others, and he is convinced that though the reaction may be long deferred, it is sure to come sooner or later. Some eleven years since, he was privileged in being usefully employed in connection with an outbreak of the work of God. For many months after the inrush of converts had subsided, he strove to keep up the excited feelings of both old and new disciples. His ill success is evident to him now. The preferable course would have been to form Bible-classes, and to try to make the fervent in spirit as thoughtful as fervent. But by the other methods was fostered a morbid appetite after religious emotion, to the exclusion of attentive meditation.

The hardest work comes after conversion.

Each Epistle to the Thessalonians shows how much *they* needed instruction of conscience and consolidation of character.

Inquirers must be dealt with very wisely—how wisely, Mr. Aitken's work on "The Difficulties of the Soul" most clearly shows. So much depends on the nature of the promptings given at the *beginning* of the Christian life. The after experience often takes much of its shape from them. These recreated ones should be taught to walk on their own feet. If always incited to lean upon others, the removal of any one prop may mean a serious catastrophe. Yet is it very natural that some should get into the habit of always wanting to be nursed, and to "have a fuss" made with them. One way of curing them is to set them to nurse others. More than any of the rest, weak believers should be interested in some department of religious duty. They will live more strongly themselves by pouring their lives into others, and will "keep themselves in the love of God," while endeavouring to increase that love within their companions.

"Each for all and all for each" is a Swiss proverb which

the nurslings of the Church need to ponder. Many who have been re-captured by the world would have been among the secured spoils still if only they had been directed into a sphere of usefulness. Every convert becomes part of God's capital, and from Him is a good rate of interest expected. An enlargement of the number of sub-pastorates would be helpful. To a young man or woman some name or selection of names is given. "This is your sacred charge. Give to this a first place in your petitions. Make sacrifices. Shelter this beloved soul. Then shall it become part of your glory and your joy."

And those newly found in God may be taught to hold little prayer-meetings for each other in the event of any signs of lassitude appearing. A young man who now preaches the Word was some eighteen months after his conversion in grievous danger of falling back into folly. His companions knew this, met together, pleaded with God for him, and just succeeded in checking his retrogression.

Gatherings for religious conversation have done good work in securing spoils. These meetings will be useful if characterised by rationalness and frankness. Without great care they will get conventional and frigid. But if meetings for witnessing and prayer be of the right stamp, they can scarcely be too highly esteemed. There is an art in conducting such assemblies, as, indeed, there is in conducting social religious meetings in general, but by earnest study even the formal may acquire it, and the awkward may exemplify it.

It is wise to follow up rapidly and carefully all good impressions. One good man has issued a leaflet, containing appropriate passages of Scripture, and also the titles of helpful religious books, and has distributed these among the "lambs." Another insists that the step into ordinary Church membership is too great for low-class converts to take at a stride. He tries to provide for them a half-way house. And he is right; for it is manifestly imprudent to push such people suddenly into scenes and habits so alien to all their antecedents. They require acclimatising, and ought, like some missionary converts, to be brought more slowly towards the full privilege of

membership. They may then be secured for the Church of the future.

In a Staffordshire village chapel might have been seen by the side of a stove on a cold winter's day a venerable Christian lady. Around her was a ring of rough eager faces, and to their owners she was talking earnestly about the deep things of God. What did it all mean? Just this: that these men had come under the power of a remarkable work, and, though the very pariahs of the place, had been brought to thought and prayer; and she had felt it her duty to give them a course of instruction before their lips pressed for the first time the cup of the Lord. I have heard of no unfaithfulness to vows in that village.

In another locality similar to this, a work equally gracious took place. A cultured gentleman and his no less cultured wife were prompted to give up much of their book-pleasure and enjoyable society, and to care for the souls who had been launched into a new life. How gleesome were their tones as they said, after a considerable lapse of time, "Not one has gone into sin or severed himself from our Church!"

Finally, any evangelism which does not inculcate the necessity for retirement and personal meditation on spiritual things contains in itself the germs of fatal disease. Our *one* great end is to help the Spirit of God to endow the soul with that truth which is His *one* means of sanctifying the soul. Religious excitement is valuable, chiefly as it brings sundry natures under the influence of healthily-convinced saints and the truths they impart. And so, "walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Spirit, will the Churches be multiplied," and their hardly-gotten spoils will be secured.

CHAPTER XI.

SIDE HELPS.

“And all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.”—ACTS ix. 39.

“Yet these are not the only deeds
Wherein Thou may'st be sought ;
On homeliest work Thy blessing falls,
In truth and patience wrought.
Thine is the loom, the forge, the mart,
The wealth of land and sea ;
The worlds of science and of art,
Revealed and ruled by Thee.”

THE topics which fall naturally within the title of “Side Helps” are: Systems of training in colleges for ministerial candidates, and in boarding-schools for young people; the ministry of women; the total abstinence movement; social and sanitary reforms; and the Press.

An amount of timidity and a want of conscientiousness are often manifested in the way in which candidates for the ministry are dealt with. If they betray an inefficiency which seems irreparable, they ought to be courteously told so, and not tacitly encouraged to go on with their candidature. Better no ministry at all than a weakly or low-principled one. If sufficient pains be given to the obtaining of right men, there is no fear of the supply failing. Many will enter the ranks if the cry, “Short of good men,” be raised, who else would have delegated the profession to others greatly their inferiors. The Holy Spirit will use means to bring forward chivalrous, talented souls, who will fill all vacant places. His “call” is

chiefly an appeal to Christian men to exercise their love and discretion as to their future work.

The candidate once accepted, a course of tuition follows almost as a matter of necessity. An educated ministry was never required so much as it is now. To say that we can do without colleges approaches nearer and nearer to the ridiculous. In intelligence and general information the pastor ought certainly to be above the great mass of his people.

But it is impossible even for godly young men to be together in considerable numbers without exposure to special perils, and the more so as there are in the majority of colleges a few who are inconsistent, and who act as tempters to the less firm in the little community. Frivolity of speech among young men spreads rapidly, until it becomes quite an infestation. Sacred things having become common are spoken of with thoughtless flippancy. A consciousness of mental growth tends, in some, to produce conceit in odious forms. And so, if great care be not taken, the college life will be weakened by many a running sore.

Moreover, in these years the chosen of the Churches are kept a good deal apart from practical life. Classics and theology, lectures and examinations, take up their days and months. Imperceptibly they get somewhat out of sympathy with human nature as it is. The ideal gets more to them than the real, and the awakening, whenever it comes, will be rude and dangerous. They often form a strained and artificial style, and cannot walk in the pulpit without either crutches or stilts. They are apt to fall into plagiarism, both of idea and manner. Many students get buried in books when they ought to be living in men, and this, too, just when the life-habits are being created and the beliefs are getting "set." In these men the emotional and sympathetic not infrequently wither through long disuse.

Correctives to all this are greatly needed, and may be provided. At present, Home Mission colleges proper are not practicable to any Church. There would soon be comparisons made between their students and those of other halls of learn-

ing. The way may open in a while. But for this there would be no necessity, if only the committees and governing bodies formally enunciated the theory that the institutions over which they dominate exist for purposes of ultimate evangelism. The committee-men and governors who will move in this matter will need "the pulses of a Titan's heart," but they will deserve well of the Churches. Something of theological symmetry and classical finish ought to be sacrificed for the sake of practical acquaintance with surrounding realities.

To remedy the dreaminess and pedantry and other evils incident to a course of ministerial training, let earnest and prominent evangelists be invited to the schools of the prophets, from time to time, to deliver lectures and addresses on experimental evangelisation. It is well worth their while to do this. The inaugural speech of each session or year ought to reiterate the assurance that a margin of time will be provided, in which the brethren assembled may work tract-districts, conduct special services of various kinds, and plunge at will among the fallen and unhappy. Large populations are growing up not far away from most of our training-homes, and work among these will pay well. Literature of a soul-stirring sort may be recommended and amply furnished, and by this the natural or acquired zeal of the young men will be strengthened.

In *one* college, at least, all this and more has been done. The head of the House tells the tyros in theology that they are not there for mental processes only, but that the great object of their residence is future usefulness as Christian pastors, and he never fails to exhort them to watch jealously their hearts, and to prize and strive to intensify their fervency. As a consequence, the men sent out from that place are famous for their assiduity, spirituality, and seeking after souls.

It is not uncommon to hear a young man say, "As I walked up the avenue of the college for the first time, I trembled for my religious earnestness, and prayed to God that I might die rather than lose it." But if all facilities are afforded for Home Mission study and work, such fears will be scarcely known. Frivolity and pride will be checked. The pulpit style will be

purged of its stiffness and artificiality. Brave young souls will buoy each other up, and the bad will be enfeebled by the habitual elevation of the good.

The question of the education of our youth cannot be taken up, as a whole, without reference to some vexed questions in politics, and *that* would not do at all. But a few words on the subject of boarding schools may fittingly come in. One of a high class presents itself to me as a model. With its old pupils I frequently meet, and nearly all of them have left its corridors and dormitories thoroughly boyish, enthusiasts in athletic games, genial and unaffected, but, above all, decided Christians. True, no system of heavy cramming has been followed, and there has been no loud advertising of the honours gained in public examinations. But the inculcation of a high moral tone is the great thought of the authorities, and this design is certainly fulfilled. The Bible is revered always; a chatty visit from minister or godly layman is much appreciated; the masters must be men of character and piety; the boys are put upon their honour, and the school-spirit is all the healthier. *Ambitious* parents may be somewhat dissatisfied, but parents who have sense enough to put piety first are sufficiently thankful. If a like course were pursued in all our boarding-schools, we should not have to deplore the lack of eligible candidates for Church offices, the number of really good citizens would be amplified, and the stricken and shrunken would be touched and remedied by kindly hands.

The ministry of women is a side-help of untold value. That was fully understood in the Early Church. The last chapter in Romans is the one which makes most reference to Christian women. The *women's* chapter is the *work* chapter, because they did so large a share of that work. And, to-day, they may be beneficially employed in Class Missions, such as those to cabmen and shop-girls; in visiting the hospitals and infirmaries; in conducting clothing clubs and teaching in ragged schools; and in most of the thousand and one labours of mercy which go so far to prove the truth of our holy religion.

It is, however, with the *public* ministry of women that we

are chiefly concerned. What place may it legitimately hold in the evangelistic efforts of the Churches? It is evident that the Scripture intends *some* women to speak publicly. Paul's mandate against such speech, if not understood to proceed from local and exceptional reasons, would be at variance with the rest of Scripture. "Your *daughters* shall prophesy," as well as "your sons." And prophesying was not then—as nearly all are aware—so much *foretelling* as *forthtelling*. The best comment on this passage is the citation of Philip's daughters, who, in Cæsarea, instructed the converts and strove to impress the wayward. The name of Priscilla, too, displaces that of Aquila in priority, which fact is all the more full of meaning when we consider the Eastern notions as to the subordination of the woman to the man.

On the other hand, such public exercises on the part of the sisters in the Church were not general, but were comparatively rare. The whole tone and manner of statement would lead us to infer that. And what was expedient then is expedient now. The strength of woman's public work consists much in its rarity. If it became general as that of man, its power would diminish in proportion as it grew more common. But if a woman be endowed with super-eminent gifts of soul, mind, and voice, is she to be debarred from extensive public usefulness just because of the accident of sex? Equally, if the attention of her hearers is to be drawn from herself, and fixed on her message, it can only be by these gifts being thus extraordinary, and by her personal saintliness being, not only superior, but truly superlative.

An old navy told me that, when the railway to the Crystal Palace was being made, Miss Marsh used to go among the men on her mission of mercy. Only once was she insulted, and then the "ganger," in fierce tones, ordered out of the cutting the man who used wrong speech to her. And when a riot took place, and a rabble crowd of navvies and a serried array of policemen were approaching each other with hostile intentions, just as the stones were beginning to fly, Miss Marsh had her carriage drawn into position between the con-

tending parties. My informant, who was present on the occasion, said that instantly every navy stood stock still, so much did they respect and love her. The riot was quelled by her presence alone. Very few *men* could have obtained that ascendancy over those wild Britons, but a *woman* conquered by her voice and her glance. Devoted Bible-women can tell the same story. Not by the putting on of masculine airs, nor by the use of patronising words, but by the firm and gentle lovingness of consecrated womanhood have they broken in upon natures long steeled against the truth. Yes, womanhood! enlightened and sanctified, and clearly separated unto the work, can sway large crowds, pierce with homely silvery eloquence obdurate hearts, and save many from the error of their ways.

The great Temperance movement is very helpful to the Gospel, and may be yet more widely utilised as a faithful ally. The Church desires to spend her powers in conflict with other evils which are rampant and threatening, but she cannot pass the drink evil to do this. It is a fortress that cannot be masked. It has to be besieged, undermined, and stormed. From it press forth the influences which create a mysterious cloud over many a home; which cause the married women, young and old, in working-class families to combine for purposes of dissipation; which cause the remark that means so much to be frequently made, "Poor little children! it's a good thing for them that their mother *has* died;" which gives many a life the appearance of a "Rose Cottage," (?) or "Laurel Villa," (?) whose surrounding loveliness and verdure have been banished or killed by the smoke and grime of the growing city.

Indulgence in strong drink is in cases almost numberless the one barrier between the soul and its Saviour. Turn the glass out and the Bible comes in. This wickedness is in firm agreement with all the rest of this world's dark creations. Giant Despair has but one wife, Giant Drink has many. As was said of Night, so, with equal truth, may it be said of this deadly traffic—

"Teeming evils thrive beneath thy shade."

The national drink bill cannot be put into figures. Useful inventions are being prevented, rising geniuses are constantly being crushed, and the negative loss through the consumption of fermented and alcoholic fluids is almost as great as is the positive.

The crusade against this formidable enemy is being valiantly urged. The fact is become more and more evident that those who are right on this social question are not likely to be wrong in their convictions as to any other questions, whether social or religious. No one can go to a great Temperance meeting without being struck with the look of earnest purpose on the faces round him. Commentators are speaking plainly; even secular poets are showing signs of changing sides.

