

The United Society of Christian Endeavor.

REV. E. J. GRANT, WOODSTOCK, N. Y.

In my last letter on this subject I endeavored to point out the inevitable tendency of requiring Christians to pledge themselves to live as they ought to live.

That letter was written, one pastor in Nova Scotia, who has been trying for about two years to manage one of these societies, writes as follows: "A change was made during the year in the constitution of the society, by which, while all members are expected to take part, the matter of doing so is left to the individual conscience rather than to a sense of duty begotten by subscription to an absolute pledge."

No discerning pastor will be long in finding out the true tendencies of the pledge business.

This society crisis will doubtless pass over after a while; but not until it shall have succeeded in giving a stab to the church of Christ.

But now let me call attention to what seems to me another very objectionable feature of this organization. A Christian Endeavor society, so called, composed partly of the professedly unconverted, is not a society at all.

It is not a society, but a collection of individuals, each of whom is a member of a church, and each of whom is a member of a church.

Does any one suppose for a moment that all these unconverted young people are so thoughtful, so spiritually analytical, as to perceive a distinction between their own condition and that of the active members?

But I need not enlarge on this point. If there are any who can see no inconsistency in making unconverted people members of a Christian Endeavor society, it would be useless to argue with them.

Again, I think we are justified in taking exception to the so-called Salvation Army idea of wearing a badge, which is a part of this society's paraphernalia.

It is called the "National Y. P. S. C. E. Badge," and is to be worn in the shape of a "scarf pin" furnished by the U. S. C. E. at prices ranging from 25c. to \$1.00. It is not stated whether this ornament is to be worn by the Christian members of the society only, or whether by all its members; I presume the latter is the idea.

In the case of the converted members, it would seem more fitting that their Christianlike spirit and conduct should proclaim to the world the fact of their discipleship. In the case of the professedly unconverted, it would seem little short of a burlesque to see them wearing a badge indicating their membership in a Christian endeavor society.

I need not say that the Word of God discourages all such outward adornments and pretensions.

This U. S. C. E. has a hymn book of its own, which it proposes to sell to the local societies. If any local society desire to introduce this hymn book, the church has no voice in the matter. The book may be all right for aught I know, (I have not seen it) or it may be as pernicious in its teachings as are the very popular "Songs of Joy and Gladness."

What I object to is, the existence in a Baptist church of a society that may, if it will, purchase and use literature out of harmony with the teaching of God's Word, and the church have no voice in the matter.

More of this society teaches the importance of a "confession" of unbelief to Christ. Far better in my judgment for the church herself, by precept and example, to teach the importance of daily consecration.

Finally, each local society is supposed to pay into the treasury of the united society not less than 60 cents per annum for each member.

It is not a large amount, it is true; still if I mistake not, it is about as much as the Baptists of these Provinces have averaged per member in the past, for all denominational purposes.

Now this united society proposes to expend this income from local societies does not appear; but I presume it is to defray expenses of State and national conventions, officers' salaries, etc.

If any of our young people have an extra fifty cents for benevolent purposes, it would be better to put it into the treasury of the church.

I feel satisfied that the more our people think on this subject, "The Church societies," the less inclined they will be to organize, or popularize, or only purpose in publishing these letters, call attention to what seems to me a very serious matter.

Since my first letter was published I have received letters from leading men in the different Provinces thanking me for it.

The last that came to hand is brief; I will give it here:

"Mr. E. J. Grant, Woodstock, N. Y.

"Dear Bro.—Accept my thanks for your excellent article, 'The Church Societies.' Societies here are sapping the church of Christ, the one effort being to attract the young people."

"Young people" at the expense of a large teaching, institutions and methods, indeed at any cost.

"Stick to God's plan, my brother. You may not find it to pay in the matter of dollars, or popularity, but stick to God's plan and take the consequences."

"Yours in testimony," J. DENOVAN.

"Toronto, Feb. 19, 1889."

