

It is to be hoped that the denominational colleges will see their opportunity to hold that place far to the front, which now lapses to them by act of big universities in Gotham and at the Hub. Even if many of the smaller colleges fail to appreciate the altogether unlooked for and really absurd invitation which they have received to take the lead in liberal education, it cannot be but that ministerial students who are able to go through college will be eager for the opportunity which their calling now has of regaining the pre-eminence in scholarship and mental discipline which was once conceded to it.—Watchman.

Hearing a Sermon.

In order to get the most out of a sermon we should come to the service with a receptive mind and tender heart. To bring a thoughtless mind and cold heart to the hearing of a sermon is like casting good seed upon hard and dry ground, in which it cannot hide itself. Thus when our hearts are hungry and seeking some truth to help us in life, then the most common hymn or prayer or sermon will be full of pearls for us.

The hearer should come prepared for the sermon, as well as the preacher come prepared with the sermon. The trouble too frequently is that persons come to the service expecting the preacher to prepare both them and the sermon. They come with thoughtless minds, expecting to be made to think, and with cold hearts, expecting to be warmed; or, to use an old adage, "The preacher must find both the sermon and ears."

Come to the service looking for some special help. The seeking soul has a quickened perception. When one is looking with open eyes for flowers in the field, he sees a hundred where the unseeking walker discovers one. Most persons can testify that very able sermons have been dull and without profit to them when they have heard them seeking no help, but the most ordinary preaching and the most commonplace sermon has been full of strength and comfort when they have heard it with a seeking heart. The purpose of the soul, when it listens to a sermon, decides how much we get out of it.

Think about it. To think about a sermon makes it more to us. Many sermons are only heard. We listen to them as to the rattle of wheels as they pass upon the street, and when the sound is gone the sermon is gone. Let the truth which the sermon has cast into the mind be silently thought over, held in the closet of the soul for a while in meditation, and it will become a part of the mind.

Talk it over. To talk over a sermon recalls it and reproduces it, and it becomes a kind of second sermon, a kind of review, and reviews are necessary to the greatest benefit in any study. Do not criticize the sermon, for that will destroy the good it was intended to do; but tell, one to the other, which part most interested or most helped you. Sometimes a good social meeting is one in which the last Sunday's sermon was talked over and prayed over. Ask the children to tell how much they remember, and have the parents do the same. A social discussion of the leading thoughts of a sermon leads to new thoughts. A good sermon is one which causes the hearer to think, and to talk over a sermon has the same effect.

Every Christian audience is a kind of class in religious instruction, and every preacher or lecturer, and every student knows that the notebook is one of the most important helps in the lecture room. We recently saw a notebook of sermons preached years ago and taken by a then young girl. It made sermon-hearing a new thing to her. It fixed her mind upon the truth, it helped her to remember the truth, and it became a source of delight in after years.

Lastly, take at least one thought of the sermon, and try to live it out for one day. Practice it. Reproduce it in your life, and that attempt will magnify the sermon—for it must be a very poor sermon which has not at least one good suggestion.

It has been said that "a sermon is never done until it is lived by those who heard it," as the life of a seed is not finished till it is reproduced by the soil which has received it. We know not how like a grain of mustard seed one thought is till we let it into our souls and feel its influence on our lives. Remember, we never know when a truth will find its way into our hearts unless we listen; and as we listen, all unexpected some common truth will lodge in our minds. Therefore always look at the preacher, for a respectful hearer helps the preacher and helps himself. With a receptive, seeking, thinking, confessing, recording, and practicing soul, the commonest sermon becomes very uncommon in its results.—Christian Endeavor World.

Anti.

Of course, as Christian people, we are against the sins and evils that corrupt and affect the world all about us. We are to manifest and assert that opposition, too, in the most thoroughgoing and effective way possible. We are, all of us, stirred up continually to discover what is the most effective way in which we may meet these evils, for

they are legion and they are very strongly entrenched and are very determined in their antagonism to what is good.