Without a doubt the supporters of this movement have still something to learn. In some places the border line between right and wrong in vocal and musical performances has yet to be found. If amateur theatricals and acting in character are to be forwarded by temperance workers, they are really playing into the hands of the theatres; and as the theatres in their turn play into the hands of the drink demon, those who arrange such exhibitions are really thwarting their own design.

But incalculable good has been done. From many Lancashire towns comes the testimony, "Every Church which has shown real sympathy with the Blue Ribbon movement has had its membership replenished with reclaimed drunkards and their wives."

There is a wise tendency, in all attempts to counteract intemperance, to show how much human physiology is opposed to the reception of these unhealthy stimulants, and the value of this argument our young people are becoming increasingly competent to discern; but with this is conjoined a holding up of Christ which is, in the highest degree, helpful to Evangelical religion. One grave modern peril is that of having too many Church committees, but, as things are, every Christian community should find room for a Committee in some shape or other for the prosecution of the cause of Gospel Temperance. And if those who give signatures to the pledge are sought after by

loving Christians, they will also give their souls to God. There is afterwards a probability that they will become the best workers. The experience of the writer has been that if, in Evangelism, much exposure and self-sacrifice have been needed, the Temperance men are ever to the fore. Countless thousands can be reached by a Temperance Mission who are not easily approached by ordinary religious agencies, and it is for the godly to hang about the skirts of the fight between the forces of drink and sobriety, gathering the spoils for the kingdom of heaven.

There is a complaint in some circles that the strictly pious will not give their aid to social and sanitary reforms. School boards have been able hitherto to command the services of some of the best men and women, but with town councils, local boards, and kindred corporations, the case is different. The godly seem to be afraid of the degeneracy of their own life in Christ if they go to the council-chamber or board-room. There is some ground for this fear, as many living examples prove. But are the bodies which hold so many sanitary and social matters in their hands to be composed of material extraneous to the Churches? If Christians occupy positions of importance in social affairs, they will be all the more safely conducted. How can righteousness exalt the nation, if the righteous shrink from its select assemblies, and leave them to publicans, parvenus, and demagogues? The cause of God is the cause of trade-honesty, of large-heartedness, of chastity, and of every branch of every virtue; of civilisation, brotherhood, freedom, and sanctified astuteness; of refinement, domestic happiness, political prosperity, and every species of rightness and fitness. Reforms in the homes that make up society are highly helpful to the Gospel. Thrift and cleanliness are not to be despised. Apostolical piety has a quarrel with dust and cobwebs, feverous streets, and wanton luxury. No Church ought to resolve itself into a sanitary association, but every Church ought somehow to help such associations. No Church member ought to allow the social to monopolise him, but each one can do something, if only a little, to advance social reform. We should not

dream of putting the educational in the place of the religious any more than we should dream of imitating those village fathers who, in order to procure pure water, resolved to *white-wash the village pump*; but the educational in schools for orphans and for waifs and strays, the social in cocoa-rooms, the sanitary in health committees and cookery classes, ought to receive the thoughtful attention of at least a portion of the general body of workers. It is well-nigh impossible to succeed in Christian work among the suffering poor unless we couple with it sundry improvements in their surroundings. The scientific owes much to the religious, and, if allowed, will do much to repay the debt. A religion whose lines are too narrow to admit that wholesome natural conditions may be used as ladders to the Infinite is crippled by mistaken notions as to religious duty.

The Press may be regarded as a side-help of high utility. The Church has not yet made herself fully aware of the services which a consecrated Press may render. Our whole system of tract provision should come under revision. Tracts are ceasing to strike as they did. Secular competition is too severe for them, and they suffer by comparison. People are getting used to their form and matter. We require something more sparkling and racy, with more profuse and attractive illustrations—the more so, as the very grocer's shop is outstripping us with its circulars and almanacks. Quaint or pathetic scenes, well conceived and highly coloured, will "take" as illustrative pictures, and there is much in real life which may be wisely retailed in tract form. By all means let everything be tried, or how can we expect the blessing of the Spirit of Truth? Attention once made sure of, smart, pungent sayings, well-told anecdotes, will find lodgment in many a working-man and Sabbath-scholar.

And most of our countrymen and women are unfamiliar with the Evidences. Catechisms may be good, but the parrot-like repetition of their contents does not get them far down into the soul. A small hand-book of Christian evidences, condensed, simplified, pointed, would be a great boon. But where

is the genius who can write such a book? He is perhaps hiding somewhere among the baggage of the Lord's army. O that the Disposer of events would drive him out of his retirement, and set him to his work! Such a little volume as this would make havoc of suspicions and allegations against Christianity, and would confirm the faith of the doubting ones.

Meanwhile we shall be more than justified in using in behalf of Christ every mentionable side-help, remembering as we do that "the shields of the earth belong unto God.'

CHAPTER XII.

REFLECTIONS.

“While I was musing the fire burned : then spake I with my tongue.”
—PSALM xxxix. 3.

“Well roars the storm to him who hears
A deeper voice across the storm.”

NO one diagnosis of national disease, and, therefore, no one prescription of remedies, can at all approach the exhaustive. The difficulties so much harped upon can only be met by the contributions of many minds and hands. In preceding articles the dark picture was swiftly followed by the bright ; in the war against the prevalent evil and in the achievement of the possible good, it was shown that elevation of *classes* could only be secured by concentration on *persons*, and that the *manhood* of Britain demanded *most* attention ; in the endeavour to accommodate Church methods to the prejudices and surroundings of the working manhood of the country, it was alleged that the toilers are openly or secretly resisted by a gilded tyranny in the shape of a selfish refinement ; *that* once overthrown, the path will be more than ever open to irregular agents, who, while accused of suffering from a “craze,” are in possession of the very craziness which Satan does not at all like ; but since, for want of wise combination, a great deal of honest, talented work goes almost for nought, it is best to interlink Christian agencies as much as may be, and also to study carefully beforehand all experiments and all channels for the display of religious energy, lest there occur a deplorable waste of that which, in many quarters, is so much needed. Hardly got must not be lightly lost ; so a rigid, loving guardianship of precious results is quite imperative ;

and in this, as well as in the actual gaining of these results, many side-helps are available.

In all topics so kindred to each other as are these, there must be a certain amount of intersection and even repetition of thought; and yet room is left for a few closing observations.

The pleaders who urge the necessity of an *early prevention* of evil and implantation of good, merit a place among the sages of the Church. Preventive measures yield least *apparent* but most *real* fruit. There are no friends more faithful than are children. If they are taught to "follow truth along her star-paved way," they will be, in all probability, the staunch adherents of truth during their after years. The blame of their disloyalty and defection is generally in others, more than in themselves. Who can tabulate the good done by a minister who, on Saturday afternoons in winter, has a meeting purposely for the young, and by heartiness and liveliness, the giving of little cards for best scriptural answers, and the introduction of plenty of blithe singing, thoroughly interests and wins for his Lord the boys and girls alike? They obtain a belief in religion which no after-testings are able to wash away. The Church can scarcely do *too* much for her lambs, and social movements when allied with religious work will prove that the propensities to evil which have come from father to son can often be trained out in quick time and their places supplied by celestial intuitions. But the afflictions of the present come extensively from the remissness of the past. The legacy of untaught, unsanctified masses left to Protestantism centuries ago by a moribund Romanism has weighed heavily upon us ever since. We have had too much lee-way to make up, and have had to devote to depraved adults the power which might have been exercised towards the children. If for fifty years the Churches could give unbroken thought to the rising race, the face of the land would be completely changed. Alas! it cannot be, for we are always in arrears with our work—thanks to the heresies and distractions of the past.

Hence the fact that this is a day of blackness, reproach,

and blasphemy ; that society is tossed and torn as if, on her expanse, the four winds were striving together for the mastery. The statistics which have gone the round have produced unwonted jubilation among the adversaries. Would-be wise social quacks and quasi-religionists have fulminated against Churches and ministers ; Papists have emitted their fœtid gasconade, and Anythingarians have favoured us with shrieky passion-cries of " Didn't we tell you so ? " Nostrums without end have been offered for nothing, and each inventor has some *one* special medicine for a most complex ailment ; uncharitable aspersions as to the capabilities of the chosen pastorate, and the faithfulness of the general crowd of the religious, have been hurled promiscuously hither and thither ; the forgotten sneers at those who hold a " vulgar hope " have been revived by traducers and libellers, materialists and review-writers ; the advocates of that doctrine of " a high (?) necessity," to which all falsities more or less incline, have fostered new anticipations of an early triumph over the one formidable " superstition ; " it is roundly asserted that we may as well try to remove the " bitter from a partridge's thigh " as to extract the vice from the low-lived and incriminated.

A new obstruction to success in soul-winning is slowly disclosing itself. All this " to do " about the frivolous and unchaste, the scornful and the negligent, is giving them a larger idea of their own importance. Their pride and self-will are brought into play more actively than ever. They are becoming wary, and, on the principle that " Surely in vain is the net spread *in the sight* of any bird," are eluding the snares laid for them by Christian love. " I'll take good care that these religious folks who are after us don't get hold of *me*," is the unspoken sentiment of great numbers of those whose salvation we desire. Never before, perhaps, were ministers of religion so much exposed to sarcastic comments as they pass along the streets. The popularised tunes with their sacred words are sung in ribaldry in hundreds of public-houses. Burlesques of the phrases and methods of aggressive Evangelism are shockingly common.

Only a few nights ago, I was put to exquisite pain on hearing from a cottage full of half-drunken men and women a vile parody of holy exhortations and sacred melodies. The astonishment and shame of the assembled company when I stepped into their midst and rebuked them with mingled sternness and tenderness was something worth witnessing. I told them I was accustomed to *trust* the working-classes of my country, and that, when I did so, I was *never* insulted. Said they, "Neither will we insult you ;"—and they listened with respect to my loving, warning words. All these phenomena teach us that while we prepare more assiduously than ever for expeditions against sin, it will be wisest to make as little clangour as we can, lest we *scare* those whom we desire to save, and lest also we aid the proud self-willed soul in finding fresh reasons for its rebellion.

In presence of all these grave facts, what attitude are believers to take toward the mass of willingly captive men? They should avoid a spirit of murmuring, and also any sedative which is yielded by a pretty illusion. Growlers are mostly idlers, and illusionists don't usually earn their salt in honest religious work. While we shudderingly hear

"The sad world's moan,
The long low discord of incessant wrong ;"

while, in view of *possible* excellences which never, in some lives, become actualities, we plaintively sing,

"I see their unborn faces shine
Beside the never-lighted fire ;"

we ought to refuse to give up our faith and respect toward *any* of our fellows ; for O ! it is *so* much easier to lose the vantage-ground of conviction than it is to recover it. The Lord Jesus spoke often with irony about the *deeds* and *belief* of some around Him, but not once with contempt toward the *persons* who wrought such deeds and held such beliefs.

Christ had faith in man. He who knew most about the evil in all men was most confident as to the future extension of good both in soul and society. As to us, if we lose faith in

our fellow-mortals, we may almost as well lose faith in our Creator. Nay! the one often results from the other. Max Müller says that the idea of *humanity* as a whole came into the world with the advent of Christianity. Aforetime nations and persons despised each other, and each affected a lofty superiority to many of the rest; but now, the outburst whose sonorous Latin and sound sense brought forth the frantic applause of Rome's citizens, has a meaning more profound than ever before—"I am a man, and I hold that nothing which concerns mankind can be a matter of unconcern to me." When contempt for any members of the human family has once occupied the servant of Christ, there is no longer any hope of wide-spread usefulness as far as *he* is considered. The old-time tale about the one whose immortality was contingent on the possession of a single golden hair, is, in bad logic, more than matched by the creed of the religionists who, in Christian England, speak of the soul as if its continued existence depended on certain of its temporal and accidental surroundings.

At the root of much of the apathy of the Churches may be found the suspicion or belief that some who are called "men" are not inherently immortal. Surreptitiously, indeed, has this doubt about natural immortality poisoned the springs of action. It is noteworthy, too, that the tenderest wailing over lost sinners and the most earnest exhortations to labour on their behalf are found in books written by those who believe in the everlastingness of retribution to the persistently and finally impenitent.

After all, it was the loyalty of the "lower orders" which lengthened on earth the Saviour's life. As far as human appearances go, but for them His day of toil, teaching, and miracle would have been shortened, and the Gospels would not have been so great and so crowded a treasury as they actually are. It behoves the "better classes" to pay their debt to Judæa's lower orders by a liberal policy in thought and act toward the dense masses now found within this realm.

Quite apart from any accessions to the ranks, all work done, whether preventive, destructive, or creative, is of service to the Church. The despondent, if they find their task and fulfil their mission, will feel that their night of gloom is scattered. The giving away of a handful of leaflets has brightened many an experience. How many saints have had to cry—

“ I myself must mix with action,
Lest I wither by despair ! ”

Persons who stagger under the burden of a great sorrow will discover that, if they fill their hands with labours, their feet will come down with safer tread. The unfortunate, the bereaved, the lonely in spirit, have often refuged themselves securely in manifold responsibilities ; and by having their thoughts drawn away from themselves, have been receptive of sundry tonics designed for them by Heaven.

Sleepy ministers and members are fond of quoting the passage, “ It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.” That, surely, was not inserted in the Bible that it might become a plea for a false contentment. In truth, neither minister nor people ought to be at all content unless conversions occur with frequency. A conversion from selfishness or haughtiness into selflessness and humility is a greater marvel than the cleansing of a blasphemer’s lips, or the reversal of a drunkard’s bias. When a sense of beauty is born into a nature once destitute of it, when features which were as monotonous as a heap of sand become bright as a garden of flowers, and all because the wooing of God’s love in Christ has been heard and accepted,—*that* is, perhaps, a greater Gospel triumph than is the transformation of a sensualist or the restoration of a prodigal ; but, withal, it is the conversion of *open and notorious sinners* which attracts most attention, and excites most remark. And so, no Church should be satisfied without this latter evidence of the presence of God in its midst. This will materially assist in checking the spread of scepticism, and, if the Church happens to suffer from a bad reputation for stiffness, lack of zeal, and general uncharity, a few genuine and

remarkable instances of personal and domestic renovation will do much to destroy such reputation.