We talk about the sacred ministry, the sacred desk, and the sacred calling; but we want sacred offices, sacred banks, sacred stores, and sacred shops, and every man in them who names the name of Christ to be an ordained minister of God—to do His work, bear His testimony, lift high the light of the Divine life, and scatter the salt which saves the world from corruption; to be witnesses for goodness, righteousness, and brotherly kindness. Every calling is sacred, and every line of business for the Christian is one in which the Master may be served, and testimony for the truth may be borne.—Dr. Fiske.

Christ Jesus the Lamp.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUTLER.

"And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine upon it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb." Such is the accurate rendering in the Revised Version, of one of the passages in which the Apostle John describes the New Jerusalem. Christ's presence will be the supreme joy and constitute the supreme splendour of heaven. Reasoned believers will not only see Jesus there as He is, but they will be "like Him." Not equal to their King, but resembling Him in holiness. Character is the one essential thing that we know about the future life of true believers—whatever mystery there may be about the gates of pearl, or harps, or palms, or streets of gold.

If this be so, then the essential thing with the Christian in heaven ought to be the essential thing in this world. If we are to be like Him there, we should strive to resemble Him here. If He is the lamp in that world, then we should seek to walk by the light of that lamp over every step of our journey thither. This ought to be true in regard to our doctrinal beliefs, in regard to our questions of conscience, and every iota of our daily conduct. Christ is the Alpha and Omega of all Bible-teaching. Your religious life, my brother, began with Him as certainly as this day began with the first glimpse of the rising sun. In your hour of conversion He was the light thereof; your new birth was at the Cross, or you never have been born at all. What was true of the inception of your Christian life, remains true until your last breath. There is not a grace of character that is not copied from Him, nor a holy motion that is not inspired by Him, nor a victory over sin but is won in His imparted strength, and you cannot take a single upward step towards a better life unless the Lamb is the lamp thereof.

Almost every day there arises some perplexing question of duty. You are troubled as to what you shall do. Selfish interest counsels a certain course, for that "big house-devil self," is always at hand to whisper in our ears. You go to some friend and perhaps he advises some thing. He says "it will pay," or it will bring you promotion, or some other advantage. You are looking over the stile and half inclined to step over. But conscience whispers, "What would your Savior have you to do? What will please Him best?" Then you better yourself, the new man "in you," springs up, and demands that you shall take the path which will most honor Christ, even though it be up a steep hill, and through thorns that tear the garments of your pride. And as you stumble up through the stones and the thickets, you have the blessed Jesus for your companion, and His smile is the lamp thereof in every step.

Church members often come with ethical questions to their pastors. "Go direct to Headquarters," I do not think I have there a troublesome question in morals or in practice on which the life and the teachings of our Redeemer do not shed ample light. If Christ is always before us, the casting vote, you will always decide rightly. You will choose the right track; you will engage in the right business; you will be guided into the right field of labor. I knew of a minister who was sorely perplexed about accepting of declining an important call; he made it a matter of prayer for awhile, and then concluded to "leave it to old Doctor Alexander of Princeton." The Doctor was a wonderfully wise man; but to turn from prayer to his decision, was like taking a case from the Supreme Court to a justice of the peace. Jesus Christ must be the tribunal in all ethical questions, whether pertaining to business pursuits, or politics, or pleasures. He is to be consulted not only in our work, but in our recreations. If Christ has full possession of a Christian's heart, he will not just after the indecency of the playhouse, or the revelries of the ball room, or the gambling operations of "boards" or markets, or for any pursuit or amusement into which he cannot take his divine Master with him.

The presence of Jesus, too, will brighten every hour of day. You will find, fellow-Christians, that when you reach the valley of the death-shade, the loving Lamb will be the lamp thereof. Christ's countenance will guide the path-way with glory. When my beloved church died, Horace B. Griffing, was on his dying bed a few weeks ago he said to those around him: "This valley is not dark; it is light all the way. The New Jerusalem is just before me! Can all this glory be for me! A realizing sense of this came to me in the early dawn of this morning, and the glory was as great as the morning sun. I was compared to the little gas jet in my room. I asked, 'Is this all for me?' and the answer came, 'Yes, yes; it is all yours through Jesus Christ.'—Evanglist.

Sensational Preaching.

