

Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

NEW SERIES.
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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

THE CURE OF SORROW.

Upon his lonely way
The high-born traveller came,
Reading a mournful lay
Of "One who bore our shame,
"Silent Himself, His name untold,
"And yet His glories were of old."

To muse what Heaven might mean
His wondering brow he raised,
And met one eye serene
That on him watchful gazed,
No Hermit e'er so welcome crossed
A child's lone path in woodland lost.

Now wonder turns to love;
The sorrows of sacred lore
No darksome mazes prove;
The desert tires no more,
They bathe where holy waters flow,
Then on their way rejoicing go.

They part to meet in Heaven;
But of the joy they share,
Absolving and forgiven,
The sweet remembrance bear,
Yes—mark him well, ye cold and proud,
Bewildered in a heartless crowd.

Starting and turning pale
At Rumour's angry din,
No storm can now assail
The charm he wears within,
Rejoicing still and doing good,
And with the thought of God imbued.

No glare of high estate,
No gloom of wo or want,
The radiance can abate
Where Heaven delights to haunt,
Sin only hides the genial ray,
And round the Cross, makes night of day.

KEBLE.

Religious.

For the Christian Messenger.

AWAKE THOU THAT SLEEPEST.

It is a startling fact that, among Christians of the present day, many sleep. Lathargy lies, as a pall, upon many in our churches, and the few who are wakeful shout in vain to the sleepers.

There can be little doubt that selfishness lies at the root of the inertness that has crept over us.

Friend, are you one of the these listless ones? Remember the sacred hours of your first awakening, the contrition of spirit, the earnest seeking for peace with God, the groping in darkness, till your eyes were opened, and you became aware of the presence of your Saviour; then the voice of tender compassion which said "Who-soever will, may come." Since then what have you done for Christ? Have you found it hard to keep awake, wide awake in a church were so many were dreaming? Friend, you must have been sitting too still; if you were busy you would not be asleep.

Body and brain are busy, I doubt not, but the "new heart," I fear has not had enough work to do to keep it quick and warm.

The Bible and prayer have nourished and strengthened you every day, and social worship has stimulated and refreshed you. What then? What use have you made of this increase of power? To speak plainly, have you striven to be a thorough Christian that you might please God and help others; or have you sought to keep merely enough religion to secure your own happiness, and your title to everlasting rest?

Why do you not neglect duty? Why do you not slumber or sleep? It is because it is "sweet to work for Jesus," and you are so busy waking other that you are thoroughly aroused yourself? Friend if you grow drowsy there is a reason why.

Think, for a moment, why the Master called you to be his disciple. He has much work for his people to do. Every one that is converted is called to labor. "Here-in is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." You

were called to "stand up for Jesus," the work assigned you to point all within your influence to "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." Now, how many through your prayers and efforts have been brought to the Saviour? Number them. You may have done much indirectly, but directly what have you done!

There is not a Christian man, woman, or child but can enlighten others with the light they have received. How many today bless God that you cared for their souls, and guided their feet into paths of peace? The Judge will ask you some day, ask yourself now, the number of those your words have helped to save. Ask how earnest you have been in this work for Jesus. Has the labor kept you all your days awake? Yet a little while and "the Master is come, and calleth for thee."

M.

MERE PROFESSORS.

Many conversions are spurious, it is evident, because the so-called converts do not repent of their sins. They have no godly sorrow—no deep, sincere sorrow because of their transgressions. They never exclaim like Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 24). They never cry out, like David, "Mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as a heavy burden, they are too heavy for me." You never hear anything like this from them. On the contrary, they get more like patrons than penitents. Their whole bearing would seem to indicate that they think they are conferring a great favour upon the Almighty. They go forward for prayer, and perhaps kneel, but never manifest in any way the earnestness of a soul to be delivered from the danger of hell. Where they have wronged others, they make no restitution. A few prayers are offered for them, interspersed, with compliments; they "feel better," join the church, sleep on with others, and finally wake up in hell.

That many who profess religion fail of being truly converted to God appears from the declaration of our Saviour, "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matt. vii. 23). Mark this language. He does not say, you have backslidden. But "I never knew you." Then, of course, they were never converted. This class is very numerous. "Many." They made a high profession of religion. They were deceived to the last. The foolish virgins did not lose their oil, but they did not take it. They had the lamp—the procession; but the grace they never had. They too were not flagrant hypocrites, but were self-deceived. Think of it! think of it! Am I truly converted to God?—*Gospel Trumpet.*

A WONDERFUL YEAR'S HISTORY.

THE BEACH-STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH. BOSTON.

The history of this enterprise is most interesting and instructive, as illustrating the rapidity and certainty with which a church in any of our cities or large towns may bound from comparative weakness to great strength, if only it be managed on right principles, and all its strength be made available and productive.

A year ago the Beach-street church was struggling for life in a very weak, forlorn condition. They had been able the year before to raise but \$1,900 for all purposes; and many, even of its friends, supposed it must die.

In this emergency they called Rev. Jas. C. Dunn from New York. This gentleman is not a great pulpit orator, but an earnest wise worker, and excellent organizer, with much social power and knowledge of human nature, and with a heart full of zeal for the Master's work. Less than one hundred persons were present to hear his first sermon; empty pews were almost as plenty as

Such was the condition of the church in the fall of 1869. We will now show the means by which, under God's blessing, it has been brought to its present strength. We shall not attempt to follow the pastor as he advanced step by step, but will give the system of church activities as it now stands.