These living specimens of the nearness and lovingness of God are the most needed of all arguments. Only by these can sophistries be split open, and sneers rebutted, and cherished convictions re-invigorated. Unless these can be displayed, a number of the most faithful of Christ's champions will be tempted to stand in doubt of the truth of their cause, and will feel sometimes as if they were drifting on a shoreless sea. It is imperative that evangelistic work be successful among coarser lives, for what discovery can equal in sadness the revelation that the Creed whose Articles are twined into my very soul, to which I have clung with passionate fondness, which has been steeped in tears and shaped into prayers, does not stand the trial imposed upon it by the practical necessities of intelligent yet sin-bound man? 'Tis then as if volcanic fires were bursting out of the rent ground, and gaping chasms were waiting for my shivering soul. Many a valiant heart has prayed that, ere that day shall come, the paralysis of death may do its work; and that day *will* come unless by means of the Gospel, in city and country alike, are produced lives strikingly transformed.

But that day need not and will not come. The problem which vexes us cannot be insoluble, for God is in the world. He loves souls more than we can ever do. Redemption teaches us that He would rather pour a few drops of comfort into a suffering child of man than light new smokeless torches in the skies. And He is "King of the Ages." He is equally the Lord of Spirit, Matter, and of Time. All the contents of the Ages point to man and exist mainly for redeemed man. God has always hidden forces at work; and, without doubt, they are more powerful than are the forces we discern. His shot silk will cross the mean fibres which we have put together, and will make the texture both beautiful and strong. We cannot, then, afford to part with Paul's great thought that the *very same power* which wrought the central miracle of our religion—the Resurrection of Jesus—is the power which works now in the souls of men. "That power raised Him from the dead

—and also raised *me* up to be an apostle.” We are filled with comfort. We are joyful in all our tribulation. From such a power, illustrated by such a deed, we may freely hope great things.

The Church is God’s chosen agent, and He will fit her more and more for her work. He will give to her members a growing horror of all forms of inconsistency. He will bestow on those who take up the duties of charity a higher skill in conjoining the nourishing of the soul with the feeding of the body, and will teach pious specialists the best methods of penetrating with their influence homes of all kinds and grades. He will instruct His people how to give on principle and to give generously, and this will rectify a crying want of the times. He will provoke into a successful agitation of great social questions the very individuals best suited to this duty.

Societies springing out of the Church, good in their aim but ephemeral in their existence, shall by their dying give birth and strength to other societies whose scope shall be wide and whose salutary efforts shall be beneficial and long continued. God’s fingers drop no threads. He can equip fresh moral forces, braid them into the old ones, and make them ready for all contingencies that shall arise. The Crusaders’ battle-shout, “It is the will of God!” can still draw out the enthusiasm of His pledged ones.

That enthusiasm will not be wasted. When I see a bad brutish face, I may be for a moment confounded, but quickly do I propound the question to myself, “Have you never known the owner of just such a countenance as this thoroughly got hold of and changed by ‘the glorious Gospel of the blessed God’?” And very soon my memory serves me well, and spells out some name, or photographs a set of features. The other day a cluster of portraits was presented to a godly pastor. It included quite a number of men who were three years ago dog-fanciers, pigeon-flyers, sots, and swearers. Yes! lost appetites after goodness may be once more aroused. The sight of thirsty companions quaffing rich draughts of the water of life may make stolid sinners conscious at last of their own thirst. Hardened looks

are sometimes little more than skin deep. Even reformatory lads display, not uncommonly, a fine cast of countenance. How have the graces of which the features are the indices found a home in youths whose ancestral history is so depraved? Lives which seem to have about them nought but evil have but to be brought under religious conditions and the prevalent naughtiness rapidly melts away.

We shall yet hear on all sides the rescued revellers, and the once fallen but now cleansed and humble youths who once figured as precocious offenders against law and morality, and middle-aged men who blush at the very remembrance of their past misdeeds, and women whose late guiltiness manifested itself indifferently in wrangling, covetousness, love of finery, neglect of home, singing in their turns the song of the man of Tarsus: "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting."

The Church needs the help of all her children, but *especially* of her sweetest and bravest and fairest and strongest. The parable of Jonathan is the parable of the masses. If the olive tree will not leave its fatness, nor the fig its sweetness, nor the vine its strength, in order to preside royally and beneficially over the trees of the forest, then King Bramble assumes the sovereignty, and from him goes forth a fire which turns into ashes many a princely cedar and shady oak, many a towering fir and flowering shrub, together with numbers of trees of lower degree. And so, if the sons of melody, the educated light-bearers, the skilful gladiators, the richly-blessed in qualities or in wealth, do not give of their sweetness, fatness, strength—do not consent to give up some of their advantages and joyous pleasures for the sake of obtaining a holy rulership over errant and peccant men, why, then, the tricksters and revolutionists, the drink-traffickers and book-makers, the secular Diotrefes and the secular Demas, will gain sway; and in the flame that will steal forth from this godless dominance those who selfishly declined the burden of Empire

shall themselves be overtaken by insulted justice, and shall be in peril of sharing the ultimate fate of the souls whom they refused to guide and to save.

The battles of the Pyrenees, fought by British soldiers among the crevasses, and near the eyries of the eagles, did not offer to those engaged the honour which now is offered by our Captain to the Christian soldiers who will volunteer to take their part in the battles of the suburbs and the battles of the slums. We want no faint-hearted ones in our battalions. The spirit of cowardice might spread by their means even among the courageous. "Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from Mount Gilead."



THE RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE EXISTING
AMONG THE LABOURING CLASSES, AND
THE BEST MEANS OF MEETING IT:

*Being a Paper read at the Annual Meeting of the Evangelical
Alliance, held at Norwich in October, 1883.*

[F we spoke of the “labouring classes” as being made up of “the toilers who earn their bread by muscle rather than by mind,” such definition would scarcely cover the whole ground;—for there are many whose mental toil is greater than their muscular, and who are yet in remuneration and social position not a whit above mechanics and bricklayers. The term had better be left to define itself.

In this paper I am not expected to dogmatise strongly concerning the sorts and conditions of men who make up the higher strata of society. One is suspicious that, though their sins are less coarse and, in the open, less rampant than are the sins of those beneath them, yet they are just as offensive to God. A process of moral disintegration in some quarters is surely, if secretly, going on. Doctors with a high-class practice can impart bits of strange information and can indulge logically in surmisings as to the shady deeds wrought beyond their ken. Equally I will leave others to speak of populations such as are some in the East End of London. I have not been brought into contact, to any great extent, with the very lowest of the people, and must judge chiefly by hearsay. What I do know does not make me sanguine as to their *immediate* future. It

has taken generations to train *in* their badnesses;—it will perhaps take generations, under even the most helpful auspices, to train them *out*.

These limitations once laid down, we may ask at once, “In what light are we to regard the labouring classes?” Now, nothing is easier than, without acknowledging it, to affirm about religion what Voltaire frankly said about philosophy,—that, after all, “it is *not* for the *people*, and that we need not care to enlighten cobblers and maid-servants.” On the contrary, nothing is more difficult than to exemplify Matthew Henry’s saying that “Christianity is more than humanity,” and to think of all men alike as if they dwelt not only in the hand of God but also in His heart. A cowardly soul will hold with Newman the Romanist that “it is a great privilege *not* to be sensible of the moral necessities of the world;” whereas a Christlike soul will value the more the deepening of its own sense of immortality according as this is accompanied by an ever-growing recognition of the glories of immortality even in the sodden and twisted children of the world. We *must* imitate our Master. The word “inconsiderate” can never be used about God, and ought not to apply to us;—and, though the will of each tailor and boiler-maker *is* free, in nothing is it less free than in the direction of eternal death. *That* once believed,—genial, tender, reverent will be the look which we cast toward each member of the classes now treated of. Let anything that militates against this be Anathema.

It may be roundly asserted that the most alarming sign of the times is the increasing number of *women* who are indifferent to religion. The men set them the example; and then, in wickedness the women surpass the men. The most notorious female infidel of the day, as I am told, heard her husband propound heterodox views, ran along the same track herself, and soon, to his horror, went far beyond him. The men gamble, and now we hear that the females of the lower orders are beginning to indulge in the same passion. Betting

women become more tricky and blasphemous, more enslaved to vilest evil, than betting men. The husband and father yields to habits of intoxication, and then the wife commences, and, in the end, as a drunken mother, lays herself out to lead away her married daughter—never resting till that daughter is a member of the same unholy circle as herself, and has pawned the small belongings of her home. The married man becomes addicted to the lowest of all vices, and, eventually, the other parent also becomes lost to all sense of dishonour, and incites the girls for whose training she is responsible to God to seek the gains of shame. In the times of the prophets *women* went to the greatest lengths in the worship of foul idols, and, in modern days, some of them march in the van of the armies of hell as the very Amazons of Satan.

There is no doubt that, in some localities, sceptical views are obtaining a wider range. It is no uncommon thing to see a well-clothed man, himself once a Sunday-school teacher, leading his fair-haired child by the hand and making his way to the Hall where cynics and socialists emit their blasts against Christianity.

While the social evil is not nearly as prevalent in other cities as in the great city, nor in villages as in towns, its facts are abundantly distressing.

The fondness for intoxicants is the bane of countless multitudes. Pledges are recklessly broken. The Temperance vow, lightly taken, is lightly thrown on one side. The majority of our confirmed drunkards have been avowedly Teetotal at some time or other for a longer or a shorter period. But their sobriety was felt by companions and friends to be a reproach, and even near relatives conspired against such sobriety, and secured its dethronement.

The Sabbath dissipations of sinners are hugely increased by the facilities afforded by railway and tramway companies.

Thus, the tests of civilisation are, in many ways, more severe and fatal than are the tests of barbarism. It would be

a mistake to judge the condition of the whole from cases of exceptional impiety, but some revelations, at first sight insignificant enough, can scarcely be too strongly emphasized. Let us go to a working-class cemetery in a large town. If persons are attached to a sanctuary, they naturally crave their pastor's presence in the day of bereavement. They find some small sedative to their sorrow in the fact that *he* performs for their dead the last sad rites. But the registries at the cemetery disclose an unsatisfactory state of things. The signature of a paid and unknown chaplain occurs almost without a break; and this means that the people who have buried their loved ones within those smoke-stained walls have no close connection with any place of worship. Again, a registrar in a neighbourhood where Nonconformity is strong tells me that quite a third of his marriages take place at his office; and as we know that the middle classes usually take their weddings to church or chapel, we are forced to believe that large numbers of working-men are treating the holiest act of life as if it were a ceremony only civil, and not religious at all.

From a bad neighbourhood the reformed are eager to migrate. If "Sot's Hole" or "Paradise Court" has gained an unenviable reputation, the staunch Blue Ribboner or the firm new convert soon finds a fresh habitation. They may not pay a higher rent, and may get a worse house, but they leave their old location as if it were plague-stricken. Its murky indifference thus becomes well-nigh unrelieved and all but impenetrable by Gospel light. Even the few stay-at-home and steady persons who dwell there are in imminent peril of being enticed into "following a multitude to do evil."

And on country life there are many blots. We need not search far before finding some farmhouse where husband and wife are idle, and are subject to all the penalties which march in the train of idleness—indulging in strong drink when they can get it, not above stealing from neighbours if the theft can be dexterously and safely accomplished, neglecting to send

their children to school, and quarrelling with each other in the hearing of their ill-fated offspring. Superstitions as grotesque and lamentable as any found in mid Africa exist in many places. As an instance, may be cited the custom of telling the bees when a death has taken place in the household. Says the housewife, "If I don't let the bees know of this death, they too will die," so she goes and informs them of it. Superstition in the soul is like mercury in the body—it takes a great deal of getting out and does much harm while it is in. Many a hamlet which lies embosomed in the glories of the summer's evening, with its tall ancestral trees, its rooks fluttering and cawing, its streamlet and its orchards, has also low-browed men and slipshod women, children whose earliest utterances are mixed with the oaths they have heard, invalids whose rotting lungs and hoarse cough tell of past folly and sin on their own part or on that of their progenitors.

There is much truth in the Latin proverb that "no man quickly becomes shamelessly vile." None lapse into spiritual apathy without being checked and rallied often by the Spirit of God. Even most of the debased and morose had, in earlier years, mellow moods sometimes, and pliant hearts; but they refused to take on trust what was said about worldliness and immorality, and now they are as they are. The deterioration has been reached by a natural and common process:—wilful ignorance, then a blinded heart, then a false conscience, then the evil deeds whose inky blackness they will not perceive; and then, at last, the endeavours to fasten on them conviction of sin are negatived by plausible denials and bland excuses which are really so many insults to God. Perhaps the worst feature of modern life is the apostasy and semi-apostasy which prevail. I calculate that quite two millions of people in Great Britain, who now live in comparative carelessness concerning religion, either have been Church members or have presented themselves at some time as inquirers after salvation. Many of these were dealt with superficially, were made to be-

lieve they were on right lines when they were not, while some give evidence of having really had a time of espousals. These latter would gladly have suffered martyrdom for the faith. Moreover, uncounted thousands who have never been enrolled among professed inquirers have been deeply and seriously impressed; but from their souls also the goodness has passed away like morning cloud and early dew. Few traces of it are, at present, discernible. The loftier the position once held by the now indifferent, the harder it is often to arouse them once more into religious interest. Memories of the past are powerful, it is true, but it is also true that to break away from religious observances is far easier than to resume attendance upon them.

Nevertheless, hopeful signs abound. It takes a long while to open to danger the eyes of the English people; but once thoroughly aroused they never do things by halves. The increasing perils and sins of England's womanhood are plainly perceived at last, and effectual safeguards and remedies are being devised on every hand.

