

CURRENT EVENTS AND COMMENTS

"We are making history fast these days," remarked an instructor during the Spanish-American war in his class where we were sitting in school days. So rapidly is the world writing new history these times that even a weekly paper is behind the times. So much is happening, and of such great importance to the peace and well being of the world that one despairs of an adequate understanding of it all. However some features stand out as epoch-making, involving changes that will close the door on the past so far as methods are concerned.

* * *

The romance of war is over. The wars that now are and that are to be will involve civilians in an even greater loss than soldiers. It used to be that men went forth to war, and back of the lines a few miles life was safe. But no more. War now brings the death of non-combatants, men, women and children who are caught by bombs from aeroplanes, by fires and explosions and poison gas. The great cities of the world will have death dropped on them from the skies. National capitals will be gleaming targets for bombers thousands of feet up in the air. Great centers of population and industry will be attacked again and again; the greater, the richer, the more populous they are the more they will be subject to attack.

* * *

Jesus said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me." He still speaks these kindly words through the good agencies by which child life is protected, the Christian home and all its aids. But war and other expressions of human depravity goes about the matter of a different translation, "We will make the little children suffer," is their version of life. From Spain, from China, and not long ago from Abyssinia came news dispatches such as, "City attacked by bombers, hundreds killed of whom many were women and children." Saint Paul warns us in the language of prophecy, "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse."—Wesleyan Methodist.

* * *

"The Evangelical Messenger," in a review of the condition of the churches, says: "Time and temper are against the soul's best interest. After seven years of storm and stress we find ourselves, as a people, stranded in the hollow of superficiality and folly. Everywhere is a terrible reaction which leaves the masses morally dazed and spiritually deadened. We were promised, we recall, a new world marked by devotion to nobler ideals; we find ourselves in a paradise of fools. Only those who have been faithfully moored in God have weathered the storm unharmed. Only those who have a tight grip upon the Almighty are sure of themselves today."

LIVING FOR OTHERS

Sir Wilfred Grenfell, of Labrador, once appealed to the head nurse of a large hospital to go out to Labrador and run a children's hospital. He told her that he couldn't pay her a cent, in fact she would have to pay her own expenses. But he guaranteed that she would know a love of life such as she had never known before and would have the time of her life in the service of Christ. She went, and this is what she wrote: "I never knew before that life was good for anything but what one could get out of it. Now I know that the real fun lies in seeing how much one can put into life for others." You see she had got a sense of purpose and destiny.—Selected.

"DEAR LORD AND FATHER
OF MANKIND"

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our fev'rish ways!
Reclothe us in our rightful mind;
In purer lives Thy service find,
In deeper rev'rence praise.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above!
Where Jesus knelt to share with thee
The silence of eternity,
Interpreted by love.

Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.

Breathe through the heat of our desire
Thy coolness and Thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire:
Speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still small voice of calm.

—John Greenleaf Whittier.

THE FAMOUS HAYSTACK
PRAYER MEETING

In 1783 a boy named Samuel Mills was born in a parsonage in Torrington, Connecticut. When he was a little boy he heard his mother tell a neighbor that he "had been dedicated to the work of missions." When she told him stories of Eliot and Brainerd, those "apostles to the Indians," his spirit caught the inspiration to their courage and self-denial. When nineteen years of age he was converted, and he felt very clearly his call to the foreign field.

In 1806 he entered Williams College and soon found four other young men who were in sympathy with him. These five young fellows used to meet in a beautiful maple grove near the college to discuss the question.

One sultry day when they were thus met, the rain began to fall and they ran to the shelter of a haystack near by. Samuel Mills urged the carrying of the gospel into Asia, saying:

"We can do it if we will."

While the storm was passing, sheltered by the haystack, they prayed that God would open the way for them to go to the heathen.

As they arose, lo, a beautiful rainbow appeared in the east. That haystack prayer meeting stands as the real beginning of foreign missionary work in the United States. On the very spot there is now a monument which bears the names of the five young men, and set into the stone is the model of a haystack.

At the centennial of the haystack prayer meeting a great company of student volunteers met at that monument. They clasped hands and formed a big circle and they took for their motto in this stupendous attempt to "teach all nations:" "We can do it and we will."—Sel.

On one occasion when Tennyson was rusticated in a country place he asked an old Methodist woman if there was any news. She replied, "Why, Mr. Tennyson, there's only one piece of news that I know, and that is, Christ died for all men." He responded, "That is old news, and good news, and new news." The death of Christ in its substitutionary fact, and in its sanctifying influence, is ever the old, good, new news for time and eternity.—Anon.

Temperance Column

Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging. Whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.—Prov. 1:20.

LIQUID BREAD

I remember seeing over a public-house door in Liverpool this inscription: "Good ale is liquid bread." I went in and said to the publican, "Give me a quart of liquid bread." He said, "A first-rate sign, isn't it?" "Yes," said I, "if it's true." I got a bottle of this liquid bread, and took it to Dr. Samuelson, an analytical chemist, and said, "Tell me how much bread there is in that bottle." He smelled it, and said, "It's beer." "No," said I, "It's liquid bread." "Come again in a week's time," he said, "and I'll tell you about it." I went again at the end of the week, and this is how he described it: "Water, ninety-three per cent. 'It's liquid anyhow,' I said. 'Alcohol, five per cent.' 'What is alcohol?' I asked. 'A powerful narcotic poison.' Then he gave me a number of small percentages of curious things, and about a quarter of a thimble full of dirty-looking powders. 'That's the bread,' he said, 'less than two per cent.' This is the simple scientific truth with regard to beer and spirits."—W. S. Caine, in National Voice.

"WHERE AM I GOING?"

As the sun was going down, one fine summer evening, a man was seen trying to make his way through the lanes and crossroads that led to his village home. His unsteady, staggering way of walking showed that he had been drinking, and though he had lived in that village more than thirty years, he was now so drunk that it was impossible for him to find his way home.

Quite unable to tell where he was, at last, he uttered a dreadful oath, and said to a person going by, "I've lost my way. Where am I going?"

The man thus addressed was an earnest Christian. He knew the poor drunkard very well, and pitied him greatly. When he heard the inquiry, "where am I going?" in a quiet, sad, solemn way, he answered, "To ruin!"

The poor, staggering man stared at him wildly for a moment, and then murmured with a groan, "That's so!"

"Come with me," said the other kindly, "and I'll take you home."

The next day came. The effect of the drink had passed away, but those two words, so tenderly spoken, did not pass away. "To ruin! to ruin!" he kept whispering to himself. "It is true, I am going to ruin. O, God help me and save me!"

Thus he was stopped on his way to ruin. By earnest prayer to God he sought the grace which made him a true Christian. It was a rock broad enough to reach that poor, miserable drunkard, and it lifted him up from his wretchedness and made a useful, happy man of him.—Selected.

WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

The notion has somehow got itself propagated into the world that repentance is chiefly an emotion, and that its truest manifestation is in tears and groans. This is a great mistake. In its innermost essence it is a change of thought, of desire, of purpose, and shows itself chiefly in altered life. That it is always accompanied by deep sorrow for past sins is, however, an indubitable fact.—Bishop E. E. Hoss.