

# Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL & GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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## Religious.

### The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon and the Society of Friends.

On Tuesday the 7th ult., the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon delivered an address to the Society of Friends, at their Institute, Bishopgate-street, London, on "The Life and Character of George Fox." The chair was taken by Mr. Charles Gilpin M. P., and the large meeting house was densely packed with listeners, chiefly members of the Society of Friends, many of those connected with the society, though not in membership, being also present. The chairman observed that it was not usual for the Friends to commence by offering a formal prayer, but to sit in silence, and according to this custom solemn silence was maintained for a few minutes, after which Mr. Gilpin said that Mr. Spurgeon had expressed to him a desire to have an opportunity of speaking to Friends and that the committee of the institute had made arrangements to permit of his doing so.

Mr. Spurgeon said that when he expressed a wish to address Friends, it was not in the form of a lecture; but he had desired to speak to them for a quarter of an hour or so on a subject that had pressed very heavily on his mind for some time. He thought the testimony of the society was not loud enough at the present time. It was clear as a bell, but not loud as a clarion. The committee had appointed the evening and named the subject; but to lecture upon George Fox to them would be a work of supererogation—a carrying of coals to Newcastle, in fact—for they knew or ought to know all about him. Mr. Spurgeon then referred to the main incidents in the life of George Fox. One great legacy of Fox was his testimony to the spirituality of religion; he was most distinct upon the point that "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." He testified against wrong names; he spoke of "steeple houses." "Was Christ married in this wise?" Dissenters were now beginning to call their meeting houses churches, and he feared were going back to superstition by slow degrees. Fox kept in view the truth—

"Where'er we seek him he is found,  
And every place is hallowed ground."

There was too much danger of formality in set modes of worship, but even silence might become a mere formality also. The spirit was free, and worship must be free also, as the spirit willed it. He left also a noble testimony to the sin of intolerance, a sin not recognized as such in his time. He (Mr. Spurgeon) believed that all sects had persecuted except the Baptists and the Friends, but we must be careful to guard against the spirit of intolerance, which showed itself in many ways. Persecution had happily ceased, but we must treat all men kindly, and love them none the less that we think they teach errors; and if some still do seize goods for tithes and church-rates, why it must be borne with for a time, and let us pray that they may see their error. Another great legacy was the testimony to the unlawfulness of war. It seemed as if George Fox had so studied the Sermon on the Mount that he had come to be the incarnation of it. There was nothing more clear than that a Christian had nothing to do with carnal weapons. "My kingdom is not of this world, else would my servants fight." Again, there was his testimony to the sinfulness of oaths—one equally sound, and one which, though now entailing no great suffering, had cost the early Friends a great deal. What was well worth noting in George Fox's life, was his conduct—the personal fruits which God wrought in him—and such were much needed in the present day. There was a story that one day the golden rule walked out of one of the churches near, and into the Stock Exchange. Whereupon the beadle was sent for to shut him up safe in the church again. George Fox was fond of plain speaking—his thee and thou were but parts of a system. When a magistrate took off his hat to him once and said, "Mr. Fox, your obedient servant," his reply was, "Beware of hypocrisy. When was I ever thy master? Men do not shut up their masters in prison." He did not and would not understand using words in a non-natural sense, and

he (Mr. Spurgeon) could not help thinking that a clergyman was not honest in telling a child that he was "made a child of God by baptism, unless he believed it fully. This non-natural use of words had got into business, and had corrupted men, so that this mode of conducting business was so twisted that an honest man could not understand it. When he talked of business, men said he didn't understand business, but he said business should know that it had no business to be such business as it is. Making of wealth where there was no wealth, stating matters to be what they were not, these things would sap and undermine the place of England among the nations. (Cheers) Thou speak well of me, and I will speak well of thee—lying all round together, George Fox was, too, admired for the way which conscience had over him in little things. He never cared what men might say or think, but only what God thought. How many were afraid of Mrs. Grundy. How they go in debt to be "respectable." But those who are "respectable" are often not respected, for their neighbours soon suspect that they are "respectable" by making free with other people's money. Fox's grand testimony was against formalism, and had we not now much to combat in that way? The Quakers were known for their opposition to all forms and ceremonies, ornaments, vestments, and such "holy rubbish." Was there ever a time since Fox's day when the Quaker was more needed? The Society of Friends stood upon a vantage ground to fight against the attempt to reimpose Popery and Ritualism on the nation. They held their testimony against it; but he wanted them not to keep that testimony among themselves, but to advance into the battle. This Ritualism, even, was not so bad as the attempt to reimpose priestcraft, that they should confess their sins to men, and believe they had power to forgive them. Friends had stamped their names on the political history of the country. Would not also the negro remember their names, and the freedman mingle them with his prayers? He prayed them now to advance in teaching the spirituality of worship. Some might ask him, How if we thus attack some portions of your faith? Let it be so. Any how souls would be won, and if certain doctrines which he held could not stand the attack, let them fall. Truth must prevail. He thanked them for their attention, and sat down amid applause.

