

TRUSTING.

P. P. B.

Could we always trace his footprint;  
 Could we always see his hand,  
 'Twould not then be faith in Jesus  
 'Twould be sight that makes us stand.  
 And our Saviour said to Thomas  
 Who doubtful of him seemed,  
 'Twas not those who saw and trusted  
 But saw not and still believed.  
 Oh, for faith that still abideth  
 Through the storms, that still assail.  
 Oh, for faith that still increaseth,  
 When all human aid us fail.  
 Oh thou blessed Lord and Saviour,  
 Though the storms may line our path,  
 Keep us with our faith still upward,  
 Trusting thee until the last.

EMPTY SEATS.

"Are you going to church this morning, Susie?" asked Dr. Clark, lying back in his easy chair with the morning paper, "a doctor who is out, day and night, can't be expected to." "No, I made jelly yesterday, and I'm faithful enough to stay to home this time, to say the least of it," and Mrs. Clark curled up on the couch with the Bible she hadn't opened for a week. But it soon dropped from her hand.

She was aroused by a strange voice saying, "Now, my good imps, what have you done today to weaken the kingdom of God?" The voice came from a suspicious looking personage seated on a throne of human skulls. Around him was gathered a crowd of terrible beings each with a crown of fire, in which gleamed some name such as malice, envy, pride, hatred, and kindred passions. "We have been busy today making empty seats at church," began one. "Nothing could please me better," answered their king. "I persuaded one man that he had a headache, and kept him from a sermon that might have changed his whole life," said one. "Induced one good man to slip to his store, and fix up his books," said another with a horrid grin. "Good," said the king, "he'll soon give up the Sabbath altogether." "I was able to get one devoted young man to visit some old friends," said one imp. "Yes, I worried a good Sister about her old bonnet until she decided to stay at home until she got a new one. (spoke up the imp labeled "Pride"), and I made several poor women who were hungry for God's word stay at home to repine over their trials. I just said to them, 'Oh, these rich people don't care for you, you can't wear fine clothes; so I'd just stay here. In this way I kept many away whom the rich would gladly have seen at church.' That is one of the best ways to cheat poor people out of heaven that I know of," answered the king. "I induced a good many men and women to think they were not strong enough to go out, (said the one called "Indifference") of course all these men will be at their business tomorrow, even if they feel worse; and the ladies will do house cleaning, go calling, and feel right well." "Very good, (said the king), Sunday headaches might often be cured by getting out into the air, and forgotten by having their thoughts directed to higher things; but you imps must use every weakness of the flesh to help make empty seats at church." They all smiled for in their kingdom, lying was a great compliment.

"I'm the weather imp (said one gloomy fellow, I go around persuading people it is going to rain; or it's too cold; too damp; or too hot, to venture to church; it is enough to make us laugh to see these people start out the next day in just any kind of weather. "Confidentially (answered the king) when I see a christian who has no more concerns about weather Sunday than Monday determine to make as much spiritual gain as worldly profit, I just give him up; it's no use to try to drag back the men and women who will go to God's house in all kinds of weather." "I'm able to do a good deal with some of the ladies of the congregation, (said imp labeled "fashion of this world"). Tell them their new hat didn't come, and their clothes are out of style." "I have a better scheme than that (said one); these you keep away are indifferent, good for nothing, generally who are hardly worth getting into the kingdom of his Satanic majesty; but I have a plan that empties seats of the workers in the church. I

make them overwork on Saturday. For instance, I make some man the preacher depends upon to some extent rush all day and until late at night; then he oversleeps himself, or feels so very unwell the next day he can't get out." "Splendid plan (cried Satan), you are doing finely, my imps," his majesty said warmly, for his breath was a flame of fire. "Preachers may work and pray all the week for a good meeting Sunday, but there will be no results in preaching to empty seats. All preachers as well as all other men have human imperfections. If you can get christians to criticise their pastor, especially before their children, you will soon get them just where we want them. It is the christians with their bright flaming testimonies that draws the sinners; so try to keep them at home. As soon as a christian begins to stay for one and another little excuse, I can soon get a mortgage on his soul, which if he does not shake off, I'll foreclose on judgment day."

