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Rev. J. McLEOD,

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WALDENIAN WORK IN ITALY.

BY JAMES M. BRUCE.

The facts in the following statement are chiefly taken from the reports presented to the late Synod, by the Waldensian churches and missions:

CHURCHES AND MISSIONS.

In the Vaudais valleys of Piedmont—the home field of the Waldensians—there are sixteen parishes, containing thirteen thousand one hundred and eighty-three Protestants; one hundred and forty-five common schools, with four thousand four hundred scholars; forty-four Sunday schools, with one thousand nine hundred and five scholars. In the rest of Italy—the mission field—there are thirty-three organized churches, thirteen missionary stations, and thirty posts more or less regularly visited. The number of pastors is twenty-three; evangelists, nine; teachers, evangelists, and catechists, twenty; schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, forty-nine; day school, fifty-seven; Sunday schools, thirty-eight. Religious instruction is given daily in all the schools.

The Vaudais missions are distributed over nearly the whole of Italy. They extend to Sicily and the island of Elba, in Egypt, the Italian colony at Alexandria, in Egypt. The reports are full of interesting details as to the nature, difficulties, and methods of the work. In Italy the men are hard to reach, on account of the prevailing indifference or materialism, while the women are generally under the dominion of bigotry and priestly influence. The peculiarities of the national character have to be thoroughly known and overcome. The Italians are impulsive and ardent, quick to seize new thoughts, but equally quick to detect any weakness of argument, or to resent approaches which are made without a due regard to their old habits and prejudices. Each region has its own dialect, and although the people are of course used to the public services, the more familiar *patois* is the only means of satisfactory personal intercourse with the people. Two or three different dialects often exist in a single field of labour. These Italian missionaries are able to adapt themselves to the peculiar exigencies of their work; and in reporting their reports, one is not less impressed with their tact and skill than with their unwearied zeal.

PRIESTLY OPPOSITION.

The opposition of the Romish church is incessant and many-sided. In Aosta, a cure informed his disaffected flock that if they but looked once at the outside of the colporteurs' books, they would be lost forever. A Lent preacher in another place told his hearers that every Protestant has in his body one hundred and sixty thousand demons. "Raging with evil," "raging with evil," are a few of the epithets applied by these orators to the "heretic preachers." In the more remote districts, and among the very poor everywhere, ignorance and superstition exist to a degree scarcely exceeded in heathen lands, and such denunciations have their full effect. At Ivrea, all other means to hinder the opening of a chapel having been tried in vain, the priests at last offered a sum of money to the evangelist if he would give up his enterprise. It is hardly necessary to add, that bribery did not prove an effective weapon in fighting against the truth. In Brescia, three landlords, one after the other, were induced to expel the Waldensians from their premises. Failing in a fourth similar attempt, the priests, who seemed to have fancied themselves back in the good old times of despotism and the Inquisition, tried to persuade the Mayor to drive the "heretics" by force from the city. In a small town, where an evangelist took steps to open a service, he was set upon by an excited crowd, and obliged to seek shelter in the church-house. A scandalous chapel at Messina, Sicily, was scandalously abused and threatened with demolition, because it had been placed opposite a church dedicated to St. Joachim, a favourite saint of that city, under the title of "grandfather of the Lord."

Difficulties in families are brought about, and unnatural cruelty is countenanced by priests. Instances are given of wives, persecuted by their confessors, to leave Protestant husbands. One such case is mentioned, where the man, while ill, was turned into the street. A father did all in his power to ruin the reputation and destroy the means of support of a son who had attended the Protestant meetings. In Naples, a man was advised by his brother—a priest—to carry out a vigorous system of persecution with his son, an intelligent student of the scientific school, who had embraced the gospel with much fervor. The son's books were accordingly burned. He was deprived of food, and finally turned out of doors. The good priest's suggestion to give him into the hands of the authorities, came three or four centuries too late. A Latin Virginate presented to him by this ecclesiastical uncle, had given the young man his first impulse to seek out for himself the truth. The hardships to which he was subjected, only made him more resolute in the faith, but had not the effect of embittering his spirit. In an affectionate letter to his uncle, he begged him to read the Word of God, that he too might find in it the peace that passeth understanding.

