

"BY THEIR FRUITS."

This is Christ's own test of men and things. Matt. 7:16.

It is also man's test. A watch is judged by its time keeping, a doctor by his cures, an engine by its efficiency—theories and ideals by their results—employees, from errand boy to president, by their worth to their firm or corporation.

"By their fruits" is a universal test, the one point in which men everywhere are in harmony with the teaching of Christ.

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The thing for which Christ gave the test, and that in which the Church is specially concerned, is the truth or falsehood of religious teaching and teachers. Christ shows that teaching may be false and dangerous, but so plausible that its real nature may not at first be seen. Apparent sheep, real-wolf! The language of heaven but leading to hell!

But, said He, there is one infallible test. "By their fruits ye shall know them. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

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In the religious teaching of the world today, with great variety of detail, there are two general trends or schools. One calls itself progressive, liberal, advanced—and calls the other conservative—and sometimes other names.

The one school accepts the Bible as a revelation from God, of His character and His attitude toward men, and as man's only rule of faith and conduct. The other school accepts as much of the Bible as commends itself to their judgment, as a useful guide in life.

One gives full place to the supernatural in Scripture history and in the Christian life. The other reduces the supernatural to its lowest terms, or in some cases sets it wholly aside.

The one accepts Jesus Christ as God manifest in the flesh, Deity as well as humanity. The other accepts Him as a high type of humanity, a copy set before us, an example of goodness and sacrifice for us to follow.

The one accepts Him as the Supernatural Being the Scriptures represent Him to be; His miraculous conception, His virgin birth, His wonders of help and healing, His rising from the dead, His triumphant ascension. The other, in varying degree, explains away the supernatural in some or all of these things.

The one regards man as sinful, estranged from God, lost and helpless, and Christ as a Saviour and Redeemer who, by the sacrifice of Himself, made atonement for man's sin, and by the power of His Spirit regenerates the sinner and creates him anew in the Divine image. The other regards man as born with all the potential elements of the Divine and able to work his way upward, stage by stage, till he attains the perfect.

The one school holds to the words Sin, Ruin, Atonement, Redemption, Regeneration, or to the things which these words mean. The other, in less or greater degree, explains away these things and

merges them all into a general struggle upwards in the evolution of the lower into the higher, the natural into the spiritual.

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The newer school is plausible. Sometimes it causes perplexity. What if all the teachings of our childhood are so much baseless superstition?

If in doubt take Christ's own test. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Which of these two main trend or schools of thought in the religious world satisfies the longings and dispels the fears of the human soul when it begins to think of passing out into an unknown future and meeting its God?

What then gives peace and rest, to be told to look up and pull oneself up, or to know of an Almighty Arm that reaches down in love and pity and helps, uplifts and saves?

Which school of teaching has been the human instrument in bringing about all the great religious revivals in history, by the preaching of Peter and Stephen and Paul, of Luther and Zwingle and Calvin, of Knox and Wesley and Whitfield and McCheyne, of Jonathan Edwards and Moody and hosts of others?

Which school of teaching has impelled men, filled with the love of Christ, to go forth to heathen lands to tell them of a Saviour from sin and win them to God?

Which school has it been that has made the deserts of heathenism in Africa, India, China, and the Islands of the sea rejoice and blossom as the rose?

Which school of teaching, begun by the Geddies, carried on by the Johnsons and Gordons and Mathesons, the Annands, Mackenzies and Robertsons and others, found the New Hebrides savage and cannibal and made them civilized and Christian?

Which school of teaching was it that Morton and Grant and others gave to Trinidad and Guiana, and which led to the schools and churches there today?

Which school of teaching was it that MacKay and others carried to Formosa and which won the heathen there?

Which school of teaching was it that the Campbells and Wilkies and Wilsons and Buchanans and Russells and many another whom one would like to name, carried to India and led so many to sing their song of "Victory to Jesus?"

Which school of teaching has led to the founding of the Christian congregations in our largest mission field, among the eight millions of Honan, by the goodly army of men and women too large to here record?

Which school of teaching has transformed South China, and regenerated Korea.

Or to go beyond our own Mission fields, which school of teaching did Moffat and Livingstone carry into Africa, Carey and Duff to India, Morrison to China, and the Moravians to Greenland and Iceland and the darkest and most degraded corners of the world that they could find, bringing everywhere the gladness of light and life.

"Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them."—Presbyterian Record.

Nothing is politically right which is morally wrong.—Lincoln.

JUVENILE CRIME.

The statistics of convictions in the courts show that during 1916, 1917 and 1918, twenty per cent. of the indictable crimes were committed by persons under sixteen, and that, compared with periods of about twenty years ago, there is a large increase in such young offenders, notes the Toronto Mail and Empire. The prompt answer to the query, "Why?" is "the moving picture theatre." But there are other influences at work, in the deterioration of juvenile character. The laxness of parents and the partial abandonment of home social attractions are also prominent contributory causes. The growth of means of pleasure-making outside the home deprives the growing child of many moral restraints that had a powerful part in the formation of character twenty or thirty years ago. Some educationists are inclined to blame the school. Moral influences are but incidental to school teaching. These should come from the home, but when father is away, mother at some woman's political or social gathering, sister at a dance or moving picture theatre, why should the boy remain quietly at home? The automobile has cut down church attendance, and interest in religion has suffered thereby. Sunday has become a day of pleasure, not a day for the gathering together of the soul's scattered forces in a renewed effort to see life merely as a means to an end. The stealing of automobiles is mainly the work of youths who have the mania therefor. Moving picture theatres educate children in ways and means of crime, of sex problems, and give rise to wrong conceptions of the social order. Is it any wonder that juvenile crime increases, with a constant lessening of the binding and holding power of the home that yields to the lure of outside pleasures?—Moncton Times.

"SPIRIT INTOXICATED SAINTS."

We believe this phrase was coined by the late Dr. A. J. Gordon. It is very expressive. It was doubtless suggested by the fact that the disciples were so filled with the Spirit at Pentecost, that they seemed to be drunken with wine. They were so overpowered, that they resembled those who become intoxicated by alcohol. There are some points of resemblance between the two.

When a man is intoxicated with alcohol he is completely under its sway. He acts and speaks under its inspiration. So it is when a soul is filled with the spirit of God. He is completely controlled by that spirit.

An intoxicated man is reckless as regards his reputation. He spends no time trying to rescue his reputation from slander. He cares nothing as to what he is called. So it is with a Spirit-filled man. He does not try to save his reputation. He has committed it to God and if God can not take care of it he surely can not. If more people were Spirit-filled there would be less work and anxiety as to our standing among men.

Spirit-filled saints have no room in their hearts for sin or the love of the world. This kind of intoxication universally would ruin the police courts and empty the county jails. May the good work go on.—Christian Witness.