

GREAT ENTERPRISES.

The men of this generation seem to be staggered by no projects, however gigantic, which look to the advancement of individual wealth or national glory. Prophetic language finds its fulfilment, in one respect at least, as physical difficulties yield to science and to the demands of the age. Every valley is exalted, and every mountain and hill is made low, and the crooked is made straight, and the rough places plain, as the path of the railway stretches from the lakes to the gulf, and from the Atlantic to the Mississippi—ere long to span the continent. Deep answers unto deep in the instantaneous, but noiseless whispers of the telegraph. The ocean steamer—forming a weekly ferry between New-York and various European and Central American ports—"Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep? that hath made the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?" Next in the order of great enterprises, may be a marine telegraph, that shall connect England and America. And a project is already said to be in agitation for a rail-road from Calais to Mooltan, in India, via Pesth and Constantinople; thence through Turkey in Asia, passing the ruins of Nineveh, Babylon, and Bagdad, and reaching the Persian gulf; thence again along the Persian coast through Beloochistan to Scinde, or through the wilds of Afghanistan to the Punjab district of the British possessions—a continuous line of 3,800 miles. The tunnelling of mountains, bridging of oceans, and spanning of continents, goes forward as steadily as if it were the purpose of worldly men to bring the antipodes into fraternal neighborhood, and to multiply the facilities for the speedy and universal diffusion of the elements of a higher civilization and a purer Christianity for the whole earth. It is thus that "the earth helps the woman"—that the enterprises undertaken with purely worldly purposes are made to subserve the great ends of the kingdom of Christ.

We have introduced this topic for the sake of saying,

1. If there is money enough to prosecute such gigantic worldly enterprises, there is enough to carry forward all the schemes of Christian benevolence on a scale vastly greater than that on which they are now planned.

2. If worldly men are unconsciously erecting a stupendous scaffolding, and employing mighty machinery for the temple of grace, it is folly and madness for Christians not to employ all the facilities thus afforded for building up the glorious edifice, and getting ready for bringing the top-stone from the quarry, with shoutings of "grace, unto it."

3. If no physical difficulties deter men of his generation from attempting projects which would have been declared impracticable half a century ago, will not the moral difficulties in the way of the world's conversion vanish before the faith and zeal of the Christian church, as she moves forward in the strength of the Most High, to conquest and to victory?

4. If the vast achievements of the present day are the offspring of voluntary, united action, will not the same elements of efficiency, sanctified and applied to Christian enterprises, accomplish results that isolated or constrained effort could never effect?

5. If worldly enterprise is making such amazing strides, is there not reasonable ground of apprehension lest it should outstrip and leave far in the background the agencies for evangelization; so that ere long the mighty forces of earth may be found arrayed in hostility to the gospel, and the vantage-ground now possessed may be lost? Will it answer for Christian institutions to creep along at the old pace, while secular enterprises rush on at locomotive speed, and herald their march by lightning messengers? Has not the period arrived for forming and executing benevolent plans more commensurate with the spirit of the age, and the wants of our country and the world? Will not the friends of truth cheerfully sustain the missionary and publishing institutions in every onward movement that Providence indicates? Shall not the wealth that is pouring in upon the churches be sanctified and sent abroad in wider, deeper streams of blessing for the race? Shall not the work of this generation be done by and for the generation? Nay, shall not the great enterprise that enlists the feelings and calls forth the resources of Christendom be, the conversion of the world to God? There are men enough there is money enough: there are divine promises enough. God speed the work!—*Am. Messenger.*

[From the Watchman and Reflector.]
Have his Labors been Blessed in the Conversion of Souls?

Such is the question, which is not unfrequently proposed in reference to the labor of a pastor, and upon an affirmative answer to this question, depends with some, not only his call of God to the ministry, but even his piety itself. It has often pained me when I have seen the prominence which, by some, have been given to this question: "I think we must have another pastor, for our present one does not seem to be much blessed in the conversion of souls," is a remark which we sometimes hear from the lips of members of our churches.

Now, what do such complainings mean? Why, they mean, if any thing, that the responsibility of saving souls rests with the pastor. But, why not equally with the church? Suppose a pastor, who had been three or four years with a church, witnessing but a few, if any conversions, should say, I will leave this people and go with some other people, where my labours can be blest in the salvation of my hearers. I have toiled here without success, long enough; surely, I believe with the same amount of effort put forth somewhere else, which I have put forth here, God would significantly bless me—hence I will not remain, I will leave, and he does leave. Suppose all our pastors, similarly situated should come to the like conclusion, what would the churches say? Should we not hear a general complaint, from one end of the land to the other? Might they not well ask, can we make revivals of religion? can we save souls? Is the direction of the Holy Spirit's influence at our controul? If we are doing what we can for the salvation of those around us, are we to be charged with the awful failure, if souls are not converted? Let our churches reverse the tables, and apply the same method of reasoning to their pastors, and I think they will see how unjust is much of this fault-finding spirit.

