The Best Memorial.

He built a house ; time laid it in the dust ;
He wrote a book ; its title now forgot ;
He ruled a city ; but his name is not
On any tablet graven, or where rust
Can gather from disuse, or marble bust.
He took a child from out a wretched cot,
Who on the state dishonor might have brought,
And reared him to the Christian's hope and trust.
The boy, to manhood grown, became a light
To many souls, preached for human need
The wondrous love of the Omnipotent.
The work has multiplied like stars at night
When darkness deepens ; every noble deed
Lasts longer than a granite monument.
—Sarah K. Bolton, in Wellspring.

Aged and Unsaved.

It has come to pass in our country that comparatively few persons beyond middle life become Christians and continue to "walk in newness of life" until death. Last week we mentioned the death of one who had been converted and baptized at the age of eighty-four, and died at the age of ninety. But such cases are exceedingly rare. Now and then one, like a brand plucked from the burning! Now and then one, to illustrate the grace of God and prove that his mercy endureth forever and that it is never absolutely too late for him who will have salvation! But the cases are so rare as to give warning that it is presumptuous to suppose that this life can be spent in sin and selfishness and then eternal life added to it, for any considerable number. A hundred years ago, even fifty years ago, it was not so notably true that the days of youth are those in which the matter of eternity must be settled, if settled right.

But a leaflet written and printed by Dr. Ashmore, in Swatow, China, tells us that it is not so there. On the other hand, it seems as though God were particularly gracious to the old heathen, and were granting them repentance unto life even when their feet are dipped in the icy waters. Those people are not gospel-hardened. They have not run "the gauntlet of grace" for two and three scores of years. They have just come to a knowledge of the truth. They have been permitted to hear the gospel just in time to be profited by it. Dr Ashmore entitles his tractlet "The Wail of an Unsaved Old Person," and he takes account of the possibility—"awfully true"—that "a man may cross the dead line long before his earthly years are ended." "The probabilities that he will ever be saved at all diminish, and the probabilities that he will certainly be lost increase in ratio as the years go by."

The thought is not a new one, nor an original one, but it is an awful one. It lies heavy upon the hearts of those who are interested for aging friends and relatives, and makes it the more imperative that all diligence be used to bring them to repentance and salvation at once. In a private note Dr. Ashmore says : "Much of our work out here is to try to save old people, whose cases are more hopeful than the same kind at home, for the reason that our old people, though idolatry-ridden, are not gospel-hardened." God does not say to them as he says to many here : "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof : I will also laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh." Do we want more convincing proof of the age-long application of those words than is furnished in what we see around us constantly—the aged, even those scarcely past middle age—quite indifferent to the calls of God and the claims of religion, while the young people, the children, the "babes," come and perfect the praise of him who cometh in the name of the Lord?

Dr. Ashmore addresses himself particularly to the aged, and he says : "God himself may close the offer of salvation, and then it will be all up with you." He hopes that some aged person will read his words and heed them. He says to such a one : "You may not know it yourself, and you may be still a vigorous, healthy man, with very few, if any, gray hairs in your head, and yet the Holy Spirit's transactions with you may be over.....In thirty or forty years there are more than fifteen hundred or two thousand Sundays. Regularly, all that time has the call sounded in your ears. That means that fifteen hundred or two thousand times Christ has sent you his invitation; and fifteen hundred or two thousand times you have put him off. You do not expect him to keep that up forever, or till you get to be sixty or seventy or eighty years old. He will not; and human experience shows it. The Spirit will cease to strive and knocks will cease to be heard."

Then, as a second consideration, Dr. Ashmore says : "Meanwhile you yourself are hardening your own heart and making it harder and harder to reach you. You can look to the time when preaching affected you far more than it does now. You used to tremble at the message. You have got accustomed to it, and now it produces but little impression." You wonder how it is that you used to be so worked up when urged to flee from the wrath to come, and sometimes think the minister does not talk as he once did, and that the pulpit is losing its power. It may be true—this last thing—for a timid and temporizing pulpit that gives an uncertain sound does lose its power; but then it is, beyond question, also true that you are getting hardened, and even the old thunders of Sinai do not disturb your slumbers any more.

