

The Christian Life.

THE TRUE FAITH.

I deem their faith the best
Who daily put it into loving deeds
Done for the poor, the sorrowing, the
oppressed—
For these are more than creeds;
And, though overblinded reason oft
may err,
The heart that loves is faith's inter-
preter.

The schoolman's subtle skill
Wearies itself with vain philosophies
That leave the world to grope in dark-
ness still,
Haply from lies to lies;
But whoso doeth good with heart and
might
Dwells in, and is made joyful by the
light.

One hand outstretched to man
In helpfulness, the other clings to
God;
And thus upheld they walk through
time's brief span
In ways that Jesus trod;
Taught, by His Spirit, and sustained
and led,
Those lives, like His, by love are per-
fected.

Such faith, such love are thine!
Creeds may be false—at best, mis-
understood;
But whoso reads the autograph divine
Of goodness doing good,
Need never err therein; come life, come
death,
It copies His—the Christ of Nazareth!

COMMENDING OUR RELIGION.

Beyond question there are multitudes of men and women who sincerely and earnestly desire the growth of the kingdom of God. They seek the conversion of the unsaved and the development of Christian character in those who are already disciples of Christ, and exhort, give, work and pray for the accomplishment of these ends. But considering the numbers engaged in the work of God and the expenditure in time and toil, the meagerness of results is distressing if not disheartening. Why is it that we reap such small harvests from our generous sowing? Why do the multitudes go their indifferent way in spite of the constant effort to win their attention to and interest in religion?

No comprehensive answer can be put into few words, for we must needs study the nature of man and of religion, take account of current influences and tendencies, discover the strength and the weakness of organized Christianity, note all the factors in the problem, if we would speak the last word about the seeming impotence of religion in the presence of irreligion or non-religion. But without undertaking any labored investigation, certain facts of large explanatory value confront the man who is at all interested. They are so evident that they have been recognized and described and emphasized by multitudes, and the mere mention of them almost serves to classify one as a dealer in platitudes. And yet in spite of all that has been said, the Christian world is very far from realizing the significance of that concerning which so much is said and with which it is so familiar.

No one doubts that Christianity is a historical religion, and no sane man will repudiate this element or consent that it be ignored in any estimate of Christianity. But however strong and convincing the historical evidence may be, it has not the power, in itself, to change the human heart and make the sinner a child of God. Multitudes of people who believe in God and accept the New Testament account of the life of Jesus Christ, give no evidence of having any interest in personal religion. Their indifference is not due to lack of knowledge, neither can it justly be ascribed to neglect on the part of the church. Many of these indifferent ones have been brought up in Christian homes, and are sought after by those who desire to see them identified with the church. Pastors have called upon them and exhorted them, church members have invited them to the house of God, and still they are unreached.

What is the matter? A practical explanation lies in our propensity to depend upon talk. The minister naturally and rightly trusts to his sermons as potent agents in reaching the hearts of the unconverted, and church-members, with good reason, feel that personal persuasion is needed in order that neighbors and friends be won to Christ. For this conviction of pastor and people there is ample warrant in scripture and in experience. The fault lies not in the use of these agencies, but in the divorce from the Christ-like life. This is no railing accusation against the members of our churches, nor even an implication that we who exhort men to turn to Christ are not sincere. As to the sincerity of the great majority of professing Christians there can be no question; but we cannot identify honesty of purpose either with comprehension of the essential elements of the Christian religion or with entire success in embodying that which is comprehended. It is just here that our weakness reveals itself. Either we do not realize the importance of character as an agent in the redemption of the world, or we are not disposed to make ourselves such Christians as we know we must be in order strongly to influence those about us towards God.

The Christian world does not lay sufficient stress upon the importance of having the "mind of Christ." Of course we all agree in declaring that the possession of the Lord's Spirit is essential to worthy discipleship, but in our living we all do largely give the lie to our declarations. Many a man whose theology is of unquestioned antiquity and in agreement with the historic symbols, does not hesitate to be unjust in his judgments. To a brother who differs from him he assigns motives and purposes that exist only in his own excited imagination. He fails utterly of any fair valuation of the worth or the work of the brother who will not pronounce his shibboleth. The spirit is not confined to the conservative. The so-called liberal is often more narrow and unfair than the man whom he condemns. The fact is that judgment righteous judgment is about the most difficult task that the Christian has to perform. When we have come to the place where we can credit the man whom we dislike with all the virtues which he

really possesses, we have travelled far along the road which Jesus has laid out as the highway of his disciples. When we can talk about the man who differs from us radically in theology without depreciating his character or misrepresenting his work, the grace of God has done much for us.

