

Selected Articles.

BACKBONE.

When you see a fellow mortal
Without fixed and fearless views,
Hanging on the skirts of others;
Walking in their cast-off shoes;
Bowing low to wealth and favor,
With abject, uncovered head,
Ready to retract or waver,
Willing to be drove or led;
Walk yourself with firmer bearing,
Throw your moral shoulders back;
Show your spine has nerve and marrow—
Just the things which his must lack.

A stronger word
Was never heard
In sense and tone
Than this, backbone.

When you see a politician
Hugging close some ugly creed,
Fearing to reject or question
Dogmas which his priest may read
Holding back all noble feeling;
Choking down each manly view;
Caring more for forms and symbols
Than to know the Good and True;
Walk yourself with firmer bearing;
Throw your moral shoulders back;
Show your spine has nerve and marrow—
Just the things which his must lack.

A stronger word
Was never heard
In sense and tone
Than this, backbone.

A modest song and plainly told—
The text is worth a mine of gold:
For many men most sadly lack
A nobly stiffness in the back.

A FRIEND IN COURT.

A LITTLE fellow, ten years of age, was arrested in London, some years since, for stealing. He was brought by the policeman into court, and placed upon the stand before the judge. He was very much frightened, and trembled as he glanced around the court-room. The judge, moved by his tender years and gentle face, which gave evidence that he could not have been long in the company of vicious boys, asked him, kindly, if he had no friend in the court-room. The little fellow cast a timid look over the faces of the crowd attending the trials, and then turning his childish, appealing face to the judge, said, "No, sir!" He had hardly made the answer, when, turning around again, and pointing toward the door, "There comes my father!"

The judge called the father forward to the stand. He wore the thread-bare garments of a soldier. His face was yet thin and pale. He limped as he came through the crowd, which separated to let him pass. He was bowed down, either through feebleness or sorrow, and had a very anxious expression upon his countenance.

To the enquiry of the judge about the act for which his little son had been arrested, he said with much feeling, "he knew nothing of it until he heard he was in court. He feared the boy done wrong. He did not know what he could do about it, 'but it will break my heart,' he said 'to have him sent to jail.'" "This little boy," he continued, "is all that is left me of my family, and if the judge is pleased to hear me I shall be glad to say few words about myself."

He was encouraged to go on, the judge expressing much interest in his story.

"A little more than ten years ago," said the feeble soldier, "when the child was an infant, his mother lay upon her dying-bed. She besought me in her last moments to watch over the motherless babe that she was to leave behind her. I promised her that he should never be away from me, if I could help it, and that I would do all I could to bring him up a good boy. Just after my wife died, I was drafted as a soldier in the army, and I had no means of securing a substitute. I could not leave my helpless child behind when our regiment was sent to India, so I took him with me. He always slept with me, and I tried to teach him, as soon as he could speak, the prayer that he would have learned of his mother, if she had lived. Wherever I went, from camp to camp, I took him with me. In the tent, in the barracks, under my blanket upon the ground, the boy always slept by my side.

"When the war broke out, and our regiment moved to the front, my child accompanied me. I have carried him for days in my weary arms during our weary marches. He was both the care and comfort of my life. In a severe battle I was wounded in several places—it was thought at first mortal—and I fell upon the field. I was carried by my companions to the hospital, and they took such care as they could of my child. Contrary to the expectations of the surgeon, I did not die of my wounds, but after a long period of weakness, began slowly to recover. But my constitution had been broken down; and I left my bed a lame, feeble man, unable

to endure the labor and fatigue of the camp. After a time, a discharge was obtained for me, and I was permitted to come back to my native land. I determined to return to the town where I had formerly lived, and was known, and try to find some light employment by which I might be able to support myself and my little boy.

"I reached London a few weeks since, and was taken sick almost immediately on landing. During my sickness I was sometimes delirious, and could take no care of my child. The people where I boarded were all strangers to me. In this time the boy wandered into the street, and fell among bad companions, I fear. When I became conscious of my situation, I found he was not in the house.

"You may imagine my distress, sick and helpless as I was. As soon as I could get out I commenced inquires for him in every direction, and, finally, through the police, heard of the arrest of a child about his age.

"And here he is," said the father, with a trembling lip, as he turned his melting eyes upon the weeping boy. "What can I do for him? I have done something for my country, and bear the marks of it. Perhaps for this the first crime of my child may be forgiven."

The old soldier opened the worn garments that covered his breast, and showed the terrible scars of the lately healed wounds which he had brought from the field of blood.

The judge and all in the court-room were deeply affected by the simple and touching recital.

"Take your boy," said the judge, his voice husky from his emotions. "You have been a brave soldier; you deserve well from your country, and I know you will be a good father to watch over him and keep him from temptation in the future."