It is not that the minister has not preached both law and gospel, future misery and future bliss, but it is that the heart of the old sinner has become so hardened, his ears so dull of hearing, his eyes so bedimmed by looking upon sin, that he can neither hear nor see, nor feel as he once did, when he hardened his heart and shut his eyes and stopped his ears and so passed the dead line. He almost wonders that he is so indifferent now, and he also certainly wonders how he could ever have felt as he did twenty and thirty years ago. But the reason is clear enough, if we go to the Word of God for it. We are there told of the virgins who sank down in sleep when they had no oil in their vessels for the replenishing of their lamps. The bridegroom came; they who were ready went in with him, "and the door was shut." Subsequently there came a voice : "I know you not."

It is a matter of fact, and a matter no less to be regretted, that we do not now see many persons past middle age and yet unconverted in our congregations. We have a considerable number of young people and children there; but those who have reached or have passed middle life have little or no use for church or minister until they are dead. They would have a funeral service then and have the despised minister there. In our neighborhoods are dozens of men and some women who rarely or never set foot inside of a house of worship, except on special occasions. Only the other day a man past middle age said to this writer : "I used to go to church, but I don't go much now. The preachers are not practical. They do not understand men and things." There may be some truth in what he said; but there is more truth in the declaration that the man has passed the dead line. He had opportunity, and was called again and again, in those other days; but they are passed now and he is not saved, and probably will not be. He is not a bad man, not a bad citizen. But he is, so far as human foresight and divine teaching go, a lost man. He is not going to change his course. He is gray-haired and hard hearted. His sun is going down in a bank of clouds portending rain on the morrow.

But that man is one of a thousand, of thousands and tens of thousands. The old people of China, and of heathendom generally, hear the gospel and, despairing of their old religion, accept it as the thing promising peace and hope and life everlasting. God is gracious and gives them life. The missionaries rejoice over converts who are soon to leave them for the other world, but saved by grace through the blood of Christ. One of Dr. Ashmore's tracts, sent us years ago, showed that a large proportion of the converts were sixty, seventy, eighty years old. Not so with us here and now. On the other hand, however, there is the satisfaction of knowing that these young people have years of usefulness before them, and that their lives will be much more valuable to the world, to themselves and to their families and friends by reason of their early acceptance of the gospel.—Journal and Messenger.

Sermons That Hit.

Sermons hit. Nathan's sermon fitted David more tightly than his tunic. When Paul reasoned, Felix trembled. John's faithful words were revenged by the scarlet Herodius. The wonderful prophecy of Jesus' resurrection was remembered by the saintly women : "They remembered his words." When the fawning minions of the rulers came to Jesus with sordid motives, they returned with empty hands and filled hearts, and said, 'Never man spake like this man." In Holyrood, Mary, Queen of Scots, wept at the sincere words of John Knox. A Methodist minister was preaching in Greencastle, Indiana. His words could not be twisted. A guilty woman, in an audible whisper, exclaimed, "I wish I could snatch his eyes out." Sermons hit. "My word .....shall not return to me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I send it."

When the sermons hit, what? Look out for the Holy Spirit. He is present. He is directing the sermon. He is applying it.

A minister was preaching a revival sermon. A young man was seated behind him to the left. The minister did not know him. When the sermon closed he went to an elderly sister ; "I am never coming back here. Some one has gone and told the minister all about me. I am mad." When the sister told the minister, he simply said : "He'll be back. He is under conviction." The next night he was at the altar, repented of his backslidings, and was pardoned.

At the close of a regular preaching service the pastor was shaking hands with a brother. "How did you know I was going to be here?" he asked. "I didn't." "Why, you were preaching right at me." It was not I. Look out for the Holy Spirit.

Jesus says of the preaching of the sent, 'For it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you" During the delivery of gospel preaching "the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us," and manifests himself, as in the house of Cornelius, by falling upon all them which hear the Word. "Therefore, he that rejecteth, rejecteth not man, but God, who giveth his Holy Spirit to you."

