

Christian Visitor.

A Family Newspaper—Devoted to

Religious and General Intelligence.

BAILEY & DAY, Proprietors.

"BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY LOVE UNFEIGNED."—ST. PAUL.

{Rev. E. D. VERY, Editor.

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LIVE TO DO GOOD.

BY GEORGE W. BETHUNE.

Live to do good; but not with thought to win
From man reward for any kindness done;
Remember Him who died on cross for sin,
The merciful, the meek, rejected One;
When He was slain, for crime of doing good,
Canst thou expect return of gratitude?

Do good to all; but, while thou servest best,
And at thy greatest cost, nerve thee to bear,
When thine own heart with anguish is oppress'd,
The cruel taunt, the cold averted air,
From lips which thou hast taught in hope to pray,
And eyes whose sorrow thou hast wiped away.

Still do thou good; but for His holy sake,
Who died for thine, fixing thy purpose ever
High as His throne, no wrath of man may shake;
So shall He own thy generous endeavor,
And take thee to His conqueror's glory up,
When thou hast shared the Saviour's bitter cup.

Do nought but good, for such the noble strife
Of virtue is, 'gainst wrong to venture love,
And for thy foe devote a brother's life,
Content to wait the recompense above;
Brave for the truth, to fiercest insult meek,
In mercy strong, in vengeance only weak.

The following admirable charge, delivered a few years since in Charlestown, Mass., by the Rev. Dr. Stow, Pastor of the Baldwin Place, Baptist Church, Boston, has been forwarded by a Ministering brother with a request for its publication. Doubtless many besides Ministers will find great comfort and profit in its perusal. Correct views of the nature and duties of the office of a Minister, and of the responsibility of those who enjoy this gracious permission, are greatly needed to secure a proper regard for those who have it, and a due attention to their messages.—Ed.

Charge.

BY REV. B. STOW.

This evening, my dear brother, is an epoch in your history. It is a point towards which you have for several years been looking with intense solicitude; and having reached it, you find it invested with considerations of penetrating interest; and when you shall have advanced far beyond it in your heavenward journey, your mind will revert to it as a scene which distances the eye of the tenderest reminiscences. An hour of judgement, when the secret of the moral universe shall be unfolded to the relations of cause and effect, and made intelligible to your understanding, you will see the transactions of this hour, the antecedents and the consequences which will determine the character and the destiny of the multitude, and which will thenceforth perpetuate of influence, into the eternity of the council are now engaged in what involves no ordinary responsibility. It is an office for which a Ministering brother, had he not the promise of exercise, would feel himself incompetent to undertake. We are acknowledging you, before

heaven, earth and hell, as a fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, and are soon by the hand of a faithful brother, to proffer the fraternal pledge of our true-hearted fellowship. As therefore we cheerfully accord to you the benefit of this public recognition, you will not regard us as arrogating undue prerogative, if we submit a few admonitory thoughts, such as are suggested by our own acquaintance with the work upon which you are entering.

We earnestly enjoin it upon you, brother, to remember the Source from which you have received your appointment. It is not the College, it is not the Theological Institution. Your diplomas are not your commission. Nor is your authority derived from this Ecclesiastical Council. Jesus Christ is King in Zion; and, if your appointment is valid, you are his ambassador to his rebellious subjects. Your commission is from his lips; your relation to him is direct; by his instructions are you to regulate your whole conduct, and to him personally and immediately are you responsible. No earthly prelate or judicator is authorized to interpose between you and him. You are yourself a bishop—the highest functionary, subordinate to the Supreme Head, that a church is permitted to recognize. From this station you can rise no higher on this side of heaven. If you leave it for any other which human suffrages can offer, you descend.

As the office was instituted by Christ, and you fill it by his appointment, let us suggest that it becomes you strictly to adhere to the instructions of your great Diocesan. He has left very little to your discretion. The message with which you are charged, is his ultimatum to guilty men; and it is full and explicit, specifying his own rights and human duty, and stating definitely the terms upon which rebels against the Divine government may be forgiven and eternally saved. All the duties of your holy vocation are prescribed with great clearness and exactitude. Scrupulously abide by his directions. As his ambassador, negotiate for him, and not for yourself.

Let the conviction be deep and permanent, that for all success on your mission, you are dependant on the sovereign pleasure of your Lord, "Of whom and through whom, and to whom are all things." You are to perform your duty, and leave it to him to render your ministry effectual just when and where he chooses. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." The value of your final reward will not be determined by your visible success, but, through his gracious arrangement, by your fidelity.

Your health you will find it important to guard with careful vigilance. Though the body is merely the tabernacle, yet, for the sake of the occupant, you are bound to keep it in good repair. Much as you may love intellectual effort, and forcibly as you may feel constrained by the love of Christ to "be instant in season and out of season," undertake no more than you can execute well without personal detriment. "Know thyself;" and in working the mental engine, have a proper regard to the capabilities of the frame in which it acts. A sound mind needs a sound body. Therefore be "temperate in all things."

Imagine not, however, that we would encourage you to be indolent, or to nourish an effeminate fastidiousness in the application of your energies. Next to a wicked ministry, a lazy one is the curse of any people. Do all you can consistently with the greatest usefulness through the longest life. Of one of the ministers of the 17th century, who lived and labored till his 60th

year, it was said in the quaintness of the times that he was always sharp, and died, not of rust, but of whetting.