Mr. Gilpin in the name of the meeting, tendered their thanks to Mr. Spurgeon for his address, and after an interval of silence the meeting separated.

### "A Crown."

One Sabbath evening our friend was distributing tracts on Seven Dials, when he saw a dirty-looking fellow, with a pipe in his mouth and a dog under his arm, and having his boots blacked. The following conversation ensued:—"Good morning, my friend, will you have a little book?" The stranger stretching out his hand with a look of surprise, cried out "Halloo!" From some reason or other—known to no one, not even himself—our friend cried out, "Halloo!" also. "How long have you been up to this dodge?" asked the dirty-looking man with the dog under his arm. "About three years," was the answer of the man with the tracts in his hand. "Does it pay?" shrewdly asked the inquisitive stranger. "Very well indeed." "Oh yes—anything for an honest living; you may as well do this as anything else." "Well rather," replied G—, "for Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do." "You said it; paid well?" "First-rate." "If it is a fair question to put, what do they stand?" "A crown." "A crown!" (drawing up his breath with surprise) "Not so bad either," thinking that a crown a-day was meant. "The pay safe, of course?" "Certainly." "Does it want any introduction to get into it?" "No; simply apply at the fountain head, and if you suit you'll be taken on directly." "I suppose its pretty lasting?" "For life if you are faithful." "Then there's no fear of your getting the sack?" "No. If you are ever so old, they'll never turn you off. Even then, there's a house to live in and a new coat." "Well it's a first-rate affair, and I should like to have a turn at it myself. Do you think I

should suit?" "Yes. I never knew a case yet where one sincerely applied that was refused. But you had better apply to the fountain head." "Oh, of course I should go to the gov'nor. Where do you apply?" "To KING JESUS." The spell was broken, and the man took his pipe out of his mouth, and gave a significant whistle. Mr. G— whistled too, and after a pause said, "Look here, my boy, I've served the devil for thirty-six years, and was faithful to him. Now I am serving Jesus Christ. He gives me good wages, has prospered me, has promised me a crown of glory, a robe of righteousness, and a mansion to dwell in. If that isn't worth working for, I don't know what is. Good bye."—*Sword and Trowel for November*

### Recipe for Fits.

Though no doctor, I have by me some excellent prescriptions, and as I shall charge you nothing for them, you cannot grumble at the price. We are most of us subject to fits; I am visited by them myself, and I dare say that you are also; now then for my prescriptions.

*For a fit of passion*, walk out in the open air; you may speak your mind to the wind, without hurting any one, or proclaiming yourself to be a simpleton.

*For a fit of idleness*, count the tickings of a clock. Do this for one hour, and you will be glad to pull off your coat the next, and work like a negro.

*For a fit of extravagance and folly*, go to the work-house, or speak with the ragged and wretched inmates of a gaol, and you will be convinced.

"Who maketh his bed of briar and thorn,  
Must be content to lie forlorn."

*For a fit of ambition*, go into the church-yard, and read the gravestones. They will tell you the end of ambition. The grave will soon be your bed-chamber, the earth your pillow, corruption your father, and the worm your mother and your sister.

*For a fit of repining*, look about for the halt and the blind, and visit the bed-ridden and afflicted and deranged, and they will make you ashamed of complaining of your lighter afflictions.

*For a fit of despondency*, look on the good things which God has given you in this world, and at those which he has promised to his followers in the next. He who goes into his garden to look for cobwebs and spiders will find them; while he who looks for a flower, may return into his house with one blooming in his bosom.

