

TERMS AND NOTICES.

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SAINT JOHN, N. B., JULY 22, 1881.

HINDRANCES, AND HOW TO MEET THEM.

There are hindrances to beginning the Christian life. There are also hindrances that beset the Christian life after it has been begun. Of these latter—the hindrances that lie in the way of those who have the Christian life implanted in their hearts and show it forth in their conduct, the things that go to check the progress of the Christian life, to obstruct its course, mar its beauty, to stain its purity, reduce its power, to stay its triumphs, to impair its blossoms, and to hinder its perfection and glory. These hindrances point out their hindrances in biography, in parables and in precept. Again and again we have instruction and warning to the end that they may not prevail against us. The history of redemption from the beginning until now, shows that in every age the Church of God has felt, and not only felt, but been fettered by them, been brought into grief through the power of them, and been arrested in many a march of spiritual achievement by the accumulation of their force. As for example, the Church of the first century, which was at one time the very type of a first century—so single in its origin, so tender its purity, but which in the lapse of a single generation yielded to the causes that bring on a general decay of vital godliness so as to draw down upon itself the displeasure of its neglected Lord, and into the experience of individual believers a consciousness of the world, and not only a consciousness of it but the influence of it. Christians knew too well that in their own persons they often presented a spectacle of men going back into Christian childhood instead of going forward into Christian manhood—mourning over a Paradise Lost, instead of rejoicing in a Paradise Regained; overcome by all the temptations that seemed to have fallen off like a garment, relapsing into the very bondage from which they appeared to have escaped, and to which they thought they should never again have been enslaved. It is incumbent on us to be alive to these things. If we have encountered the hindrances which opposed the beginning of the Christian life, if we have entered on that spiritual, heavenly course which is by faith in the Son of God—if we have felt the power and tasted the joys of that life, we need to remember that the difficulties are not all passed away, that we are still encompassed by things that are fitted to impede our advancement in the Christian life, to diminish our joy in serving the Lord our God.

Some of these things are outward in their character. One of them is found in the very position of a Christian. His position is in the world. If the world were what God made it, and what it ought to be, there would be nothing in it to render a position in it trying to the Christian life. But it is not so. The world lies in wickedness, and friendship with it is enmity with God; wisdom with it is foolishness with God. The things that belong to it are not of God; for they are "the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life." The distinction between the men who breathe its spirit and who walk in its ways, and the men who live a Christian life and who breathe the spirit of the Divine Master, is as great as the distinction between the trees and the wheat growing in the same field. It is plain, therefore, that the work which cannot favor the Christian life; it is plain that the course of the world must be contrary to the course of Christian life; it is plain that all the influences that come from the degeneracy and corruption, from the disobedience and impiety, from the conversation and example of men over whom the world reigns supreme, can have no other tendency than to extinguish the light, to quench the zeal, to slacken the efforts, and to impede the progress of those whom the new life has set free from its shackles, whom the new law has lifted above its dominion, and whom the new man has raised superior to its claims. If this be so, when the line between the Church and the world is sharply drawn—when each exhibits its own proper qualities in the most conspicuous manner, it is none the less so when the one seems to draw near the other. The smoke of idolatry worship may not darken the sky around the Christian, but the saints of God may not be at open war with the world, the servants of the most High may not be forever frustrated in their work; for it may come to pass that the teaching of divine truth, the proclamation of the everlasting Gospel through the force of Christian example, and the power of Christian love and Christian effort, may subvert many of the evils that are in the world, and may purge away many of its pollutions, may sweeten the heart of society, and may disarm it of its small portion of its hostility to the name and cause of Jesus. In point of fact we know that it is so, the distinction between the men who breathe its spirit and those who are of the world appears less prominent and less violent. In such cases the danger is that Christian men will be tempted to suppose that that distinction is not vital, it is not of infinite consequence; the danger is that Christian men will be tempted to suppose that the voices and the ways that prevail around them may be safely followed as the voice and the way of Christ. Yet, rather the danger is that they will suppose thus, and supposing it, that they will go on to act upon it, and that believing it they will come to act upon it, and that acting upon it they will lower the tone of their Christian life, cool the ardor of their Christian love, diminish the strength of their Christian principle, compromise the most peculiar point of their Christian profession, present the signs of a feeble, languid Christian life, and slide into that worldly conformity which is opposed alike to the letter and spirit of the Gospel, and which produces poverty of soul and mischief to the world.

