

## Advice to Ministers.

Preachers often receive counsel as to powerful preaching and right living, and they cannot complain if they, who preach so much to others, are preached to themselves. It is easy to give advice, which consists of cheap, commonplace, and useless generalities; but to touch with a strong hand the actual needs of a particular situation is a different thing. It was once said, under great provocation no doubt, that the worst vice is advice. That statement, however, cannot be accepted without qualification. In the "Homiletic Review" for November, the Rev. Dr. Cunningham Geikie, who is so well known as a thorough scholar and a graceful writer, furnishes an interesting and useful article on "The Preacher in Daily Life," in which he draws upon his own large experience. In this article there are many wholesome words, and none more so than the following passage:

"If you don't know the right answer to any question, frankly say so, never attempting to explain if you feel ignorant. Tell your questioner that you will turn the matter over, and then tell him what you think the solution. Show a manly, free, direct integrity. Never hedge or trim, assenting one moment only to retract the next, and thus save yourself, whichever side is right; but speak frankly, with no mean, non-committal circumlocution. Men will not respect one who fences. Never carry favor by cowardly silence or by implied assent to what you in reality think wrong, but state your opinion with gentle modesty."

The counsel here set before the young minister may not be the way to speedy popularity, but it is the spirit of the true disciple. The writer illustrates the character of the good priest or faithful parson by pictures drawn from the poems of Chaucer and Goldsmith; these should be familiar to all young ministers, and they can read them in their original setting, or in Dr. Geikie's quotations. But there are a few words, so appropriate to the present hour, that we must quote them.

"Be careful not to startle your hearers by crude, revolutionary notions, either in doctrine or criticism of the Scriptures. The faith of the crowd, whether gentle or humble, is like the chemical toy known as Prince Rupert's drop, a tadpole-like bit of unannealed glass, to break the least tip of which is to shiver the whole into dust. You can tell the truth, even if unrealized before, so free from all hostile aspects that it will provoke no opposition. That goes for much, and humility and real godliness are a guard against flashing too strong a glare of what you fancy truth on eyes too weak to bear it."

The following words will show the spirit in which the practical side of life is dealt with: "Christ tells us that the good shepherd faces the wolf when he sees him coming to prey on the flock. But is there a worse wolf in our day than strong drink? In my Norwich parish I reckoned that every third family was more or less ruined by it. Make no friend with such an enemy of Christ's fold. He tells us that to follow him we must bear a cross as He bore His. It is surely a toy cross for a respectable man to give up, his wine or beer, to rescue souls from the wolf. To do so is worth bearing a heavier cross than that."

## Sale of Indulgences in Brazil.

(One of the Presbyterian missionaries in South America forwards the following public announcement by a priest of the Romish Church, of the sale of indulgences.)

"On next Monday, August 1, at 3 o'clock p.m., in the Church of Our Lady of Carmel, begins the 'Pardon of Assisi,' or, as some call it, the 'Indulgence of Porciuncula.' It will continue until midnight of the following day. This is the greatest indulgence in the Catholic Church, for on this occasion the faithful, having confessed and communed, though in some other church, and afterwards visited a church directed by the monks of St. Francis of Assisi, as Carmel is at present, can gain not only the pardon of their sins, but also the remission of all penalties which they ought to suffer either in this world or in the world to come."

"What makes this indulgence still more notable is the fact that, repeating the visits to said church, its benefits are secured for the souls of our precious dead. Therefore, the greater number of visits, the more the number of souls delivered from purgatory. Who does not recognize the greediness of such an indulgence?"

"That all the faithful may learn more perfectly the glorious origin, the marvelous propagation, and the singular advantages of this indulgence, there will be special services beginning on Saturday, July 30, at 7 p.m."

"On the day of the indulgence, August 2, at 9 o'clock a.m., in the Carmel Church, there will be a solemn mass, which will be exclusively for the contributors and their dead. They are, therefore, invited to be present. On the same day there will be a mass at 4.30 a.m., and another at 6 a.m."

"Monk Joao Pedro de Sesto."

## Our Young People

[We regret having to go press without the several important articles and items of interest, that will usually be found on this page. Below we give the Sabbath School lesson. By next issue all the departments of the paper will be in complete working order.—Ed.]

