

ADVANCE MOVEMENT.—I.

BY J. C.

An idea of the outlook in the State of California and in San Francisco may be got from a clipping from a daily paper of that city, "Wanted—a great man."

"The curse of California has been that, ever since the American occupation all attempts to educate the people and lead them into correct methods of thought have given way to blather and bull-dozing. We have proceeded on the theory of the Puritans who were said to have emigrated to Massachusetts so that they could worship God in their own way and make everybody do the same. The history of California is a history of political, social and intellectual bossism. The masses have been counted as idiotic. The plan has been to drive, not to lead them. Out of this has come a race of lying, insincere politicians, faithless office holders, clerical and collegiate frauds and humbuggery in general. False theories of government and universal cussedness have prevailed over honesty and sincere attempts to see the light. Our great men have been Harry Meiggs, Joe Palmer, Adolph Sutro, Mayor of San Francisco, and Jim Budd (Governor). What California now needs is a great man."

The two last referred to so curtly are the mayor and the governor. This year has been unusually fertile in rare and stirring events and advance movements chiefly religious and social. Noted leaders have visited the coast. Only a few of the most conspicuous can be noticed now.

In the line of mixed reforms, by which is meant, the vain effort to combine religion with political or socialistic panaceas for the ills or evils of the world, the golden rule as a sort of charm to cure or prevent the maladies of the body, social or politic, Prof. Geo. R. Herron, of Grinnell College, Iowa, made the most stirr, a nine days wonder. He gave, by invitation, a course of lectures in several cities in California. His theories are no doubt familiar to your readers. Most of the pastors and their people eagerly grasped at the new fad, chiefly those who are wide awake enough to see that the present methods and means of reaching the people by the Church are an utter failure, but who have not the spiritual discernment to see that what is needed, is a return of the Church to sole reliance on the Holy Spirit to apply the old gospel to the hearts and consciences of the people. These latter, though utterly mistaken in following Herron, by forming clubs, called "Institutes of applied Christianity," (to be applied externally!) are more likely to get *some* where than the moribund, fossilized clergy though orthodox, yet embalmed in self-satisfied delusion or indifference, who stolidly ignored Herron. There was one exception. A leading pastor "showed fight," even before he arrived. Though he was backed by his deacons and the rich element of his Church and endorsed by Rev. Joseph Cook, who lectured in his Church *en route* to the Orient, and by Henry Varley, who held a series of meetings in his edifice, he was "snowed under" by the ephemeral wave of the Herron craze, which swept over the fickle populace, like a Kansas cyclone, headed by the aggressive but mistaken ministers who, like Saul, forsaken of the true God and source of help, seek counsel from the ether world spirits of the ilk of the Witch of Endor. In the line of the true and real Scriptural work, first came General Booth, of the Salvation Army, who stirred and troubled the stagnant waters of religious life by his robust, Scriptural methods of dealing with sin and its remedy. Sin had never heretofore been dealt such telling blows, not even by Sam Jones as by his Titanic strokes. Sin and hell, sin and misery are inseparably linked. The blood of Christ, the only remedy, was the gist and burden of all his gospel addresses.

In March Henry Varley, of London, now of Melbourne, Australia, landed in this city, unexpected and unknown, except by reputation, to all but a very few. He had no plans or engagements, but was inclined to hire a hall for gospel meetings. He is not