A minister once started a course of evening sermons devoted to the antagonizing of the various sins to which the people were exposed. As he proceeded, night after night, and month after month, the subjects divided and subdivided so that there seemed no possible end in sight, and he at last gave up the series. He was none the less opposed to sins, but he had changed somewhat in his ideas as to the best method of attacking them.

It is to be remembered that all possible sins are but subheads, specifications, outcroppings or manifestations of sin. So long as sin is in the soul it will be manifested in some form or other, and the form is a matter of secondary importance so long as sin itself flourishes. Unless sin is destroyed, it will continue to manifest itself. As long as a thistle is left undisturbed, it will send out its myriads of seeds, and it will be an almost endless task to follow them and gather them up and destroy them one by one. The only effective way to deal with the matter is to cut the thistle down by a blow at the root, and if this is done, there will be no seeds to ripen and be scattered. This is the Bible way of dealing with sins. While each and every form of sin is deprecated and condemned, and while we are urged to fight against every evil habit and disposition, it is impressed upon us that the heart must be purified, sin driven out, slain, destroyed, and the soul made pure by the cleansing of the Holy Spirit. Christ came to take away the sin of the world, and in so doing he takes away the sins of the world. If men were not sinners there would be no intemperance, profanity, falsehood, robbery, gambling or war in the world, and so long as men are un saved their sinfulness will show itself in some form or other, and there is no way by which it can be prevented.

Another thing to be remembered is that the surest way to get rid of sins is to have the heart made alive in Christ. There is no mechanical way of meeting evil. If, however, the soul is saved and the heart filled with purity and faith and goodness, there will be a disappearance of the evil habits. If the world is converted to God, the great sins that curse nations and the human race will disappear. A Christian man does not wish to be intemperate and profane and impure. A Christian nation will not be willing to foster and protect great, crying evils. Get the heart right with God, and the man is made right and his habits come to be right. The apple tree will bear apples. There is no way to compel a thorn tree to bear apples. We cannot make trees over, but we find that God can make men over.

Our great work as Christian people is to present Christ as the only Saviour. When his salvation comes into a heart all forms of evil will be driven out. It is like bringing a light into a dark room, thus driving out the darkness as it can be driven out in no other way. It is like making a fire in a cold room. You cannot shovel out the cold or blow it out, or push it out, but before the fire it disappears. So before the power of the new life in the soul and in the world, evil habits and sinful practices must disappear. Our hope is in the Gospel of Christ and the power of God's Holy Spirit.—Her. & Pres.

Platform Ethics

It not infrequently happens that public speakers violate all the proprieties of a public meeting, and spoil their welcome as guests of the audience to which they speak, by transgressing certain limits which have previously been fixed for them. This is done usually in two ways, by encroachment either upon the assumed subject of another speaker, or upon his time.

Now, in plain words, both of these transgressions fall under the ban of the Eighth Commandment. No public speaker has a right to another man's time or his subject, any more than to his purse or his clothes. And it is the duty of the prevailing officer to see that no such theft is perpetrated under his jurisdiction. There is just as much reason for being prompt and honest in the conduct of a public meeting, as for the exercise of those virtues elsewhere. The chairman who fails as to his duty in this respect shows himself unfitted for the position to which he has been chosen. He is the servant of the audience to see that their expectations, based upon a published programme, are fully carried out. No matter what the cost may be, he should make the way of these transgressors hard. Speakers who know that they are limited in time have no right to presume upon the elasticity of a programme or the forbearance of the presiding officer. They do not know what duties and engagements other speakers who are to follow them, may have. Their offense is all the more heinous when, as usually happens, directly in front of them is the huge dial of a clock, whose hands plainly indicate when it is time for them to sit down.