Infidelity is, in most instances, only superficial. Irreligious men, as a rule, do not inquire deeply into matters, and their convictions, therefore, are not strong. There are no movements in this country subject to such violent fluctuations as are those connected with scepticism. The Secularist cause in the large towns is up and down many times over in ten years. A great noise is made for a while; but, suddenly, through the removal or conversion of some agitator, or by reason of internal quarrels, there comes a temporary paralysis. A boastful Atheist residing in a populous locality was challenged the other day by a warm-hearted Christian to show *one convert* to infidelity among the working men during the past twelve months. He had to acknowledge his inability to do so.

Sternly do the labouring classes set their faces against any legal encouragement being given to the social evil. The Trades Union Congress, with one voice, has petitioned against the Contagious Diseases Acts.

The drink traffic is far from having it all its own way. History yields no stronger example of sturdy and sanctified perseverance than is afforded by Temperance reformers.

And against other and kindred evils the national conscience cries out. There is, on every hand, a heightening of the moral sense. The resources of civilisation are being more wisely employed. There is a prospect of better dwellings for the people, and of the consequent breaking up of human rookeries. Wrongdoers in the villages run a greater risk than ever of reprobation. Flagrant sins are growingly unpopular. The diffusion of knowledge is fatal to the prevalence of hoary superstitions. A new interest is being taken in the young, and greater skill is manifested in preserving them from spiritual and physical enemies. Many who are false to Christ are made to taste the wormwood and the gall, and their renegadism is not long-lasting. They return to the Church as to a forgiving mother, and abide ever afterwards at her side. If every age in the past has affected some special trait of Christianity, the present age affects several of her traits—her humanitarianism, her admiration of social morality, her belief in the possible progress of the race. This is a symptom by no means unhealthy. It shows that some portion even of the natural heart is on the side of truth and of Jesus.

The Church herself is learning from her past defeats. Her vital force was never so strong as it is to-day. As things are, we can fancy a frozen Niagara more easily than we can a stagnant Evangelicalism.

Widely as religious indifference prevails, the condition of the labouring classes is far from desperate. A man who loves his child may, if properly dealt with, love his God. Working men are susceptible of strong attachment to individuals. A little attention, a nod of recognition on the part of a trusted worker toward a cabman, a street-sweeper, a gun-maker, a weaver, will sometimes turn that individual into a staunch believer in the reality of religion. Any police sergeant will

tell us that if labouring people are kindly and firmly treated they are not refractory, but are loyal and reciprocal. Any successful Evangelist will assure us that no one gets so much out of his religion as does the typical British workman when once he is thoroughly converted. However deplorable their present religious state, it is my fixed belief that any regenerative influences within the next centuries must proceed extensively from the working people of Great Britain.

And it is not only the less robust in mind who are accessible by the Gospel. Only very lately I had the joy of directing to Christ a young man, whose head (said a phrenologist) was the finest he had examined for months. He is but one among a multitude of cases equally good.

In dealing with the necessities of the labouring classes it is well to gauge our expectations according to the facts of human life. Christian workers begin by being *idealists*. Their expectations are too high. If they stand all tests, and continue faithful and zealous, they will end by becoming *realists*. We are forced to modify from time to time our notions as to what may be expected from men. Dangerous truly is this transition from idealism to realism. Many an ardent nature has broken down between the one and the other. As we work on, we shall discover that, with many, fickleness is in the very grain. They are easily stumbled. Any transplantation is perilous to their piety. They sorely try the patience of the Christians who strive to do them good. Some will *assent* to all that *we* say, and then *consent* to all that Satan says. Though religious agents be never so persuasive and forceful, some sinners *will* go their own way. Though all styles of preaching were effectively welded into one, and all qualities of Christian workers met in each religious life, yet would many lovers of sin hold out against God. Men, like locusts, walk to destruction over each other's corpses, and that in spite of all attempts to dissuade them.

All kinds of Evangelism, too, have their weak side. As a

revivalistic preacher I feel constrained to confess that not more than one in three or four of the professed converts has become part of the stable membership of the Church. For Evangelists to tell *all* their secrets would be unwise and unsafe. They are under no bond to proclaim on the housetops what they know of this weak side. Yet they would be happier if they had never been initiated into the secrets concerning backslidings and inconsistencies. Possession of this knowledge cannot but sometimes suggest doubts as to the depth and stability of what at first appeared to be a perfectly genuine work of grace. One has an unutterable shrinking from the belief in the mere "survival of the fittest" in relation to a revival. It seems so cold-blooded and altogether fatalistic to hold such a doctrine. That natural debility or angularity of disposition makes it impossible for some to be steadily pious, is a thought most offensive to all our cherished convictions concerning God and His Gospel. Yet are we almost driven to this as we perceive the fleeting nature of some results which at the first appeared unimpeachable. At the most then, we may hope to save some, to ameliorate the condition of others, and to effect improvements in society which shall, after all, leave it very far from perfection. Social and moral evils which have been so long in growing cannot be rectified in a day, a year, or a century. We must not be too impatient, or try to cover too much ground. Most of the Missionary Societies admit that, among the heathen abroad, education is needed to develop their capacity to receive the full message of love; and we may as well admit the same about our home heathen. The crushed, the prejudiced, the one-sided, the oblique in mental vision, the hell-branded, the parsimonious, are not going to reach a perfectly rectified state by means of a hop, a skip, and a jump. It will take time, and much time; labour, and of many kinds, before most of them do much credit to the agencies of religion. If we found anything now that was not existent in apostolic times at Antioch, Jerusalem, and Rome, we might well be worse

than despondent ; but we know that, while old foes have new faces, they are really the very foes which Paul and his fellow-soldiers had to confront. At that period, and in all localities visited, large numbers judged themselves unworthy of eternal life, and courted for themselves a dark doom, and that in spite of all that could be done for them.

However, we may justly expect to meet with much that will respond to our appeals, and will warrant our continued self-sacrifice. There are persons whose religious sensibility seems dead, whereas, actually, it has but been buried alive. It is in a death-faint, but is not dead at all. Unexpectedly its struggles recommence, it throws off its casings, and emerges from its tomb in more than youthful strength and beauty. We never know how soon, in any one obstinate nature, all this may occur. No doubt the simple-minded *are* the kernel of the people as far as godliness is concerned, but native symmetry of intellect, classic vigour of countenance, abnormal quickness produced by modern habits, may be looked upon as giving new grounds for expectation of good. The street-boys and news-boys are all the more likely to adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour, if once they are gosselled, because they are so sharp-faced and shrewd. The features of the men who go to rabbit-races exhibit, with astonishing frequency, a marvellous expression of intelligence and good-nature. So there is for all such as these a larger hope than at first we might detect.

Successes already secured are representative of many more which may be secured. There are stories told by Neander, in his own charming fashion, of mediæval revivals in Central Europe. The preachers spoke much of the terrors of the law and the end of the world, as well as of the love of God. Usurers, debauched persons, loose women, were strangely altered, and became living references as to the power of the truth. One locality which, from its vices, had been called "Little Venice," became so crowded with virtues as to earn as its title the term "Little Jerusalem." Might not every pious soul have

properly argued from such transformations the possibility of equal blessing in every Austrian and German city? And if to-day, in Hull, it is not easy for a working man to go many weeks without being brought face to face with the claims of his Creator, why may we not have conditions equally helpful in other large towns, and even in the great Metropolis itself? I almost fear to cite as an illustration one congregation under my charge, lest those of whom I speak should ever draw back from their vows. But in a mission chapel which seats rather more than two hundred persons I am accustomed to meet at the table of the Lord a number of converted working men whose history, not many months ago, was marked by criminal indifference and rabid rebellion against God. Humble, reverent, radiantly thankful are they, and I am the happiest of men when thus in their midst. Among them is a man whose pugilistic proclivities were very pronounced, and who had held his own in the prize-ring; another, who had the delirium tremens many times over, and who described his sensations the other night before hundreds of listeners, until those who at first felt inclined to smile shuddered before he had finished. Another, who was a book-maker, and was looked upon as about the most unlikely man in the engine-works to become a follower of the Saviour. Another, who was the inmate of a home proverbial for its discords, and who himself plunged into iniquity. Another, who was on Sabbath days the referee and time-keeper at pigeon matches, but who now gladly opens his house for a prayer-meeting. Another, who says himself that he was known as the foulest-mouthed man in the neighbourhood. Another, who for many years never had dinner on Sunday with his wife and children, because he preferred spending the day in wandering hither and thither with irreligious associates. More than one brought up in a public house is seen accepting the memorials of the Saviour's Passion; several who for years seemed altogether careless about God and reckless about the future are among the communicants; and when I asked this motley

membership the other evening whether, with their present knowledge, they could repeat as fully as at the first their consecration to God, each face gave its own pleasant answer. If these things are so in that one sanctuary, why should not similar trophies be secured elsewhere? We may, then, continue working with an expectation of results goodly both in quantity and quality.

The all-important question is, "How can these results be secured?" First of all, church-work is dependent upon church-life. Finney's habit of preaching to the church and thus getting that into a healthy state before making any attempt to awaken sinners was founded on good logic. A church which assumes the position of luxurious convalescence and demands plenty of nourishment without accepting any corresponding duty toward the ungodly, is the most pitiable sight that earth can afford. It is simply sickening to hear the large petitions of do-nothing professors. And with equal truth it may be said that a church or person affecting the aggressive, and ignoring, at the same time, the necessity for spiritual supplies, for self-searching, for acts of adoration toward the Triune God, is beginning at the wrong end. A believer who has read well his own heart is most competent to read the hearts of others, even when those others are among the unsaved. He who speaks much of working for Jesus, but himself declines to be studious and prayerful, will find that he is like a housewife who tries to sweep with the broom-handle instead of with the broom. Says one, "Our love to souls increases as we pray," and as it does increase we shall discover that it is the soul that lives in God which can best impart the fire-breath to the rest who hitherto have had no hope. In fine, we have to keep up our commissariat and secure our base, and withal to find our safety in advance.

There can be no solid advance without much sacrifice. Any regiment which possesses what is called a "fighting number" has had to pay for its reputation, and a church worthily

notorious for its success has also to lay down its price. Without continued self-denial the channels for sanctified energy rapidly become silted up. To speak and toil for sinners when our own souls are quivering with pain; to break out into the sweet Pauline exaggerations of love, and to cry before God, "If, every time Thou sendest out blessing through me, it means a growing vacuum within me; if, by shedding harmonies into other natures, I am forced to introduce discords into my own; if I cannot morally elevate others without bringing myself down to a lower platform of being; yet do I demand, O God, that Thou use me to save my fellows from the second death"—this is to be a Christian sacrifice indeed; for giving in all its branches is to be looked upon as a duty, and the motives that lead to it regulated by the Divine One. Sacrifice! we must cater for the appetites and subscribe to some of the idiosyncrasies of the working people whom we desire to save.

In church-life and church-work we should seek after the fusion of all classes into unity; but in the unity there ought to be plenty of elasticity. Let the labouring people in the congregation be made to see that they have choice and voice in arrangements and operations. No rescued man is to be allowed to believe that he is held to be a person of no account. Let him feel that he has a share in the concern,—that brotherhood in religion is *not* the glittering fragment of an ancient dream. Then he will look on the sanctuary and its associations as affording him what is well-nigh equivalent to a second home. Under some circumstances that home will become to him almost the all of life. Friendships of the best character will be formed; there will be happy groupings together of life with life. In the ordinary church-meetings and in the grooves of labour will be found both "the rubies of emotion" and "the crystals of intellect." What was, at the beginning, but a slight tie in the way of membership, will, month by month, be strengthened. Such are the effects of self-denial in church-life on the part of the better-placed and trained amongst us. This

should be often preached up, for there is nothing that we so quickly forget. Then, only, have we our answer to our enemies. Quite recently, I received from an intrusive infidel a letter crammed with stale objections and statements scurrilous and adverse to our holy religion, and challenging me to controversy. Giving all glory to God's grace in me, I was able to reply in effect, "Will you and your crew meet me in the region of my work? Will you labour as I am doing to reclaim the profligate, to drive the drink curse from the working man's home, to screen the feeble and the suffering from the ills of life? When I find you doing this, I will argue with you, and not till then." That reply gave him his quietus.

Given, then, the best conditions of Church life, under what sanctions and in what directions may the powers of that life best be spent on the labouring classes? Evangelism is a science, and is truly the greatest of all the sciences. It is more than a science, too, because there is in it that unsearchable, immeasurable factor, the energy of the Holy Ghost. We admit that the problem of the masses never appeared farther from solution than it does at present. Some recent experiments, which claimed to be important contributions towards its solution, have really only darkened the problem. But we still avow our conviction that it can be solved by Evangelism only, and we perceive that, if solved at all, it must be in certain specified directions.

Efforts after the social improvement of the populace have a fitting place in modern Evangelism. A slatternly woman takes more converting than even a covetous man, and more keeping after she *is* converted. Very few men who have incompetent wives and unfavourable domestic surroundings continue in the service of God. Many withdrawals from the Churches are traceable primarily to bad sanitary conditions. While the social fixings in most working-class homes are what they are, we shall obtain few abiding triumphs there. Whereas, improved homes prepare the way for a Gospel that cannot be

improved upon. Thrift and cleanliness, good cooking and house-ornamentation, will be the precursors and accompaniments of any future millennium. The denomination most deserving of success will be the one most skilfully uniting the social and the religious.

There ought to be also a pronounced antagonism to certain methods of tempting the people. The censorship over the press is not nearly strict enough. The secret of the laxity in morals on the part of households and their separate members is, with alarming frequency, explained by the presence on the window-sill or table of the penny novelette, or the cheap work of low fiction. We have a right to interfere with the liberty of any subject who, by his presentings of powerful temptation, is really interfering with the liberty of his fellow-subjects. In this matter we have been far too reticent and fearful. The like may be said about our attitude in relation to other evils. It is high time that the alliance between clubbism and drink was broken up by force of law, as also a good many other alliances with which the drink traffic is concerned. Agitation and petitions take up much valuable time and talent, but without them our Evangelistic movements are counteracted on every hand.