How can this hindrance be met and overcome? It can be met by fleeing from it! By going into the desert or the cloister? By seclusion from the cares, the occupations, and the friendships of the world? Surely not. In spite of the halo that has been thrown around this way in former and in later times, it is the way of moral cowardice because it is an attempt to withdraw from the field of battle between the powers of good and evil, of light and darkness—it is an ignoble desertion of the post assigned to the soldier, the cross which he has taken, and their salvation—it is a falling out of the ranks in which the race for the immortal garland is appointed to run. That mode of meeting it—in spite of the benevolence that has invested the name of many who adopted it—is the way of selfish inclination, because it robs those who are left to mingle with the world of the co-operation and countenance and sympathy to which they are entitled at the hands of their Christian brethren. It robs the world itself of the benefit to be derived from the labors and of the example of the Christian life, and it is a shrinking from evil. It is a shrinking from evil, that men do not get rid of the spirit of the world by trying to get rid of the world itself, therefore, whatever be the obstacles that rise up in the path of the Christian pilgrim, it is because it is a path that lies through a fallen world and through the midst of men that walk according to the course of this world. The Christian must not think that

he will speed his way to the better country, and that he will grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, by cutting out a path in which the world and its spirit will not come nigh him, and in which he will be a stranger to the conflict and trial, and all the work and endurance that are bound up with the steadfastness of those that walk in the steps of him who came into the world to seek and save sinners, and who left the world only to go to the Father.

There is, however, a way of retirement which does help to success in the struggle against the world. Christians may sometimes retire from the more active scenes of worldly life, they can sometimes rest from the busier occupations of worldly people, they can sometimes make room for serious thought and sober reflection, they can sometimes create solitude for contemplation, which is the best name of wisdom. They can look at the things that are seen in the light of the things that are not seen, when they can look at this world in the light of the world that is to come, when they can rise on the wings of devotion to the throne of God, and enter into communion and fellowship with the Lord of life and the Father of mercies. They can do that, and get food for their life within by prayer and thought on holy things. They can do that, and get renewal of the strength which contact with the world never fails to weaken. They can do that, and get soothing, and tranquility, and peace for the distraction and the troubles which the breath of the world's temptations, the gusts of the world's passions, and the force of the world's example are sure to produce upon the spirit. They can do that, and get refreshment to souls out of the fountain of true gladness, and piety, and joy when sad and depressed, and crushed by the evil that is in the world, and that too readily finds an echo and an answer in the heart. They can do that, and get from the light which will put all the things of this world into true perspective, and the things of the future. By contemplation and prayer in the retirement and communion which every one can easily take out of the busiest and most toilsome life, and can get that which will defy all the power of the world to harm us, will overcome all the difficulties that any one can cast in our way, will make that progress in the Christian life, and have that enjoyment of the blessedness of the Christian life, which will be of the surest pledges of its perfection and glory in the heavens.

From the seeking and finding of this kind of retirement we should never let either the earnestness of the life, or the pleasures of the world, or the demands of outward work, or the competition of a busy age, or any other thing beguile us. But it must not be forgotten that in order to succeed over the hindrances to the Christian life there must be resistance. The world, in so far as it hinders Christian living, must be met by action, that kind of action for which the retirement last referred to is a preparation. The action needed is not that of men who, while mingling with the world, walking up and down in it, refuse to be carried away by its spirit, refuse to be subject to its dominion, refuse to be stained by its pollution; it is the action of men who are resolute in the making it—not merely that they may themselves be free to serve the Lord and to run the race which is set before them, looking unto Jesus, but also that they may send through the world the healthful and saving influence of holiness, and truth, and love, and piety; that they may imitate the example of Him who came to shed the holy virtue of his presence and power wherever there is a wound to heal, a sorrow to assuage, or a sin to rebuke. The temptations that are in the world are a snare to Christian men. The evil that is in the world is a burden to them. Conformity to the world is a mischief to them. But with all their might and with all the grace they can command, and with all the help they get from God, true Christians must make it their business to strive against evil influences and keep themselves unspotted from the world, and to go forward in the path of holiness.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

...Dr. Tanner, the forty-day faster, is lecturing on temperance. He certainly knows something about total abstinence.

...The Russian State Church is fiercely intolerant. Recently a newly-built church in Moscow belonging to the sect called Old Believers was ordered to be pulled down.

...Mr. George Seney of New York, has given away an average of \$1,000 a day for the last two years. It is good to be able to do so well, and better to have the disposition to do it.

...Prophecy is being fulfilled—in a strange way. The papers report that a few days ago, in Sussex, Mr. Joseph Lamb and Miss E. G. Lyon were married.

...Mr. Spurgeon in a recent sermon urging the necessity of more evangelistic work in London, said it was getting to be the most heathenish city under the sun.

...The Government of Germany is anxious about the enormous flow of emigrants from that country, is endeavoring to devise measures to arrest it if possible.

...Rev. Robt. Wilson (Presbyterian), who was formerly years pastor of the Congregational Church, in Sheffield, S. Co., died on Sunday in Montreal. He was an able preacher, and highly esteemed.