The "dock" where the boy sat was opened and he sprung into his father's arms. All in the court cheered them, as the two passed slowly, hand in hand out of the room, and started once more upon their weary journey.

What a comfort to that boy, in his trouble, it was to find a friend in court—one able to speak for him; one that loved him so well, and one that was able to save him.

Dear readers, have we not sinned? Does not something within us sit as a judge, and seem to condemn us? Have we a friend who can save us? We look all over the faces around us, even the loving ones in our homes, but there is none that can forgive our sins, or has power to give us release. But we have a friend in court. He always comes in our helplessness. We have but to lift our eyes, and we shall see him as he "stands at the door." If we are so weak and ashamed that we cannot pray, "not daring so much as to lift our eyes to heaven," he will speak for us. "He ever liveth, to intercede for us at the right hand of God." He loves us as no earthly father can. He calls himself our Friend and Elder Brother. He bears the marks of the wounds which he has received in our behalf, and which will secure our release from punishment if we trust him and always keep by his side.

A PICTURE OF A GLACIER.

The correspondent of the New York Tribune with the Hassler expedition, in one of his letters, gives the following description of a glacier:

No photograph, however, even by the most skillful hands, and taken from the best position, could do justice to the wonderful beauty of this glacier. As I approached it through the woods, even on the second day, I mistook it for the blue sky appearing through the trees. In some parts it seems simply like a crusted field of snow; go nearer and you will find it is ice, pebbles of ice, packed into a solid mass. Its two principle brooks emerge from splendid caves, arching over them, and glowing within with a deep blue light. It is split at its termination by great fissures, running far up into the mass, into tongues varying from one or two feet to thirty or forty feet in thickness, and of an altitude so great that I did not care to venture far up into the fissures between them, lest a fragment of the ice falling from above should crush me. I suppose the mass of ice a mile wide, and perhaps two miles long, must be in its deepest parts 200 or 300 feet thick, possibly much more. It was a great delight to see this huge mill and examine its fresh-ground grist, and note the ease with which it ground the veins of hard jasper porphyry down to the same surface with a softer granite. The most beautiful sight about it was a portion of it shivered, by passing over a steeper place, into a thousand of the most fantastic pinnacles, made more fantastic by the melting during the past summer, and now lighted for me by the cloudless morning sun. The valley around the bay is grandly beautiful, and if the mail steamers could only be sure of such fine days as we enjoyed, it would pay them to cut a path through the half mile of forest, and advertise that passengers would be allowed to stop and see the glacier and its surroundings.

HOME EVANGELIZATION.

BY THE REV. WM. M. TAYLOR.

If it be true that the poor are not found in any proper proportion in our churches, or that the Gospel is not reaching a large mass of the working element of the population, then it is a truth which ought to fill us with sadness, and rouse us to exertion. When John the Baptist sent two of his disciples to ask Jesus, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" he made reply by working some miracles before their eyes, and then saying: "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard, how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached." Thus as the crowning evidence names the preaching of the Gospel to the poor, and if it be so that in any large measure this evidence is not presented to the world in these days, we do not wonder that skepticism should be rearing its head among us, or that scientific objections to the word of God should have so much weight among our contemporaries. These objections indeed can be satisfactorily met, and it is well that they should be refuted by Christian apologists, but all the answers which can be given will fail to carry conviction to the minds of men generally, if the poor are neglected by the Christian churches, and left to sink deeper and deeper in misery and degradation; whereas on the other hand if the people of Christ would but lay hold of the suffering, the guilty and the debased, and by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, lift them up into happiness and holiness, such a demonstration of the divinity of our religion would be given as would silence every gainsayer, and put every scoffer to an open shame.

But the pressing question is, By what means shall we bring the masses of the people in our larger towns into contact with the regenerating and elevating influence of the Gospel? The answer is twofold, namely, by adapting our churches to them, and attracting them into them, or by going forth outside of our churches, and carrying the Gospel to their homes. But indeed the difference between these two answers is more apparent than real, for in every case where success has been attained, both methods have been somehow combined, and what is needed is a loving heart and a wise head in the worker, more than any rigid and stereotyped mode of operations. Different individuals will have different plans, and that method which answers admirably in one place may fail most signally in another. It will not do, therefore, to prescribe any rigid rule, but it may serve perhaps to stimulate inventiveness, and to quicken zeal if we describe some experiments which have been tried elsewhere with most encouraging results. The first is connected with the name of the Rev. Dr. McLeod of the Barony Church, Glasgow, who is perhaps better known as the editor of Good Words. His church is situated near some of the worst streets of the city, but by the power of his eloquence he drew into it at once a very large congregation, containing many of the wealthiest inhabitants of Glasgow. There was, consequently, no room in it for the poor, and even if there had been ample accommodation for them, the respectability of the other worshippers would have kept them aloof. But the minister was not willing that they should not be cared for, so, dividing the other labors of the day with an assistant, he instituted a third service on the Sabbath, having this peculiar feature, that no one was allowed to attend it except in working apparel. As many as fifteen hundred men and women in every-day attire have frequently been gathered together on such occasions to hear his words, and at the close of the winter's services, sixty-nine of these were after examination admitted to the membership of the church. The next year forty were similarly received, and then as there was no accommodation for them in the parish church, the result was the formation of a mission church, which has now been in existence for a good many years, and has become the mother of others.