The pastor considers himself the Executive Officer and leader of the church; and every member, either as officer or private, has something to do. He has a private memorandum book containing alphabetical lists:—

1. Of the names and residences of all regular attendants of the congregation. Against each name are placed significant letters, as follows:—

126 [C] M [B]rawn, Jas R [7] 28 Mt. Vernon St [S. & P
32 [P] [S] Smith Lucy [3] 26 Broomfield St. [A & G

Here C. stands for communicant, P. for pew-holder, M. for married, S. for single; the figures the number of pew, and the double letters at the close the initials of the two church officers in whose district the person lives.

2. A list of all new comers not yet permanently attached to the congregation, who are to be followed up by the pastor and the Strangers' Committee.

3. Of religious cases, inquirers and backsliders, who are to be visited in like manner by the pastor and the Spiritual Committee.

4. Of other particular cases which for any reason need regular attention.

5. Of persons who are proposed and are to unite with the church. The pastor is in the habit of presenting to each communicant at the time of admission to the church a beautiful pocket testament containing on a fly-leaf their name, the record of their mustering into the hosts of God's Church militant, and an appropriate text, selected by the pastor in view of their character, circumstances, or some peculiarity of their experience. It was a beautiful and touching part of the ceremony when receiving one hundred and twenty-five persons last spring at a single communion service, Mr. Dunn gave to each the watchword, as it were, of their spiritual warfare. Against the name of each person so received stands the motto thus: A Acts iv. 13, last clause.

DUTIES OF CHURCH OFFICERS.

The entire congregation and church membership is divided geographically into five districts. Over each of these, two church officers, if possible an elder and a deacon, are placed, who aid Mr. Dunn in their districts in the pastoral oversight and direction of the entire work.

DEPARTMENTS OF CHURCH WORK.

We have stated elsewhere that every one is expected to be doing something. To afford channels of activity adapted to every variety of talent the work of the church has been arranged in twelve different departments, as below:—

Relief.—Which attends to all cases requiring material aid.

Care of Sick.—The members of this department visit the sick, high or low, act as nurses or night-watchers, as the case may require, call in the pastor or officers of their church district, or apply for aid to the Relief Department; in a word, carry help and sympathy to all the suffering.

Strangers.—This is the "hand shaking" committee. Neither man nor woman can show themselves twice at church before these loving canvassers have scented the game, and if the stranger has no church relations his name and residence is reported for the pastor's list of new-comers; he receives a cordial welcome, and is made a willing captive.

Domestics.—Remembering that all human distinctions fade out in presence of the one lofty title—Children of God—the church has brought in very many of this class and made them feel welcome and at home. With great wisdom the committee which looks after them, and all its officers, are selected from such of their own number whose engagements or the kindness of their employers give leisure for this service.

Temperance.—The duties of this department are obvious. Much attention has been given to this subject.

Music.—The singing in Beech-street is congregational, led by a strong, well-trained choir of their own members. The leader is an earnest Christian man. They use Robinson's Songs of the Sanctuary, and stand when singing. The congregation meet an hour before the Friday evening prayer-meeting to sing and practice the hymns for the following Sabbath. Attendance on this service from three hundred to four hundred. The singing on the Sabbath, is of course, unusually full and fine. This committee is also responsible that there be good singing at all church and neighborhood prayer-meetings, etc.

Sociable.—This committee has in charge the monthly Social Gatherings, provides entertainment and attends to all arrangements. Here the pastor and church officers get ready access to the people, and they become acquainted with each other. Many a soul has been quietly led to Christ by a work spoken here. "More than one member of the church," says the pastor, in a letter to me "has told me that their first awakening was by words privately spoken to them in one of the Social meetings by Rev. Dr. John Hall of New York who happened to be present."

Sunday School.—To visit sick and absentee scholars. Many of the Sunday-school teachers are domestics, and male and female clerks, operatives, whose time is not their own.

Missionary.—To look after the church and Sunday-school missionary meeting and collections, and yet all, even the little ones, to do their part.

Devotional.—This committee has charge of the church and neighborhood prayer-meetings. It is their duty always to be present to take a part or lead, as the superintendent of the committee shall direct.

Young Woman's Devotional.—Has charge of the young ladies' prayer-meeting on Monday evening. Average attendance sixty or seventy.

Spiritual.—The oldest and ripest Christians to aid the pastor and session in counselling inquirers and backsliders.

The superintendents of these departments may be male or female, church officer or member. Fitness and efficiency is the only test. In one or more of them, as duty may prompt or their pastor advise, all are expected to be employed, unless exempted by sickness or God's providence.

The superintendent directs the work of the committee, and the pastor looks to and acts through him. Results are, of course, very great under such thorough system, and any emergency is promptly met.

A READING-ROOM

is attached to the church and open every night. There is no institution better supplied with periodicals and current literature in Boston. The average attendance is fifty or sixty. This is open to males and females. The social influences are cultivated. The rich and poor meet together in genuine, hearty sympathy. The deepest, honest thought of all appears to be: This is our Father's house and our church home.

RESULTS.

We gave the state of things a year ago. More than two hundred and fifty persons have since been added to the church. The house of worship is crowded and camp-stools are carried into the aisles every Sabbath. They have outgrown accommodations, and are making arrangements to send out a colony. Eight thousand dollars has been raised for current purposes, and a debt of \$30,000 wiped out. The church is full of young people. Nearly all of the young ladies and three fourths of the young men have been converted. From four hundred to six hundred is the usual attendance at the prayer-meeting, and so great is their love that when obliged to move, many attend their church and its stated meetings from distances of three to five miles.

And this has been accomplished without any extra meetings, except those for prayer