*For all fits of doubt, perplexity and fear*, whether they respect the body or the mind, whether they are a load to the shoulders, the head, or the heart, the following is a radical cure which may be relied on, for I had it from the Great Physician: "Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he will sustain thee."

### Logical.

The *Watchman and Reflector* recites the following conversation between a Baptist minister and a relative, a Roman Catholic prelate, who inquired, "How in the world did you ever become a Baptist?" The answer was, "Simply by reading the New Testament. I saw that the only church which could there be traced as an outward and visible institution or organism, was composed, not of nations like the law established ecclesiasticisms of Europe; not of States, not of municipalities, not of parishes, not of families as such; but of individual persons, acting from free choice, and asking for their own baptism as a profession of loyalty to Christ, and of faith in the resurrection as the cardinal fact and doctrine of Christianity. While reading the thirty years' church history, the Acts of the Apostles, with the Epistle to the Romans, this idea disclosed itself; and the thought occurred to me that this is the distinguishing idea which the body of Baptist churches now present. I went and offered myself—was accepted and baptized; that is all." "Well, well," said the Bishop, "that is a plain story perfectly logical. If I were to take your premises—the Bible alone the rule of faith—I could not avoid your conclusion."

### How a Presbyterian became a Baptist.

We gave our readers last week an account of the manner in which an Episcopal lady became a Baptist. We have now to mention a case of conversion to our views on the part of one who had been a Presbyterian. As in the former case, the change originated in a desire to ascertain the teaching of the Word of God in regard to the baptism of unbelieving children. Prof. C—, a gentleman of fine scholarship and undoubted piety, was married to a lady of the Baptist faith. He knew that the requisitions of the Presbyterian church, of which he was a member, called for the baptism of his children. As, however, he had never had occasion to bestow any special investigation on the subject, he was not convinced that the confession of faith and the Bible harmonized in their teachings on the subject. His lady, one of the most amiable and submissive of wives, though a Baptist, had not obtruded her convictions on her husband—further than to remain firm in her faith. She did not feel herself called upon to leave the church with which she was connected for the sake of being with her husband.

The professor determined to ascertain, if possible, what was the true teaching of the Scriptures on this important subject. Being abundantly able to examine the original Scriptures, he went to the New Testament as the apostles wrote it. After as careful an inquiry as he was able to institute, he rose from the investigation with the conviction that there was not in the Word of God the slightest authority for the rite enjoined by the Presbyterian church. His inquiries further settled him in the belief that nothing was baptism but the immersion of the candidate in water. As an honest man, he promptly discarded the tenets which he had imbibed, and knocked at the door of a Baptist church, asking admission to its membership in the prescribed way. He has been for many years an able and earnest advocate of Baptist views.

We cannot resist the conviction that conversions like the one now mentioned would be far more frequent, if those who have taken it for granted, without any examination, that pedo-baptist views are scriptural, would bring their creeds "to the law and to the testimony." A pedobaptist minister of many years' standing recently confessed that he had never particularly examined the Bible on this point. What, a "master in Israel," and yet not knowing—not considering these things! O, if this "pillar and ground of Popery" were discarded, how much more rapid would be the progress of the truth.—*Christian Index*.

A curious Sabbatarian question has been raised by a clergyman. He summoned RALPH PARKER for working on the Sunday, whose business was, grinding flints in a water-mill. He loaded the mill on Saturday night, and turned on the water on Sunday morning. The question was therefore whether the mill working was RALPH working. RALPH's servant, who was included in the indictment, said "he did not call that working." WALKER, the clergyman contended it was, but the magistrate, Mr. DAVIS, thought with RALPH, and he and the worthy miller had the benefit of the decision that water working on the Sunday was not men's working.—*London paper*.

### Choirs.

We give below two brief series of catechetical instruction for the benefit of choirs. It will be noticed that the two systems set forth are widely different. One seems to be based upon practice, the other upon theory. We leave it for our readers to decide whether or not the reduction of the theoretical system into more general practice would be likely to prove a benefit.

#### A CATECHISM FOR CHOIRS. (A la mode.)

1. What is the object of a choir?  
Ans. To sing fine music, and display the beautiful qualities of the human voice.
2. How should the time of service be spent?  
Ans. In the most interesting manner possible. Reading novels and flirting will answer