Parallel with this effort on the part of Dr. McLeod, a noble work was prosecuted in the same city under the auspices of Rev. Dr. Robert Buchanan, of the Free Church. This was conducted on the territorial plan of selecting a certain portion of the city, and bringing all holy agencies to bear upon its inhabitants. The place chosen was the Wynd, in the very heart of the lowest portion of the town. A church was erected; a minister was appointed; he was assisted by volunteer agents from the regular churches, and very soon the building was filled by those for whose benefit it was intended. Again and again a blessed revival has visited the locality, and many who were notorious for wickedness in the locality, among whom was a well known prize fighter, whose sobriquet was "the Brig-gate Flesher," were converted. But as these converts grew in Christian character, they grew also in worldly respectability, and so they very soon discovered that they could not continue to reside

in such a miserable locality. They removed, therefore, to better portions of the city, and a sufficient number of them having gone to one locality to warrant the commencement of a new congregation there, they erected a church, and called their mission minister to be their pastor. He accepted the call, leaving behind him in the old place as many as would form a nucleus for the carrying on of the work. This remnant called a new minister, who again filled the church, and the former process was repeated until now the Wynd Church is like a mother-hive, which has thrown off, we think, four separate swarms, while it still remains to gather in the outcasts that are continually buzzing in its neighborhood. The funds for the sustaining of these and kindred operations in other quarters of the city have been raised entirely by voluntary contributions, and at the present moment the three Presbyterian denominations are engaged in raising a sum of from forty to fifty thousand pounds for the purpose of doing still more in the same direction. Nor is this all. A work which had for its primary end the benefit of the Foundry boys of the city has sprung up into a most important and successful organization, numbering amongst its members persons belonging to all the evangelical denominations, and forming branches in some of the larger towns in the West of Scotland. Similar efforts have been prosecuted with great success in the cities of this country, and though our residence here has been so relief, we have heard with deepest interest of the Bethels of Brooklyn, the Five Points Mission of New York, and the Bethany of Philadelphia. We have not described these experiments (or rather as we might call them experiments), in Scotland therefore because we imagine that things here are more backward in this matter than they are in the old country, but rather, that the friends who are interested in the subject may know something of what is being done in the cities of Great Britain, and may be encouraged to prosecute their labors with the assurance that by the blessing of God, they will yet be crowned with success. But, indeed, the plans are not nearly so important as is the character of the men by whom they are carried out. A foolish man will make the wisest method a failure; while a wise man may achieve marvelous success with the crudest possible method. What is needed is a loving spirit in the worker. When the Lord healed the leper, he did not stand aloof from him and wave him off, saying to him, "Keep at a distance! thou art unclean!" No! but he did a new thing in Israel. He touched the leper, and by that touch he not only drove away the disease by which the poor man was afflicted, but he thrilled his heart by the discovery that here at length was one wearing human nature who was not afraid to approach him, and take him by the hand. If, therefore, we would do any good to the masses of the ungodly, we must touch them with our sympathy, and let them feel the genial warmth of our affection. A kind word spoken, or a loving service cheerfully rendered will be here of more avail than the most liberal dole of charity. It is thus our city missionaries, and missionary agents generally succeed; and he who would put his hand to this work must beware of attempting to prosecute it in a cold or worldly spirit. The loving heart is ever the wisest guide, for love is itself the inspiration of the Divine Spirit.

But while in laboring for others, our love to them must be made apparent, we must not forget, either, that if we neglect their misery, and leave them to go down to deeper degradation, we do so at the extremest peril to ourselves and to the commonwealth. There is a spiritual contagion as well as a physical, and if we allow the corruption of our cities to increase, how shall our sons and daughters be kept from its defilement? When smallpox is abroad, great is the alarm in every household, and immediate precautions are taken to keep it from spreading in the district; but in the condition of the midst of us, a spiritual putrescence more pernicious than that loathsome malady, and if we are indifferent to its existence there may come a day when our own sons and daughters shall be infected with its dreadful impurity. If we would beat back a fever epidemic, it is not enough that we merely attend to personal purification, but we must cleanse the entire neighborhood, and in like manner we must evangelize our cities if we would make the safe places in which to rear our children.

