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SUBMISSION I cannot say, Beneath the pressure of life's care to-day, I joy in these, But I can say, That I had rather walk this rugged way, If Him it please. I cannot feel, That all is well when darkening clouds conceal. The abiding sin; But then I know, God lives and loves, as I may, since it is so, And 'Tis will be done."

SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE SHORTER CATECHISM. BY REV. A. B. MACKAY, MONTREAL, C.V.

BOZOMON, the Royal Preacher, has said, "Be not righteous over much," and many have grievously misunderstood his words. They are often quoted as if he meant to say, "Be not good over-much." There could not be a greater mistake. We cannot possibly be too good; though we may possibly be too righteous. We have to guard ourselves...

and the debtor. Now, as a creditor, a man may be too righteous, as a debtor he cannot. We may be too righteous in demanding a debt; we cannot be too righteous in paying a debt. The rule for every disciple in the school of grace is "Owe no man anything." We are to live not only soberly, but also righteously. Right and punctilious discharge of every obligation ought to be the characteristic of every saved soul; and by this means, as much as by any, will he adorn the doctrine of the grace of God. The worldly man can understand and appreciate such an outcome of vital godliness better, perhaps, than any other—it is so thoroughly practical, affects him so frequently and touches his self-interest so closely. These things are made very plain by Jesus. In that matchless prayer He has taught us to pray, there is no petition more practical than the fifth. It is the only petition to which Jesus calls special attention. Most plain, and emphatically does he press its importance. Most solemnly does he assure us that an unforgiving sinner is an unforgiven sinner. It is so practical that Augustine has called it "The terrible petition," and it is terrible to every hard, unforgiving heart. To present this petition from an implacable and revengeful heart, is like the harsh and cruel servant crying to his master, "Deal with me as I have dealt with my fellow-servant." And we must remember that this was just what the master did. We read, "When his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me; shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." As this petition is very practical in its bearing on men who are notoriously wanting in the spirit of Christ, so is it very practical in its bearing on those who think that they are so filled with the spirit of Christ as to be without sin. Nothing could be more true than that...

can sincerely present this petition, we need not be much troubled with his talk about perfection. No twisting or turning of this petition can ever make it a prayer for perfect men, yet the holiest saint that ever lived can never get beyond it. So long as he is in the body, it is an expression of his needs. Not to see and feel that he needs to present this petition, is proof that a man is blinded by the deceitfulness of sin. Supposed perfection is proclaimed imperfection. If any man thinks that he is without sin, that he has no need of forgiveness from day to day, he deceives himself, and the truth is not in him. Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, was a man whom the Holy Ghost describes as righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless. But that this does not mean that he was perfect, is plain from the fact that he was struck dumb for the sin of unbelief. Paul testifies that before he was converted, he was blameless as touching the righteousness of the law. That is to say, he had attained to victory over all known sin, and to the fulfillment of all known duty. To live merely in victory over all known sin, can therefore be done without a particle of faith, without a particle of love to Christ. Saul, the ancient Pharisee, was able to do it. Yes, he sends out a challenge to all his fellow-Pharisees of ancient and modern times, maintaining that he could do it better than any of them. "I, more," is his cry to every man that thinks himself perfect. Yet he proclaims himself "The chief of sinners." And he does so, not at the beginning, but at the very end of his Christian course. The very lips that cry—I, more—to the perfectionist, cry—I, chief—to the sinner. He does not say, "I was chief," but, "I am chief." Thank God for these two letters, A, M—AM. He who utters them has fought a good fight, he has finished his course, he has kept the faith. His feet are planted on the pebbly threshold of the golden city. The crown of glory is glittering before his eyes. The palm of victory is waving close at hand. But this petition is his passport into Heaven, and all its glory; and Oh! glorious thought! it is free for sinners everywhere. Therefore, casting one wistful glance backward on the sinners left behind, anxious to win more of them to the joys and triumphs of the great salvation, he shouts as he enters in, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Therefore, "In the fifth petition which is, 'And forgive us our...

debts as we forgive our debtors, we pray that God, for Christ's sake, would freely pardon all our sins, which we are the rather encouraged to ask because by His grace, we are enabled from the heart to forgive others"

## CHRISTIAN GUILDS.

THE Christian Church, from the earliest times, has found it necessary to organize brotherhoods and associations of various kinds, in order to efficiency in Christian work. Such brotherhoods are older than any existing ecclesiastical organization. Among the Greeks, the Romans, and the Jews, associations of various kinds were made, for purposes of trade, pleasure, charity, and religion. The early Christians took advantage of Roman laws and the customs of the several Provinces of the Roman Empire; governing such associations, and organized themselves in the same way. These organizations, or brotherhoods, were of immense advantage to the Christian Church in its origin and early history. They furnished a legal form in which it could organize itself and carry on its religious and benevolent work.