And the more we bring ourselves into contact with the people in the desire to save them, the more shall we value the cardinal doctrines of the orthodox creed. The time when "a show of hands fixes the faith of ages yet unborn" has passed away, never to return. *Some* latitude of belief must be allowed. A man must not have the hue and cry sent after him as after a heretic, because in one or two minor particulars he dares to dissent from the rest of his brethren. But by the very confessions of the Broad School in religious thought, as well as by the evidences furnished from our own work, we are made certain that our dogmas are eminently adapted to the labouring classes, and that, without them, we should be all but powerless. If orthodox Christianity cannot bring to pass the

enfranchisement and sanctity of these classes, no other creed or system has any chance. Of all the people that on earth do dwell, the working people in this island are the most responsive to the great central teachings of the New Testament concerning guilt and substitution, God's peculiar relationship toward saints and Christ's ultimate repudiation of perversely rebellious sinners.

Orthodoxy gives many incentives to activity, and many encouragements to anxious independent thought. Orthodoxy is therefore prolific of theories, and of theorists as such the Church in her aggressive attempts must beware. Amiable and well-intentioned as, no doubt, they are, it cannot be denied that those who have had least experience and most seclusion are usually most forward in theorising. He who has actually faced the difficulties of Evangelistic work is apt to be sparing of his statements. Your theorist gets hold of two or three ascertained facts. From these he generalises. The misfortune at this point is, that his non-acquaintance with practical life leaves him ignorant of other facts and forces which, if brought within his range, would lead him to modify considerably his opinion. As it is, however, he dogmatizes strongly, and the Churches are inundated with dicta which are false from previous lack of data. Their Mr. Talkatives are provided with large stores of bottled moonshine. A know-everything is a vastly greater nuisance than a know-nothing. A theorist is, too frequently, to Evangelism what a child-king is to a realm—"Woe unto thee, O land, when thy king is a child!"—and woe unto thee, O Church, when thy rulers are theorists! Because of this, enormous quantities of the Church's strength and wealth have been wasted in costly and foolish endeavours. Let us have practical men on our committees, and at the head of every formation in the army of Christ.

In all Evangelism greater stress should be laid on *men* than on measures. In some quarters the opposite tendency is discoverable and reprehensible. Measures may easily be unduly

exalted. The wisdom of Christ's direction to pray for "*labourers*" was never more evident than it is in this nineteenth century. If we get the men, the methods will come as a matter of course. Enthusiasm, both in stronger and weaker souls, is the fruitful mother of wise methods of soul-winning. Assuredly, persons of superior powers are greatly needed. No one more quickly discerns true strength of mind and will than does your artisan or day-labourer. He feels complimented by being chosen as the object of the action of one who greatly excels him in force and variety of character. He is predisposed to yield to its presentations of truth. Superior social position also gives great advantages. To be noticed and cared for by Christians who travel along walks of life higher than those pressed by his feet, makes the railway servant or the carpenter respect himself the more, and inclines him to serious thought. The work of a true gentleman or lady tells mightily in most populations. Ecclesiastical pretensions which turn men into creatures are quite out of place in Home Mission work; but when high-pitched natures take up homely tasks, there is soon a disposition in favour of piety on the part of the men and women whose salvation is thus sought.

And, among the Lord's servants for whose sending forth we are to pray, sympathy will be found an endowment of rare value. In fact, very little can be accomplished among the labouring classes without it. A sympathetic soul, albeit of small natural abilities, has, when fully consecrated, great influence both in gaining and in conserving spiritual results. Much of the world's best work is being wrought by ill-dressed, ungainly persons, and the main reason for this is their possession of the power to exhibit sympathy. And if they make mistakes, the gracious Spirit is ever at hand to apply remedies.

Converted working people must be incited to save their work-mates. Religious propaganda are never more powerful than when a genuine sensible working man has to do with them. Even when minister or leading layman is not listened

to, a godly man in fustian or moleskin will command attention and wield influence among his peers. Converts from these classes may be instructed in watching over each other. Jesus would have many good under-shepherds thus raised up. So much for men.

Measures may now be spoken of. About one thing we may be positive—the world will never be saved by routine Christianity. For every man to do what is right in his own eyes is one extreme ; to have the heart true but the hands fettered is the other. There is a golden mean, and in this middle way measures new and old may be concocted or vitalised afresh.

Audacity is needful. Danton's maxim in the day of his country's calamity we may well appropriate—"To dare, and again to dare, and always to dare." Let us be audacious in entering at once the open doors. Doors once shut, after having been opened and neglected, are hardly ever opened again to the same person or church. Neither are we always to wait till circumstances open doors for us. We are to take the initiative and to find them, to push them open, even to *break* them open ourselves, and then to enter them with dispatch and determination. The more quiet and order-loving *must* consent to give way on occasions. It will never do for Christ's daring champions to fear and obey always those who are called in the Churches "the old standards." Audacity and celerity in movements and measures will amply recoup us. We may turn the flank of the enemy or cut in two his army before he has time to checkmate us.

In all toiling among the people proper, straightforward dealing is needful. Fuss and flattery are useless. If a working-man fancies you are wishing to ingratiate yourself with him, he just won't let you manage it. He becomes mulish at once. I have said the most terrible things to such men, but have taken care to say them so lovingly as neither to arouse irritation nor to expose myself to insult. A manner studiously bluff fails in its end, but plain-speaking will go right home.

The working classes are not inaccessible. Would God that my own time were not so taken up with the kitchen-duties of my Church! I doubt not that hundreds who dwell near my residence might then be led to embrace religion. I have spoken to audiences of factory workers, masons and such like, with bold appeal and strong sentiment, until it was almost expected that some would get up and walk out of the sanctuary;—but no! every man sat to the end; and even the men who *refused* to decide for God have spoken gratefully of the services whose truths were so unpalatable, and whose denunciations were so scathing. By such manners and methods may many working-men's Churches be constituted. The main hindrance to this lies in the fact that the men most competent to bring these elements into cohesion are so much burdened with other ecclesiastical tasks. If they begin to create a Church, they are soon up to the neck in bricks and mortar, and their attention, if not engrossed by financial responsibilities, is distracted from their purely spiritual pursuits. Let our wealthy laymen, instead of giving the money in dribbles to various charities and missions, make a compact with efficient Evangelists in something like these terms—"If *you* will find the heart and brain, the experience and organisation, *I* will find any money you are really short of, and so we will make the firm 'Dives, Evangelist & Co.'" Such a venture would soon pay for itself, and self-supporting Churches would speedily be formed.

The promotion of true revivals may be properly included among the measures taken by modern Evangelicalism. Some Christians do not believe in revivals at all, while some believe in revivals and in little else. They have their place. They *seem* to set the laws of labour at defiance; they are really in harmony with those laws. Many results obtained ought to be kept under the same laws of labour. The results of even a spurious work may, by loving care, become truly good; and the results of a gracious work may, by carelessness, show all the

signs of unreality. We cannot keep all who are thus led to profess and call themselves Christians, but we ought to strive to keep *every one*. The revival converts who do continue are, as a rule, the most lively and useful members. Many a Church gets a new start by means of a revival. Village Churches, especially, yield examples of this. Of the whole population of twelve hundred in a Lincolnshire village, I have known all healthy persons of riper years, with the exception of a dozen or so, to be present at the services during some portion of the week. But if we wish to avoid having what the Americans call "burnt-out" districts, that is, districts where the results of revivals have proved evanescent, and hardly any one believes in extra agency or in special religious interest, we must draft those who are impressed and who appear decided into classes for religious instruction. Only when kept under the personal influence of godly people will most of these evangelised persons prove faithful. Revivals, then, hold their unique position in our work. We may wish we had outgrown the necessity for them, even as Arnold wished that men had outgrown the necessity for the Sabbath because they discerned a Sabbath sacredness within every day; but, as things are, they may be made very helpful in saving the labouring classes.

In all our efforts we have need of patience—the lower the type of convert the more patience will be required. The world expects more from most Church members than it has any right to expect. The respectable within the religious communities are very severe with any who, under great temptation, return to their old ways. If Paul had dealt with the Ephesians and Corinthians as some newly-recovered ones are dealt with now, those Churches would soon have been in danger of dissolution. In spite of ebullitions of temper, lapsings into vice, yieldings to natural weaknesses on the part of the hot-blooded, the sufferers from heredity, and the vain, we are still to extend to them the cheering voice and helping hand. While we do not disguise from them the magnitude of their offence and the need for a new and

strong repentance after their grievous falls, we are not to frown them away from the assemblies of the saints. Even if they, several times over, disgrace religion, let us bear with them. A horse that has broken his knees once is apt to stumble again, because his confidence is gone; and a retrieved sinner, suddenly tripped up by the evil one, somehow loses nerve, and, in the absence of the diligent attention of confirmed believers, is easily thrown down again.

Conversational meetings, with a view to religious advancement, may be encouraged among the Christianised working people. In fact, they cannot well be dispensed with. But the "meeting every night" system is not good. Individuals impressed or saved should be taught that they have domestic duties, and duties in the line of private devotions and meditations. Else they will become dissipated, will expose themselves even to accusations of immorality, will forget the practical nature of true piety.

Neither should such as these be spoken to promiscuously on religious perfection. Else they will become Antinomian and Pharisaic. A cheap and easy holiness is also cheap and nasty.

Feeling should be reprobated except as it is understood to lead to action. Many become good on impulse, or under excitement, to whom afterwards practical goodness becomes the habit of the life. But half-trained natures become dependent on passing emotions unless wise correctives be inserted. They must be taught to aim at *growth*. I always hail with joy the first original Biblical quotations from the lips of a working-class convert.

All should be taught to give according to their power. A pauperised working-man's Church is molluscous and variable. Cheap religion is an expensive delusion.

Neither in dealing with the lower classes must the *dignity* of the message be forgotten, and the conceptions of God lowered by coarse representations. It is no vain thing to bring a soul face to face with God and duty. The soul thus accosted must

be made to understand that its responsibility is thereby largely increased. That is certainly how the apostolic preachers were told to put it, and in that way they did put it. We may beseech and implore, and resort occasionally to out-of-the-way means of impressing men, but there is a limit. We dare not ignore the sublimity of the theme, nor become oblivious of the solemnity of the occasion. Any success vouchsafed to my ministry I ascribe very much to the fact that my heart has been oppressed with the thought that I am pleading *for* God and *with* souls, and that there is a concentrated awfulness about the whole business.

And we must avoid anything which is calculated to lessen materially the reverence of the masses for religion. There is, in nearly all these concerning whom I write, an under-current of reverence toward the Bible and Christianity. It may not be discovered even by those who possess it, but it is there. Now the discrimination of the populace between true and false Evangelism is not keen. They are apt to confound the one with the other. Useless parade; advertisements that smack of the lowest music halls; exhibitions of fantastic or fanatical piety, conspire against this underlying reverence. The more intelligent are led to say, "If the Gospel requires all this to help it, then, by its own admission, the Gospel is a failure." Some who are at first affected by outrageous measures and are outwardly reformed are in great peril of ultimate reaction toward blank scepticism. These will be, of all sceptics, the hardest to be dealt with. They will fancy they have known once the core of religion as far as it has any core, whereas it is to be feared that they have had to do mostly with husks and excrescences. If they confound the spurious with the real and the real with the spurious, who will be able to persuade them into a better mind? Besides, some "striking" methods soon lose the influence for good they once had. The sneering comments passed by the herding hundreds as *some* processions go by is a sure sad proof of this. I have, as a by-

stander, listened to these comments until I have hung my head with shame because of that which has provoked them.

In conclusion, were we even hopeless about the future of the labouring classes of England, we could but imitate the patriotic Jeremiah, who, in the very day of his hopelessness, sternly kept to his post and did his duty. We have to fall back on God, to refer all to God. In Kingsley's "Yeast," Tregarva, the pious Cornish gamekeeper, answers the questions put to him by his gentleman friend, "Where will Crawy the half-starved poacher go when he dies?" with a "God knows, Sir." "Can you and I between us mend the world if we try?" with the same pithy and pathetic "God knows, Sir." Ay! God *does* know. And there, after all, we have to leave it. Let Him work in His own way. If He chooses to send an epidemic whose raging shall frighten people into seriousness—Amen! If He elects that the Holy Spirit shall fall on the congregations until from them shall come a shrill and sudden cry—Amen. If He wills to go past the orator and to select the child; to ignore the versatile and to use the simple as His agents—Amen! Meanwhile, we in our steadfast and practical affection for the labouring millions are in our religious pressure upon them to imitate that atmosphere which, though heavy enough to crush men, yet "coils itself round them so lovingly as to break no bones and cause no pain." And, since the welfare of our nation is bound up with its religion, let such welfare be as near to our heart as it was to the heart of the grandest of all the Puritan champions, who, as our historian tells us, when wounded to the death for the liberties of this land, breathed away his noble and fearless spirit in the ejaculation, "O Lord, save my country! O Lord, be merciful to my country!"

Tenth Thousand. Price Sixpence.

BY THE REV. EDWARD SMITH.

AN EVANGELIST'S NOTE-BOOK:

**Being Records of Home Mission Work, and of
Experiences in Revivals.**

REV. CHARLES GARRETT :—"They are the most racy, vigorous, and truly Methodist things I have seen for many a day. I wish every Methodist would read them."

REV. A. M'AULAY :—"The author endeavours to point out the most approved methods of conducting Methodist operations. He tells the hosts of God's elect how they may and must repel the foes of God and man."

REV. E. SMITH, $\frac{2}{3}$ FAIRFIELD, MANCHESTER.!

N.B.—For a dozen copies, four shillings and sixpence.

Standard & Popular Works

PUBLISHED BY

T. WOOLMER, 2, CASTLE STREET, CITY ROAD, E.C.

PRICE FIVE SHILLINGS.

Sermons by the Rev. W. MORLEY PUNSHON, LL.D. With a Preface by the Rev. W. ARTHUR, M.A. These Sermons contain the latest Corrections of the Author. Crown 8vo.

