

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER.

Longing for Home.

Earth is the spirit's rayless cell; But then, as a bird soars home to the shade Of the beautiful wood, where its nest was made, In bonds no more to dwell, So will its weary wing Be spread for the skies, when its toil is done, And its breath flow free, as a bird's in the sun, And the soft fresh gales in spring. O, not more sweet the tears Of the dewy eve, on the violet shed, Than the dew of age on the "hoary head," When it enters the eve of years. Nor dearer, amid the foam Of the far-off sea, and its stormy roar, Is a breath of balm from the unseen shore To him that weeps for home. Wings, like a dove to fly! The spirit is faint with its feverish strife; O for its home in the upper life! When, when will death draw nigh? —E. B. Thatcher.

The Revival We Need.

Hopes and premonitions of a great awakening of religious interest are in the air. Many hearts are lifting up the cry of the ancient prophet, "O Lord, revive thy work!" That a revival is needed no one at all conversant with the low spiritual state of our churches as a whole can doubt. The proportion of those who are being saved to the vast machinery at work for the winning of a man to Christ is lamentably small. If human efforts could effect salvation the converts would be numbered by thousands where hundreds are now brought to the feet of Jesus. But human effort fails at the vital point. Something more and more powerful is needed to make the machinery effective. What is it?

We need a revival of the thought of God concerning the awful nature and peril of sin. An inadequate conception of what sin is leads inevitably to indifference to the fate of the sinner. If we do not realize how terrible a thing sin is in the eyes of the Holy God we shall not be greatly concerned as to the need of immediate salvation for those who are living in unbelief and disobedience. God's thought concerning sin is expressed in the "unspeakable gift" of his beloved Son to die for the salvation of the lost. A deepened sense of the meaning of that infinite sacrifice would mark a long step toward the awakening of the churches to their first and most important work, the saving of lost souls.

We need a revival of the sense of dependence upon the Holy Spirit in the doing of God's work. It is impossible to reach a sinful soul without the Spirit's aid. Preaching, exhortation, prayer, personal conversation are of no avail unless that mighty power gives force to the word and prepares the way for its reception. By his help the weakest agencies are transformed into forces that can overcome the proudest defences of sin, and bring the defiant soul to the feet of Jesus. Those who attempt to win men to Christ by persuasion of their own eloquence find that they have undertaken an impossible task; but the humblest worker for Christ, endued with the power of the divine Spirit, can reach and win hearts that seemed shut up forever against the sweet influences of the Gospel.

We need a revival of the essence of God's presence. He is not afar off, looking down from a remote throne upon our sorrows and strivings. He is all about us, and, if we desire it, will be in us, an abiding presence. But this, too often, we fail to realize. A true sense of the divine presence would awaken in us a more earnest longing and purpose to do the will of God, would stimulate us to higher living, would make us ashamed of our careless, empty, frivolous pursuits and ambitions, and lead up to a fuller consecration of our powers of mind and heart to the service of our divine Lord.

We need a revival of knowledge of the Word of God—not surface knowledge, but the knowledge that comes from prayerful, Spirit-guided study of its deeper meaning. We may become familiar with it as literature; we may be able to repeat it from the beginning to end; we may know its history, its archaeology, its doctrinal teachings; but none of these, nor all of them, will make it a weapon in our hands for slaying our own sinful desires or for impressing the truth upon others. A knowledge of the Word that shall make wise unto salvation is one of the most pressing needs of the children of God in our day.

We need a revival of faith in the saving power of Christ's sacrifice for sin. There is a vast deal of practical skepticism on this point among professing Christians. That the death on the cross is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth

we repeat with the lip, but our hearts fail to grasp the momentous truth, and hence it does not become a living force within us, stimulating us to labor for the salvation of all classes and conditions of men. When the members of our churches really believe, in their inmost souls, that Jesus Christ, by his sacrificial death, made it possible for every man, whatever his condition or however great his sins, to be saved, there will be, there cannot help being a mighty revival of effort for the salvation of all for whom he died.

We need a revival of what has been called, sometimes with a covert sneer, old-fashioned piety. But the piety that puts God and his service first, and our own pleasure afterward and in just subjection to the will of God, can never be out of fashion. The worldly lives of Christians are a stumbling block to multitudes of un saved souls. It is not to pleasure but to service that the saints of God are called and holy living, far more powerfully than profession of creeds or stately forms of worship or "attractions" of any sort, will appeal with power to the world.

If we really want an awakening of spiritual religion we shall find it, not by multiplying or changing methods of "working up a revival," but by cultivating within ourselves the spirit and purposes and holy enthusiasm and consecrated living of our divine Lord, and learn, like him and by his methods, to seek and to save the lost. —The Examiner.

The Awful Punishment of Sin.