Indelibility is far less dreaded by the Papists than Protestants. They do little to stop the rapid spread of unbelief, while all their forces are concentrated upon a handful of evangelical Christians, generally poor and without social influence. A priest will walk arm in arm with a notorious infidel, and cross himself if he meets a Protestant. The minor local officials are often under the influence of the clergy, and subject the Waldensian workers to many annoyances, but liberty of worship is practically as well as theoretically maintained by the government. The *Carabinieri* have repeatedly protected the evangelists, both in their meetings, and on their journeys. Enlightened public sentiment also comes to their aid. On several occasions they have been defended by parties of the more intelligent citizens, who, while not professing sympathy in their work, were determined to secure them the liberty to which they, as well as others, are entitled.

METHODS OF WORKING.

Various methods are used in the evangelizing work. Besides the stated preaching and regular schools, there are neighborhood prayer-meetings, industrial and evening schools, public announced lectures on the errors of Romanism; priests are invited to public discussions of the charges they make—in invitations which they generally ignore, or answer only with fresh vituperation; little treatises of a dozen or twenty pages are printed and widely circulated. Funerals often furnish opportunity for making the truth known to hundreds who would never come

themselves by entering a Protestant chapel. On such occasions it is not unusual to find a pastor, finding himself before an assembly of peasants, to conduct the whole service in their *patois*. Thus the humblest and the most ignorant have the gospel preached to them. A missionary spirit is cultivated among the people. In turn an organized society exists in the church. The members pledge themselves to do all in their power in the way of personal appeal, distributing tracts—which they first read, in order to bestow them intelligently—and bringing strangers to the meetings. In remote stations the brethren are encouraged to hold meetings among themselves, when the pastor or evangelist cannot be with them; and good testimony is borne to the faithfulness of some of these simple Christians. The pastors do their utmost to rouse the people to self-activity, and the little sums contributed are often surprising, in view of the extreme poverty of nearly all. It is hard for a stranger to appreciate the scarcity of ready money, even among those who are not destitute of the necessities of life. Roman Catholics are not so far from being very small results. One poor laborer man insisted upon pledging himself for ten francs (two dollars) a year, although the pastor remonstrated, knowing that he would have to undergo serious privations in order to give such a pledge. A little boy, Florence received every day a few centimes (a centime is one-fifth of a cent) to buy a scrap of cheese or sausage to eat at noon with his piece of bread. For a long time he made his dinner out of nothing but dry bread, and put by his earnings till he had enough to buy himself a Bible.

The reports frankly recognize the difficulties and discouragements of evangelization in Italy, but they furnish, as will be seen from the few details quoted above, many evidences of success, and are full of ardor and hope. The number of new members received into the mission churches during the past year is 180; and the number of applicants for admission at the present time is 307.

INTERESTING MEMORIAL ENTERPRISE.

An enterprise of great interest is at present on foot in the Waldensian valleys—a memorial chapel at Pra del Torno. This natural mountain fastness was the site of the ancient college of the Vaudais clergy, whence, long before the Reformation, those teachers of a pure faith which they had never lost went forth to spread the truth. It was also the scene of many conflicts and much heroic endurance during the centuries of persecution. The proposed building, which will embrace a school-room, as well as the chapel for divine service, will not only be a most appropriate monument, but will practically supply a long-felt need. Pra del Torno is several miles from the nearest church, and in winter, especially the people are shut out from religious privileges. On all grounds, the project commends itself to Protestants of every persuasion. It was originated by an English clergyman, and collections for the object are now beginning among Christians of various denominations in Great Britain, as well as in the Valley churches themselves. The few American Protestants who have heard of it have been eager to share in such a tribute to these fathers of our common faith. If the needed amount can be raised, it is wished to complete the chapel next summer.