dependent on the people he ministers to for his support, yet he does not refuse voluntary gifts to aid the work, especially the publication of his books, tracts and addresses. However, he was waited on by the clergy of Oakland and entered on a "Bible campaign." A Bible reading in the afternoon and a gospel address at night in a central church, thus moving from one to another till all sections of Oakland, Berkeley, Alameda and San Francisco have been covered in the five months since, ending with meetings in the largest hall in the city to reach the neutral or non-church element. He has just sailed for Australia, perhaps to return to work more steadily, bringing his family with him. It is quite impossible to give any adequate idea of Mr. Varley's teaching, methods, or results to those who have not heard him. For he is an Englishman of the Gladstonian type in mental calibre and manly physique and presence. He is in his sixtieth year, yet, as he claims, as vigorous as at twenty-five. Certainly he seems to have more fire and courage, as well as a deeper knowledge of the Word and a richer personal experience than when we heard him in New York, over twenty years ago, address audiences of over 15,000 in Barnum's Hippodrome. To understand the herculean task before Mr. Varley, it is needful to look at the background of the picture of the religious world here. In brief, this coast has been over-done or over-run with all sorts of evangelists, so that the churches are nauseated with them. The climax of distrust and disgust was reached with the re-action after the collapse of the revival bubble by Rev. B. Fay Mills, who three years ago engineered the biggest boom and fraud that ever scourged this long and much-afflicted with humbug state, not excepting the wild craze of fanaticism led by the Trance evangelist, Mrs. Woodworth, whose "prophecy" of the destruction of these cities by a flood in 1890, with scores of prostrations into an unconscious state, under the "power" in her meetings in a big tent, caused a cyclone of demoniacal frenzy in Oakland and San Francisco.

Here was a clumsy delusion of Satan, a drag-net to catch the gullible masses. His was a latter day masterpiece of the devil to deceive if possible the very elect, coming as an angel of light (2 Cor. xi. 13-15), hoodwinking the whole of the ministers and church people generally of these cities. God enabled a very few to see through the counterfeit at that time. Time, however, has opened the eyes of most of the pastors. Of the thousands of the professed converts most have gone their own way, and it would be much better for the churches if every last one would levant too. As an evidence of the revulsion of feeling, a Presbyterian minister recently read a paper on Mill's work before the Ministers' Union, in which, among other strong terms, it was referred to as a calamity, and the paper received the unanimous approval of all present.

Another barrier in the way of Scriptural teaching is the erroneous doctrines held as truth by many earnest, Christian people, chiefly those in the so-called holiness movement, with its subtle errors of instantaneous sanctification and eradication of the carnal nature, there being little teaching hitherto on the Scriptural view of holiness. Still another deadly hindrance is the wide diffusion of specious or false doctrines in the realm of eschatology, among ministers and Christians, such as soul-sleeping, annihilation of the wicked, Restorationism, a second probation, and other spawn of the pit, that have come up like the frogs of Egypt invading every sect or fold.

Of course it passes without saying that general indifference to religious matters, varied outbreaking sin of all kinds, are increasing here as elsewhere at a headlong rate. This obstacle, though perhaps much greater here, is not peculiar to California, though in the line of general all-round depravity, the press, the politicians, prostitution, intemperance, Sabbath breaking, divorces, dead-formalism in the churches, Mr. Varley places this city at the bottom of all in Christian lands.

MONDAY MUSINGS.

BY A CITY PASTOR.