This is only one of manifold illustrations. Concerning gentleness, honesty, unselfishness, forgiveness, love and a host of other character-qualities, the same words might be spoken. We talk lovingly and approvingly of these virtues, while not striving very greatly to make them our own. And the non-Christian world knows it. They look on while we wrangle, hear the bitter speech of a Christian about his brother, note the unforgiving spirit, detect the tricks and sharp practice, and then ask very naturally, why they should become Christians. Oh, yes! we know the answer that will be given, that one man's wickedness does not make the righteousness of another, that the imperfections of Christians do not excuse others from coming to God. That is all true, but the fact remains that the failure of Christians to live out the spirit of Christ greatly hinders the progress of the kingdom of God. The Christian man must be a better man than the non-Christian if he is to give the Christian life power in its appeal.

The world will never be saved to God by abstract truth. It takes life to affect life. Because Jesus not only knew the truth, but was the truth, he has power over the hearts of men. In the measure that the disciples are truth and love and unselfishness will they make potent appeal to the souls of men. True words, these are, and they have been spoken often, but there are no words more significant for the church of God. As we live what we preach, as we show our fellow-men in the every day and common life what beauty and helpfulness there is in reproducing the temper of Jesus Christ, we shall commend our religion to them as argument and exhortation alone can never do. — *The Standard*.

There are few, if any, congregations in which there are not homes that do not receive the denominational paper. It would like to go to all these. The present is a good time to introduce it. Our brethren, the ministers, will be helping the INTELLIGENCER and its work very much if they will make a special effort this month to have it go to all the families of their congregations.

WITH OR WITHOUT THE BIBLE.

We may broadly divide the inhabitants of the world into two classes: those who have the Bible and those who have it not; and we shall find that each class has its peculiar characteristics. No matter whether a nation be called Christian or heathen, no matter whether it be in Christendom, or heathendom, a nation without the Bible is a nation sunk in ignorance, poverty, oppression, degradation and unrest; while a nation where the Bible is read, revered and obeyed is a nation marked by education, intelligence and prosperity. A nation without the Bible will be a nation without inventions, without popular education, without modern improvements. A nation with the Bible will have all these things.

The peril of any country is the presence of people trained without knowledge of the scriptures, and without the fear of God. The roughs, the rowdies, and the hoodlums who curse and dis-

grace all lands are men who have been brought up outside the light and influence of the Word of God. The sober, faithful, orderly, intelligent population of a country are people who have been trained under the influence of God's Word, and have not yet lost the effects of such a training. The prisons, the almshouses, the refuges, the reformatories, and the orphanages, the hiding places of the children of the drunken, degraded, dissolute and worthless people, are largely filled by people who have known little of the light of divine revelation, but have been brought up in darkness—whether it be the darkness of the heathen, who have never had the Bible, or the darkness caused by men who have hidden the Word of God from the people, and thus taken away the key of knowledge, refusing to enter in themselves, or suffer those to enter who desire to.

The best remedy for most of the ills which afflict the body politic is the wide circulation and careful and reverent study of the scriptures of truth, and unless this remedy is applied greater ills may be expected; for it is a well-known fact that when nations are deprived of the scriptures and befooled by priestly interference and superstition, when at last intelligence bursts the bonds of their ignorance, they denounce all religion and plunge into darkness and infidelity, vice and crime.

The one remedy for atheism on the one hand and superstition on the other—the superstition which ends in atheism, and the atheism which rushes on to anarchy and confusion—is the Word of the living God. The entrance of that Word giveth life and blessing to a lost world; and if we can bring that Word to bear upon the darkened minds of men we shall do more for humanity than by any other means.—*H. L. Hastings*.

They Cleanse the System Thoroughly.
—Parmelee's Vegetable Pills, clear the stomach and bowels of bilious matter, cause the excretory vessels to throw off impurities from the blood into the bowels and expel the deleterious mass from the body. They do this without pain or inconvenience to the patient, who speedily realizes their good offices as soon as they begin to take effect. They have strong recommendations from all kinds of people.

A Kansas farmer, being asked what he did to get rid of the weeds on his farm, said that he sold most of them as mutton at three and one-half to four cents a pound. A contemporary adds that goats are the best brush-cleaners, and sheep are the best weed-cleaners, but they both eat weeds and brush in preference to grass, although grass is a part of their natural ration.—*New England Farmer*.

There is danger in neglecting a cold. Many who have died of consumption dated their trouble from exposure, followed by a cold which settled on their lungs, and in a short time they were beyond the skill of the best physician. Had they used Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup, before it was too late, their lives would have been spared. This medicine has no equal for curing coughs and colds, and all affections of the throat and lungs.

We cannot serve God and mammon, but we can serve God with mammon.—*Robert E. Speer*.