"I WILL."

How often have you said *I will*, on points that seemed to require immediate and energetic action? Now I want you to say *I will* on a point which eternity will reward as important beyond all human calculation, though it may never as yet have evoked a strong irrevocable *I will* from your lips. It is this: "*I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.*" You are one of the millions who should desire to inherit your household to the great family of heaven. Perhaps you are the father of a family. Let me, with most prayerful solemnity before God, ask, Have you ever, in the strength of Omnipotence, said, with David, "*I will be true to myself*?"—I will be true within my house with a perfect heart? You have desired and prayed that every member within the household band might, unitedly and singly, conspire to behave wisely, and walk daily within your house in a perfect way, and present a family, such a scene in the *ministry* of daily life as the eye of God, angels, and men might love to look upon. But though you have desired and prayed for this, you have not seen the fulfillment of your heart's desire. Why is this? Is it because God is not willing to fulfill your heart's desire? It stands written, "He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him." God is faithful. Is there any unfaithfulness on your part? May not the difficulty be found in the fact that you have not, by your daily walk before your family, persistently said, with David, "*I will walk with a perfect heart within my house*?" "*I will behave myself wisely.*"

Outwardly, the manifestations of your life before the church to which you belong, and the religious community by which you are surrounded, and even within the social circle in which you move, may not have been perfect. But has your walk been perfect within your house? Shut out from the observances of the outer world—within your house—do your children, and others that walk your pleasure, see your spirit, though firm for the maintenance of right, tender, loving, and pious? Do they never see manifestations of impatience and irritability? Do you indulge in no habits of any sort—think—in which you would not wish your children or others serve you, to indulge? If you do indulge in any such habit, it is because you have not, in the strength of grace, said, with the inspired one, "*I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way.*" "*I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.*"

And you resolve that you will this walk within your house you need not wonder why your prayers are not answered for your household. Does it not stand written, "*If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.*" Can you not see the reason, dear father, why your prayers have not been answered? How short the intervening time before you and the individual members of your household will be called to stand before the judgment seat of Christ! Should any one member of your household be called to-day, ungodly, do you feel sure that your walk within your house has been such as to assure you that you shall be found free from the blood of that individual?

The fact of your standing well in the Christian community as a member of the church militant, may even have an honorable official standing, or you may have been raised to the highest dignity within the gift of the church in her sacred ministries;—will not free you from the blood of the unsaved members of your household. The Christian duties first begin at home, within the sacred sanctuary of one's own

house. The Christian man and woman, whom God has set, unitedly, as the head of a household must first, in unity, say, "*And my house will serve the Lord.*" The outward duties can supersede this one great, all-commanding duty. In this, father and mother, whom the great Father of the universe has pronounced one, must act as one in rearing a family for immortality and eternal life. But if a higher responsibility rests on one than on another, it is the father. The Old Testament saints seemed to apprehend—"I will"—parental duties better than the New Testament Christians. God said, "*I know Abraham*" (not Sarah), "*that he will command his household after him.*" But either the father or the mother of a family walk within their house with a perfect heart with the entire renewing of grace? The love of God must first be perfected in the heart for "out of the heart are the issues of life," that is the outgoings of life.

Dear Christian parents, God has entrusted to your keeping treasures of infinite worth—immortal spirits for whom Christ died! that are millions of silver and gold compared to the words of one of these precious promises purchased by the blood of Jesus, which the great purchaser has committed to your keeping? He may ask at any hour—at an unlooked-for moment require an account of your stewardship. Are you ready to appear with each member of the family content with your keeping? Those souls were entrusted to you, keeping, to train for glory, honor, immortality, and eternal life. If you and yours were called suddenly, would you be enabled with stainless, blood-washed garments, to stand before the throne and say, "*Here, Lord, am I, and the children whom thou hast given me!*" If so, then the high resolve of every day life must be, "*I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.*" This can only be done by the heart being given wholly to God, and washed momentarily in his precious blood.—*Phoebe Palmer.*

CHURCH SOCIAL LIFE.