But this subject has a national bearing as well as an individual. Some one has compared representative government to a pyramid with its base resting on the mass of the people, and its shape rising up and narrowing in through magistrates and governors, to its apex in the head of him who sits in the Presidential chair. Now the strength of a pyramid is in the stability of its base, and if the people in the lower layers are allowed to become corrupt, what is to become of the nation as a whole? The character of the people will determine that of their representatives, and if we wish to get at the root of that corruption on the judi-

cial bench and in the halls of legislature, over which all good citizens are mourning—here is where we must begin. Like people, like judges, like citizens, like representatives. Reform the people, therefore, by regenerating influence of the Gospel of Christ, and you lay the whole tree of corruption low; leave them alone, and whatever else you do is the lopping off, here and there of a branch, while the upas remains to shed its poison fruits upon our heads. Thus personal and national issues are involved in the solution of the question, "How shall we evangelize the masses of our large towns?" Yet if we would do the work in the best possible style we must keep uppermost the highest motive, and prosecute it "for Christ's sake." The men we wish to save bear his image—blackened, and almost obliterated it may be, but still his image. They are wearing that human nature which he has consecrated by his incarnation, and he desires that we should show our gratitude to him by helping them. It is he, therefore, who is appealing to us through their necessity, and the question for every one whom he has saved is, Shall he thus plead in vain?

STRIKING THE WHEELS.

"Clang! Clang!" The sharp, ringing sounds impressed me peculiarly, as I stood waiting at the railroad station. "Clang Clang!" I caught them again. A train had just arrived, and crawling along from car wheel to car wheel was a workman carefully striking each with his hammer. He was testing the wheels. They had turned many times that morning, and would turn many times more before night should come. Through many a deep cut, jover quick fierce streams, around sharp curves they would turn, and it was important that they should be sound and strong. There were trains that would run far into the night; and who would want to go over the bridge at Niagara with a flaw in the wheels? So "clang! clang!" went the workman's hammer. It preached a sermon to me that morning.

I am thinking of the religious type of this age. It is that of activity. Go back, and we find men less busy in spiritual things. At last the noises lie down till you come to the stillness of the huge overshadowing monasteries as hollow with little cells as a hive. There in the dusk and quiet of a meditative life, men were trying to find the rounds of the golden ladder that would carry them up to God.

That leaf in history was turned over long ago. We think differently now, and more wisely, too. The missionary, not the monk, is the type of the age. We push our enterprises in every direction. We push hard. Bibles, tracts, the missionaries themselves, go out with a kind of steam-power behind them. In our narrower fields at home, a like impulse is upon us, and we are occupying every corner with a prayer-meeting. There is no prominent point, but it must be made to carry the flag of Jesus. I am not finding fault with the tendency of the age. I like it. I praise it. "Keep he wheel-turning," let it be your motto as a rule. And yet in the midst of the turning wheels, we think of those that come to stop one morning, and the workman struck them.

Let us make activity the prevailing characteristic of your life; but it is a good idea once in a while to bring every thing to a full stop, and then let there be self-contemplation. None of us believe in morbid self-examination, in the introspection that is microscopic. Still it remains good that a Christian may with profit, now and then ask himself just how it is with his soul. The glory of the age makes one of its dangers. Amid the great stir of this outward activity, we may become averse to the hour of meditation. Let it come, though; its stillness, its solitude, its few plain, heart-searching questions. We may be surprised to find some flaw where we little suspected it.

The hours for meditation may not seem so attractive. Self-contemplation does not look so interesting as self-sacrifice. There is something so full of dash and stir to a train of cars in motion, thundering down through the valleys, sending the echoes flying over the hills-tops. There is nothing very romantic about the train at rest; a few box cars succeeding one another, the engine lazily rolling its smoke aloft, the workman going from wheel to wheel, and breaking the stillness with the clang of his hammer. But the swiftest gliding train may be running with a dangerous flaw in its wheels exposing it to sad and swift disaster.

Ah, Christian worker, it is a good idea to "break up" now and then, let the train come to a full stop, and then strike the wheels.—Christian Banner.

They who are the fullest of faith and richest in good works make the least sound; when their hearts and lives, like the face of Moses, shine brightly with grace and holiness, they do not, they will not know it. They consider their greatest light and lustre is but a reflection from the Father of lights, and therefore they have no reason to boast at all of borrowed goods.—Swin-nock.