The following is a brief report of one of Dr. John A. Broadus' lectures at Yale: "Anything is better than empty pews, some persons say. But it is better to have empty pews than a crowd allured by those things which have no spiritual interest, and the light of these remarks certain kinds of sermons are considered."

1. "Advertised sermons on special occasions or on popular amusements. As to amusements, if you denounce them there is danger of exaggeration; if you discriminate, you are in danger of being opposed to any of them. As to special occasions, you are in danger of seeming to know too much about them; by dwelling upon them you become unjust to the community as a whole; while you are giving to places of vice free advertising. Make casual references, brief admonitions, occasional allusions in the course of sermons on more spiritual topics, and you are more just and more effective."

2. "Advertised sermons on the latest occurrence or news of the day. It is best to make brief references to such things, or to preach truth which such occasions suggest without mentioning them."

3. "Sermons on a popular novel, or a picture on exhibition. Do not advertise these things by talking about them by name. Set forth those truths which those who have read the book need to

know. As a general rule let only casual mention be made."

4. "It is well to advertise subjects of preaching in general. Some great preacher, or some great subject, or some effect is not good. Preachers are tempted to select their topics and state them so as to awaken an interest which is not strictly spiritual. To satisfy those who come, they must emphasize the unspecial aspects of their subjects."

5. "Preaching on politics. You have both parties in your congregations. If you discuss party politics there are two evils: (1) those who oppose will either be driven away, or what is worse, they will stay without having any confidence in the minister as a spiritual guide; (2) those whose side is taken are liable to look for political allusions and to be distracted by their dominant political interest. Often when the preacher is most inclined to preach on these subjects, there is the time when he is likely to do the most harm. Jesus and Paul never discussed political questions. Was not it through wisdom that they thus preached? It often requires more heroism to keep quiet than to make an immense noise and do an incalculable amount of harm."

6. "Applause of preaching. The habit is growing among us. Churches are so often the scenes of ecclesiastical or political gatherings where applause is allowed, that it is thought to be appropriate when only the subject, not the place and surroundings, are different. Some say: 'It is better to applaud than to go to sleep.' Is this a necessary alternative? Speak to the heads, not to the heels of your audience. Look for that subtle, spreading sympathy which makes no noise, but is vastly more effective."

[We have never heard the applause of the hands and heels at any service of worship at the South. We have heard that it is common at the North. Still we have attended many services there, and never heard anything of the kind but once. The thought on our feelings on that occasion was simply unpleasing. So far as we are concerned no spiritual benefit could come from attending public worship, if the sanctuary is to be desecrated in this shameless way.—Ed. Index.

Be Good for Something.

We are indebted to the rugged and unconventional Thoreau, of New England, for many wholesome sentiments. One of the best is the following: "Be not simply good, be good for something." This is easily remembered sentence is bound up in the mind of every man of sense. It is packed the essence of some of the ethical teachings of the Sermon on the Mount. There is too much goodness that is negative, that is good for nothing so far as others are concerned. So much of our life is spent in being good, without making any effort for the welfare of others. Our Lord's type of goodness was not passive, but rather active and aggressive. We know and honor Him because of the truth of His saying, "I am sending you as one that serveth." He did not go about saying, "How good I am, or how free His life was from the vices of the day, but 'He went about doing good.' Every man, woman, and child, as soon as they saw or heard Him, felt the Divine Master was good for something. He was good for something to everyone who follows Him in His simple yet superb activities. He will belong to that inner circle of followers who are good for something."

Take Thoreau's sentence and write it upon a card and place it where it will remind you of your duty every morning before starting on your errands of the day. While you are young, run your habits into this mold: "Be not simply good, be good for something." Let them become fixed according to this model, and whether you are rich or poor, prominent or obscure, educated or ignorant, each day of your life on earth will be a gracious benediction.

Good George Herbert expresses the thought in another way: "Be useful when thou livest, that they may both want and wish thy pleasing presence still." Another poet exhorts us as follows: "Do something, do it now, with all thy might. An angel's wing would droop if long at rest. And God himself inactive were no longer blest."

—The Presbyterian.

Easy as Politics.

"You have some imagination," said the editor, kindly, "but you are no poet; I wouldn't try any more poetry if I were you. I think I know what you can do. Are you at all religious?" "Not a bit," replied the young woman, for it was she.