BY THE REV. HENRY D. NORTHROP.

The Christian Church ought to be a hand-shaking institution. It is surprising how many people who are pretty agreeable before they love the Lord, become reserved and exclusive when they get to be Christians. They have such a sense of Sunday of being in church; to be dressed up and sit in an orthodox position is something so awful, that one would think they had every body face well for the last time, and have nothing more to say.

Every thing must be proper, and some of the most improper people we have ever known, are these proper souls. The most gloomy and lugubrious gatherings, not excepting some funerals, are church societies, and the young folks are afraid of the deacons, and the deacons never can forget that they are deacons. The minister generally smiles in private, or behind his handkerchief; the old folks must be circumspect, and must have been solemnly warned beforehand, the new converts do not add much vivacity to the occasion, and in truth, the grim consciousness that it is a religious affair, rests like a wet blanket upon even the unsanctified. Not a chuckle, not a smile, not a word, but, as a rule, the presence of an undertaker would be a cheerful thing to have. We sing:

"Religion never was designed
To make our pleasures less,"
and then act as though we were living in everlasting graveyards. There is a lighter side to it, that of fools, a mirth which is madness; and there is also a smile of peace and holy joy, which tells of smiles and holy joy. The most of Christians feel more pleasure than they dare express. They are going to do every thing decently and orderly, and they are waiting to be spoken to; others are waiting also; and this is not the most enterprising way for becoming acquainted; they check the natural expressions of social life; walk as softly in church as they would in a receiving hall; thank God when they get ready to feel relief. If there is any set of people on earth who ought to be happy, friendly, sociable, affectionate, frank, cheering one another, talking right out of the heart, they are Christians. All social enjoyment need be postponed until we get to heaven. We doubt if anybody there will want for an introduction.

Not long ago, a young man came to New York, from a town in Delaware. There he had been blessed by home, church, Sunday school, and Christian society. Church life and social life were his life; and he was a happy individual. New York was cold. He wandered about from church to church, but found no home for his heart. He was not a Christian, but wanted to be; yet was not more distant from the unseen God than he was from the world. He was seeking a kind fire, and growing colder all the time. He was sighing for friends, and was the victim of church propriety, which stares at a man, and seems to say, "*What business have you here?*" One Sabbath evening he walked up the steps of a church, where he had never been before, and a kind-hearted gentleman reached out his hand, and gave him a welcome. It was a revelation to him. He had sought that hand as eagerly as a wanderer seeks a home. He sat watching every word for morning. He sat waiting for the evening, and he was waiting for his own people; and not long afterward made a confession of Christ in that very place—a soul saved by a hand shake. Who would not shake hands with a whole congregation, and the risk of being accounted forward, for the sake of reaching the heart of one young man? We have got to get rid of our stiffness, or the millennium will never come. Some one has said, that frequently the best prayer meeting is around the stove, after the prayer meeting.

Be a contributor to the social life of the church; give more than you expect to get. Speak a warm word, and bestow a pleasant smile for Christ's sake. Some people complain that they are never spoken to; the fact is, they never ought to be. Once is enough. They expect to be spoken to, and make no effort to be sociable. No one is to blame but themselves. Talk about something, put up on the weather, get familiar with the subject, and talk about that, if you can find nothing else. The only way to get anything friendly, unreserved, will have more friends than he knows what to do with. They will swarm him as bees do a clover field. But to be attractive toward some people, would be like trying to find honey in a last year's mullen stalk. The Lord give us that unusual grace which will help us to say, "*How do you do?*" How are your folks? Are you looking up, and pressing on?

A square flag-stone of some eighty pounds' weight was recently shoved out of place in an English town by the united efforts of only three mushrooms growing under it.

SIX YOUNG MEN.

"Who was that young man who bowed to you so pleasantly, Miss P.?" I said to a friend with whom I was walking one bright afternoon.