It is the duty of every preacher to make sin appear as exceedingly full, not of blessedness, brightness, and hope but of badness, darkness and despair—as exceeding sinful. Let sin be considered as wrong thought, as wrong desire, as wrong consent, as wrong action, as hereditary evil bringing generations into the awful consequences, as wrong example and environment, intensifying and extending the ruin; and, finally, as wrong destiny, reaching the wrong goal or destination as to permanent character and abiding fellowship, then and thus the awful punishment of sin appears. God is not mocked: as a man soweth, so he reaps.

Man is responsible for sin. God is not its author, nor was it ever ordained by God that he might get the greater glory either in punishing it or in vanquishing it. Sin comes from the human spirit rebelling against God, acting contrary to his will and character. Although sin is always hateful in the sight of God, yet God has taken the merciful attitude toward the sinner, and has inspired his prophets through all ages to proclaim his loving kindness and tender mercy, and has sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.

The consideration of God's love and mercy makes further sin appear more awful, more ungrateful, more rebellious, more hardening and destructive. When light shines and men and women refuse to see, it must be attributed to a besotted love of darkness. When Divine love appeals, and men and women refuse to yield, it must be attributed to settled stubbornness and hardness. To sin against Gospel light and Gospel love is surely the conquering climax of wrong-doing, and the incurable love for iniquity. That any human being should sink so low in feeling, in aim, in character, and in fellowship, is surely the most awful consequence and punishment of sin.

Asked to feel the love of God, he replied, No!

Asked to aim at purity, usefulness, and nobleness, he replies, No!

Asked to seek the fellowship of the heavenly Father, Son, and Spirit, he says, No!

Asked to accept salvation, and then to work it out as God works in him, he replies, No!

How shall he escape if he neglects so great a salvation? —Chris. Guardian.

Men Want to Know About God.

Men do not go to church to listen to an oratorical address, for they are to be found at the concert halls; men do not go to church because of the club attractions, for there are more entertainments at clubs elsewhere. Men do not go to church to listen to an oratorical address, for there are few orators in the pulpit, and no man can be an orator fifty-two times a year. There is only one person who is more mistaken than the members of the congregation who expects to listen to an oration every Sunday, and he is the minister who hopes to be an orator twice a day every Sunday throughout the year.

The papers tell us that the ministers of the present day must shorten their sermons; that the churches must have good circulating libraries; that good music must be provided; free stereopticon lectures must be given and

smoking-rooms for the men members of the church must open out of the vestry, if we would bring people into the church. Let us have the circulating libraries. Let us have the lectures, but let us not forget that it is not these things that the people want. People do not go to church to while away an hour. They go because they want to know about God and an invisible world. What they are seeking is a life of love and peace. You ministers must give it to them, must show the way, or you have no business in the pulpit.

The four questions every intelligent man is asking himself to-day are: "What is man?" "What is God?" "What is the relationship between them?" "How can I bring about that relationship?"

What difference does it make whether Jesus was raised from the dead two thousand years ago or not? What we want to believe is that he is here as truly as he was in Capernaum; that he is a living factor among us; that he is as certainly with us at this moment as he was with his disciples in Palestine. —Lyman Abbott, D. D.

How Not To Grow Weary.

The way to enjoy Christian service and not tire of it is to be diligent in spirit. The hard workers never become weary in well-doing. The more we do for Christ, the more eager we become in his service. We tire most when we do the least. The idlers are the weary ones. Those who do the most enjoy it best, and complain the least. Those who keep growing in grace never weary of the race. Faithfulness in prayer and diligence in the study of God's Word make the soul proof against weariness in God's service.

Redoubled diligence is the remedy for discouragement. The trouble with discouraged ones is that they always feel like quitting, when to quit is the worst thing they can do. Discouragement lets go the moment that a man sets his face against it with grim determination not to give up, but to press forward with renewed diligence.

There is no misery like the misery of spiritual dispendency of a man who has been in close touch with God and in the front ranks of hope and heavenly aspiration, and godly influence among men. To know how to avoid such a state or how to escape from it is a matter of grave importance. The outcome involves the honor of God and the destiny of a man. —Evangelical Messenger.

One Proposition too Many.

"A farmer once went to hear John Wesley preach. The preacher said he would take up three topics of thought; he was talking chiefly about money.

"His first head was, 'Get all you can.' The farmer nudged his neighbor and said, 'That man has got something in him; it is admirable preaching.'

"Wesley reached his second division, 'Save all you can.' The farmer became quite excited. 'Was there ever anything like this?' he said.

"The preacher denounced thriftlessness and waste, and the farmer rubbed his hands as he thought, 'and all this have I been taught from my youth up.' What with getting and with hoarding, it seemed to him that 'salvation' had come to his house.

"But Wesley went on to his third head, which was, 'Give all you can.' 'Oh, dear! he has gone and spoiled it all,' exclaimed the listener. But getting, without giving, makes only stagnant pools of us."

The Christly idea is, Get what you honestly can, and give what you wisely may. The Satanic plan, Get all you can and keep all you get.

Missed By Waiting.

