

SATISFIED WITH MEDIOCRITY IN RELIGION.

By Rev. Joseph H. Smith.

This is the curse of modern churches. Preachers, as well as people, seem to have perverted and misapplied such words as: "Be not righteous overmuch." They have wholly lost sight and sound of the saying: "It is good to be zealously affected, always, in a good thing."

Religion is taken as a seasoning, rather than as the Bread of Life. Paul's, "One thing I do," only as a spark of spiritual genius rather than as law and pattern for us all. Martha, cumbered with much serving and making incident only of Jesus' visit is crowned rather than Mary with other things subordinated, absorbed in the Master's teaching and sitting at His feet. God's order is inverted. Men are seeking first of all "these things" and presume that the kingdom of God will be added unto them.

As a result the progress which in all things marks the age is not evidenced in things of the spiritual life. Upon the other hand Christian ethics, in society, in business, and in affairs of the church, are dropping a stitch or two. Christian Doctrine is falling into twilight. And Christian Experience in the things of the Spirit as regeneration, adoption, assurance and Divine union, is unknown and thought to be unknowable by many who are active and some more modern church movements and philanthropies. Some, indeed, accept these latter as substitutes for the spiritual. Others imagine them the same, and quite a few insist that they are even better.

A beclouding effect is to be noticed upon the spiritual vision and a benumbing effect upon the spiritual vigor. And withal a strange, and to some a pleasant sleep has crept over the souls of many, dreaming they have found the solace of grace. Alas! It is the stupor of death. Dying. Dying under an opiate to quiet the pain.

Now the appalling fact is that the masses of church-members have grown content with this measure of mediocrity in religion. Content to know less than their fathers knew about the things of God Himself. Content with mere solacing and subduing influences of a ritualistic or mildly religious service, rather than pressing to be indwelt by the Comforter Divine. Content in fact, with the form of godliness, often disputing or discrediting, or even sometimes denying the power thereof.

Now what we call attention to is that this is the anomaly of our generation. In everything else—Hygiene, Education, Society, Business and Politics, the slogan of the day is progress. But the man who in matters of his soul would forget the things that are behind, and reach forth to these things that are before, and press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God is a relic.

Contentment under this order is soul sleep—sleep even unto death.—Heart and Life Bulletin.

Do not dare to live without some clear intention toward which your living shall be bent.—Phillips Brooks.

BUD ROBINSON IN WICHITA.

"I'm here in Wichita," said Bud Robinson, "to preach the truth if I have to eat wind for a living and sleep on the clothes line at night." Well, glory! I've got a wagonload of determination hung up in the gable end of my soul. Brother, if you get so hot that you'll burn a blister on the devil when he sits down on you, you'll not have easy sailing. What the old boy and his crowd will do to you will be a plenty. There isn't a book, chapter, verse, word, or letter in the Bible that will justify a man doing wrong. I'm glad that the Lord has cleaned me up and cleaned me out, then He filled me up and sent me out; next He charged and surcharged me, and wound me up, and all I have got to do is unwind. If the life of the average church member is the best that God can do, then I'm ready to admit that the whole thing is a farce and sham. Brother, I can afford for you to laugh at me, if Jesus will laugh with me. I've been cussed and discussed, judged and misjudged, understood and misunderstood, and peeled and scalded and blistered, but I've come out a-flyin' on top every time.—Pentecostal Herald.

At a gathering of Indian Christian workers in Meerut testimonies were given to the benefits experienced in regular Bible study. All these testimonies refer to God's Word, which these Indian workers are pledged to read daily for at least one hour.

"In it I hear the voice of Christ."

"It presents to me the picture of my Lord."

"It is as sunlight to my soul."

"It satisfies my spirit."

"It purifies my heart."

"It is to me the fountain of the water of life."

"It quenches my thirst."

"It is my food."

"It is the living Word."

"It is my great teacher."

"It is to me the way to heaven."

"It is my special friend."

"It is to me a bazaar of heavenly supplies."

"It is God's letter of love to my spirit."

"It is God's dwelling-place."

"It is the ship that carries me home."

"It is the touchstone of my soul."

"It is my spiritual pasture."

"It is the spiritual garden of Eden."

"It is my sword in warfare with sin and Satan."

"It is a province of the heavenly kingdom."—Selected.

In order that people may be happy in their work, three things are needed. They must be fit for it; they must not do too much of it; and they must have a sense of success in it.—John Ruskin.

Never a drop of truth percolates through the heart that it does not leave a sediment of strength. Never a thought, word of deed that does not leave some eternal effect.—Gerard B. F. Hallock, D.D.

"Such as antagonize the distinctive grace of heart holiness are in opposition to the experience which they most need."

GRAIN AND GROG.

It is not right at any time, and especially at a time like this, and no one can reasonably justify it, to crush hundreds of millions of bushels of the best food products, grains that will make bread, into the stuff of which to make drink.

Still less is it right at any time to turn this food product into a form which weakens manhood, lessens efficiency, impoverishes the homes, curses humanity.

If our country is warring for liberty, conscience and humanity, let it with a strong hand put an end to the destruction of materials needed for food. Let it stop the enfeebling of our men and the destruction of body, mind and soul which the liquor manufacturers and liquor traffic produce.

Now is the time, if there ever was a time, for dealing with this matter with a strong hand.—The Presbyterian Journal.

"MOTHER! I LOVE YOU!"

A pleasant-faced woman boarded a trolley-car with her two small sons.

The smaller boy sat with his mother upon one side of the car, while the older, who was about four years old, took a seat opposite. It interested him to look out of the window, but frequently he glanced across at his mother.

At length he called softly: "Mother!" No answer. Again he spoke: "Mother!" This time it was said a bit louder, and the mother looked over and smiled. The boy's eyes lighted, and he whispered: "Mother! I love you."

The mother turned a glorified face upon her small son, and men and women in the car looked tenderly from one to the other. The trolley-car had suddenly become a place of blessing because a little boy had voiced this ever-beautiful sentiment: "Mother! I love you."—Zion's Herald.

JOHN WESLEY'S CREED.

"I am sick of opinions. I am weary to bear them. My soul loathes this frothy food. Give me solid and substantial religion. Give me an humble, gentle lover of God and man; a man full of mercy and good fruits; without partiality and without hypocrisy; a man laying himself out in the work of faith and patience of hope, the labor of love. Let my soul be with these Christians, wheresoever they are and whatsoever opinions they are of. Whosoever doeth the will of my Father, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. Inexcusably infatuated you must be if you can never doubt whether the propagation of this religion be of God. Only more inexcusable are those unhappy men who oppose, contradict and blaspheme it."—Sel.

PRAYER.

Prayer pulls the rope below, and the great bell rings above in the ears of God. Some scarcely stir the bell, for they pray so languidly; others give it an occasional pluck at the rope. But he who wins with heaven is the man who grasps the rope boldly and pulls continuously with all his might.—Spurgeon.