After the Church had gained a strong external organization and a hierarchical constitution, the Christian guilds lost for a while their importance, but the heretical sects still continued to make use of them for the secret propagation of their errors.

In the Middle Ages we find these guilds active in the service of the sects of various kinds, which claimed descent from the pure apostolic doctrine, which had been perpetuated in these secret societies, as they claimed, while the ecclesiastical organization of the Church had misled the Church into error. But the medieval Church was compelled to meet the sects on their own ground, and, accordingly, the monastic orders arose, and numberless religious guilds, with the design of advancing the interests of the Church. There can be little doubt that these monastic orders and religious guilds were of immense service to the Church of the Middle Ages. They did not succeed, however, in their designs of exterminating the...

still continued to make use of them, as did their ancestors the heretical sects of the Middle Age; and they could not be entirely suppressed. The neglect of the Protestants to organize Protestant guilds was a serious mistake, that left it exposed to the more vigorous and better organized forces of the Jesuit order. The Puritans and the Pietists overcame this defect of Protestantism, to some extent, by the organization of pious bands, for prayer and prophesying within the parish churches; and with these organizations the revival of Protestantism began. This method was also used by Wesley and the Methodists in the eighteenth century, and has thus descended to our times.

## MODERN ASSOCIATIONS.

The wonderful growth of large cities in the present century, and the increased necessity of religious work in addition to that of the stated ministry, occasioned the rise and development of the modern guilds and associations. The guilds in Europe have been chiefly organized within the parish churches, and in subordination to the Churches. But in America the associations have been chiefly prominent outside of ecclesiastical organizations.

The Young Men's Christian Association is the largest and most important of these associations. It was formed in London in 1844. The Boston Association was organized in 1851. Its growth has been very rapid, and its development marvellous, as it has extended its influence over the globe. The International Association now embraces some three thousand different associations in different parts of the world. It is entirely undenominational in character. It is, however, Protestant as distinguished from Roman Catholic, and Evangelical as distinguished from Unitarian and Rationalistic, but it admits into its membership all the sects of Protestantism. It is friendly to the Evangelical churches, but is entirely independent in its organization and in its work.

The Society of Christian Endeavour was organized in Portland, Maine, in 1881, with sixty-eight members. It has grown even more rapidly than the Young Men's Christian Association. It now reports more than three hundred thousand members. It organizes young Christians within the local church, and aims to set them at work for Christ and His Church. It lays great stress upon meetings for prayer. It embraces both sexes. There are three classes of members: 1. Active members. These must be professing Christians. 2. Associate members. These are those who are not professing Christians, but who are willing to help in the work. 3. Honor-

ary members. Those who, though no longer young, are interested in the society, and desire to help it.

The Society of Christian Endeavour is not a part of the Church, for it has its own independent organization within the Church, and is not responsible to the authorities of the Church. It is, moreover, associated with other societies of different denominations in a general society, which is, and must be, undenominational. But the Society aims to work in harmony with the ecclesiastical authorities of the Church, and therefore the officers of the Church are *ex officio* honorary members, and the pastor is *ex officio* a member of the executive committee; and he may be, and often is, *ex officio* president of the Society. It is evident that the Society of Christian Endeavour is actuated by the same principles, and has the same religious spirit and evangelical basis, as the Young Men's Christian Association. They differ in that the Young Men's Christian Association works chiefly beyond the limits of the local churches, while the Society of Christian Endeavour works chiefly within the local churches.

## PARISH GUILDS.

The Church of England took the lead in the organization of parish guilds. This was due largely to the Anglo-Catholic revival. These parish guilds embrace communicants of both sexes who desire to engage in Christian work, and to give active help to the officers of the congregation. They have special services, and special prayers composed for them, and vows of service that they assume. These parish guilds are, so far as I know, entirely parochial. They have not been united in any general organization. Such parish guilds have been introduced into the Protestant Episcopal parishes in this country.