## "The Captivity of Judah."

The end had come at last, the sorrowful message of Israel's noblest prophets received a tragic fulfillment. A great judgment fell upon Samaria at the close of the eighth century before Christ and Judah met a similar fate early in the sixth century. These two acts of judgment were both prophesied by the peasant prophet of the Judean lowlands, Micah i., 6, 9, iii., 12. The second was the burden of Jeremiah's long, painful ministry. The executor of judgment in the first case was the Assyrian, and in the second the Chaldean power. Not only did the prophets foresee these calamities, they also understood their spiritual significance. In their view the great national sorrows came from Jehovah for punishment and purification, the great world powers were instruments in the hand of the Eternal. Isaiah, x., 15. The judgment upon northern Israel was destructive, the kingdom was destroyed, and except those who joined themselves to Judah, there were few that held fast to the nobler faith and pure worship. In the judgment upon Judah many were lost, but out of the purifying fire the Jewish church came freed from the coarse forms of idolatry, and with a new devotion to the Word of God. Early in his life Jeremiah saw that this calamity must come, and as it drew near his spirit trembled under the pressure of the coming storm. Though it was too late to ward off the hour of doom, the terrible suffering recorded in this lesson might have been avoided had kings and people accepted the prophet's warning and bowed penitently before the rod of chastisement. The horrors of the final hour were increased by the feeble violence, and shallow fickleness of this king, whose name is so inconsistent with his character. He who should have represented the "righteousness of Jehovah" is one of the most striking examples of wickedness based on weakness. There were at least three reasons why the politicians and the populace would not receive the message of judgment until it had actually reached its final stage, and even then persuaded themselves that it would be temporary. 1.—A false interpretation of the deliverance in the days of Isaiah, instead of the goodness of God leading them to repentance, they concluded that under no circumstances could Jerusalem be destroyed and were ready to say, like their forerunners, in the days of the earlier prophet: "Is not the Lord among us, none evil can come upon us?" Micah. 2.—A foolish trust in Egypt instead of in God. This was a strange infatuation, with its ignored all the lessons of history. It led to a vacillating policy, which invited disaster. 3.—A belief that the reforms, and especially the one under Josiah had rendered judgment unnecessary. It seemed unreasonable that the prophet Jeremiah should continue to declare that these religious movements had not gone deep enough. Thus they hardened themselves and were encouraged by false popular prophets until the "day of Jeremiah" came as a day of disaster. From this point of view we may interpret the "captivity of Judah." It was a tremendous national catastrophe; it closed the career of the old chapter of Judah's life and opened a new one; its effects are still felt in the life of the Jews and of the world. When they sat and wept by the rivers of Babylon, though there was still much corruption, new forms of piety and patriotism arose. It was a vindication of Jeremiah's ministry, the man who through long, toilsome years had preached the unpopular truth was shown to have been in communion with the Highest, and to have possessed "the Secret of the Lord." There was no joy in this for him, but for us there is a great lesson. It was a manifestation of the righteousness of God and of the real nature of election. The living God, who was revealing himself to Israel, prized purity of life more than any city or temple, and called His people not to sensual enjoyment or conventional religion, but to real unselfish service.

\*International S.S. Lesson, Dec. 18th, Jer. 52, Golden text, Jer. 29, 13. Memory verses, Jer. 52, 9-11.

## A Case of Conscience.

"He's paid me too much."  
Ned's fingers were rapidly turning over two or three bills.

"Yes—three dollars too much. He must have thought this five dollar bill was a two."

The boy sat for a few moments in deep thought.  
"I don't care. It's no more than my rightful due—only I don't get it. Twelve dollars a month for my whole time out of school. It doesn't begin to pay for all I do, and I wouldn't stand it if I could help myself. Everybody says old Curtis is a real grind. Of course, I shall keep this. He gave it to me. If he has made a mistake that's his own lookout. That settled, what shall I do with this lucky windfall? I'm to have a half-holiday the last Saturday in the month. This would give me a run down to the shore. I never got out of the city. It seems as if this had come just to give me a chance."

Carefully laying the money in a safe place, Ned quickly absorbed himself in study. All the week he took little time for thought. It was easy to avoid it, for between work and study few boys were so busy as he. Night found him so "dead tired" that the sound sleep which blessed labor was his rich reward. There came a night or two in which he had to fight hard against a troublesome, intrusive thought. By the aid of some intricate calculations he succeeded in refusing entertainment to the unwelcome visitor. At the same time near he had all his plans for his seashore frolic. And when early sleep seemed to evade him, he strove to fix his mind on his antic, old pleasure. But far into the last Friday night in the month, he got up, lit his lamp, and gazed fixedly into his mirror.

"Ned Harper, you're a thief."

Pausing for a moment as if to familiarize himself with the sound of his self-accusation, he resumed:

"You are, and you know it. That is, you are as long as that money remains in your hands. It is not yours, and all your fine talk cannot make it so. You're on the right side of it now, but in one day you would have been on the wrong side. You would have been a thief, thief, all your life. Nothing could ever have put you back where you are now, by the Grace of God."

"You made a mistake in your last payment," said Ned, going with the money to his employer.

"Ah, did I? When did you find it out?" He looked keenly at the boy's painful flush as he asked. Ned had hoped he would not ask. For a moment he thought of evading the question by half truth. Then came the thought: "Because I came next door to being a thief, I needn't come next door to being a liar."

"I saw it soon after," he said.  
"Like enough he'll discharge me," was Ned's conclusion in the matter. He was not discharged. Little by little Mr. Curtis placed more important work in his hands, and by slow degrees led him up to a position of trust and confidence.

"I have kept him," he said to a friend, "because I like a young fellow who has a conscience."

## Story About Lions.

When lions were still numerous and easily observed in southern Africa, they were sometimes seen instructing one another in voluntary gymnastics, and practising their leaps, making a bush play the part of the absent game. Moffat tells the story of a lion which had missed a zebra by miscalculating the distance, repeating the jump several times for his own instruction. Two of his comrades coming upon him while he was engaged in the exercise, he led them around the rock to show them how matters stood, and then, returning to the starting point, completed the lesson by making a final leap. The animals kept roaring during the whole of the curious scene, "talking together," as the native who watched them said. By the aid of individual training of this kind, industrial animals become apt: as they grow older—old birds, for instance, constructing more artistic nests than young ones, and little mammals, like mice, becoming adroit with age.—Christian Work.

## For Brainy Boys.

Boys, if you wish promotion when you take up business, you will need to let strong drink alone. A drinking young man is not the kind that gets the best positions. Twenty years ago it was often true that a young man who drank beer or wine, or even whiskey, in moderation, might be advanced to places of greater trust and responsibility. It is not so now. Brainy boys and young men who are teetotalers from principle are plenty enough to get the best positions. It will pay you in the long run to be a teetotaler.

The largest bible in the world is the Buddhist tripitaka, or "Three Baskets," which comprises 325 volumes, and weighs 1,625 lbs.