Mrs. C. awakes. "You have none on mine; I'll go to church this very day, if only to defeat you, Satan." "What's the matter dear," asked the Dr., "have you been dreaming?" "Perhaps so; but I'm going to church if I get to my seat just in time for the benediction. I'll cheat Satan out of one empty seat from this day, and use my influence as best I can to get others to do likewise." So the meeting house began to be filled, and the work went on.

WORLDLY CONFORMITY.

Peter Cartwright was a noted Methodist minister. He was ordained to the ministry in 1804. He gave, in 1856, a clear witness against worldly conformity in the Methodist church at that time. He wrote:

"We had, at that time, when I was ordained, no choirs, no organs, in a word we had no instrumental music in our churches anywhere. The Methodists in that early day dressed plain, attended their meetings faithfully, they wore no jewelry, no ruffles. They could, nearly every soul of them, sing our hymns and spiritual songs. The Methodists of that day knelt down in the public congregation, as well as elsewhere, when the preacher said, 'Let us pray.' There was no standing among the members in time of prayer, especially the abominable practice of sitting down during the exercise was unknown among early Methodists. They generally fasted once a week, and almost universally on the Friday before each quarterly meeting. If the Methodists had dressed in the same 'superfluity of naughtiness' then as they do now, there were very few even out of the church that would have had any confidence in their religion. But, oh, how have things changed in this educational age of the world! I do declare there was little or no necessity for preachers to say anything against fashionable and superfluous dressing in those primitive times of early Methodism; the very wicked themselves knew it was wrong and spoke out against it in the members of the church. The moment we saw members begin to trim in dress after the fashionable world, we all knew they would not hold out.—Sel.

WORLDLY AMUSEMENTS.

What havoc to spiritual life is being wrought everywhere by worldly amusements. Bright young men and women are being led into utter indifference concerning the claims of the Gospel, and many already in the church indulge, and invariably lose their appetite for spiritual things. Think of a Presbyterian preacher, the pastor of a large, aristocratic church, patronizing a theatre, and sending his daughter to a dancing school! Yet he is the most popular pastor in town. Think of a Congregational preacher in a large, influential city church, preaching recently to twenty five hundred people, and telling them that he patronized the theatre, and that if he had the money he would buy a theatre ticket for each one of his members each week, that they might attend also! Think of a Methodist Church with six hundred members, with not more than fifty of that number giving any real evidence of spiritual life, with many families constant theatre goers, and advertising progressive euchre parties at their homes, besides indulging in all other forms of worldliness. Is it any wonder such a church has but from thirty to fifty in the prayer meeting, and eight or nine in the class meeting? Is it not about time the

Methodist discipline was brought out? What has become of this valuable little book, anyway? Something must surely be done to save the church from the ravages of the world. What shall it be? Let the ministry hold up the Bible standard of regeneration and entire sanctification, and many will see how far beneath their privilege they are living. Such a view will cause alarm, and scores will seek for a better experience.—Christian Standard.

THE PRICE OF ETERNAL LIFE.

There was a preacher of the gospel who had gone down into a coal mine during the noon hour to tell the miners about Jesus Christ. After telling them the simple story of God's love to lost sinners, the time came for the men to resume work, and the preacher came back to the shaft to ascend to the world again. Meeting the foreman, he asked him what he thought of God's way of salvation.

"Oh, it is too cheap; I cannot believe in such a religion as that." Without an immediate answer to his remark, the preacher asked:

"How do you get out of this place?" "Simply by getting into the cage," was the reply.

"And does it take long to get to the top?"

"Oh, no; only a few seconds!" "Well, that certainly is very easy and simple. But do you not need to help raise yourself?" said the preacher.

"Of course not!" replied the miner. "As I have said, you have nothing to do but get into the cage."

"But what about the people who sunk the shaft and perfected all this arrangement; was there much labor about it?"