The Church of Scotland was the first to undertake the organization of guilds under the ecclesiastical direction of the Church, and in accordance with its forms and methods. The work began in 1881, under the direction of the Committee on Christian Life and Work, Professor Charteris, of Edinburgh, being the efficient chairman. These were the young men's guilds. In 1882 no less than eighty-three parish guilds were organized. These grew in 1883 to 146. Then four Presbyterian...

organized in Presbyterian Councils embracing all the parish guilds in the Presbytery. The work of organization went on until in the report of 1888 there were fifteen Presbyterian councils and 491 parish guilds. No synodical organization has yet been made, but this may be looked for in the not distant future. The Committee on Christian Life and Work found not a few parish associations of various kinds already in existence. It did not seek to destroy them, but used them. Thus the Barony Church, at Glasgow, had an ancient parish association, which was affiliated with the Young Men's Christian Association. This association did not change its name. It simply adopted some of the new features of the guild system, and became at once a member of the Presbyterian Council, and retained its connection with the Young Men's Christian Association of Glasgow. So far as I can learn, this has been the method of the guild organization throughout. It has not destroyed any efficient organization already in existence. It inspired these with new energy. It did not break connections with the Young Men's Christian Associations, but allowed these to continue, and made them more fruitful. It organized many new associations, and these new associations not infrequently stretched out their arms to the undenominational Young Men's Christian Associations at the same time that they united in the closer ecclesiastical organization.

The guilds of the Church of Scotland were started as young men's guilds. The necessity soon arose for some provision for young women also. Accordingly in 1886 the Church of Scotland authorized its committee to organize the Woman's Guild. This has been organized in three circles: 1. Woman's Guild, comprising "all women who are engaged in the service of Christ, and all who desire to be trained for service." 2. Woman Workers' Guild, comprising all trained women actively engaged in Christian service. 3. Deaconesses, women trained in the Training Institute for special Mission Work. There were, at the last report, thirty-two woman's guilds with 2,087 members. The Training Home has been established in Edinburgh with an excellent body of lady teachers.

The guilds of the Church of Scotland not only provide for the organization of Christian workers within the lines of the Presbyterian organization of the Church, but they also advance to the all-important work of training Christian workers. The training of the workers in the guilds is by means of lectures, text-books, and examinations with prizes. The deaconesses' training school is to give that higher theological education for women which is provided for men in the Scottish universities. In 1885, the Free Church of Scotland undertook the organization of guilds under the direction of the Committee on the Welfare of the Youth of the Church. They reported to the last General Assembly ninety-two congregational guilds, one Presbyterian guild, and a general guild embracing all the guilds of the Church. The work of these guilds is essentially the same as those of the Church of Scotland.

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## HOW GUILDS DIFFER FROM SOCIETIES OF CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOUR.

It is clear that the guilds of the Church of Scotland differ from the Societies of Christian Endeavour in several important particulars: 1. They are strictly parish or congregational guilds, not only within the geographical limits of the local church, as the Societies of Christian Endeavour, but also within the organization of the local church itself. The officers of the congregation are not honorary members, but real members, and also directing and governing members. The congregational guild is thus one of the arms of the parish, as much so as the church prayer-meeting or pastor's Bible class, and even more so than the American Sunday-school. For the American Sunday school is often only nominally a part of the church, but really in many cases independent of the pastor and officers of the church, electing its own officers without their knowledge or consent. The parish guild in the Churches of Scotland is the church itself, organized under its own officers for Christian work.

2. The Societies of Christian Endeavour are united with other societies in an undenominational union. This has the advantage of promoting the spirit of good-fellowship between the different denominations. The guilds of the Churches of Scotland have a Presbyterian union. All the guilds of the churches of the Presbytery are united together in a union. Thus the ecclesiastical advantage is gained and the closer union of workers of the same faith and order, working in entire harmony with the Presbytery. The greatest advantage in this. The...

guilds have been organized to constitute a Presbyterian union, the guild system extends with wonderful rapidity into churches, that have never thought of any kind of association before. Furthermore, when the influence of the Presbytery is given in favour of the guild organization, the guild organization becomes a recognized part of the work of the Church.

