

ABOUT FAULT FINDING.

KNOXIAN, IN THE PRESBYTERIAN.

Not long ago we heard a veteran minister give a refreshing description of a congregation with which he had been connected. Among other things, he said: "They belong to a class of people who never find fault without good reason for doing so." May a kind heaven multiply that class a millionfold.

Our friend's description was strictly correct. The congregation in question is largely made up of representative people, business men, professional men, public men, representative, high class men from almost every walk in life. People of that kind are rarely fault-finders. They know by experience how difficult it is to serve the public and naturally sympathize with a minister or any other man who works for the public. Besides, most of them are too well bred to be professional fault-finders. An expert fault-finder is generally a low-down fellow. His blood is poor. His tone is low. He comes from bad stock. Either that or his digestive apparatus is continually on strike.

Some men are natural born fault-finders. They were constructed that way from the beginning. They came into the world with a growl and they will leave it with a snarl. All the way between the beginning and the end they have found fault with everybody and everything. Such men are rarely converted, and even if they are, conversion does not do them much good. As Professor Young used to say: "Grace sanctifies what it finds." If we find a man a chronic fault-finder, he may perhaps remain one. Possibly he may change his sphere of operations a little, but that will likely be the most his conversion will do for him. Instead of constantly finding fault with his wife he may turn his attention to the minister, which may be a good thing for his wife, but not a happy arrangement for the minister.

Some men find fault from a pure love of notoriety. Nobody would know they were there if they did not make a fuss of some kind. They have neither brains nor position, nor anything else to make them prominent, so they try to secure prominence by attacking some one who is prominent already. The game is an old one and should not deceive anybody.

Some people find fault from sheer habit. Long years ago in some way or another, perhaps because they thought it showed originality or cleverness, they contracted the abominable habit of snarling at everything and everybody, and the abominable habit stuck to them through life.

Jealousy and envy are at the root of much fault-finding. A person of a naturally envious disposition sees somebody do something he cannot do so well himself and he instinctively begins to nibble and carp at the performance. Some clergymen and some evangelists belong to this class.

Ambition of a low kind is the tap root of much fault-finding. Too many people in America think they cannot rise to positions of prominence without pulling down some one who has risen

already. Laboring under this delusion they direct all their malign energies to the destruction of people they imagine to be rivals. They forget—if they ever knew—that in the long run every man must rise by his own merits if he rises at all. The mania for the destruction of supposed rivals is distinctively Yankee and Canadian. Typical Englishmen scorn such ignoble methods.

Supposing we all earnestly resolve never to find fault with anybody unless stern duty demands that we should do so. Duty does sometimes make this demand, but not nearly so often as most of us think it does. Many people are very apt to say duty requires them to do certain things when only motive power pushing them on is the power of old Adam. Don't degrade the noble word duty by making it do the work of Satan. It is never a man's duty to serve the devil.

It may be well to remember that habitual fault-finding places one in very mean company. Neither brains, nor knowledge, nor culture, nor any other good thing is necessary to make a man a chronic fault-finder. The veriest imbecile that walks the earth can find fault. The veriest ass that ever lived on three meals a day can find fault. The most useless human biped in creation can find fault with the best man ever created. The lowest blackguard can find fault with the Bible, and many a blackguard has done so. The worst men on earth can find fault with God himself and they usually do that very thing.

Besides all this habitual fault-finding makes a man hated. Some people wonder why they have so few friends. How could they have? They have done nothing all their lives but find fault with other people. How could the other people be expected to like them?

THE DENOMINATIONAL PAPER.

In the *Church Economist* for February there is an editorial on "The Denominational weekly" which has in it suggestions to pastors well worth their attention. The editor says:

Pastors make far too little use of one of the most powerful and available agencies they have, to extend their influence among their people and the community. This largely unused force is the denominational weekly. We know that the popular feeling just now runs in the opposite direction. But the fact remains that these periodicals are both willing and able to promote the interests of any pastor or church that gives them a legitimate opportunity. . . . If the pastor feels that it is a good thing for a denomination to have a reasonable and vigorous organ let him help make it so. We venture to suggest, in a quiet aside, that he will not lose his reward. It's not a bad thing to earn the respect and favor of your denominational organ. Ministers can engage in works of journalistic supererogation in two ways. They can help the paper to get circulation in their congregation and they can report matters of local moment for the news columns. "Oh, but this is puffery, self-advertising, etc." Well, that depends. Perhaps you remember the servant that didn't advertise or hustle, but hid his talent in a napkin. This, however, is another story. What we wish to say just now is that the wide-awake, go-ahead minister can yoke up with his denominational organ to their mutual welfare, and can do so with a clear conscience.

RELIGION IN BUSINESS.

There is need of a revival that will lead Christian men to carry their Christianity into all the relationships of life—that will lead them to carry their religion into their business transactions and make them just and true and honest and considerate of the rights of others.

We feel that there is a constant need for a reiteration of this thought. It seems as though there is an increasing tendency to divorce religious thought and religious feeling and religious principles from business areas. Men will speak of justice and love and mercy in the prayer-meeting and will go into the arena of the world the following day and drive the hardest and sharpest bargain they can with the man with whom they are transacting business. They will speak before a Bible class of the oppression of the rich in fixing prices and yet in the control of commodities needed in the daily consumption of the poor they will do precisely the thing which in theory they condemn. We heard incidentally the other day of a business man of high repute and wide influence whose eyes would fill with moisture as he spoke of evangelistic effort and of the needs of the Sunday-school of which he was superintendent, and yet could almost in the same breath speak of the advantage which he had secured in a business transaction because the man with whom he was dealing was not his equal in his acquaintance with the affair and in his mastery of the facts. Suppose this man in the days following should meet the other party to the transaction in which he had been tricked and asked him to become a Christian. Would not, must not the lack of equity in the business transaction cripple and neutralize every spiritual effort? We have wondered in these days when there has been so much trepidation in many circles and so great depression in the stock markets of the land, how many Christian men were responsible for transactions to which the strict principles of the gospel of Christ cannot be applied. We need a readjustment among this line. No bargain is a good bargain that inures to the disadvantage of either party. It is as bad for the winner as for the loser. No bargain is a Christian bargain in which one seeks to overreach another. Moreover, stronger testimony to the necessity and to the grandeur of the principles of the Christian religion can be borne by business men in their transactions in the store and in the shop and on the street, than by their testimony given in the prayer-meeting. It is not alone burnt sacrifice that the Lord demands of his people, but justice and uprightness and fair and Christian dealing as well. We need a revival of emotion in our churches without doubt, but we need a revival likewise that will produce Christian and fraternal relationship in the commercial transactions of the world.—*Baptist Commonwealth*.

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Reduced from 45
- do. Bakers, now 15 cents
Reduced from 30
- do. Bakers, now 10 cents
Reduced from 20

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