"But you know something about religious people, don't you?"

"Very little; I might say not at all," said the young woman. "I have never associated very intimately with them."

"But," persisted the editor, "you must know something about the different denominations, and the points of difference in their creeds and practices? You know what the Baptists believe, for instance, and what the Methodists are, don't you?"

The young woman sighed. "I couldn't tell a Unitarian from a Democrat," she said. "I don't know much about church matters; all that I know positively about denominational practices and creeds is that the Methodists baptize only in running water, and only once, while the Baptists baptize in baptismal waters, three times, and only once. I know that all men are fore-ordained to be damned."

"Good," cried the kind-hearted editor, "and with pleasure. I knew you were just the person who could do it. I want you to write us a theological novel, something on the 'Robert Elsmere' style, you know, to run through about five or six numbers of the magazine. I'll call it the 'American Robert Elsmere,' and you can do it off like hot cakes."

"You can do it, don't be afraid; just go for the Puritans and old-fashioned religion as though you knew all about it. You know plenty enough to write a novel about it."—Robert Burdette.

Do not lose courage by considering your own imperfections, but instantly set about remedying them, every day begin the task anew.—Francis Dobson.

The Engineer's Story.

BY REBECCA HARDING DAVIS.

In 1885 I was one of a surveying party sent by the Northern Pacific Railway to lay out a short branch road in Montana. It ran through a sterile plateau at an altitude of about five thousand feet; the hills above this level were only ridges of clay bared of snow by the wind. Here and there on their sides were patches of grass, bleached gray. Trees there were none. The snow lay deep in the gulches. For an hour or two each day the sun shone brilliantly on these solitary yellow hills and the slopes of dazzling white between them, but at about two o'clock in the afternoon a drizzling fog closed down on us, and the cold followed. The cold! It paralyzed body and mind. I heard much of the blessed Chinook wind which was said to blow soft and warm from the Japan gulf stream in the Pacific. But I must say that I never felt it. My remembrance of that winter is one unbroken dull horror of cold.

The town of our little road was at Bonanza City, one of the richest silver mines in the world. There was the usual swarming population of a mining camp in the Northwest—gamblers, thieves, Mormons, Chinamen, adventurers from every corner of heaven, every man of them hoping to make a huge fortune by some lucky stroke, and to go back next year to the East with it. There were but few women. I am glad to say.

One woman ran a cattle ranch on the hills just back of our surveying camp. The Widow Mag's reputation was rather than that of any of her sex in Montana. The week before we pitched camp, she had cleared sixty thousand dollars by gambling in mining stock, and set off alone on horse-back to carry the money to her home in Helena. She always held on to every dollar she made. Well, she went and came safely. She was a cool, sure shot. The cow-punchers might "hold up" a stage full of passengers, but they kept clear of Mag. I saw her once, riding down the gulch. She was padded trousers and like all the men, but atop of her head was a frisky bonnet with a dragged red feather in it.

But there was a woman of a different kind near our tents. On the hillside opposite stood a shanty of two rooms, in which a young married couple lived. The man was a lame little fellow, who worked every morning and night about the place digging, plowing (when spring came), or building a screen of wattles to keep off the terrible wind. He always disappeared during the day. In these solitary hills, where there was no one in the neighborhood, he only lived in the night. He was not a gambler, but he was a miser. He was sure of it but for his wife. The husband of that woman one felt must be decent and honest. She was a tall, erect girl, who dug, and scrubbed, and carried her tubs in an out with an indescribable something in her air that showed that she was a gentlewoman.

Passing by the cabin, too, we caught glimpses of the man's content, and well-bound books and one fine print, that reminded us of home. We noticed that the Indians in the neighborhood frequented the cabin, and that gangs of the Mormon women came up to it almost every day. The poor wretches must have carried away some good from the mere sight of the poor, clean little home, and the courage and truth in that woman's face.

One day (it was in December, I remember, and the night before had been the coldest of the winter) Benson, our chief, and I, and a few others, were sitting in the cabin looking at the map, and I was staring at the poor, clean little home, and the courage and truth in that woman's face.