'Here we have found, in rare combination, pure and elevated diction, conscience-searching appeal, withering exposure of sin, fearless advocacy of duty, forceful putting of truth,' etc., etc.—*London Quarterly Review*.

Lectures by the Rev. W. MORLEY PUNSHON, LL.D. Crown 8vo.

'One and all of the Lectures are couched in the powerful and popular style which distinguished the great preacher, and they are worthy of a permanent place in any library.'—*Daily Chronicle*.

Toward the Sunrise: being Sketches of Travel in Europe and the East. To which is added a Memorial Sketch (with Portrait) of the Rev. W. MORLEY PUNSHON, LL.D. By HUGH JOHNSTON, M.A., B.D. Crown 8vo. Numerous Illustrations.

PRICE FOUR SHILLINGS.

Our Indian Empire: its Rise and Growth. By the Rev. J. SHAW BANKS. Imperial 16mo. Thirty-five Illustrations and Map.

'The imagination of the young will be fired by its stirring stories of English victories, and it will do much to make history popular.'—*Daily Chronicle*.

'A well condensed and sensibly written popular narrative of Anglo-Indian History.'—*Daily News*.

Zoology of the Bible. By HARLAND COULTAS. Preface by the Rev. W. F. MOULTON, D.D. Imperial 16mo. 126 Illustrations.

'We have in a most convenient form all that is worth knowing of the discoveries of modern science which have any reference to the animals mentioned in Scripture.'—*Preacher's Budget*.

Missionary Anecdotes, Sketches, Facts, and Incidents. By the Rev. WILLIAM MOISTER. Imperial 16mo. Eight Page Illustrations.

'The narratives are many of them very charming.'—*Sword and Trowel*.

Northern Lights; or, Pen and Pencil Sketches of Nineteen Modern Scottish Worthies. By the Rev. J. MARRAT. Crown 8vo. Portraits and Illustrations.

It is a charming book in every sense.'—*Irish Evangelist*.

The Brotherhood of Men; or, Christian Sociology. By Rev. W. UNSWORTH.

PRICE THREE SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE.

- Uncle Jonathan's Walks in and around London.** Foolscap 4to. Profusely Illustrated.
- Our Sea-girt Isle: English Scenes and Scenery Delineated.** By the Rev. J. MARRAT. Imperial 16mo. Map and 153 Illustrations.
'An unusually readable and attractive book.'—*Christian World*.
- Rambles in Bible Lands.** By the Rev. RICHARD NEWTON, D.D. Imperial 16mo. Seventy Illustrations.
'From the juvenile stand-point, we can speak in hearty commendation of it.'—*Literary World*.
- 'Land of the Mountain and the Flood': Scottish Scenes and Scenery Delineated.** By the Rev. JABEZ MARRAT. Imperial 16mo. Map and Seventy-six Illustrations.
'Described with taste, judgment, and general accuracy of detail.'—*Scotsman*.
- Popery and Patronage.** Biographical Illustrations of Scotch Church History. By the Rev. J. MARRAT. Imperial 16mo. Ten Illustrations.
'Most instructive biographical narratives.'—*Derbyshire Courier*.
- Wycliffe to Wesley: Heroes and Martyrs of the Church in Britain.** Imperial 16mo. Twenty-four Portraits and Forty other Illustrations.
'We give a hearty welcome to this handsomely got up and interesting volume.'—*Literary World*.
- John Lyon; or, From the Depths.** By RUTH ELLIOTT. Crown 8vo. Five Full-page Illustrations.
'Earnest and eloquent, dramatic in treatment, and thoroughly healthy in spirit.'—*Birmingham Daily Gazette*.
- Chronicles of Capstan Cabin; or, the Children's Hour.** By J. JACKSON WRAY. Imperial 16mo. Twenty-eight Illustrations.
'A perfect store of instructive and entertaining reading.'—*The Christian*.
- The Thorough Business Man: Memoir of Walter Powell, Merchant.** By Rev. B. GREGORY. Seventh Edtn. Crown 8vo, with Portrait.
- The Life of Gideon Ouseley.** By the Rev. WILLIAM ARTHUR, M.A. Eighth Thousand. Crown 8vo, with Portrait.
- The Aggresssve Character of Christianity.** By Rev. W. UNSWORTH.
- Missionary Stories, Narratives, Scenes, and Incidents.** By the Rev. W. MOISTER. Crown 8vo. Eight Page Illustrations.
'Intensely interesting.'—*Methodist New Connexion Magazine*.
- Sunshine in the Kitchen; or, Chapters for Maid Servants.** Fourth Thousand. Crown 8vo. Numerous Illustrations. By Rev. B. SMITH.
- Way-Marks: Placed by Royal Authority on the King's Highway. Being One Hundred Scripture Proverbs, Enforced and Illustrated.** Crown 8vo. Eight Page Engravings. By Rev. B. SMITH.
'The pages are concisely written, anecdote is freely used, and the book is most suitable for gift purposes, being capitally got up.'—*Methodist Recorder*.
- Scenes and Adventures in Great Namaqualand.** By the Rev. B. RIDSDALE. Crown 8vo, with Portrait.

- Gems Reset; or, the Wesleyan Catechisms Illustrated by Imagery and Narrative.** Crown 8vo. By Rev. B. SMITH.
- Vice-Royalty; or, a Royal Domain held for the King, and enriched by the King.** Crown 8vo. Twelve page Illustns. By Rev. B. SMITH.
- The Great Army of London Poor.** Sketches of Life and Character in a Thames-side District. By the River-side Visitor. Third Edition. Crown 8vo. 540 pp. Eight Illustrations.
'Admirably told. The author has clearly lived and mingled with the people he writes about.'—*Guardian*.

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE.

- Little Abe; or, the Bishop of Berry Brow.** Being the Life of Abraham Lockwood, a quaint and popular Local Preacher in the Methodist New Connexion. By F. JEWELL. Crown 8vo. Cloth, gilt edges. With Portrait.
'The racy, earnest, vernacular speech of *Little Abe*, and his quaint illustrations and home-thrusts, are humorous indeed. . . . Cannot fail to be a favourite.'—*Christian Age*.
- Cecily: a Tale of the English Reformation.** By EMMA LESLIE. Crown 8vo. Five full-page Illustrations.
'This is an interesting and attractive little book. . . . It is lively and healthy in tone.'—*Literary World*.
- Glimpses of India and Mission Life.** By Mrs. HUTCHEON. Crown 8vo. Eight Page Illustrations.
'A well-written account of Indian life in its social aspects, by the wife of an Indian missionary.'—*British Quarterly*.
- The Beloved Prince: a Memoir of His Royal Highness, the Prince Consort.** By WILLIAM NICHOLS. Crown 8vo. With Portrait and Nineteen Illustrations. Cloth, gilt edges.
'An admirable condensation of a noble life.'—*Derbyshire Courier*.
- Glenwood: a Story of School Life.** By JULIA K. BLOOMFIELD. Crown 8vo. Seven Illustrations.
'A useful book for school-girls who think more of beauty and dress than of brains and grace.'—*Sword and Trowel*.
- Undeceived: Roman or Anglican? A Story of English Ritualism.** By RUTH ELLIOTT. Crown 8vo.
'In the creation and description of character the work belongs to the highest class of imaginative art.'—*Free Church of England Magazine*.
- Self-Culture and Self-Reliance, under God the Means of Self-Elevation.** By the Rev. W. UNSWORTH. Crown 8vo.
'An earnest, thoughtful, eloquent book on an important subject.'—*Folkestone News*.
- A Pledge that Redeemed Itself.** By SARSON, Author of 'Blind Olive,' etc. Crown 8vo. Numerous Illustrations. Cloth, gilt edges.
'We are informed in the preface that it is "an etching from life," and we can well believe it, for it bears all the marks of a genuine study of living men and women.'—*Literary World*.
- Pleasant Talks about Jesus.** By JOHN COLWELL. Crown 8vo.

- Old Daniel; or, Memoirs of a Converted Hindu.** By the Rev. T. HODSON. Crown 8vo, gilt edges.
- The Story of a Peninsular Veteran: Sergeant in the 43rd Light Infantry during the Peninsular War.** Crown 8vo. 13 Illustrations.
'Full of adventure, told in a religious spirit. We recommend this narrative to boys and young men.'—*Hastings and St. Leonard's News*.
- Rays from the Sun of Righteousness.** By the Rev. RICHARD NEWTON, D.D. Crown 8vo. Eleven Illustrations. Cloth, gilt edges.
- In the Tropics; or, Scenes and Incidents of West Indian Life.** By the Rev. JABEZ MARRAT. Crown 8vo, with Illustrations, etc.
'A vivid description of scenes and incidents, . . . with an interesting record of the progress of mission work.'—*Sheffield Post*.
- Climbing: a Manual for the Young who Desire to Rise in Both Worlds.** By the Rev. BENJAMIN SMITH. Crown 8vo. Sixth Edition.
- Our Visit to Rome, with Notes by the Way.** By the Rev. JOHN RHODES. Royal 16mo. Forty-five Illustrations.
- The Lancasters and their Friends. A Tale of Methodist Life.** By S. J. F. Crown 8vo.
'A Methodist story, written with a purpose and with a heart.'—*Methodist Recorder*.
- Those Boys.** By FAYE HUNTINGTON. Crown 8vo. Illustrated.
- Leaves from my Log of Twenty-five years' Christian Work in the Port of London.** Crown 8vo. Eight Illustrations. 2s. 6d.
'We have in this pretty volume a large number of anecdotes of the right sort, . . . a valuable treasury of instructive and touching facts.'—*Hastings and St. Leonard's News*.
- The Willow Pattern: A Story Illustrative of Chinese Social Life.** By the Rev. HILDERIC FRIEND. Crown 8vo, gilt edges. Numerous Illustrations.

MARK GUY PEARSE'S WORKS.

Eight Volumes, Crown 8vo, Cloth, Gilt Edges. Price 2s. 6d. each.

- 1.—Daniel Quorm, and his Religious Notions. FIRST SERIES. 68,000.
 - 2.—Daniel Quorm, and his Religious Notions. SECOND SERIES. 20,000.
 - 3.—Sermons for Children. 18,000.
 - 4.—Mister Horn and his Friends; or, Givers and Giving. 20,000.
 - 5.—Short Stories, and other Papers. 7000.
 - 6.—'Good Will': a Collection of Christmas Stories. 8000.
 - 7.—Simon Jasper. (A New Story.) 8000.
 - 8.—Cornish Stories.
- Homely Talks.** 8000.

'Scarcely any living writer can construct a parable better, more quaintly, simply, and congruously. His stories are equally clever and telling. . . . One secret of their spell is that they are brimful of heart. . . . His books should be in every school library.'—*British Quarterly Review*.

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.

Sir Walter Raleigh: Pioneer of Anglo-American Colonisation.

By CHARLES K. TRUE, D.D. Foolscap 8vo. 16 Illustrations.

'We have here a book which we strongly recommend to our young readers. It will do boys good to read it.'—*The Methodist*.**The Great Apostle; or, Pictures from the Life of St. Paul.**

By the Rev. JABEZ MARRAT. Foolscap 8vo. 28 Illustrations and Map.

'A charming little book. . . . Written in a style that must commend itself to young people.'—*Sunday-School Times*.**Martin Luther, the Prophet of Germany.** By the Rev. J.

SHAW BANKS. Foolscap 8vo. 13 Illustrations.

'Mr. Banks has succeeded in packing a great deal of matter into a small space, and yet has told his story in a very attractive style.'—*London Quarterly Review*.**Homes and Home Life in Bible Lands.** By J. R. S.

CLIFFORD. Foolscap 8vo. Eighty Illustrations.

'A useful little volume respecting the manners and customs of Eastern nations. It brings together, in a small compass, much that will be of service to the young student of the Bible.'—*Watchman*.**Hidden Treasures, and the Search for Them: Lectures to**

Bible Classes. By the Rev. J. HARTLEY. Foolscap 8vo. With Frontispiece.

Youthful Obligations. Illustrated by a large number of Appropriate

Facts and Anecdotes. Foolscap 8vo. With Illustrations.

Eminent Christian Philanthropists; Brief Biographical

Sketches, designed especially as Studies for the Young. By the Rev.

GEORGE MAUNDER. Fcap. 8vo. Nine Illustrations.

The Tower, the Temple, and the Minster: Historical and

Biographical Associations of the Tower of London, St. Paul's Cathedral,

and Westminster Abbey. By the Rev. J. W. THOMAS. Second Edition.

Foolscap 8vo. 14 Illustrations.

The Stolen Children. Foolscap 8vo. Six Illustrations.**Peter Pengelly; or, 'True as the Clock.'** By J. J. WRAY

Crown 8vo. Forty Illustrations.

'A famous book for boys.'—*The Christian*.**My Coloured Schoolmaster: and other Stories.** By the Rev.

H. BLEBY. Foolscap 8vo. Five Illustrations.

'The narratives are given in a lively, pleasant manner that is well suited to gain and keep alive the attention of juvenile readers.'—*The Friend*.**The Prisoner's Friend: The Life of Mr. JAMES BUNDY, of**

Bristol. By his Grandson, the Rev. W. R. WILLIAMS. Foolscap 8vo.

Female Heroism and Tales of the Western World. By

the Rev. H. BLEBY. Foolscap 8vo. Four Illustrations.

'Useful and valuable lessons are drawn from the incidents described.'—*Derbyshire Courier*.**Capture of the Pirates: with other Stories of the Western Seas.**

By the Rev. HENRY BLEBY. Foolscap 8vo. Four Illustrations.

'The stories are graphically told, and will inform on some phases of western life.'—*Warrington Guardian*.

Adelaide's Treasure, and How the Thief came Unawares.

By SARSON, Author of 'A Pledge that Redeemed Itself,' etc. Four Illustrations.
'This graphic story forms an episode in the history of Wesleyan Missions in Newfoundland.'—*Christian Age*.

Wilfred Hedley; or, How Teetotalism Came to Ellensmere-

By S. J. FITZGERALD. Crown 8vo. Frontispiece.