However much speakers may be hurt in feeling by the attention which is called to this transgression on their part, the long suffering audience will be grateful for the enforcement of the time schedule in the circumstances we are considering. It makes a vast difference whether one stands upon the platform, or sits in the audience,

To know how to let go, to stop when one is done, to cut off rather than taper off—this is an art which should be cultivated by every public speaker. As "Keynote" once said in the Examiner, "say your best things first, and then stop." But at a public meeting, when others are to speak after you, stop the instant your time is up, whether all your best things have been said or not. Nobody will know what brilliant things you have left unsaid; but what is better, your hearers will be happily conscious that you have not exceeded your time. Would it not be well for the speakers at our coming State Conventions to bear these suggestions in mind?—Examiner.

Intercessory Prayer.

The instinct of intercession must have awakened in every mother's heart when she first looked upon the helplessness of her child. It is the friend's resort in absence. It is the Christian's opportunity. It was the utterance of Christ's love. It sums up human brotherhood and divine co-operation. God will not be alone in his beneficence. He invites us to make requests, to his thoughts of need and danger, to consider his problems of redemption and supply.

The province of intercession far transcends the boundary of personal relations. Its field is the world. Just so far as knowledge grows and love of Christ constrains, the lives of others come within the circle of our prayers. If the father's heart in Abraham melts for his son and he cries, "O, that Ishmael might live before thee!" so also the fate which hung over a great and wicked city moves his heart to pity and prayer.

It was God's choice of man for partnership which gave Abraham courage for intercession; and God did not pass sentence upon Sodom till he had met and satisfied the sense of justice in his friend. Here is a hint for our petitions. We need not fear to outdo God in willingness to help or save. Our prayers are contributions to that fellow-working which aims at the upbuilding of a kingdom of righteousness which is also the kingdom of God. We are free to come but we are bound to trust. Our appeal cannot rest in present satisfactions; it must reach toward the great end which God has most at heart. Our appeal is to his larger wisdom and his deeper love. That wise and loving will of God must be the ultimate and complete satisfaction of all prayer.

Our Christian life needs enlargement in this direction of intercessory prayer. Paul remembered the Philippians in every supplication. A true pastor always has his people in remembrance. A true friend finds the needs of his friend rise naturally from heart to lip in prayer. The priesthood of believers finds expression here and gains its own reward. The prayer that God will quicken others is the best petition for self-quickening. The prayer that God will raise up leaders for the church suggests our duty of personal witness-bearing. It is an opportunity which poverty may share and love can never exhaust. In using it to the full we draw closer the happy ties of fellowship with God in thought and work for man.—Congregationalist.

The Power of Encouragement.

At the battle of Waterloo, on one occasion when a party of the enemy came suddenly down upon the British, the Duke of Wellington sent for one of his officers. When the officer appeared in his presence the Duke asked him if he could take a certain battery. "Give me a shake of your conquering hand, and I will take it," replied the officer. He wound his way round the hill with a few men, and the very fact that his brave commander's eye was upon him nerved him with courage to go boldly forward and execute the duty that was assigned to him; and with some of his master's courageous spirit he soon put to flight the French.

At the Appointed Time

The child lying down to rest asked the parent to remember him in the morning and call him at the appointed time. And when the sun casts his glad beams over the earth and all nature is awakening to joy, the father withdraws the curtains and bids his child arise. So shall it be with the blessed God and His children in the glad resurrection morning. He will remember to call them at the "time appointed," and at His well-known voice they shall awake, to sleep no more.—Dr. Tait.

The New Year.

(BY R. SIMONSON)

A voice that comes to every heart, I hear;
It sounds in accents earnest, strong and clear;
"Conscience—m I," it says; to one and all;
"At every soul a door do I surely call;
"The past is gone, yet backward look I pray;
"And see what grave mistakes have marred the way;
"And profit thus by what experience shows,
"For sin, neglected, to a monster grows.
"Then forward look; the future now demands
"The fervent heart of love, and helping hands;
"The New Year beckons to the high and low;
"Gird to the fight, and trusting onward go;
"Now make resolve to live for God and right,
"Determine now to walk in Christian light."