...In Kings Co., N. S., the temperance men are preparing to put the Canada Temperance Act into operation in that county. It is evident they mean business, as several donations have been made to fund to promote the cause, and it is to be hoped that they will come to act upon it, and that acting upon it they will lower the tone of their Christian life, cool the ardor of their Christian love, diminish the strength of their Christian principle, compromise the most peculiar point of their Christian profession, present the signs of a feeble, languid Christian life, and slide into that worldly conformity which is opposed alike to the letter and spirit of the Gospel, and which produces poverty of soul and mischief to the world.

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it is no credit to any political party to make a man who has been convicted of violating the Law of a meeting. Woodstock did it last week. Such a blunder should be corrected if not too late, and should never be repeated.

...Should the President recover, which now seems probable, the miserable wretch who shot him can be tried only for "assault with intent to kill," and for this the imprisonment cannot be for more than eight years. It would be better to confine him in Lunatic. President shooters ought to be taken care of.

...It is proposed to have, as soon as the recovery of President Garfield is assured, a day of Thanksgiving. The Governor of Ohio has taken the initiative, and has appointed a Committee of State Government to observe the day. His recovery is something that the whole nation may well offer humble, hearty thanks to God who regarded their prayers.

...The leading Quakers in England are bewailing the worldliness of their people. At a recent meeting one of the speakers "condemned the simple, self-sacrificing habits of the ancient Friends with the wealth and high position of the moderns, and deplored the worldliness that is among them. In furniture, dancing, cards, music, theatre-going, this is shown and is tolerated, even by members of this meeting."

...In Quebec last week a girl only seven years old died from the effects of whiskey which she

drank. Whiskey selling is a nice thing to legalize, and they are the highest style of good citizens who sell it. What matters it if the people do feel, little boys and girls included? Aren't they intended to be sacrificed to the whiskey trade for the special pleasure and profit of the whiskey men?

...Sir Leonard Tilley and Sir Chas. Tupper are to speak in this city on Monday next, in Fredericton on Tuesday, and in Woodstock on Wednesday. The people will not be able to restrain their curiosity, they have not been well informed politically; and having heard both sides presented by such able men—Messrs. Tilley, Tupper, Blake and Huntington—they should be able to decide which is right—or, perhaps we should say, nearest right—and govern themselves accordingly.

...The Disciples of Christ Church on Coburg Street in this city was opened for public worship last Sabbath. Elder Crawford of P. E. Island preached the opening sermon. The church is very neat, substantially built, and commodious; and best of all it is free from debt. The new Methodist Church at Gibson was dedicated last Sabbath. It also is free from debt.

...We were very sorry to hear of the burning of the Methodist Church at Florenceville on Friday, and that there was no insurance.

...An immense audience assembled in the Exhibition Building in this city on Friday evening last, to hear Hon. Mr. Blake discuss Dominion Politics. The present is variously estimated at from 3,000 to 5,000. Mr. Blake was introduced, and an address was read by Ex-Mayor Rev. Mr. Blake spoke at great length of the various questions on which the two parties differ. Hon. Mr. Huntington was also present and spoke. The speeches were fully reported in the dailies. He spoke to an immense throng in Gagetown on Monday, and in Fredericton on Wednesday. Mr. Blake is admittedly an able man, and it is good that he has so large and attentive a hearing.

...We do not know how much truth there is in the story, but it is going the rounds and we give it for what it is worth, thus:

"A gentleman who accompanied the Marquis of Lorne on his recent Maritime Province tour, reports that extraordinary precautions were taken by the Intercolonial authorities to guard against any accident happening to His Excellency; not only were the switches locked, but all the switches rails were spiked down so that they could not be opened. Detectives in the employ of the Government travelled on the same train with the Marquis, and were present to join hands with the authorities had received a hint that His Excellency was threatened with some danger while he was in the Maritime Provinces.

...President Garfield continues to improve. The doctors think the worst is now past, and speak somewhat confidently of his recovery.

The President's pastor, Rev. F. D. Power, speaks of his Christian character as follows: "President Garfield has been a communicant and worshipper in his Church for several years, and I have always found him to be an earnest, faithful, prayerful Christian. I have known him in prosperity and in adversity, and I have never known him to be anything but a true Christian. He has been a communicant and worshipper in his Church for several years, and I have always found him to be an earnest, faithful, prayerful Christian. I have known him in prosperity and in adversity, and I have never known him to be anything but a true Christian. He has been a communicant and worshipper in his Church for several years, and I have always found him to be an earnest, faithful, prayerful Christian. I have known him in prosperity and in adversity, and I have never known him to be anything but a true Christian. 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