"O, that is Charles Stanley, one of my Sunday-school scholars. He is a noble fellow. I have six of them; they are all noble fellows."

"Your Sunday-school scholars?" I exclaimed, "why, what do you mean? He is a man grown; he smiled as cheerily to you as if you were his mother or dear friend. You do not mean that you have a class of young gentlemen like him?"

"Yes, I have six young men, and Charles is the youngest of the whole class. These six have been with me for nearly ten years. I suppose I cannot keep them any longer. May God's blessing go with them wherever they go; mine surely will. I always say, 'God bless them,' whenever I meet one of my six young men."

I looked at my gentle friend, fair and lovely, and I said, "I don't wonder that the six boys loved her, and I gradually drew from her a little account of her class."

"I have always been in the Sunday-school, and have taught quite a variety of classes—sometimes very little children, then again young ladies, and some of the best scholars I knew nothing at all, and appreciated very little the interest shown toward them; but finally the superintendent said to me one day, 'Miss P., you have wonderful success in keeping up an interest in your class. Your scholars are seldom absent, and the roll is called. Would you be willing to undertake a very refractory class of boys? Five different teachers have tried them, but have given up in despair, and say they can do nothing with them.' I looked across the school, and discerned six very active little fellows, full of spirits and life, and wide-awake to the last degree. 'O, yes, I'll try them,' I replied; 'they are bright, active boys, but none of them look vicious. I think I know the parents of several of them.'"

"So the next morning I took my seat beside the six restless little fellows, and began talking to them pleasantly of their homes, their parents, and their school, so as to fix their attention. I then told them I intended teaching their class, and hoped they would give me some trouble. They all looked pleased, and one of them was excited enough to hold his hand to me and say, boy-fashion, 'That is bully, ma'am; we will all sit still as mice.' But pretty lively mice I found them sometimes."

"On Sunday after Sunday I was at my post, and Sunday after Sunday the six boys were in their places. I did not preach much to them, but interested them in their lessons and in all the exercises of the school, sang with them in the little choir, and read with them some portion of Scripture every Sunday, and had them help me explain it; and wonderful interest sprang up between us and my six boys. I kept on with the class for eight years; the youngest was sixteen years old, and I said to them, 'You are no longer boys, my friends, you are young men; some of you are ready for college, and will soon be finding places of business. If you feel too old to remain my scholars, take classes of your own; but do not leave the school.' But all asked if they might remain just as they were, my Sunday-school scholars, as long as I would keep them. Two of them were in college, noble fellows! but when vacation came round, they always came to me, and remain in my class until they are obliged to go back. Two are preparing themselves for the ministry, and two have good situations in stores in the town—all active, earnest, working young men, and by God's help, will make valuable citizens and Christian gentlemen in whatever society they may be placed. I feel the tenderest love and care for them. They have always come to me in all their perplexities at school or in the family, and many times have I knelt with them to ask God's forgiveness for their shortcomings, and his blessing upon their future. My heart will be with them wherever I lay, and my prayers for their welfare will daily go up to the throne of grace."

When I was asked to send a letter to the noble fellows I had in the church, I thanked her kindly and finished her recital I myself, what an invaluable friend and teacher has this lady been to these six young men! Patiently, gently, and most lovingly she has borne with those wild, irrepressible boys, and kept them on and on, until they have all come forward in the Church, and have with her commemorated the holy feast in memory of their dying Lord."

Six young men! trained, taught, watched over, and tenderly cared for by one frail, gentle woman! What a noble hand to send forth into the world, to take up the cross as Christians in the highest sense among their fellow-men! What jewels in her crown when the Master cometh and calleth for her!—*Am. Messenger.*

DRAWING A CONGREGATION.

