

## PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

### SABBATH DESECRATION.

At the last meeting of the New York Ministerial Association, held in Newmarket on the 30th of October, the following was unanimously adopted:—

"Because of the absorbing, exhausting and debasing nature of continuous toil, our Creator has wisely appointed that one day in seven should be observed as a day of rest, for the recuperation of our bodies and culture of our souls.

"The command to observe a weekly day of rest is as binding as the command not to kill—not to commit adultery—not to steal—not to be a false witness, etc., the breaking of which society will not tolerate.

"The needs of our spiritual nature demands, and God enjoins, that we spend the day of rest in the exercises of His worship and service and the study of His Word, unless engaged in some work of necessity or mercy.

"The history of the Jews, and of the world, proves beyond question that the faithful observance of every seventh day as a day of religious rest conduces in the highest degree to health and happiness, and promotes both temporal and spiritual prosperity.

"But the greed of gain and the rage for worldly pleasure conspires to rob us of the sacred privilege of a weekly day of holy rest.

"We have observed, with painful regret, a growing tendency to profane the Lord's Day in such a way as the following:—

"By the burial of the dead when it could quite as well be done the day before or the day after; the running of railway trains and steamers for business; the practice of pleasure-driving, boating, fishing, camping out, holding picnics, social visiting, etc.; etc., entailing, almost certainly, a great deal of extra work, and the partial or total neglect of religious duties.

"It is both foolish and simple for us to barter such an inestimable boon for what we can get thereby, either of gain or worldly pleasure, because it has been established by repeated trials that more and better work can be done by man or beast working six days in the week than seven; and that a religious observance of the day of rest does more to refresh and recuperate the body and mind than any other way in which it can be spent.

"Believing then, as we do, that 'Godliness is profitable unto all things having the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come,' and that a right observance of the weekly day of rest appointed by God is of the very essence of true godliness, and tends most directly to promote man's temporal as well as his spiritual welfare, we earnestly appeal to all whom our words may reach, to discountenance in every legitimate way everything tending towards the desecration of the Sabbath.

"Let magistrates not hesitate to enforce the law; let parents and guardians of the young use their influence and authority to secure the right observance of the day by those in their charge; let masters and mistresses see that those in their employ enjoy, as far as possible, a full benefit of this wise provision of God's mercy; let all who have work to do so spend the day that it may be to them a *real resting day*; let ministers of the Gospel and teachers inculcate in the minds of the people right and scriptural views of the day and its use; and let all who love their country and wish well to the cause of true religion and pure morality strive earnestly, unitedly and persistently, for a more faithful observance of the Lord's Day.

"So shall God bless us, and so shall we rejoice and be glad in the Lord all our days."

### PRAYER-MEETING DON'TS.

Don't forget all about it until the hour of meeting comes; but plan for it, arrange your other engagements so that you can be present, and be there in season, and not come in while the Scripture lesson is being read or the opening prayer is being offered, and thus disturb others.

Don't forget to think about the subject, but rather turn it over in your mind during the week, that when the hour of meeting comes your heart and mind may be alive with it, and, if occasion is given, you may be ready to say a word; come with your heart full, and you will be all the better prepared to enjoy what others may say.

Don't take a seat as far back as possible, as though you had no personal interest or responsibility in the meeting, but come down to the front, as near to the leader's chair as possible, and thus give an earnest, social, and united appearance to the services. No little thing chills a meeting more than empty seats between the pastor and the people.

Don't scold. It is so easy; it requires neither brains nor grace, and springs from neither prayer nor love. It does no good—instructs no one—comforts no one, but injures yourself and those who hear you. It is the cheapest stock in trade a Christian can have.

Don't complain of how low Zion is and how imperfect Christians are, and what a poor sinner you are, and remark how much more good would be done if Christians were only active. All such remarks grow out of conscious unfaithfulness on your part, or poor digestion, or jealousy, or self conceit. Tell of some good thing and not of some disagreeable thing. When I hear a man scold or complain in a prayer-meeting, I am sure he scolds and complains to his wife.

Don't preach. Let the minister do that. Avoid saying "firstly" and "secondly" and "thirdly;" it sounds as though you were making an effort for a speech. Let your words be a simple testimony to the truth, or an illustration of the truth, or an exhortation to the truth.

Don't pray for everything in the same prayer, but of that which is resting most upon your heart, and then the next time for some other thing, and then your prayers will be fresh, tender and short.

Don't manifest more interest than you feel, but be honest with your emotions, and then your emotions will be honest with you and fill you with greater tenderness. The Holy Spirit loves honesty. It is not noise but sincere love which has power.

Don't manifest less interest than you feel. When the Spirit moves you, let Him lead you, let Him excite, stir and rouse you, for honest feeling is one of the greatest powers for good which God gives to men; therefore, when the emotions begin to rise, let them rise and boil, the hotter the better.

Don't look sad, look honest, tender, serious and earnest, but not sad. Look as though you were happy to be in the kingdom and glad of an opportunity to speak for your Master.