"Indeed, yes; there was a laborious and expensive work. The shaft is eighteen hundred feet deep, and it was sunk at great cost to the proprietor."

"Just so; and when God's Word tells you that whosoever believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life, you at once say, 'Too cheap! Too cheap!' forgetting that God's work to bring you and others out of the pit of destruction and death was accomplished at a vast cost, the price being the death of his only Son. Men talk about the help of Jesus in their salvation—that if they do their part, Christ will do his, forgetting or not seeing that the Lord Jesus Christ by himself purged our sins, and that their part is but to accept what has been done, and thank God for it.—The Classmate.

BEING RELIGIOUS BY PROXY.

Speaking with a man the other day as to his attendance at the house of God, he said, "Oh, I am always represented; my daughter is always there." It called up the remark of an old man some years ago, who said, in a semi-jocular vein, "My daughter attends to the religious part of the house, she is the church member." Is it not singular with what satisfaction people will turn over to others the religious part of their lives? They seem to have some interest in it, but they turn the consideration and attention of it over to another member of the family. It is about the only business that a man is willing to turn entirely out of his hands; yet it is the only business that another cannot perform for us. We can delegate to other people almost everything else in the world, but no man can put his religious affairs into the hands of another; he must attend to it himself; if it shall even be attended to. Even a father cannot stand for his son, or a son for his father. There are mothers who would willingly stand for a son or daughter; but religion by proxy is not accepted in the Kingdom of God. Do not turn over to others the religion of a life in Christ; religion is not furnished in packages; nor can it be served on a platter; you can go to God yourself; you can meet him yourself; you can accept him for yourself. Men can pray for you, but they cannot secure life for you. What folly to try to be religious by proxy!—Baptist Union.

A NOBLE ANSWER.

"It is a striking truth which is embodied in the familiar saying, 'The boy of today is the man of tomorrow.' If we wish to win and hold this land for purity and temperance, we must win and hold the children, for the boys and girls of the present will be the men and women of the future—the not distant, but near, future.

A little boy when asked derisively by someone, "What are little boys like you

good for?" replied, "Please, sir, little boys like me are the stuff they make men of."

His answer was one which every worker for Christ and the overthrow of the liquor traffic would do well to lay to heart. Work for the children, is one of the strategic points in our work. The older ones, whose ways are fixed, may not be susceptible to influences of good example and moral persuasion, but the child is. Its heart is open and tender, its life absorbs from every influence with which it comes in contact. Says one, "Tell me the first ten years of a child's life and I will tell you its future." How important it is, then, that every act of our lives should be with the thought of its result on the future.—The Searchlight.

WHO IS GUILTY?

E. W. WHEELER.

In the past four years we have found several evangelical churches with large memorial windows, the bottom of them bearing the name of some one prominent in the manufacture of liquors, and in one instance the brewing establishment stood within two blocks of the church. In another instance a prominent liquor dealer was at the head of the church choir. Stopping in a beautiful village of two thousand inhabitants, we noticed five beautiful churches and one saloon. We asked a prominent member of one of the churches, Why so many churches and one saloon? What is the prohibition vote? He replied "Sixteen." We asked him why he did not vote the prohibition ticket: "Oh I am in business and don't want to make any enemies." But the devil does not not hesitate to ruin your boys and perhaps the family. Brethren, let us pray right that we may vote right. Statistics show five millions of voters that belong to the Church in the United States, and there is no state in the Union but what could be carried for prohibition. It is high time that we bestir ourselves and vote as we pray. It is not only so in this country but so elsewhere. In England stock companies are required to publish the names of the stockholders. And the list shows that among the stockholders of the great Guinness Brewing Co., there are one hundred and seventy-eight bishops and other clergy, and in another there are one hundred and thirty-three. In her address of the late annual meeting of the British Women's Temperance Association, Lady Henry Somerset referred to these clergy as "reverend brewers." What a sad record!

NOT TOO BUSY TO PRAY.