Your opportunities for education have been favorable. But you still have much to learn.—Carry forward the work of mental discipline, and accumulate stores of knowledge, so far as you can render such discipline and such knowledge subservient to your main object. Study the material universe; study the productions of human genius; study human nature; study deeply your own heart. Above all, study the Bible. Whatever else may be neglected, you cannot, you must not neglect the book of God. This volume is full of precious things.—It is a mine of spiritual wealth, which you are commissioned to open; and whose treasures you are to dispense to the poor in spirit. Endeavour every week to descend deeper and deeper into this mine, and to bring up new specimens of the virgin metal.

Cultivate spiritual mindedness. If you depend for the promotion of personal holiness, upon the reflex influence of your official duties, you will soon find yourself a frigid, unfeeling backslider. I once heard the venerable Staughton pray for ministers, "Lord, save us from the curse of official holiness." If you will grow in grace enjoy the comfort of good hope, obtain a deep insight into the profoundly spiritual truths of the Bible, and have your preaching bedewed with that unction which is to constitute its life and charm, you must be habitually and eminently devotional. Crucify the flesh; walk with God; be filled in the Spirit; pray more than you preach; live on the sides of eternity.

In your words, appearance and conduct, be prudent. Under every perplexity and provocation carefully preserve good temper. In the midst of trials and persecutions be patient. Visit your hearers impartially, showing no preferences that may be deemed invidious. In your intercourse with your people, while you maintain the dignity of a teacher and overseer, exhibit the familiarity of a friend.

Be prompt to visit the sick and the afflicted, and, while you sympathise with their sufferings, direct them to the only source of certain and adequate relief.

Treat the aged with respectful tenderness, and endure, with easy forbearance, what the young impatiently regard as their tedious garrulity.—From their long and varied experience you may learn much that will throw light upon human nature, and illustrate many passages of the inspired word. Carry in your pocket a memorandum book, and note down the thoughts of aged Christians. You will often find them beaten gold.

"Condescend to men of low estate." Let the poorer members of your flock share largely in your personal attentions. Their prayers will be to you a richer blessing than the gifts of the affluent.

In your intercourse with other Christian denominations, be kind, be candid, be courteous. For the sake of peace, of union, of fraternal co-operation, sacrifice anything but truth; but sacrifice the truth for nothing. "Contend earnestly for the faith," but avoid all captiousness and dogmatism. Provoke no controversy. Stand erect upon your own ground; maintain the truth as you understand it, and accord to others all the liberty which you claim for yourself.

Administer the ordinances of the New Testament to proper subjects, and in the prescribed manner, you have already ascertained from the statute book of that kingdom which is not of this world. These laws you have not the authority

to alter or amend, any more than you have to annul or abrogate.

In ordaining others to this sacred work, lay hands upon such only as evince deep piety of heart, stability of character, soundness of faith, and talents and acquirements that promise usefulness.

In preaching the gospel you will exhibit the truth, and the whole truth, in its just proportions as taught by Christ and his apostles.

Deliver your message distinctly, so as not only to be heard, but understood. Sacrifice the foolish pride of being classically elegant, and use plain, Saxon English; and then the most illiterate hearer will apprehend your meaning, while the most intelligent will admire your simplicity. "If any man," said Kirke White, ascend the pulpit with the intention of uttering a fine thing, he is committing a mortal sin." Give the trumpet a certain sound: Announce the truth fully, unmitigated undisguised.—"Preach no discourses," said Leigh Richmond, "from which the most ignorant hearer may not learn how he may be saved."

Deliver your message affectionately. Your people will hear without offence, the plainest and most pungent discourses, if they see that you are tenderly affected by the truths you utter. O, there is in pulpit love a softening, subduing majesty, before which the most refractory nature becomes yielding and impressible. Baptize every sentence you utter in your heart's deepest and purest sensibility.

In maintaining the discipline of the church, take the New Testament for your rule, and apply its principles in tenderness, impartiality, and unflinching firmness. Be ever a peace maker among the contending. Be not the minister of a party, but of the whole. See that the weak are not overborne or oppressed by the stronger; that the rights of all are equally respected, and that the body is preserved free from every thing that can deface its beauty, or cripple its energy.

By the request of this church, we not only ordain you as a minister of Christ, we also install you as their pastor. Take the oversight of this flock, my brother and be a faithful shepherd. Strengthen the feeble; encourage the timid; restore the wandering; rebuke the froward; restrain the impetuous; guide the perplexed; and going before them, conduct them to the green hills of the heavenly Canaan.

And we now charge you so to live and labor, that they may have occasion to retain you as their pastor till your Lord shall summon you home. Be not a rotary minister. Let us not immediately see the advertisement, "The Rev. William C. Child has removed to Narragansett, and requests his correspondents to direct accordingly. You will find this an affectionate people, disposed to render your relation permanent and happy. Unless some afflictive providence should make your removal necessary, here stay—here "feed the flock of God."—here "turn many to righteousness," and here leave your body in some green resting place, bedewed with the tears of a people whom it was your faithful endeavour to serve and to save.

FOUR RULES FOR PROMOTING THE PEACE AND PROSPERITY OF THE CHURCH.

1. Let the judgment you form of yourself be dictated by humility.
2. Let the judgments you form of others be dictated by charity.
3. Let your desire to please yourself be moderated by self-denial.
4. Let your desire to please others be stimulated by benevolence.