When the sermon hits, what? Look out for the Holy Spirit.—Western Advocate.

Spasmodic Religion.

The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon is quoted as saying, "The Lord deliver us from spasmodic religion," to which every person with a sense of consistency would certainly say, amen.

We have known preachers to hold revivals, and apparently would gather thirty or forty safely into the fold, when, in two years, there would no be ten as the result of the effort. This kind of work would seem analogous to building on the "sand," instead of on the "solid rock," or at least too superficial to endure.

What part of the blame should fall to the preacher and the church is an unknown quantity, but we feel safe in saying that they should bear the greater part of it. The church, in its anxiety to save souls, and to enlarge the borders of Zion, hurries the seeker through this most important epoch of his life without giving him to understand what he must do to find and retain the favor of God. The instances are fewer than formerly in which the seeker is from one to six months or a year in finding divine forgiveness. We do not think so long time necessary, but do know that a person had better spend his whole life as a seeker than as a backslider. If there is any one thing that hinders the advancement of Christ's kingdom on earth more than another it is this constantly increasing company of deserters The church, knowing the evil, certainly should do all in its power to correct it.

We must have more thorough conversions. To convert means to turn about A person, then, converts himself. Here is where the trouble lies. God always does his work thoroughly and well ; but the part that man must do for himself is sometimes but half done. Instead of turning squarely and leaving the old life behind them, so many only partly are converted and are ready at the first great conflict to swing back into the old ruts that the devil's chariots have worn into their lives. The seeker should be brought to see that to find favor with God he must "shun the very appearance of evil," which means, in his case, that he must forsake evil associates, the ballroom, the card-table, the drink habit, the swearing habit, and every other evil habit. The minister in charge, or whoever takes upon himself the obligation of leading a soul from darkness to light, should impress upon the seeker's mind that these things so interwoven with every fiber of his previous life, must be dropped off as he would brush a viper from his hand, never again to touch or meddle with them.

More than this, as he is shown what he must turn his back to, he must also be instructed as to what he must face. He must realize that to belong to the Christian army means a continual warfare. In the first place, he must decide to unite with some local church. This is imperative, for stragglers in the army are sure to be captured. We have known persons who were bigoted enough to think that they could be Christians independently of any church or ordinance, They did well for a season, but "the last state of the man was worse than the first" in every case. The seeker must also be made aware of the fact that if he would be a live Christian he must feed upon Christian food—prayer, the Word of God, and church literature. These things should be so impressed upon his mind that they become as finger-boards that point the way to the throne. Nor until this decision is reached should he be encouraged to feel that he belongs to the Christian family. A good beginning is more than half the race.—The Telescope.

Good Points for Churches.

For terseness and vigor we commend the following gems of truth. They are taken from an address by Dr. Radcliffe of Detroit to the congregation of Westminster at the installation of a pastor ; but there is some wholesome counsel in them to churches generally. He made his thoughts plain enough to be seen and sharp enough to be felt :

"New brooms sweep clean, and the noisiest welcome is not the most continuous cheer."

"One man cannot keep both sides of a contract. The church bell rings twice on Sabbaths, and just as loudly for the people as for the pastor."

"A thoughtful usher is a means of grace."

"Repair all roads that lead to the church."

"Sabbath sickness is healed only by the unction from the Holy One."

"Perfection is never in the pulpit, and it is seldom in the pews."

"The congregation is often tried with the pastor. The pastor is often tried with the congregation. And these two are equal."

"Harvest does not come every two months. Church-work is slow work, but that is no reason for sloth."

"If Aaron and Hur are not on the church roll, you may as well burn the books.

"Children cry for sweets when they need hickory-oil or the slipper—the same is a parable."

"Hear with both your ears. Hear with your own ears."

"The benediction is not an official order for overcoats."

"Drink water out of thine own cistern, and eat that which thine own larder provideth."

"As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is he that tasteth all the pulpits."