Equally Yoked: and other Stories. By S. J. FITZGERALD.

Frontispiece.

Master and Man. By S. J. FITZGERALD. Frontispiece.**Coals and Colliers; or, How we Get the Fuel for our Fires.**

By S. J. FITZGERALD. Crown 8vo. Illustrations.

'An interesting description of how we get the fuel for our fires, illustrated by tales of miners' families.'—*Christian World*.

James Daryll; or, From Honest Doubt to Christian Faith.

By RUTH ELLIOTT. Crown 8vo.

'We have seldom read a more beautiful story than this.'—*The Echo*.

The 'Good Luck' of the Maitlands: a Family Chronicle.

By Mrs. R. A. WATSON. Five Illustrations. Crown 8vo.

Tina and Beth; or, the Night Pilgrims. By ANNIE

COURTENAY. Crown 8vo. Frontispiece.

Valeria, the Martyr of the Catacombs. A Tale of Early

Christian Life in Rome. By the Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D. Crown 8vo. Illustrations.

The Oakhurst Chronicles: A Tale of the Times of Wesley.

By ANNIE E. KEELING. Crown 8vo. Four Illustrations.

Illustrations of Fulfilled Prophecy. By the Rev. J. ROBINSON

GREGORY. Crown 8vo. Numerous Illustrations.

The King's Messenger: a Story of Canadian Life. By the

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, M.A. Crown 8vo.

'A capital story. . . . We have seldom read a work of this kind with more interest, or one that we could recommend with greater confidence.'—*Bible Christian Magazine*.

PRICE EIGHTEENPENCE.

'Little Ray' Series. Royal 16mo.

Little Ray and her Friends. By RUTH ELLIOTT. Five Illustrations.**The Breakfast Half-Hour: Addresses on Religious and Moral Topics.** By the Rev. H. R. BURTON. Twenty-five Illustrations.

'Practical, earnest, and forcible.'—*Literary World*.

Gleanings in Natural History for Young People. Profusely Illustrated.**Broken Purposes; or, the Good Time Coming.** By LILLIE MONTFORT. Five Page Illustrations.**The History of the Tea-Cup: with a Descriptive Account of the Potter's Art.** By the Rev. G. R. WEDGWOOD. Profusely Illustrated.

- The Cliftons and their Play-Hours.** By Mrs. COSSLETT.
Seven Page Illustrations.
- The Lilyvale Club and its Doings.** By EDWIN A. JOHNSON,
D.D. Seven Page Illustrations.
'The "doings" of the club decidedly deserve a careful perusal.'—
Literary World.
- The Bears' Den.** By E. H. MILLER. Six Page Illustrations.
'A capital story for boys.'—*Christian Age.*
- Ned's Motto; or, Little by Little.** By the author of 'Faithful
and True,' 'Tony Starr's Legacy.' Six Page Illustrations.
'The story of a boy's struggles to do right, and his influence over other
boys. The book is well and forcibly written.'—*The Christian.*
- A Year at Riverside Farm.** By E. H. MILLER. Royal 16mo.
Six Page Illustrations.
'A book of more than common interest and power.'—*Christian Age.*
- The Royal Road to Riches.** By E. H. MILLER. Fifteen
Illustrations.
- Maude Linden; or, Working for Jesus.** By LILLIE MONTFORT.
Four Illustrations.
'Intended to enforce the value of personal religion, especially in Christian
work. . . . Brightly and thoughtfully written.'—*Liverpool Daily Post.*
- Oscar's Boyhood; or, the Sailor's Son.** By DANIEL WISE,
D.D. Six Illustrations.
'A healthy story for boys, written in a fresh and vigorous style, and
plainly teaching many important lessons.'—*Christian Miscellany.*
- Summer Days at Kirkwood.** By E. H. MILLER. Four
Illustrations.
'Capital story; conveying lessons of the highest moral import.'—*Sheffield
Post.*
- Holy-days and Holidays: or, Memories of the Calendar for
Young People.** By J. R. S. CLIFFORD. Numerous Illustrations.
'Instruction and amusement are blended in this little volume.'—*The
Christian.*
'Meant for young readers, but will prove instructive to many "children
of a larger growth." It is prettily illustrated.'—*Hastings and St. Leonard's
News.*
- Talks with the Bairns about Bairns.** By RUTH ELLIOTT.
Illustrated.
'Pleasantly written, bright, and in all respects attractive.'—*Leeds Mercury.*
- My First Class: and other Stories.** By RUTH ELLIOTT.
Illustrated.
'The stories are full of interest, well printed, nicely illustrated, and taste-
fully bound. It is a volume which will be a favourite in any family of
children.'—*Derbyshire Courier.*
- 'Wee Donald' Series. Royal 16mo.
- An Old Sailor's Yarn: and other Sketches from Daily Life.**
- The Stony Road: a Tale of Humble Life.**
- Stories for Willing Ears. For Boys.** By T. S. E.
- Stories for Willing Ears. For Girls.** By T. S. E.
- Thirty Thousand Pounds: and other Sketches from Daily Life.**
- 'Wee Donald': Sequel to 'Stony Road.'**

PRICE EIGHTEENPENCE. *Foolscap 8vo Series.*

- Two Standard Bearers in the East: Sketches of Dr. DUFF and Dr. Wilson.** By Rev. J. MARRAT. Eight Illustrations.
- Three Indian Heroes: the Missionary; the Soldier; the Statesman.** By the Rev. J. SHAW BANKS. Numerous Illustrations.
- David Livingstone, Missionary and Discoverer.** By the Rev. J. MARRAT. Fifteen Page Illustrations.
'The story is told in a way which is likely to interest young people, and to quicken their sympathy with missionary work.'—*Literary World.*
- Columbus; or, the Discovery of America.** By GEORGE CUBITT. Seventeen Illustrations.
- Cortes; or, the Discovery and Conquest of Mexico.** By GEORGE CUBITT. Nine Illustrations.
- Pizarro; or, the Discovery and Conquest of Peru.** By GEORGE CUBITT. Nine Illustrations.
- Granada; or, the Expulsion of the Moors from Spain.** By GEORGE CUBITT. Seven Illustrations.
- James Montgomery, Christian Poet and Philanthropist.** By the Rev. J. MARRAT. Eleven Illustrations.
'The book is a welcome and tasteful addition to our biographical knowledge.'—*Warrington Guardian.*
- The Father of Methodism: the Life and Labours of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.** By Mrs. COSSLETT. Forty-five Illustrations.
'Presents a clear outline of the life of the founder of Methodism, and is calculated to create a desire for larger works upon the subject. The illustrations are numerous and effective,—quite a pictorial history in themselves.
- Old Truths in New Lights: Illustrations of Scripture Truth for the Young.** By W. H. S. Illustrated.
- Chequer Alley: a Story of Successful Christian Work.** By the Rev. F. W. BRIGGS, M.A.
- The Englishman's Bible: How he Got it, and Why he Keeps it.** By the Rev. JOHN BOVES, M.A. Thirteen Illustrations.
'A mass of research ably condensed, and adapted to the needs of the young.'—*Christian Age.*
- Home: and the Way to Make Home Happy.** By the Rev. DAVID HAY. With Frontispiece.
- Helen Leslie; or, Truth and Error.** By ADELINE. Frontispiece.
- Building her House.** By Mrs. R. A. WATSON. Five Illustns.
'A charmingly written tale, illustrative of the power of Christian meekness.'—*Christian World.*
- Crabtree Fold: a Tale of the Lancashire Moors.** By Mrs. R. A. WATSON. Five Illustrations.
- Davy's Friend: and other Stories.** By JENNIE PERRETT.
Excellent, attractive, and instructive.'—*The Christian.*
- Arthur Hunter's First Shilling.** By Mrs. CROWE.
- Hill Side Farm.** By ANNA J. BUCKLAND.
- The Boy who Wondered; or, Jack and Minnchen.** By Mrs. GEORGE GLADSTONE.
- Kitty; or, The Wonderful Love.** By A. E. COURTENAY. Illustrated.

PRICE EIGHTEENPENCE. *Crown 8vo Series.*

- Drierstock: A Tale of Mission Work on the American Frontier.
Three Illustrations.
- Go Work: A Book for Girls. By ANNIE FRANCES PERRAM.
- Picture Truths. Practical Lessons on the Formation of Character,
from Bible Emblems and Proverbs. By JOHN TAYLOR. Thirty Illustrations.
- Those Watchful Eyes; or, Jemmy and his Friends. By
EMILIE SEARCHFIELD. Frontispiece.
- The Basket of Flowers. Four Illustrations.
- Auriel, and other Stories. By RUTH ELLIOTT. Frontispiece.
- A Voice from the Sea; or, The Wreck of the Eglantine.
By RUTH ELLIOTT.
- Rays from the Sun of Righteousness. By the Rev. R.
NEWTON. Eleven Illustrations.
- A Pledge that Redeemed Itself. By SARSON.
'A clever, sparkling, delightful story.'—*Sheffield Independent.*
- In the Tropics; or, Scenes and Incidents of West Indian Life.
By the Rev. J. MARRAT. Illustrations and Map.
- Old Daniel; or, Memoirs of a Converted Hindu. By Rev. T.
HODSON. Twelve Illustrations.
- Little Abe; or, The Bishop of Berry Brow. Being the Life of
Abraham Lockwood.

CHEAP EDITION OF MARK GUY PEARSE'S BOOKS.

Foolscap 8vo. Price Eighteenpence each.

1. Daniel Quorm, and his Religious Notions. 1ST SERIES.
2. Daniel Quorm, and his Religious Notions. 2ND SERIES.
3. Sermons for Children.
4. Mister Horn and his Friends; or, Givers and Giving.
5. Short Stories: and other Papers.
6. 'Good Will': a Collection of Christmas Stories.

PRICE ONE SHILLING AND FOURPENCE.

Imperial 32mo. Cloth, gilt lettered.

- Abbott's Histories for the Young.
Vol. 1. Alexander the Great. Vol. 2. Alfred the Great. Vol. 3. Julius Cæsar.
- PRICE ONE SHILLING. *Royal 16mo. Cloth, gilt lettered.*
- Ancient Egypt: Its Monuments, Worship, and People. By
the Rev. EDWARD LIGHTWOOD. Twenty-six Illustrations.
- Vignettes from English History. From the Norman Conqueror
to Henry IV. Twenty-three Illustrations.
- Margery's Christmas Box. By RUTH ELLIOTT. Seven Illusts.
- No Gains without Pains: a True Life for the Boys. By H.
C. KNIGHT. Six Illustrations.
- Peeps into the Far North: Chapters on Iceland, Lapland, and
Greenland. By S. E. SCHOLDS. Twenty-four Illustrations.
- Lessons from Noble Lives, and other Stories. 31 Illustrations.
- Stories of Love and Duty. For Boys and Girls. 31 Illusts.

- The Railway Pioneers; or, the Story of the Stephensons, Father and Son.** By H. C. KNIGHT. Fifteen Illustrations.
- The Royal Disciple: Louisa, Queen of Prussia.** By C. R. HURST. Six Illustrations.
- Tiny Tim: a Story of London Life. Founded on Fact.** By F. HORNER. Twenty-two Illustrations.
- John Tregenoweth. His Mark.** By MARK GUY PEARSE. Twenty-five Illustrations.
- 'I'll Try'; or, How the Farmer's Son became a Captain.** Ten Illustrations.
- The Giants, and How to Fight Them.** By Dr. RICHARD NEWTON. Fifteen Illustrations.
- The Meadow Daisy.** By LILLIE MONTFORT. Numerous Illustrations.
- Robert Dawson; or, the Brave Spirit.** Four Page Illustrations
- The Tarnside Evangel.** By M. A. H. Eight Illustrations.
- Rob Rat: a Story of Barge Life.** By MARK GUY PEARSE Numerous Illustrations.
- The Unwelcome Baby, with other Stories of Noble Lives early Consecrated.** By S. ELLEN GREGORY. Nine Illustrations.
- Jane Hudson, the American Girl.** Four Page Illustrations.
- The Babes in the Basket; or, Daph and her Charge.** Four Page Illustrations.
- Insect Lights and Sounds.** By J. R. S. CLIFFORD. Illustrns
'A valuable little book for children, pleasantly illustrated.'—*The Friend*.
- The Jew and his Tenants.** By A. D. WALKER. Illustrated.
'A pleasant little story of the results of genuine Christian influence.'—*Christian Age*.
- The History of Joseph: for the Young.** By the Rev. T. CHAMPNESS. Twelve Illustrations.
'Good, interesting, and profitable.'—*Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*.
- The Old Miller and his Mill.** By MARK GUY PEARSE. Twelve Illustrations.
'In Mr. Pearse's choicest style; bright, wise, quaint, and touching. Mr. Tresidder's pictures are very good.'—*Christian Miscellany*.
- The First Year of my Life: a True Story for Young People.** By ROSE CATHAY FRIEND.
'It is a most fascinating story.'—*Sunday School Times*.
- Fiji and the Friendly Isles: Sketches of their Scenery and People.** By S. E. SCHOLDS. Fifteen Illustrations.
'We warmly recommend this little volume to readers of every sort.'—*Hastings and St. Leonard's News*.
- The Story of a Pillow. Told for Children.** Four Illustrations.
'Simply and gracefully told.'—*Bradford Observer*.
'Little folks are sure to be interested in this wonderful pillow.'—*Literary World*.

NEW SHILLING SERIES. *Foolscap 8vo. 128 pp. Cloth.*

Gilbert Guestling ; or, the Story of a Hymn Book. Illustrated.

'It is a charmingly told story.'—*Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express.*

Uncle Dick's Legacy. By E. H. MILLER, Author of 'Royal Road to Riches,' etc., etc. Illustrated.

'A first-rate story . . . full of fun and adventure, but thoroughly good and healthy.'—*Christian Miscellany.*

Beatrice and Brian. By HELEN BRISTON. Three Illustrns.