The question should not so much be, are souls converted under our pastor's labors? as, does he faithfully and affectionately preach the gospel? Does he evince a love to the souls of his hearers, by striving to win them to Christ? and if he is not so much blessed in this respect, as we wish he was, may not the blame, in a great degree, fall justly upon us? Have we been faithful in warning our fellow-men to flee from the wrath to come, and lay hold on the hope set forth in the Gospel? We say, and that frequently, in our conference meetings, and in other places, that all the efforts of the watchmen are in vain, unless God succeeds their efforts by his Holy Spirit. But do we pray for our pastor, that God will thus attend his labors with divine aid? Instead of spending so much breath complaining, should we not spend more in praying?

Now, let our churches talk in this way, and act accordingly, and we should see more frequent and extensive revivals among us. Let us remember, that it takes the whole church to preach the gospel efficiently. The pastor may preach ever so faithfully on the Sabbath, and in vain, if his people do not practically preach during the week. O, what sermons are professors of religion preaching every day, either for or against Christ, either to lead men to heaven, or to quiet them on in sin!

Dear reader, what kind of sermons are you preaching? How much have you done during the last week to save a soul from death? How much of direct effort towards this point, have you put forth since you were a member of the church? With how many of your fellow-men have you personally conversed upon the subject of their salvation? For whose souls have you cared enough to beseech them to be reconciled to God? In view of these questions, you may say, "Verily I am guilty. I have not spoken with one person during the last week upon this momentous question! I have conversed with many upon almost every subject, but upon this—the most important of all, I have not said a word—and yet I am often complaining of my pastor. No wonder his preaching is not more successful, an angel's would not be. I am ashamed of myself, and will confess my delinquency to God, and by his help will be more faithful."

Religious Newspapers a Help to Pastors.

Every Minister of the Gospel, who has charge of a congregation, is no doubt fully convinced that the circulation of a well conducted religious newspaper within the bounds of his charge, has aided him in no small degree in the discharge of his pastoral duties.

First, they are the means of communicating a large amount of religious information and

instruction, which could not with propriety be presented from the pulpit; truth often arrests the attention, and reaches the heart, when presented in the shape of narrative, which has failed to produce any effect from the pulpit. As the mirror reflects our image, so often is our conduct reflected in the life of another. Thus it was that David condemned himself in passing sentence upon another.

Second, they are the means of giving enlarged and benevolent views and feelings, by disclosing weekly the spiritual condition of the world, bringing home to the fireside of every reader the perishing condition of the heathen, and making a personal application to him, as did the man of Macedonia, in a vision to Paul, "Come over and help us."

Thirdly, they are the means of making an intelligent people, imparting a knowledge of Geography and History, promoting the cause of education, creating an interest in Sabbath Schools, and in the distribution of Bibles and Tracts.

And the last I shall mention is, they are great helps in promoting revivals of religion; when one church is revived and souls are converted unto God, that glorious news which causes the angels in heaven to rejoice, is communicated through the medium of the religious newspaper, to other churches; is read by hundreds, and perhaps thousands, and many of them will rejoice. They will pray with more earnestness and faith, that they too may be revived; and when that congregation come together on the Sabbath, will it not be with different feelings, and better prepared to hear the truth, from having heard of a revival?

If, then, you would have a benevolent and intelligent church, ready to promote every good word and work, encourage the subscribing for and reading a well-conducted religious newspaper.

"I Have Neglected My Soul."

A minister of the gospel, in the neighborhood of London, was sent for one tempestuous winter evening, to visit a poor woman who was supposed to be very near death. The man of God, anxious to be the means of imparting comfort at such an awful time, heeded not the cold or the storm, but went forward on his errand of mercy; and having with some difficulty found out the woman's abode, he entered her miserable dwelling; the rain beat through the broken roof and unglazed window; no fire was in the grate, scarcely any furniture in the room; and on a bed of straw, and covered only with rags, pale, and panting for breath, lay the object of his visit. "My friend," said the good man, "you seem in miserable poverty; in your weak and diseased condition, you must suffer much, for the want of the common necessities of life." "Oh, sir," said the poor creature, raising herself up, and fixing on him her dying eyes, "my miserable abode, these rags, my poverty, my want of every comfort, all are nothing. I count them all as nothing, because I feel the wants of my soul! Oh, sir, my soul! my soul! I have neglected my soul! My life is nearly gone; nothing in this world, if I could have all that its riches and honours could procure, would be of any use to me; the only thing which appears of any value now is my never-dying soul. Oh, that my time might but come over again! I would attend to the wants of my soul." But her time had not to come over again; and she died. Reader, shall the day come when you will have to say, "My soul, my soul, I have neglected my soul!"

