

WILL HISTORY CONTINUE TO REPEAT ITSELF?

H. C. Mullen

Considerable is being written about the "second generation" of holiness people. The question is how do they compare with the first generation? The history of every movement has been that a slowing down has taken place; the early enthusiasm subsides. Is it going to be thus with us as a people? There is enough apparent decline in some quarters to excite concern, and to arouse us to see if any tendency may be averted before it is too late.

It should be a matter of deep concern to every church for it is a sad fact that lost ground is very hard to recover. The fact is that one church historian makes the unqualified statement that church history shows no single instance where a church that departed from original standards ever by itself returned to primitive purity and zeal. Whether this will stand the test of strict analysis or not I would not be able to say, but so far as my reading and observation have extended, the statement has been confirmed. This should give us all a cause for intensive checking and stock-taking.

It would be an interesting theme for debate or discussion whether this decline is chargeable to the pulpit or the pew. Personally I believe the fault is more likely to appear first in the lowered standards of the pulpit. The church will never rise above the pulpit. False doctrines almost invariably have originated among the clergy, but false doctrines and lowered standards quickly pass from the clergy to the laity. It is a sad fact that what appears as trifles and only tendencies can in one generation pass to near apostasy. A whole denomination can become so changed that could the original founders come back upon the scene they would not recognize their own people. It is doubtful if some of these men could return that they would be allowed to preach in the pulpit of their own denomination.

The tendency to become conformed to the world has not been confined to any one age or people. By way of illustration I will pass on what another writer said recently while dealing with this same matter.

Bishop Asbury was once asked by a fellow minister to accompany him to the home of a Methodist family. As they passed into the parlor, they found the daughter with some friends, all gayly dressed, at the piano. The bishop took a seat and directly the father and mother of the young lady came in, and then followed the grandfather and grandmother. When the bishop took the hand of the old lady he held it, and, looking her in the face while a tear dropped from his eye, he said, "I was looking to see if I could trace in the lineaments of your face the likeness of your sainted mother. She belonged to the **first generation** of Methodists. She lived a holy life, and died a most triumphant death. You belong to the **second generation** of Methodists. Your son and his wife are the third; and that young girl, your granddaughter, represents the fourth. She has learned to dress, and is versed in all the arts of fashionable life, and I presume, at this rate of progress, the fifth generation of Methodists will be sent to a dancing school." What would the old bishop think if he saw some church members of the present day?

LETTERS FROM OUR PASTORS

Jonesport, Maine

To The Highway Family: Greetings in the name of the Lord. We wish all a Happy, Prosperous New Year, full of blessing from the Lord.

The Church at Jonesport had the privilege of sitting under the ministry of Brothers Traf-ton and Nicholson for a week, Dec. 10th to 17th. The seal of God's blessing was on the services from the first night, with the result of some definite victory in salvation, reclamation and sanctification. One soul, kept home the last three nights because of sickness, prayed through to victory and has given testimony. Through the definite preaching of the truth, some who had become confused, received help, and became established in the doctrines of the church. Brother Nicholson's exhibitions in art were greatly enjoyed by those attending.

Our combined prayer meeting and watch night service was a time of rich blessing and inspiration. We feel as a church, just now, to praise God for present blessings and a brighter outlook for 1948.

Mrs. Hilyard joins me in expressing thanks to all who remembered us with cards, gifts and other tangible means of thoughtfulness.

The good people of the church once again expressed their concern for the material needs of their pastor and family by their generous gifts and offerings, thus making possible one of the best Christmases that we have enjoyed. One store in town presented us with a box containing everything for the Christmas dinner which we greatly appreciated.

We appreciated the presence of Lic. Harvey Tracy, Jr., in our services, who has been home for the Christmas recess from Bethany Bible College. He spoke for us in prayer meeting, Young People's service and the watch night service. We pray God's blessing on him as he returns to school and upon all at the college.

Your Brother in the promotion of scriptural holiness.

S. G. HILYARD

A PASTOR'S NEGLECT

A few days ago a lady said to me, "My husband, who is unsaved, said to me, 'I don't think much of your pastor'."

What was the matter? Well, this lady had been sick for months, had undergone a very serious operation some two months before, and she said the only time the pastor had been in her home was to attend a prayer service and to ask her to subscribe for the church paper.

I know of another instance in which an aged saint of God (not a member of his church) asked someone to request the pastor to come and pray for someone in the home who was ill. Later she apologized for "bothering" the preacher, because she "guessed that he wasn't interested in folks who did not belong to his church."

Why was this? There had been illness in this home for more than a year since the preacher had moved to this charge, and he had failed to manifest any interest.

We laymen hear many sermons on sin, on walking in the light (many times the preacher's light), and such topics; but as we see our young people, children and new converts neglected, the homes not visited, and the like, we sometimes wonder if the Lord will not one day say to some of these preachers "These things

ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone."—By a Layman.

PREACHERS' PROVERBS

The eternal gospel does not necessitate an everlasting sermon.

A man unscrupulous in the ministry is out of the will of God.

Devotion to duty is a fire which warms us, but worldly ambition is a fire that consumes.

Some preachers believe that God cannot do anything unless they run the machine.

It is by the "foolishness of preaching"—not foolish preaching—that men are saved.

Knocking in a preacher is just as much evidence of lack of power as in an automobile.

The religion that makes you feel like fighting your brother did not come from your Father.

Too many preachers conduct their lives on the cafeteria plan—self-service only.

A true call from God carries with it a burden for the lost and a desire to win souls for Christ.

It is no use praying for the salvation of your grocer when he is sitting up nights thinking about your bill.

The hardest thing in the garden of life is digging up the root of evil. And the best way to do it is on your knees.

The preacher who wants to make noise should get a job in a boiler factory. Loud, fast talking, with much gesticulation, is not a sign of having the anointing.

A colored preacher, when asked to define "perseverance," said: "It means, firstly, to take hold; secondly, to hold on; thirdly and lastly, never to let go." Preachers need perseverance.—Selected.

WITHIN THAT CITY FAIR

Leland Wilcox

Well done thou faithful pilgrim,
Thy battles all are past,
Thy foes forever vanquished,
Thy crown is won at last;
Welcome to life eternal,
Thy Saviour bids thee come,
Dear ones for thee are waiting
In thy eternal home.

Farewell, but not forever,
For we will meet again
Where Heaven's sun is shining
Upon that fair domain;
Soon we will gather yonder
Within that city fair,
Go then, dear one, be waiting,
For we will meet you there.

Where Eden's flowers are blooming,
And the tree of life doth grow,
We'll meet on that fair morning,
Each other's face to know;
With Christ our dear Redeemer,
We'll live thro' eternal day,
Beyond the vale of sorrow
Where tears are wiped away.

Chorus—

Within that city fair,
Beyond this world of care,
Be waiting in the morning,
For we will meet you there.