"Down on his luck, I reckon," said one of the men, "he's a gambler. He's a preacher."

We laughed. It really did seem too ridiculous to try to preach the gospel at Bonanza City.

"He has courage enough," continued Benson. "I saw him a little while ago, button-holding Big Mike to-day, and afterwards he got the Widow Mag in a saloon, and made her listen to him."

Just then a negro teamster thrust his head in the tent.

"Hyah! hyah!" he shouted. "Dat boss in de shanty done froze, an' his wife's a-totin' him home!"

We dashed down the hill. There the girl was, on the wagon-trail, the snow to her knees, carrying, dragging him along. God must have put the strength of a man into that body to do it. I never saw such a sight. I tell you it made me sick to look at it.

He was nearly gone. Even after we brought him into the cabin, and worked with him for an hour, there was hardly a breath in his mouth. Months of underfeeding had brought him to the very lowest ebb; the cold only finished the work.

Did I tell you that I recognized him? It was Parker Logan, who graduated the year before me at Princeton. He had been a hot-blooded, wild fellow, but generous to a fault. It gave the men of the fraternity a shock when the news came that he had gone into the ministry. I remembered hearing that he had married Judge Voorhees' daughter in Philadelphia, a girl with both birth and beauty. He had imagined him at the head of some fashionable city church, and there he was, a shivering, shivering man, brought down by wine and soup, and blankets from the camp. They would have heaped the shanty with provisions, but you had to be careful. You could not treat that girl as a pauper.

It was a day or two before Parker got about again. I spent a good deal of time with them, for they looked on me as something out of their old home, and clung to me. God only knew how homesick they were. They said nothing, but I guessed it.

"Why not go back to the East?" I said one day. "There are plenty of pulpits waiting for men like you, with brains and energy."

He shook his head, for he was not able to talk much.

"We think," said his wife, "that his work is here. He will not give it up."

There was fire in her blue eyes, as if she had been storming a redoubt.

When she went out I said: "Parker,

this won't do. How did you come into such straits? Forgive me, but I can't shut my eyes. There's not enough in this house to keep body and soul together."

He made the best of it. His was a missionary post with a salary of three hundred and fifty a year. Provisions were enormously high in the neighborhood of the mines. Some missionaries with children had no more than he, etc. I held my tongue then. But when he was well again, I went to him. It was in the evening; the thermometer was forty degrees below zero. He had made a roaring fire.

"Come in, come in," he said zealously. "Kitty has made some hot soup."

She laughed and made me welcome. But even while she swallowed the scorching broth, she trembled with cold.

"This is what I came to say to you, Parker," I began. "Benson wants an answer man to his corps. You are quite competent for the work. Give up preaching for a year or two. It's a hopeless task to save any souls in Bonanza City. Money is god. There Benson offers you a hundred a month, and your expenses paid. Mrs. Logan can go into Helena, and keep comfortable and warm. Health, madam, is finished. It is not the salary alone I offer you. But you will have every opportunity of buying land at the junctions in which there must be a boom. In five years, if you are wide awake, you will be a rich man."

He stood up, looking at his wife. We had seated her in the warmest corner, wrapped in a horse blanket. The pretty face was thin and nipped with the cruel cold.

"Kitty you must answer for us," he said. "You have most to bear."

She laughed.

"Money is not our god. We are not cowards, Parker."

"I was provoked at such obstinacy."

"What good can you do here?" I said, roughly. "What good are you doing?"

A knocking was heard at the door, as if in answer to me. Parker opened it. A huge woman in a man's coat staggered in. I helped him to seat her in a chair.

"The Widow Mag," I said, "drunk."

But she was not drunk. She had been thrown and gored by one of her own cattle. There was nothing picturesque or pathetic about this dying woman. Her big body filled and tainted the clean little room. She dropped heavily on a chair.

"Stop, you! I am gasping, as I started for the doctor. I'll have no fuss. I'm bleeding inwardly. It's all up."

Parker had his ear to her chest. He shook his head at me. Kitty pulled off her muddy coat, and took the limp, frosty head in her arms.

"All up," muttered Mag.