God Represented by the Poor.

We find the following impressive passage, illustrating God's design in requiring benevolence of his creatures, in the prize essay of Rev. Dr. Cooke, of Lynn, lately issued by the American Tract Society:

God throws on us his poor, for the purpose of enriching us. He sends the poor, as the representative of himself, and of the cause of his gospel, out to begging of us, and so, as it were, repeats the act of his humiliation, that the din of their solicitations ever sounding in our ears, and the sighs of a ruined world borne on every breeze, may draw forth from us those benevolent emotions and acts that shall more and more assimilate us to him, "who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor." God takes the place of man: in his poor he asks, and man bestows; that in bestowing, man may accumulate the true riches—more precious than gold, which perishes. It is God himself who asks; and our enriching with grace is the end for which he asks. He asks in the only way in which he could test and exercise our benevolence. For

this purpose he must needs ask as a beggar, and not as a king. Should he come to us in regal splendor or heavenly glory, his asking would be a command, which we should not dare disobey; but our giving would be no act of compassion or benevolence. But now he comes to us in the person of his poor—he comes as the king dethroned and dependent—banished from heaven, covered with rags, pining in want—he comes uttering the tale of misery and real suffering, unless we afford relief. And now what we give is given by the promptings of compassion, and from no sordid motives. Here is both a proof and exercise of benevolence. Yet, to enforce his calls, he gives us to know that it is He that speaks and pleads for compassion, through the open wounds and uttered agonies of dying men; and that every donation shall be acknowledged by him in person when he shall come in the glory of his Father, with all the holy angels, and say to every one who has exercised compassion on his poor, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto me." It is not for his good but ours, that he thus begs himself, and pleads as a beggar before us. "Our goodness extends not to him." A wise father draws out the disposition of his child by bestowing gifts and then soliciting a portion in return, or getting proxies to solicit for him, anxious to open the heart to an expansive generosity. So Christ clothes himself in rags and casts himself on our compassion for no purpose so much as to give us the reflex benefit of our benevolent acts.

"Thou art my Sister."

Poverty came to me, and she said, "I must dwell with thee." And while I held the door of my room half way open, she looked hideous and ragged, and her voice was hoarse. But when I said to her, "Thou art my sister," her face looked divinely thoughtful, and there was that in her voice which went to my heart, and she was ragged no longer; nor yet gay, but like the angels whom God so clothes. And through looking into her eyes, my sight was cleared. And so I first saw the majesty of duty, and that beauty in virtue which is the reflection of the countenance of God. For, before this, my eyes could only see what was coarse worth there is in medals, and stars, and crowns, and appeared in purple and fine linen.—*Mountford.*

The Difference.

Christians wonder why they should be saved. Sinners wonder why they should not be saved. The sinner asks, "What have I done?" The Christian, "What have I not done?" The sinner says he does the best he can. The Christian knows he does not. Who was it that said, "Behold I am vile?" Was it Saul, Judas, or Jeroboam? No. It was Job, "and perfect and an upright man; one that feared God, and eschewed evil." The habits of an evangelically righteous man are holy; his sins are but occasional acts, contrary to his fixed habits; whereas, with the unregenerate, it is just the reverse. He may do good actions, but his habits are sinful. The Christian acts out of character when he sins; but when the other sins, he acts in character. With the former, sin is a digression; with the latter, it is the main stay. The one walks in the way of obedience, though he is guilty of occasional aberrations; the other walks in the ways of disobedience habitually. Devotion is with the Christian a habit, though he is sometimes undevout; so is trust in God, though he sometimes distrusts him; so is sobriety and the severest rectitude, though he may occasionally be betrayed into acts that are opposed to these virtues. If the sinners are not out of their senses, the saints are. There is madness somewhere. If Festus was not beside himself, Paul certainly was. The one party, or the other is dreaming. Who is it, Paul or Festus?

Comfort in Trouble.

I wonder many times that ever a child of God should have a sad heart, considering what the Lord is preparing for them. When we shall come home and enter into our Brother's fair Kingdom, and when our heads shall find the weight of the eternal crown of glory, and when we shall look back on pains and sufferings—then shall we see life and sorrow to be less than one step or stride from the prison to glory; and that our little inch of time-suffering is not worthy of our thought when compared with our first night's welcome to heaven. However matters, the worst can only be—a tried traveller, and a joyful and sweet welcome home.