Don't rush out of the meeting as soon as the benediction is given, as though you were glad to be out of the place, but linger a little and shake hands with each other and speak a word to the strangers and inquire after each other's families. Remain a little, as though the place was pleasant to you.

I am sure if you look out for these things your prayer-meeting will be warm and tender, Christians will be quickened and sinners saved. Don't forget them.—*Rev. Smith Baker.*

### INFIDELS DESPONDING.

The men who are labouring to destroy Christianity do not grow happy. There is a certain exhilaration while their bright but injurious books bring them copyright; and while crowds of men are found willing, for reasons which bring no credit to their minds or their hearts, to pay a dollar each and contribute also their applause to a preacher of blasphemy; but as life wears on, and as there comes to such men a revelation of the probable effects of their teaching on the future of society, they grow very despondent.

Mr. Renan is reported to have said, "We are living on the perfume of an empty vase. Our children will have to live on the shadow of a shadow. Their children, I fear, will have to live on something less."

It would be almost cruelly to ask this brilliant writer who they are that have emptied the vase, and who they are that have spent their strength in taking the substance out of all human life so that nothing but shadows should be left. But should he be spared that keen question, unless he frankly repent, and employ the remainder of his life in labouring to neutralize the poison he has so insidiously injected into society, and which now infects him and produces a deadly despondency?

We have, however, comfort for him and for all his class. Their grandchildren will live in an age of increasing Christian activity, in an age when Christianity will be more stripped of ecclesiasticism than now, and the mind of the Spirit in the Word of God will be better known, and there shall be an increase of that faith which rounds out reason and complements the barrenness of this life with the fruitfulness

of the life to come. They will have something better than perfume and more substantial than shadows.

Now let all men pause and consider the pitifulness of this case. A few gifted men have been employing their powers in accumulating an estate for posterity, and the best of them makes statement of the assets of the estate: in hand, "the perfume of an empty vase;" for the next generation, "the shadow of a shade;" for the third generation, "something less." No wonder Mr. Renan is despondent. The more his descendants believe as he does the less they will have.

The labourers on the Christian side have no such gloom. We may die, but the Gospel will live. The more our descendants receive and believe and live in this Gospel we preach, the happier they will be. We grow cheerful as time goes on, and as our departure is at hand. Men may live and men may die, but Christianity goes on forever.—*Charles F. Deems, D.D.*

### SEVEN SHORT RULES FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS.

I.—Never neglect daily private prayer; and when you pray remember that God is present, and that He hears your prayers. (Heb. xi. 6)

II.—Never neglect daily private Bible reading; and when you read remember that God is speaking to you, and that you are to believe and act upon what He says. I believe all back-sliding begins with the neglect of these two rules. (John v. 39)

III.—Never profess to ask God for anything you do not want. Tell Him the truth about yourself, however bad it makes you; and then ask Him, for Christ's sake, to forgive you what you are, and to make you what you ought to be. (John iv. 24)

IV.—Never let a day pass without trying to do something for Jesus. Every night reflect on what Jesus has done for you, and then ask yourself, What have I done to-day for Him? (Matt. v. 13-16)

V.—If ever you are in doubt as to a thing being right or wrong, go to your room, and kneel down and ask God's blessing upon it. (Col. ii. 17.) If you cannot do this it is wrong. (Rom. xiv. 23.)

VI.—Never take your Christianity from Christians, or argue that because such and such people do so and so, therefore you may. (2 Cor. x. 12.) You are to ask yourself, "How would Christ act in my place?" and strive to follow Him. (John x. 27.)

VII.—Never believe what you feel, if it contradict God's Word. Ask yourself, Can what I feel be true if God's Word is true? and if both cannot be true, believe God, and make your own heart the liar. (Rom. iii. 4; 1 John v. 10, 11.)—*Brownlow North.*

It may be impossible not to feel contempt for some kinds of weakness, and scorn for most sins; but the heart is not Christ-like that does not feel pity for the weak and sympathy for the sinner.

LET the emotional side of the human mind be fully stirred on this subject (of temperance), and it will refuse to see any remedy but the drastic one: *The still makes drunkards—away with the still.*

IF there is any one thing in respect to which the citizens of this country, of all parties and sects, ought to be agreed, and for the promotion of which they should be united as one man, it is the cause of a universal common school education.

THE American girl would be none the worse, but all the better, for a little closer surveillance, a more judicious maternal care than she sometimes gets; and society would be vastly improved in tone if the matrons would not give place so entirely to the maidens.

THE grandest privilege which God ever gives to His children upon earth, and which He gives to comparatively few, is to write a noble Christian hymn, to be accepted by the churches, to be sung by reverent and loving hearts, in different lands and different tongues; and which shall still be sung as the future opens its brightening centuries.

THERE is a vast difference between a sustaining faith and a sustaining a faith. A sustaining faith carries out a heart and head, without question or swerving. The attempt to sustain a faith exercises one's head only, and gives evidence of doubt by the very effort to remove doubt. Sustaining a faith is a troublesome business. A sustaining faith is the grandest possession of a human soul. A faith which sustains is above all need of sustaining.