In a moment she struggled up.

"I come here because I believe you're honest, preacher. There's nobody else I can trust."

"What can I do for you, Mag?" asked Parker, gently wiping her forehead.

"I'll say my last words, Ohio—he's five. I want you to see that he gets the ranch and the money, and—and—I had ought to make a will."

"I will do what you wish, I promise you," said Parker, solemnly.

"I'll say my last words—tell him about—God. The poor little kid!"

She fell back, staring into Kitty's face with a dumb misery that made the girl tremble.

"Yes, Mag, yes," she cried. "I'll take care of him, too. He'll grow up a good man. But you—You're going to God. O Parker, pray for her."

Mag nodded.

"He's done it, a fine man. Talkin' to me—in the saloon, 'n' the road, 'n' my house. I thought a heap of what you said, preacher. He've turned a card for the cabin look to me as if they were starving. I met the man to-day near Bonanza City, and his face had that blue, pinched looked that comes from lack of food."

"Down on his luck, I reckon," said one of the men, "he's a gambler. He's a preacher."

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Resigning the Rudder.

For those who are troubled about many things, these words from the Quiver are full of comfort:

It was a prayer of George Herbert's that he might wholly be led to resign the rudder of his life to the sacred will of God, to be moved as Thy love shall sway." How much fretting, how much worry, it would spare us all, if we asked our Heavenly Father that He would cause us to lean utterly, in perfect faith, in cheerful, unquestioning obedience, upon His will and wisdom, whether in life's trivial concerns or in those shades of darkness from which we recoil in fear! We can ask Him nothing beyond His power; some of us know the feeling, "In all but this, I could say Thy will be done," but if we will only tell the story at His feet, pouring out our hearts before Him, we shall be able to trust our Father, even to rejoice in Him, through every changeable pathway. Not long ago a Christian visitor called upon a poor woman who had just been told by the matron of the hospital of the incurable nature of her complaint; the poor sufferer tearfully declared she accepted God's will patiently so far as her own pain and death were concerned, but she could not bear the thought of her motherless children; nobody could console her, she was so concerned the children, to feel patient and resigned. It was a painful scene; the visitor could not remonstrate with her upon her spirit of impatience and murmuring, but felt that she must weep with her as she said, "Yours is untold sorrow, beyond our understanding, even, but God knows all about it—God understands. Will you not tell Him just how you feel—tell Him what you have told me—your pain, anxiety, and dread of leaving your little ones alone? I am going now to tell the leader of our prayer-meeting about you; to-morrow, from three to half-past, prayers will arise on your behalf; will you not at the same time be on your knees before God and tell Him all? The sufferer promised; next day, relates the visitor, earnest, pleading supplications laid her case before God; and what was the result? The next interview found that woman as calm as she had been impatient; she had poured out her own heart in prayer, and others had prayed for her, and she told the visitor, "I am just leaving everything with God—not only my own life, but each of my little children. Everything is safe with Him; I feel it—I know it." Verily our God is the same now as in past ages—prayer-hearing, prayer-answering. Thou canst no more not hear than Thou canst die.

The Lost Atlantis.

For many centuries there has been a tradition of a long lost island called Atlantis.

The Greek geographers located it in the Atlantic Ocean, west of the northwest part of Africa and the Pillars of Hercules. The sea-kings of Atlantis are said to have invaded Europe and Africa, and to have been defeated by the Athenians.

All the legends agree that it was a vast island of inexhaustible resources, and inhabited by a race of superior people. For ages this island has existed only in legendary lore. But now, when the light of modern research is turned full upon the investigation, behold the lost Atlantis at our very doors.

So the bigoted medical fraternity goes groping about in the dark. If they would investigate, they would behold the lost Atlantis at their very door. They experiment and dose with their injurious drugs, and with no results, or lose hold them accountable, they continue their bigoted, unjustified practice, staring into vacancy, imagining that they see in themselves an Esculapius.

Wrapped in ancient bigotry, they denounce any new idea advanced by a layman or an opposition school as a fraud. Because humanity will not be benefited? Not at all, but because their special aim did not make the discovery. Yet they say that there is no remedy known to their medical