Waiting to be of service is the sure way of missing the service altogether. There is no waiting one's chance in the life of true service. Opportunities throng the path of every day routine. Every one is susceptible of greater joy. Everyone has a burden, often to be lightened by an understanding look, a tactful word, a sense of companionship. But we wait, and often none of these, because we are not quick to see, and we want to do something notable and striking when we do serve. Meanwhile a whole brood of opportunities are born, and die. Let us be—not wait to be—of service.

Be patient with every one, but, about all, with yourself. I mean, do not be disturbed because of your imperfections, and always rise up bravely from a fall. —Francis de Sales.

The distress we cause others is always subtracted from our own happiness. —Good Cheer.

Random Readings.

Each new day with its opportunities is a fresh gift from the hand of God.

Write it on your heart, that every day is the best day of the year. —Emerson.

A little religion is a painful thing; but more religion takes the pain away. —William Arnot.

Life fellowship with Jesus is the only school for the science of heavenly things. —Andrew Murray.

Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control, these three alone lead life to sovereign power. —Tennyson.

Christianity is not so much the advent of a better doctrine as of a perfect character. —Horace Bushnell.

There is no heaven, either in this world or the world to come, for the people who do not praise God. —Pulsford.

Courage! Up your heart! When ye do tire, He will bear both you and your burden. —Samuel Rutherford.

The lives of the saints of God ought to inspire others to the same saintly characteristic. The Rev. Thomas Coke, LL. D., the first bishop of the Methodist church, represented in his own person, down to his death, the whole missionary operations of Methodism, as their official and sole director, lavishing upon them his affluence, and giving more money to religion than any other Methodist, if not any other Protestant, of his times.

When nearly seventy years old, he proposed to go to India at his own expense and there establish Wesleyan missions. A friend remonstrated with him, but he replied, "I am now dead to Europe and alive for India. God himself has said to me, Go to Ceylon! I would rather be set naked on its coast, and without a friend, than not to go." —Steven's Methodist Episcopal Church.

The woman of Samaria was a most remarkable instance of the effect which contact with Christ was able to produce. She came to Jacob's well a notorious sinner; she went back to the town a rejoicing believer. Not only so; she was transformed into an eloquent evangelist, who spread abroad the news that the long expected Messiah and the Savior of the world was at hand. And she was most successful. There is a strange persuasiveness in the testimony of one in whom the flame of divine love has just been kindled. Her word so moved her fellow townsmen that they flocked out to see Jesus in number, which, as they approached on the highway, reminded him of the stalks of corn covering a harvest field. —Dr. Stalker.

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Slander, the worst of poison, ever finds an easy entrance to ignoble minds. —Harvey.

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"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Mr. Moody tells of having asked a soldier for the process of his conversion. His graphic answer was: "Halt!" "Attention!" "Right about face!" "March!"

I do believe the common man's task is the hardest. The hero has the hero's aspiration that lifts him to his labor. All great duties are easier than little ones, though they cost far more blood and agony. —Phillips Brooks.

Take heed how you build. That which you are doing, the work which you are performing, you do not leave behind you because you forget it. Every stroke, every single element abides, and there is nothing that grows so fast as character. —Henry Ward Beecher.

Sorrow must be made an opportunity for service. They who comfort others shall themselves be comforted. Unto those who minister to others shall the Father himself minister. —George Hodges, D. D.

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The spiritual life is a Spirit led life. It has new impulses, new sensations, new needs. It is a life which no longer goes its own way, it has surrendered its way to the Spirit's better way. By submission to the Spirit's direction, it escapes the dominion of the flesh. The spiritual life is a life yielded fully to the control of the mighty spirit of God. —The Episcopal Recorder.

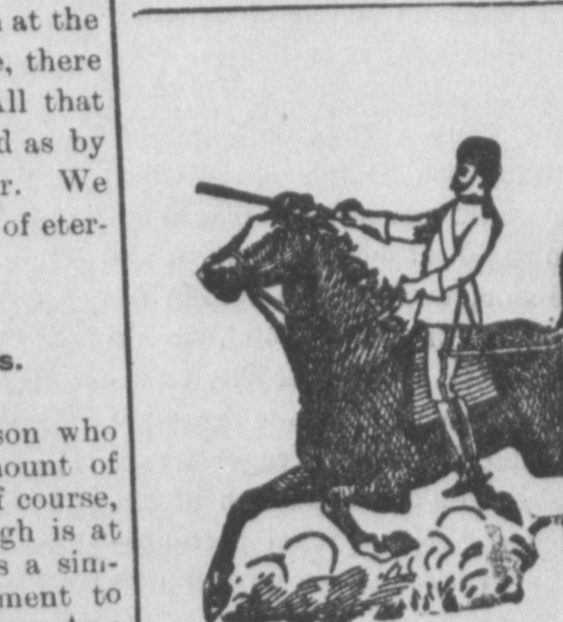
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