"Far-off fields look green, and the other church hath also its disappointments. He who belongeth to all the churches is of no use to any of them Free lances never win battles."

"The rusty lock creaks loudest and the do nothings make the most noise in the church. The ox which pulls the least groans the loudest."

"There are some things which even the young people do not know. The church does not exist for the young people, but the young people for the church."

"Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but that is no reason for sharpening the tongue whenever the pastor appears."—Selected.

The Revival We Need.

Here are some of the distinguishing characteristics of the work of grace we so greatly need :

A revival born of the Holy Spirit.

A revival in which the pastor shall lead.

A revival where the ploughshare of Bible truth is driven deeply into human hearts

A revival where the exceeding sinfulness of sin shall be tremendously emphasized.

A revival where truths about hell will not be apologized for.

A revival where repentance shall be a cardinal doctrine.

A revival too hot for hypocrites.

A revival which will reconcile estranged brethren and heal all factional feuds.

A revival in which the whole community shall come under the power of conviction.

A revival in which conversions shall be radical, cleor, and glorious.

A revival which will promote the spiritual life without encouraging theological fads.

A revival which will baptize in most wonderful ways the whole official board.

A revival which will intensify the life and zeal of the Young People's society.

A revival which will save multitudes of the children of the Sunday-school

A revival which will place special emphasis upon every-day righteousness.

A revival which will strike terror to every saloon keeper in town.

A revival which will shut up ball-rooms and cause theaters to close for want of support.

A revival which will build family altars and make every home a type of heaven.

A revival which will open closed pocket-books, enlarge contracted souls, and cause the streams of beneficence to overflow their banks.

A revival so genuine, so thorough, so spirit-wrought that its fruits will abide.—The Herald.

Spirituality and Professional Spirituality.

The profession of spirituality is either the cause or effect of a faulty religious life. Professing and magnifying spiritual experiences do not amount to much, excepting the harm they do. The wise, discriminating world and the thoughtful part of our churches are out of sympathy with such things. On the other hand, if we read the signs aright, there has not been for centuries an equal demand for, and appreciation of, spirituality. Never since the days of Paul and John has the type of spirituality been truer, more real, more divine, than can be found today, than is beginning to reign in many places to day. It is of a royal type. It stands four-square with the universe, seeing storms of sin in the world and spiritual apostacy in the churches, and yet betraying no weakness in scolding and beratings, nor in despondings and shrinkings. It seeks to apply the divine to the human, the heavenly to the earthly It believes in God and man, in the coming reign of good over evil, of heaven over hell. It falls in line with the workings of God to redeem a world, to turn it into a transformed city, ready for its King and Ruler. It counts no costs, it asks no appreciation, no cash, no ringing bells or flying flags Smiling, bearing, suffering, succeeding or seemingly failing, it looks to God, and with enthusiasm goes on. We know not how many such there are because they do not give us their secrets and we are too busy with our own plans and notions to count them. But nevertheless they are felt Unorganized, and yet they are organizing a new movement. They are kindling a fire which is to consume cant and worldliness. Some day they will be manifested, a God organized, solid phalanx. They will set up a truer and a more positive expression of the Kingdom of heaven, and make ready upon it a throne for their announced King

Character is more than scholarship. Manhood is worth more than a college diploma Piety is not to be discounted for the sake of philosophy. Let the student not forget that the world he lives in and is endeavoring to understand more and more thoroughly, in order that he may make it minister to his own purposes, is God's world, and that none is so able to guide him through its labyrinths as is He who made it, rules it, and upholds it from day to day by the word of His power Let the student sit at His feet and learn first of Him. Let him be a man of prayer.—Baptist Outlook.

For a man to hesitate in taking a stand for the pure life is for him to ask, Shall I be a slave or a king? A soldier is found with one or the other force in battle, and just so must young men be found with one side or the other on the only ground between right and wrong—the battle ground—either with those who conquer or with those who are conquered.—Selected.

What is life's heaviest burden? asked a youth of a sad and lonely man. To have nothing to carry, he answered.

You Should Know.

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