A very unreasonable notion prevails to some extent in churches, who call for a word of animalism. It is this: that the chief business of a minister of the gospel is to draw a congregation. No matter what his surroundings may be; whether or not there are plenty of other churches in the neighborhood, or whether the people are generally inclined to church-going, nor whether the members are carefully drawing with him, or scattering abroad; the one essential, indispensable requisite and qualification in him, is that he draws a congregation. If he fails to do this, it is evident that he is not fit for the place; it is even preposterous to think of employing him, however well furnished he may be intellectually and religiously to instruct and edify the people.

Of course a minister must do his part in gathering and holding a congregation. But not one in a hundred, or five hundred, has a word of animalism. It is this: that the chief business of a minister of the gospel is to draw a congregation. No matter what his surroundings may be; whether or not there are plenty of other churches in the neighborhood, or whether the people are generally inclined to church-going, nor whether the members are carefully drawing with him, or scattering abroad; the one essential, indispensable requisite and qualification in him, is that he draws a congregation. If he fails to do this, it is evident that he is not fit for the place; it is even preposterous to think of employing him, however well furnished he may be intellectually and religiously to instruct and edify the people.

According to Conybeare and Howson, "in every church established by St. Paul, there sprang up a schismatic party, opposed to his teaching, and hostile to his person." That was no fault of his, surely; any more than it was of the Master, that "many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."

And it may be no fault of the minister, now, that he incurs the opposition and hostility of some portion of his people. In her "Recollections of Mary Lyon," Miss F. writes that "she often said to us: 'Young Ladies, when I speak to you, I depend more upon the inspiration of your countenances than on my preparation.' It is added by Miss F., as I fear it could not be by some ministers, "That inspiration was fully given him, in those exercises."

The duties of pastor and people, and their influence upon each other, are reciprocal; and no minister can succeed who does not receive the sympathy and co-operation of his mem-

bers, in the great work of building up the kingdom of God. If the place or the work is a difficult one, so much the more need of all standing together, and bearing one another's burden, instead of casting it all upon one, because he happens to be the leader, and to stand in the most conspicuous place. The very men who complain most loudly of ministers—the business men of a community—often find it difficult to draw all the customers and business men they could like. I can see some of them every day, waiting and looking, almost impatiently, for people to come and buy their excellent goods, of which they have an abundant supply on hand. Not, of course, because they are not smart men, and capable of doing a great deal more business than they do, but because the circumstances are against them. There are many competitors, and people very strangely, perhaps, choose to trade somewhere else, and with somebody else, rather than with them. So they find it uphill work to draw customers, against the natural and popular current, and the strong competition.

A little Christian common sense would show men the unreasonableness of many of their demands upon ministers, and of their complaints against them. But, somehow or other, it often happens that men of great ability, and tact in business seem to have skill, in religious matters, only to baffle and hinder all true success. Instead of considering your minister to provoke him to discouragement and despair, why not try the other method occasionally recommended by the Apostle, and consider him "to provoke unto love and good works."

FUNERAL FEES.

Some one introduced into a recent Illinois Legislature a resolve, which never became a law, that ministers should be entitled to a fee of five dollars for funeral services, which furnishes a correspondent of the *Advance* a text for some remarks:

Whether such a law is needed or not, there can hardly be two opinions as to the justice of some pecuniary consideration for such services. A neighbouring minister, whose salary is small, and irregularly paid, but whose parish is large, and his home about as exhausting, was sent for to attend a funeral service ten miles away. He paid his own travelling expenses, increased a troublesome cold by a thorough wetting, spent a whole day's time, and was not even thanked for his very acceptable services. If he had been sent for to his duty—if the common law of gratitude, generosity, or even justice, does not operate to secure compensation for such labours—by all means let us have a statute; that would prevent a minister from relinquishing a part of his salary, and in some cases, a poor poor. He would certainly be more than able. Ministers could consult their own pecuniary circumstances, their expense of time and money, and not accordingly.

Let this claim be as legal as the undertaker's. The neglect of payment arises from ignorance in some cases. Many persons do not seem to know that it is due and expected. Others are so overwhelmed with grief as to forget. Why not leave it, then, with the "manager" of the funeral to pay the minister, as the friend of the bereaved family, and as a matter of course, he will see to it that he is paid. If more persons would be so thoughtful, and so considerate, there would be no need of a law. Ministers could consult their own pecuniary circumstances, their expense of time and money, and not accordingly.