3. But the advantages of this Presbyterian union culminate in the training of Christian workers. It is difficult, if not impossible, to train Christian workers in congregational or parish guilds. But if they can be united into Presbyterian unions under the direction of Presbyteries or other ecclesiastical bodies, then the workers may be trained by general co-operation and the employment of competent teachers, lectures, text-books, examinations, and the like. This method of training is at work in Scotland, but it is easy to see that it might be made much more efficient and thorough. It is possible to train Christian workers in an undenominational union; but as things now are, and are likely to continue to be for some time at least, it is better for the Christian workers of each denomination to be trained by themselves. It would be possible to combine a certain number for training in undenominational unions; but the great majority of Christian workers who need training would keep away, or be kept away, from such undenominational training, partly because they need training for special work in the forms and methods and doctrines of their own denomination, and partly because of the colourless character of a teaching which many think is calculated to undermine the efficiency of the organized Churches of Christ. If denominational unions of this kind were organized with denominational training, it would not be difficult to cultivate the spirit of union by occasional exchanges of lectures and joint meetings.

4. Another advantage of the Presbyterian unions is that these may constitute a sort of exchange for Christian workers. In this way the weak churches and mission stations may be aided by Christian workers from stronger churches. Such an exchange is greatly needed, especially in our large cities, and also between our large cities themselves and their own suburbs.

5. Another advantage of the parish guild is its flexibility and comprehensiveness. There are two difficulties in our churches at the present time: (1.) The associations are too special. Zealous ladies and gentlemen become in-

terested in certain important matters, and make them a hobby, and organize associations for the promotion of these special objects. Unless there is a sufficient number of zealous persons interested in a variety of objects, some one or more special objects will absorb the attention of a congregation, and other objects of as great, and even greater, interest, will be overlooked or forgotten. If, however, the congregation be large, and there are many enthusiasts in it, there will be several rival associations contending for the mastery. Now the parish guild overcomes both of these evils. Its design is to organize and train Christian workers, and to direct in all forms of Christian work. It covers the denominational work within the parish, and in the relation of the parish to the greater missionary work of the denomination.

It also covers the undenominational work. The guilds of the Church of Scotland are essentially fellowship guilds. The second most prominent feature is the literary branch. All must unite in fellowship and the more specific Christian work; but only a portion will engage in the literary work. There are also singing clubs, Bible classes, white cross branches, temperance branches, athletic clubs. Indeed every form of Christian, social, benevolent, and physical culture may come within the sphere of the parish guild. These are not so many separate and rival organizations, but branches of one organization, so that the unity in the guild does not prevent the variety of the interest. This gives freedom to some to extend the operations of the guild into the social, the literary, and the physical culture, at the same time enables others to confine it to the strictly religious work of the Church.

It will be evident that the guild system of the Churches in Scotland is an advance upon anything that we have yet organized in America. I think that it would be of immense service to American Christianity if each denomination would organize such guilds in all its churches, and associate them in unions in accordance with its own ecclesiastical forms.

## THE GUILD OF Y.M.C.A. AND S.C.E.

But some are asking what then will become of the Young Men's Christian Association and the Society of Christian Endeavour?

Young Men's Christian Association and the Society of Christian Endeavour will only be favourable. If there are any who think that these undenominational societies are destined to break down and destroy the Protestant denominations, the parish guilds will certainly prevent such a ruin. But if those who have a correct understanding of the relation of these societies to the Protestant churches, there need be no difficulty in the parish guild. It seems to me that it will be the work of the parish guild to organize and direct the Christian workers in the parish. It will be the work of the denominational unions to train the Christian workers, and direct and help them by larger experience and counsel. It can only be for the advantage of the Young Men's Christian Association and the Society of Christian Endeavour that all these Christian workers should be organized and trained. The Society of Christian Endeavour is an undenominational union, with which the parish guilds may unite with perfect freedom. The Society of Christian Endeavour in the congregations would be transformed into parish guilds, but they would continue their fellowship with the Society of Christian Endeavour. The organization of an increased number of parish guilds can only be helpful to the undenominational union,—unless that union is ambitious to control the Christian workers in the denominations, and would regard an ecclesiastical union of the guilds as a rival. If there be any such feeling in the general organization of the Society of Christian Endeavour, its death is sure, and the quicker it dies the better. But I have never heard or supposed that it had any other aim than to promote the best work for Christ and His Church. The Society of Christian Endeavour would thus have a grand work before it, as an undenominational exchange for Christian workers.

The Young Men's Christian Association has a work of its own, outside of the limits of Churches. There is little doubt that it sometimes unintentionally encroaches on the work of the local churches, and gives annoyance to Christian pastors and ecclesiastical authorities. But such cases of friction are less than one would be likely to expect. That they are so few is an evidence of the great efforts that are put forth to avoid friction. The work of the parish guild can only be helpful to the Young Men's Christian Association, for it furnishes them a much larger number of trained workers. A

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