'A very prettily told story about a wayward little lady and a large mastiff dog, specially adapted for girls.'—*Derbyshire Advertiser.*

Tom Fletcher's Fortunes. By Mrs. H. B. PAULL. Three Illustrations.

'A capital book for boys.'—*Sheffield and Rotherham Independent.*

Guy Sylvester's Golden Year. Three Illustrations.

'A very pleasantly written story.'—*Derbyshire Courier.*

Becky and Reubie ; or, the Little Street Singers. By MINA E. GOULDING. Three Illustrations.

'A clever, pleasing, and upon the whole a well-written story.'—*Leeds Mercury.*

The Young Bankrupt, and other Stories. By Rev. JOHN COLWELL. Three Illustrations.

Left to Take Care of Themselves. By A. RYLANDS. Three Illustrations.

The Basket of Flowers. Four Illustrations.

Mattie and Bessie ; or, Climbing the Hill. By A. E. COUREENAY,

Mischievous Foxes ; or, the Little Sins that mar the Christian Character. By JOHN COLWELL. Price 1s.

'An amazing amount of sensible talk and sound advice.'—*The Christian.*

Polished Stones from a Rough Quarry. By Mrs. HUTCHEON. Price 1s.

'A Scotch story of touching and pathetic interest. It illustrates the power of Christian sympathy. . . . Sunday school teachers seal this little volume and learn the results of such labour.'—*Irish Evangelist.*

Recollections of Methodist Worthies. Foolscap 8vo.

PRICE NINEPENCE. *Imperial 32mo. Cloth, Illuminated.*

1. **The Wonderful Lamp ; and other Stories.** By RUTH ELLIOTT. Five Illustrations.
2. **Dick's Troubles ; and How He Met Them.** By RUTH ELLIOTT. Six Illustrations.
3. **The Chat in the Meadow ; and other Stories.** By LILLIE MONTFORT. Six Illustrations.
4. **John's Teachers ; and other Stories.** By LILLIE MONTFORT. Six Illustrations.
5. **Nora Grayson's Dream ; and other Stories.** By LILLIE MONTFORT. Seven Illustrations.
6. **Rosa's Christmas Invitations ; and other Stories.** By LILLIE MONTFORT. Six Illustrations.
7. **Ragged Jim's Last Song ; and other Ballads.** By EDWARD BAILEY. Eight Illustrations.

8. **Pictures from Memory.** By ADELINE. Nine Illustrations.
 9. **The Story of the Wreck of the 'Maria' Mail Boat:** with a Memoir of Mrs. Hincksman, the only Survivor. Illustrated.
 10. **Passages from the Life of Heinrich Stilling.** Five Page Illustrations.
 11. **Little and Wise: The Ants, The Conies, The Locusts, and the Spiders.** Twelve Illustrations.
 12. **Spoiling the Vines, and Fortune Telling.** Eight Illustrations.
 13. **The Kingly Breakers, Concerning Play, and Sowing the Seed.**
 14. **The Fatherly Guide, Rhoda, and Fire in the Soul.**
 15. **Short Sermons for Little People.** By the Rev. T. CHAMPNESS.
 16. **Sketches from my Schoolroom.** Four Illustrations.
 17. **Mary Ashton: a True Story of Eighty Years Ago.** Four Illustrations.
 18. **The Little Prisoner: or, the Story of the Dauphin of France.** Five Illustrations.
 19. **The Story of an Apprenticeship.** By the Rev. A. LANGLEY. Frontispiece.
 20. **Mona Bell: or, Faithful in Little Things.** By EDITH M. EDWARDS. Four Illustrations.
 21. **Minnie Neilson's Summer Holidays, and What Came of Them.** By M. CAMBWELL. Four Illustrations.
 22. **After Many Days; or, The Turning Point in James Power's Life.** Three Illustrations.
 23. **Alfred May.** By R. RYLANDS. Two coloured Illustrations.
 24. **Dots and Gwinnie: a Story of Two Friendships.** By R. RYLANDS. Three Illustrations.
 25. **Little Sally.** By MINA E. GOULDING. Six Illustrations.
 26. **Joe Webster's Mistake.** By EMILIE SEARCHFIELD. Three Illustrations.
 27. **Muriel; or, The Sister Mother.**
 28. **Nature's Whispers.**
 29. **Johnny's Work and How he did it.** Five Illustrations
 30. **Pages from a Little Girl's Life.** By A. F. PERRAM. Five Illustrations.
- PRICE EIGHTPENCE. *Imperial 32mo. Cloth, gilt edges.*
- The whole of the Ninepenny Series are also sold in Limp Cloth at Eightpence.
- Ancass, the Slave Preacher.** By the Rev. HENRY BUNTING.
- Bernard Palissy, the Huguenot Potter.** By A. E. KEELING.
- Brief Description of the Principal Places mentioned in Holy Scripture.**
- Bulmer's History of Joseph.**
- Bulmer's History of Moses.**
- Christianity compared with Popery: a Lecture.**
- Death of the Eldest Son (The).** By CÆSAR MALAN.
- Dove (Margaret and Anna), Memoirs of.** By PETER McOWAN.
- Emily's Lessons; Chapters in the Life of a Young Christian.**

Fragments for Young People.
 Freddie Cleminson.
 Janie : a Flower from South Africa.
 Jesus, History of. For Children. By W. MASON.
 Precious Seed and Little Sowers.
 Sailor's (A) Struggles for Eternal Life. Memoir of Mr.
 JAMES BOYDEN.
 Saville (Jonathan), Memoirs of. By the Rev. F. A. WEST.
 Soon and Safe : a Short Life well Spent.
 Sunday Scholar's Guide (The). By the Rev. J. T. BARR.
 Will Brown ; or, Saved at the Eleventh Hour. By the Rev. H.
 BUNTING.
 The Wreck, Rescue, and Massacre : an Account of the
 Loss of the *Thomas King*.
 Youthful Sufferer Glorified : a Memorial of Sarah Sands Hay.
 Youthful Victor Crowned : a Sketch of Mr. C. JONES.

PRICE SIXPENCE. *Crown 16mo. Cloth, Illuminated Side and
 Coloured Frontispiece.*

1. A Kiss for a Blow : true Stories about Peace and War
for Children.
2. Louis Henry ; or, the Sister's Promise.
3. The Giants, and How to fight Them.
4. Robert Dawson ; or, the Brave Spirit.
5. Jane Hudson, the American Girl.
6. The Jewish Twins. By Aunt FRIENDLY.
7. The Book of Beasts. Thirty-five Illustrations.
8. The Book of Birds. Forty Illustrations.
9. Proud in Spirit.
10. Althea Norton.
11. Gertrude's Bible Lesson.
12. The Rose in the Desert.
13. The Little Black Hen.
14. Martha's Hymn.
15. Nettie Mathieson.
16. The Prince in Disguise.
17. The Children on the Plains.
18. The Babes in the Basket.
19. Richard Harvey ; or, Taking a Stand.
20. Kitty King : Lessons for Little Girls.
21. Nettie's Mission.
22. Little Margery.

23. Margery's City Home.
24. The Crossing Sweeper.
25. Rosy Conroy's Lessons.
26. Ned Dolan's Garret.
27. Little Henry and his Bearer.
28. The Little Woodman and his Dog.
29. Johnny: Lessons for Little Boys.
30. Pictures and Stories for the Little Ones.
31. A Story of the Sea and other Incidents.
32. Aunt Lizzie's Talks About Remarkable Fishes. Forty Illustrations.
33. Three Little Folks Who Mind Their Own Business; or, The Bee, the Ant, and the Spider. Twenty-five Illustrations.

The whole of the above thirty-three Sixpenny books are also sold at Fourpence, in Enamelled Covers.

PRICE SIXPENCE. 18mo. Cloth, gilt lettered.

- African Girls; or, Leaves from Journal of a Missionary's Widow.
 Bunyan (John). The Story of his Life and Work told to
 Children. By E. M. C.
- Celestine; or, the Blind Woman of the Pastures.
 Christ in Passion Week; or, Our Lord's Last Public Visit to
 Jerusalem.
- Crown with Gems (The). A Call to Christian Usefulness.
 Fifth of November; Romish Plotting for Popish Ascendency.
 Flower from Feejee. A Memoir of Mary Calvert.
- Good Sea Captain (The). Life of Captain Robert Steward.
 Grace the Preparation for Glory: Memoir of A. Hill. By
 Rev. J. RATTENBURY.
- Hattie and Nancy; or, the Everlasting Love. Book for Girls.
 Held Down; or, Why James did Not Prosper.
- Impey (Harriet Langford). Memorial of.
 John Bunyan. By E. M. C.
- Joseph Peters, the Negro Slave.
- Matt Stubbs' Dream: a Christmas Story. By M. G. PEARSE.
- Michael Faraday. A Book for Boys.
- Ocean Child (The). Memoir of Mrs. Rooney.
- Our Lord's Public Ministry.
- Risen Saviour (The).
- St. Paul, Life of.
- Seed for Waste Corners. By Rev. B. SMITH.
- Sorrow on the Sea; or, the Loss of the *Amazon*.

Street (A) I've Lived in. A Sabbath Morning Scene.
 Three Naturalists: Stories of Linnæus, Cuvier, and Buffon.
 Young Maid-Servants (A Book for). Gilt edges.

PRICE FOURPENCE. *Enamelled Covers.*

Precious Seed, and Little Sowers.
 Spoiling the Vines.
 Rhoda, and Fire in the Soul.
 The Fatherly Guide, and Fortune Telling.
 Will Brown; or, Saved at the Eleventh Hour.
 Ancass, the Slave Preacher. By the Rev. H. BUNTING.
 Bernard Palissy, the Huguenot Potter.

PRICE THREEPENCE. *Enamelled Covers.*

'The Ants' and 'The Conies.'
 Concerning Play.
 'The Kingly Breaker' and 'Sowing the Seed.'
 'The Locusts' and 'The Spiders.'
 Hattie and Nancy.
 Michael Faraday.
 Three Naturalists: Stories of Linnæus, Cuvier, and Buffon.
 Celestine; or, the Blind Woman of the Pastures.
 John Bunyan. By E. M. C.
 Held Down; or, Why James didn't Prosper. By Rev. B. SMITH
 The Good Sea Captain.

PRICE TWOPENCE. *Enamelled Covers.*

1. The Sun of Righteousness.
2. The Light of the World.
3. The Bright and Morning Star.
4. Jesus the Saviour.
5. Jesus the Way.
6. Jesus the Truth.
7. Jesus the Life.
8. Jesus the Vine.
9. The Plant of Renown.
10. Jesus the Shield.
11. Being and Doing Good. By the Rev. J. COLWELL.
12. Jessie Allen's Question.
13. Uncle John's Christmas Story.
14. The Pastor and the Schoolmaster.

The above Twopenny Books are also sold in Packets.

Packet No. 1, containing Nos. 1 to 6, Price 1/-

Packet No. 2, containing Nos. 7 to 12, Price 1/-

PRICE ONE PENNY. *New Series. Royal 32mo. With Illustrations.*

1. The Woodman's Daughter. By LILLIE M.
2. The Young Pilgrim: the Story of Louis Jaulmes.
3. Isaac Watkin Lewis: a Life for the Little Ones. By the Rev. MARK GUY PEARSE.
4. The History of a Green Silk Dress.
5. The Dutch Orphan: Story of John Harmsen.
6. Children Coming to Jesus. By Dr. CROOK.
7. Jesus Blessing the Children. By Dr. CROOK.
8. 'Under Her Wings.' By the Rev. T. CHAMPNESS.
9. 'The Scattered and Peeled Nation': a Word to the Young about the Jews.
10. Jessie Morecambe and her Playmates.
11. The City of Beautiful People.
12. Ethel and Lily's School Treat. By R. R.

The above twelve books are sold in a Packet, price 1/-

NEW SERIES OF HALFPENNY BOOKS.

By LILLIE MONTFORT, RUTH ELLIOTT, and others. *Imperial 32mo. 16 pages. With Frontispiece.*

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The New Scholar. 2. Is it beneath You? 3. James Elliott; or, the Father's House. 4. Rosa's Christmas Invitations. 5. A Woman's Ornaments. 6. 'Things Seen and Things not Seen.' 7. Will you be the Last? 8. 'After That?' 9. Christmas; or, the Birthday of Jesus. 10. The School Festival. 11. John's Teachers. 12. Whose Yoke do You Wear? 13. The Sweet Name of Jesus. 14. My Name; or, How shall I Know? 15. Annie's Conversion. 16. The Covenant Service. 17. The Chat in the Meadow. 18. The Wedding Garment. 19. 'Love Covereth all Sins.' 20. Is Lucy V—— Sincere? 21. He Saves the Lost. 22. The One Way. 23. Nora Grayson's Dream. 24. The Scripture Tickets. 25. 'Almost a Christian.' 26. 'Taken to Jesus.' | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 27. The New Year; or, Where shall I Begin? 28. The Book of Remembrance. 29. 'Shall we Meet Beyond the River?' 30. Found after Many Days. 31. Hugh Coventry's Thanksgiving. 32. Our Easter Hymn. 33. 'Eva's New Year's Gift.' 34. Noble Impulses. 35. Old Rosie. By the Rev. MARK GUY PEARSE. 36. Nellie's Text Book. 37. How Dick Fell out of the Nest. 38. Dick's Kitten. 39. Why Dick Fell into the River. 40. What Dick Did with his Cake. 41. Dick's First Theft. 42. Dick's Revenge. 43. Alone on the Sea. 44. The Wonderful Lamp. 45. Not too Young to Understand. 46. Being a Missionary. 47. Willie Rowland's Decision. 48. 'Can it Mean Me?' 49. A Little Cake. 50. A Little Coat. 51. A Little Cloud. 52. The Two Brothers: Story of a Lie. |
|---|--|

The above Series are also sold in Packets.

Packet No. 1 contains Nos. 1 to 24. Price 1/-

Packet No. 2 contains Nos. 25 to 48. Price 1/-

LONDON:

T. WOOLMER, 2, CASTLE STREET, CITY ROAD, E.C.