Many a minister of Christ has gone away from a funeral, and gone down to his grave with a stingy sense of injustice, which he would not reveal, because his conscience would not allow him to do so. He would not have been able to do his work with a heart full of bitterness, and his services, than to accompany your written or spoken thanks with a pecuniary offering. If that offering is difficult to make, and costs you an effort, it will express and be received with all the more gratitude. If more persons would be so thoughtful, and so considerate, there would be no need of a law. Ministers could consult their own pecuniary circumstances, their expense of time and money, and not accordingly.

Love is a better motive than duty; but love is just, generous, and self-sacrificing. It is better to lay back on the feeling of obligation than to not make it.

LOST BENEATH THE CROSS.

The cross of Jesus has been lifted up so that all may behold it. Christ was not crucified within the walls of a jail, but in plain view of all the multitude. The record of his life and death is an open page before us, so that he who perishes amid this gospel light has no excuse to create his blindness. I have read of those who are lost in the darkness, and whose bodies are found at the gate of their own dwelling. Although Christ has made an all-sufficient atonement, so that all who will look to the cross of Christ may be saved, I fear that beneath the cross, thousands of people are lost, because they are not so much as look away from their sins upon him, who, from the cross, is looking upon them.

Many have planted beneath and trimmed around the cross, but have not looked up to the cross itself. They are like the Pharisees, who were so busy with their good works, that they were not looking up to the cross. They are like the Pharisees, who were so busy with their good works, that they were not looking up to the cross. They are like the Pharisees, who were so busy with their good works, that they were not looking up to the cross.

Many have built about the cross such a high wall of sectarian animosity, that neither do they themselves touch the hem of the healing garment of King Jesus, nor do they permit others to do so. For shame, for shame! Tear down those walls of division, and let the light of the cross be seen as the victor over death and sin, to all who will look upon him. Reader, be careful to make your salvation sure, that at last you may not be found under the flowing stream of redeeming blood, but beneath the cross of the loving Son of God!—*Rev. J. McLeod.*

Do Not Pray Down.—In Sunday-school prayers, there is often too much praying down to the children, instead of lifting them up. I have heard many which really seemed to be addressed more to the children than to God, and I have seen many which were to be taught to trust. It puts them upon the same level with too many of the Sunday-school hymns in which there is a sort of jolly repetition of the most sacred titles and themes, which is not a degree raised from profanity, and which must be fatal to reverence or even respect.—*Advance.*

ABSENTEEISM.

The *Christian World* has some good thoughts on what constitutes a healthy congregational life, as follows:

Absenteeism is a very bad *tem*, both as to individual and congregational progress. The strength and efficiency of congregations, and the church at large, would be twofold more than it is, if it could be rooted out, and every member would be faithfully at his post in all the services of the pastor and exercises of the congregation. Another duty of the members is to co-operate with the pastor and other faithful members, in every thing undertaken and done for the good of the congregation. It is important for the member, personally, in order that the inner and better life may be drawn out in active, spiritual exercise. This is needed in order to cultivate, strengthen, and give tone to the religious character. It is important, too, as a stimulus and support to others. In this view the failure of a member to cheerfully and heartily concur with the pastor and other active ones in every good purpose, is a stumbling-block and offence. It does not only render the work on the part of the latter more difficult and liable to fail, but acts as a chilling and disheartening influence in their personal experience. On the appropriate and hearty co-operation gives zest and certain success to every proper purpose and undertaking. As it is not right for any one to leave all the work to be done by others, so the failure to join in it is actually a holding back of its accomplishment, by undertaking fault-finding, lagging, go, fall into the work; you will do good to your own soul, and you will do better service in the vineyard of the Lord. Do your part toward awakening a cheerful, healthy congregational life. Do not be standing idle, looking on coldly, or murmuring discontent—all this is to your own accusation of your unfaithfulness to your Christian relation.

