

"BACK TO THE OLD-FASHIONED RELIGION."

We are living in a progressive age. There are many changes taking place all around us. Many of the changes are improvements over the past, but some are not. The church is undergoing a change that is evidently for the worse. The old-time gospel preaching is seldom heard, and in its place we have sermonettes and essays and learned disquisitions about astronomy, politics, social ethics, and on sensational topics. The cry of the penitent and the shout of the new-born soul are scarcely heard nowadays and the altar rail has been discarded. The card-signing, hankshaking method has been adopted instead, and the baptized worldlings join the church and continue in sin. The hearty amen and the shouting of the saints are considered out of good form in these times, and the one who would be so bold as to commit a breach of church etiquette by indulging in either in a popular church would not only interfere with the frigid services but would make himself liable to arrest as a disorderly person disturbing a religious meeting.

The old-time doctrines of repentance, faith, resurrection of Christ, the witness of the Spirit, future punishment of the wicked, etc., are considered out of place, and the denial of the divinity of Christ and the immaculate conception and the miracles of the Bible is often heard from the pulpit, declared by the press and taught by the religious schools.

This all means disaster, for unless the doctrines of the Bible are taught and her high standards are maintained there will be a moral deterioration of the people ensue and sin of every character will prevail and ruin will come to our nation.

We are always glad when any one comes to the defense of the Bible standard of faith and righteousness, so we take pleasure in giving our readers the following, which recently appeared in the editorial columns of the Christian Witness on this timely theme:

The advanced spiritual movements of Christianity—since Pentecost—have not been through the discovery of new truths, but by a return to the old-time doctrines and experiences. We call the attention of those who are ever straining after something new, and discrediting the old-time religion to this fact. The Reformation under Luther was an advanced movement out of the dark ages and it was but a return to the grand old doctrine of justification by faith as laid down by Paul and his contemporaries. The Wesleyan revival was the greatest religious movement since Pentecost; but it was only a return to the doctrines and experiences of the Pentecostal church. The early Methodists were testifying to the witness of the Spirit just as the early church did.

The great advances of Christianity have not been so much primarily advance into the unsaved masses of the world as a rehabilitation of a dying church. This rejuvenation of the church always resulted in an aggressive campaign that enlarged the borders of Christianity. In this way, and this alone, the forward movements of the church have been born.

When we see the lack of aggressive

evangelistic success everywhere apparent and hear the attempts to assert that the religion of today is an improvement on that of our fathers, we are compelled to believe that those who so assert are destitute of what constitutes Bible religion. They do not know what God requires of man, nor do they know the kind of religion that the nature of man needs.

The Bible requires repentance. It declares that repentance is the foundation of religion. This was the doctrine that Jesus, John the Baptist, Paul and Peter preached. Will the reader please try to recall when he heard repentance preached in the modern pulpit? This repentance, too, demanded restitution. Is it a common thing to hear it preached in these days? Who believes it? It is so uncommon that when any one in these days, saved by the ministry of holiness, makes restitution, it gets into the papers, as a great curiosity.

Old-fashioned revivals were brought by prayer. The church prayed down conviction so that men could not sleep nights. There are very few such revivals today. Almost any scheme used to get joiners.

The old-fashioned gift of exhortation has disappeared. Did God withdraw it? No. It went itself. What a tremendous power those old-fashioned exhorters wielded. Under its sway sinners trembled and wept their way to the mourners' bench. It disappeared because the church went out of the salvation business and no longer had a burden and anxiety to see men saved.

Camp meetings have disappeared or become half-breed chautauquas—little imitations of the gatherings of the world. Shall we be told this is a mark of advancement? Not so. We give an instance of this "advancement." It was a district camp meeting, held year after year. We can not remember a camp meeting when less than a hundred were converted. This was a customary thing. Spiritual life decayed. The passion for souls died. Sinners no longer came. There was no convicting power to draw them. So a chautauqua has taken the place of the old camp meeting. Amusement has taken the place of testimony, prayers and travail of soul. What man with a spark of spiritual life says this is an improvement? This is only a sample of thousands of cases of dead camp meetings.

We have and still maintain that if the church will come back to the ways that originated the church, and without which there would have been no church, it will see the same old-time results. Perhaps the leaders of the church do not wish to see the same old-time results—the salvation of man. Perhaps they think culture and amusement are better than salvation. If so the proof of their degeneracy is too manifest to be denied. If this world is saved it will have to be the old-time salvation.—Free Methodist.

"Being contentious about little things is not the same thing as earnestly contending for the faith."

"Do all the good you can, in all the ways you can; to all the people you can; in every place you can; and as long as ever you can."—Sel.

A TIMELY SUGGESTION.

We have very much to thank the Lord for these days.

1st: The turmoil and strife and bloodshed of over four years is at an end. To be sure thousands of our boys have made the supreme sacrifice, yet many others will be coming home from the battlefields and training camps. Others who fully expected to go across can now stay at home. For which we praise the Lord.

2nd: The influenza epidemic is clearing away; many of our loved ones who were stricken down have recovered, others have escaped altogether. Comparatively few of our members have been taken from us.

3rd: Our churches which were closed for several weeks, are re-opened and we are free to take up our church work again with renewed energy.

In consideration of these things, how grateful we all should be, and I believe we are.

We find that when the "Glory of God" returned to the Temple the Israelites brought their thank offerings to the Lord, and I want to suggest that we, too, make a special thank offering at this time. In this way:

Every member of our denomination or reader of the "King's Highway" who has not been in the habit of tithing, begin now. Set aside a tenth part of your income during the month of December for missions, and we who know the joy and blessings derived from tithing, tithe our portion (the nine-tenths) for the same period of time. Then send in this special offering to the Mission Board at the New Year (which should mean several hundred dollars), and thus boost our mission work next year as never before.

If we do this it will surely surpass all other years.

Then this would be very appropriate as we are nearing the Christmas tide, with all it means to us.

We will receive rich blessings beyond our expectations for having been instrumental in extending Christ's kingdom on earth.

I brought this before our own people at our last prayer meeting and they adopted it unanimously.

Will not the pastors of each church take this up with their people, for the sake of Jesus and lost souls?

I. M. KEIRSTEAD.

JACOB'S CHANGED NAME AND NATURE

"Jacob was a changed man after that night struggle.

"The great need of the religious life of this day is the clear, plain, positive mark by which the world can see at once the sharp difference that distinguishes the Christian from those by whom he is surrounded. In business the Christian's walk should be entirely unlike that of other men. The cunning, the trickery, the unscrupulousness, the greed, the avarice, the dishonest competitions, the unholy rivalries, the combinations, the sharp practices, are unworthy of the one who has met the angel by the brook, and upon whom the divine hand has been laid."—The Christian Advocate.