

THE ATTIRE OF GOSPEL WORKERS.

Mrs. Julia A. Shelhamer.

The attire of gospel workers should be particularly exemplary. God has shown His interest in the wardrobe of mankind by installing Himself as their first dress-maker. He also takes the pains to mention the attire of His Son at His birth and at His death. His word gives advice regarding neatness in Eccl. 9:8, "Let thy garments be always white and let thy head lack no ointment;" while the passages on plainness and simplicity are too numerous to quote here. This suggests the idea in the mind of God that the world would need more of the latter than of the former. If a gospel worker would be exemplary, he must take particular pains to be both neat and plain in his appearance.

John Wesley quotes the following pretty couplet in his discourse on Neatness:

"Let thy mind's sweetness have its operation

On thy person, clothes and habitation."

While the primary meaning of the text, "How beautiful . . . are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings," has no reference at all to the attire of the feet, yet the Lord used it to inspire a gospel worker who was careless about the appearance of her shoes when in the pulpit.

Sometimes Satan pushes one too far when he first gets the light on dress and suggests that there is so much money used for expensive clothing that a suit of "blue jeans" is all sufficient. Or he will tell one that collars and cuffs are superfluities. Many people suffer from such thoughts. Christ's woven vest was doubtless of fine material and a good wool suit will last much longer than many suits made of a cheap cotton fabric. It is quite unsanitary to go without collars and cuffs, as they prevent the oils and perspiration of the body from soiling the coat. The Lord desires His own to leave the impression that holiness and cleanliness go hand in hand.

Now may we give a few reasons for plainness of attire on the part of gospel workers?

1. Since example goes further than precept, what does it avail for us to denounce worldliness if we ourselves are not strictly plain.

While abroad we met missionaries who, though generally exemplary, still wore jewelry, particularly the wedding ring, giving as an excuse that it was a proof of marriage! (A poor proof of so solemn a fact). Their converts still wore their heathen bracelets, of course, while those of more exemplary missionaries laid aside the whole outfit of heathenism.

The great missionary to India, Odoniram Judson, had many converts, and all went well until new workers were sent him who were bedecked with jewelry. Their example caused Judson's converts to go back to their heathen ornaments. This was heart-rending to him, to think his toil of years had been undone in so short a time, and he wrote back to the board begging them not to send him any more missionaries who wore any sort of jewelry.

Another reason for plainness is that the world expects it of us. In the beautiful capital city of an eastern state, the pastor

of a magnificent church called a lady evangelist to hold a revival for him. Her earnest appeals had little effect on the stylish audience. We surmised at a glance what was wrong but did not suppose her listeners knew. Enquiring of a worldly lady how the revival progressed we received about the following answer:

"Well, Mrs. S., I don't want to judge, but it does seem to me that a woman in her position should not dress as she does. I may be wrong, but really people cannot feel that she is sincere in her preaching when she comes out looking as she does."

And how was she dressed? Merely in a very plain silk dress tied with a silk cord. A moderately low neck, high heeled shoes and a few pieces of jewelry. While this was a plenty, yet we hardly expected the aristocratic ladies of her audience to consider her too worldly to succeed as an evangelist. It seems that the Methodist Discipline is correct in stating, "All these things doth God write on truly awakened hearts," and we would add, on many unawakened hearts. The world can detect anything worldly or affected. More than this, they know whether or not we have power with God.

Ministers are often kept from good circuits because the family is not exemplary in dress. It is indeed sad to see a capable, Spirit-filled man sent to a "dry-bone circuit" when he might have had the best had his family not hindered him.

Last, but not least, those who obey the Scripture regarding plain dress have good company—Phoebe Palmer, Hester Ann Rogers, Mother Cobb, and thousands of others. In conclusion we give the experience of Frances E. Willard on this subject:

"At the age of twenty-seven in a meeting held by Mrs. Phoebe Palmer, Miss Willard definitely sought and obtained the experience of entire sanctification. She thought her chief besetment had been a speculative mind, a hasty temper, and a purpose to be a celebrated person. But in that hour of real self-examination, she writes, 'I felt humiliated that the simple bits of jewelry I wore, gold buttons, rings, and pins, all of them plain and quite in their style, came up to me as the separating cause between my spirit and my Saviour. The sense of it remained so strong that I unconditionally yielded my pretty little jewels, and a great peace came into my soul. A conscious emotional presence of Christ held me. I cannot describe the deep welling up of joy that gradually possessed me.'—Pentecostal Herald.

Hon. W. E. Gladstone, though so great a man of affairs, is said never to have lost a night's sleep from worry. The motto he kept on his mantle was, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee."

Thanks—The Fort Fairfield Review has very kindly placed the notice of Beulah and Riverside Camp Meetings in its list of coming events.

"It is not the fact that a man has riches which keeps him from the Kingdom of heaven—but the fact that the riches have him."

ALLIANCE FUND.

Will the pastors please remind the deacons of the various churches of their duty, lest they should forget, to be sure and collect the **Alliance Fund** from each member? We will greatly need it this year. **Let us have a good large fund this year.** Begin early. Don't put it off till the last moment. It is only twenty-five cents for each member. The pastors can greatly aid in this matter.

Please do not forget it, brethren.

THE SECRETARY.

THE GOOD, THE ENEMY OF THE BEST.

How many one-sided are the possible applications of this old aphorism. We find one in a very unexpected quarter. To say that many of the great Christian denominations have illustrated the truth of this aphorism in their church processes ought to be a slander but it is not. It is the most patent and demonstrable truth.

Never before in the history of these large churches have they reached the high level of excellence in the vast sum of money raised annually, and the prodigious amount of social, and benevolent, and reformatory work accomplished of which they can boast today. They are doing more home work than ever before. They have more hospitals, orphanages, rescue homes, more colleges, and institutions for the uplift of humanity than ever before and give more attention and labor to social welfare and the betterment of human conditions.

Who would dare say that any of these things were not good things? We dare not for a moment insinuate by one syllable that they are not good things, or that they are not even necessary things for a church to engage in. We do dare say, however, that these are not the best things to which the church is called, and in which the church should engage. We claim that the best things the church ever does and the cardinal work to which she is divinely called is the radical, conscious personal salvation and sanctification of individual human beings. We further claim that when this is made the constant and overmastering work of the church, that social, benevolent and reformatory work, which are all good will follow incidentally. The trouble is, the church has shifted these two classes of work, substituting social work for salvation work. Thereby she has made social work which is good the enemy of salvation work which is THE BEST.—Herald of Holiness.

NOTICE.

The Thirty-third Annual Alliance of the Reformed Baptist Church of Canada will convene (D. V.) in the Tabernacle at Beulah Camp Ground, Kings Co., N. B., on Wednesday, June 29th, 1921, at 10.30 a. m.

The first business session will take place in the afternoon at 2 o'clock.

THE SECRETARY.

"Church cook stoves help support many a fireless preacher."

"God wants you to be a channel of blessing, not a jug with a cork in it."