CHRIST THE EXEMPLAR OF EQUALITY.—Humanity speaking, the Christ of Nazareth and of Bethlehem was born in a stable, and most obscure and abject. It is well known that he descended from the family of David; but he had his birth-place in a stable. He is simply the son of an artisan; he is not the son of a king; he is not even of the ruling tribe, like Mahomet. He passed a life, which he sustained by the labour of his hands, in a miserable condition, often without where to lay his head. He died by the most ignominious and atrocious of punishments, for having preached doctrines considered heretical and seditions. For modern communities, which constantly tend toward anocracy with greater or less rapidity, can there be an ideal more striking and acceptable? Can philosophy, which does not separate equity from liberty, present for the support of men in their common duties, a model more simple and encouraging? What religion has ever offered anything more practical or more exalted for the adoration of humanity?

A WORD TO GRUMBLERS.—Don't be a grumbler. Some people contrive to get hold of the prickly side of everything, to run against all the sharp corners, and find out all the disagreeable things. Half the strength of a growing world often set things right. You may as well make up your mind, to begin with, that no one ever found the world quite as he would like it; but you are to take your share of the troubles and bear it bravely. You will be very sorry to have the world laid upon you that belong to other people unless you are a shirk yourself; but don't grumble. If the work needs doing, and you can do it, never mind about the other boy who ought to have done it and didn't. Those workers who fill up the gaps, and smooth away the rough spots, and finish up the job that others leave undone,—they are true peace-makers, and worth a whole regiment of grumblers.

IMPROVING THE MINISTER.—One of the problems of the times seems to be, How can the most be made out of a commonplace ministry? This problem will be in the way of relieving one slighter contribution towards its solution when you begin to realize that you can make far more out of common men, by giving them a little of that inspiration which larger ones never fail to find in their attentive audiences, and that ready response always given to the appeal. If you would make more out of your small men, listen to them occasionally as though you were rolling words like a sweet morsel under your tongue. Practice a little deception if need be.

It may not be possible to make a model preacher out of a "half-baked beneficiary," but assuredly he must be more than "half-baked," or he cannot fail to improve under such treatment.—*Congregationalist.*

SEVEN-DOLLAR THEIF.—A traveller on his journey meets a robber in the woods. "Give me your money," cries the highwayman, "or I'll shoot you." "The man is in want," and he generously gives him six dollars. "Take this, God bless you, Farewell."

"Stop! stop!" cried the robber; "I see another dollar, and I must have that." "O sir," replied the traveller, "be content. Of my six dollars, seven dollars you have six, and I have only one to help me on my journey."

"Give me that seventh dollar," cries the robber, drawing his pistol. "The money that I ever could conceive of!" "What is his name?" Sabbath breaker.

A week filled up with selfishness, and the Sabbath stuffed full of religious exercises, will make a good Pharisee but a poor Christian. There are many persons who think Sunday is a sponge with which to wipe out the sins of the week. Now God's altar stands from Sunday to Sunday, and the seventh day is no more for religion than any other. It is for rest. The whole seven are for religion, and one of them for rest.

You wish that "fidgety little mind" was out of your class, do you, teacher? Well, now, let me say to you that that "smart," active-brained little scholar can't be still long at a time; and if you do not find some noble, loving work for that irritable little soul to do, Satan will. He tells us there is pure gold in that child.—*S. S. Times.*

A rich but parsimonious old gentleman, on being taken to task for his uncharitableness, said: "True, I don't give much, but if you only know how I want when I give anything, you would not wonder."

THE WORK OF A VETERAN.—An excellent lady of New York has retired, on account of age, from her work as a Sabbath-school teacher. She has been constantly engaged in it for fifty years; has had 500 children under her instruction; how many of these have been hopefully converted, she knows not; but she has the names of 104 who have made profession of conversion while in her class.

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