A touching little incident happened the other day on one of Philadelphia's busiest streets, and it caused even those who scoff at religion to show respect. A blind negro, with a singularly expressive face, had a cornet, upon which he played with great feeling some of the best known church hymns. "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," "Rock of Ages," "Lead, Kindly Light," followed each other with much approval from the audience of passersby who had stopped.

"How Firm a Foundation, Ye Saints of the Lord," seemed to conclude the program, but before its last notes sounded a dignified-looking white clergyman, with silver hair and a gentle smile, stepped to the musician's side and whispered a question or two. He then turned to the surrounding listeners.

"Friends," the clergyman said, "we have paused in our busy walk to listen to music that brings to each of us a message from God. Surely His spirit is with us, though it be on the open street. I am going to offer just a word of prayer that all may profit from the holy thoughts this music has brought to us." And the clergyman bared his head reverently, as did the other men standing there, and offered a prayer, simple and earnest.

Then, shaking hands cordially with the musician, the old clergyman was observed to slip a bill into his hands as he started away rapidly, evidently desiring to avoid hearing the comment his unusual act of benevolence had produced. The negro, too, strayed away without passing his hat for any further collection.

"Well, I am not much for churches," remarked a well-dressed man to his companion, according to the Philadelphia Record, "but if I thought that preacher had a church in Philadelphia I would go from one to another to find him. He makes me feel like when I was a little boy and my mother used to kneel down beside my bed and pray for me."

REVIVAL BARRENNESS.

Nothing is more distressing to behold than a barren professor of salvation. The same Word which tells us of the fruits of the Spirit, also tells us that "by their fruits ye shall know them."

One of the saddest results of the one who professes, but yet shows no proof of the existence of what is on his lips, is the fact that such a one repels the seeker after God. People do not come to live in the desert. Millions of square miles of the earth's surface have no inhabitants save the wandering Arabs or roving Bushmen, because these vast portions of land are dry, and arid, and produce no fruit. Just so, people who see professors of religion fruitless and powerless are frequently persuaded to continue groveling in the malarious swamp of sin and iniquity.

O reader, if you have an experience which is swept by the simooms of unbelief, and which is barren of the fruits of a holy life and Spirit-filled soul, do not be satisfied! People do not want what you have, but they do want something which will bless and give perfect victory. Do not again profess when you fail to possess, but fly to the blood, and get the joy-bringing, fruit-giving, all-conquering experience which God has for you.—Ibid.

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION.

Do I always tell the truth?  
 Am I in the habit of using slang?  
 Do I use extravagant expressions?  
 Am I living before God what I do before men?  
 Is my inward life as good as my outward life?  
 If I told a lie unthoughtedly and afterward found it out, would I be willing to acknowledge it?

Counting wheat at \$1.00 per bushel the bread eating world consumes \$2,300,000,000 worth of bread in one year. The estimate for tobacco expenditures for one year in the United States alone is over \$20,000,000,000 and over 25,000,000 bushels of grain were used for the manufacture of liquor in this country last year. Think of it! About ten times as much money for tobacco for this country as for bread for the world! 4,631,820,620 cigarettes were manufactured in the year of '97. Where is the money to pay for these cigarettes, and the boys to smoke them? They are forthcoming from every home, as there is a marked increase in the manufacture each year and the market is not glutted. Is it your boy that is sacrificing soul, mind, and body to help swell the deadly traffic?

The New York Tribune is authority for stating that the liquor traffic costs more every year than our whole civil service, our army, navy and Congress, including the river and harbor and pension bills; all we pay for local government; all national, State and county debts, and all the schools in the country. "In fact," says the Tribune, "this country pays more for liquor than for every function for every kind of government." And the Union Signal adds, "Two million of our own boys, the boys of this nation, must be selected out of every generation to go into the saloon hopper. Sixty thousand boys are drafted every year into the army of drunkards, to take the place at the saloon bar of the sixty thousand bloated drunkards that have been drawn forth from the street and buried with the burial of a beast."—Selected.

Entire sanctification is the complete destruction of all tendencies toward sin, and the entire renewal of the whole soul in the love and image of God to "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything to give thanks."