Yesterday was my communion Sunday, and truly it was a day of fellowship. It was what a communion-tide ought to be, a time of refreshing, of cheer and hopefulness, and newness of life. My view concerning the communion has undergone much change since the days of boyhood. In those days I was afraid of it. It seemed to me a shining goal, toward which only the shining ones had any right to press, and whose attainment was the pledge of the soul's perfection. From the side seats of my father's church, I looked on with awe, and for the time being the occupants of the centre pews were to me the spirits of just men made perfect, while the elders ranked with the cherubim and seraphim. For years, I feared to enter in, and even when I did, my first communion was impaired to me by the old-time awe, which led me to look for the ideal in myself, rather than in Him whose death it was my sacred privilege to join in celebrating. That unwholesome fear has, in great measure at least, passed away. To the quarterly communion, I now look forward with almost impatient joy. It is no longer the goal; it is the spring by the wayside, of whose life-giving waters the weary pilgrims may freely drink, their faces still turned toward the heavenly Jerusalem. It is no longer the end; it is a means whereby those who wait upon the Lord may renew their strength. It is no longer the prize of perfection; it is the privilege of those who, sin-stained and heavy laden, do yet plod along the narrow way which leads to the golden gates that open on the place beyond. It was in the full realization of these precious aspects of the communion, that I turned yesterday toward the "supper in the house beautiful." And I am gladdened this morning as I reflect on the mellow memories of that service past. While my trusty elders passed the emblems to the hushed and reverent worshippers, I bethought myself of the beauty in which the whole situation seemed to be clad. The day had all the matchless splendour of autumn's gentle glory; the world seemed far away, and spirit seemed to reign. What tragedy in each life before me I knew not; what long-continued war with sin, I might not know; what silent prayer, the unseen messenger of hearts distressed, might even then be winging its way to God, for strength against the future days, when from the mount illumined, the soul should descend into the dusty plain! What soul-filled memories of kindred forms, once visible by their side in these very pews, but now standing in God's sight, and walking in His presence with acceptance forever; what unspoken covenant between the soul and God; what vision of unseen realities, what conceptions of the soul's great majesty, what glimpses of its coming glory, when, disenthralled, it shall sit in the heavenly place with those who do forever gaze upon the life indeed! It was a pregnant hour, the one to which I have just referred. How vocal silence is, if one only knows how to listen! I felt the grandeur of the ministry, because I felt the wondrous dignity of the souls into whose lives our own are pouring forth their sacred tide; and I felt hope for minister and people alike, since Christ has deemed us worthy of Himself, and since we too, with all our imperfections and our sin, yet deem that gift the greatest, and treasure still with loving hearts the sign and seal which speak the love of His heart.

LILLIAN BLAUVELT.

Mme. Lillian Blauvelt, the celebrated American concert soprano, will sing at the grand concert in Massey Hall on November 14th. The New York Musical Courier speaks of her as follows: "Lillian Blauvelt sang deliciously one of her proprietary boleros—Van der Stucken's 'Fallah Fallah,' which she is bound to bring into favor—and a charming song by Bouhy, 'Ave Printemps.' She has the throat of the lark. Her voice has grown bigger, but she retains the same luscious freshness and has the same spontaneous ring in her utterance which first made her here a marked soprano. She is, indeed, our little concert Patti, and not unlike the diva in her pretty piquant personnel. Encores, and again encores, and storms of applause were her portion."

The other artists who will appear at the same concert are: Mme. Isidor Klein, soprano; Dr. Carl E. Dufft, basso; and Mr. H. M. Field, pianist. The subscribers' list is at Messrs. Gourlay, Winter and Leeming, 188 Yonge St.

Christian Endeavor.

REJECTING CHRIST; THE CONSEQUENCES.

REV. W. S. MCTAVISH, B.D., DESERONTO.

Nov. 17.—Matt. x. 11-15, 32, 33.

It is well at the outset to understand that Christ is rejected whenever His Gospel is slighted and whenever His invitations are neglected or declined. Overtures of mercy may be found in a religious book; they may be met with in the Bible itself; they may be heard from the lips of the preacher or they may fall from a loving friend, but however they come, Christ is rejected when they are refused. Christ may be rejected by one individual in one way and by another in another.

It would seem as if Felix rejected Him very blandly, for he said to Paul: "Go thy way for this time and when I have a convenient season I will call for thee" (Acts xxiv. 25). It may be that Felix did not dream that he was rejecting Christ when he dealt thus with Paul, nevertheless that is the only construction we can put upon his conduct. The rich young ruler rejected Christ very sorrowfully. Christ laid down certain terms and conditions to him, but he considered them too hard and so he turned his back upon Christ. "He went away sorrowful for he had great possessions" (Matt. xix. 22). Some reject Christ with shame and fear. "Among the chief rulers many believed on Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue, for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John xii. 42, 43). It is to be feared that a great many young people like those chief rulers decline now to make a profession of Christianity because of the fear of ridicule. They believe that Christ is entitled to all honor, they know that He is the only Saviour for sinners; they know that there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby they can be saved. And yet they are so afraid of what evil companions may say that they will not come out and confess Him. They love the praise of men more than the praise of God. Some again reject Christ disdainfully. When He was expostulating with the Jews on one occasion, some of them said, "He hath a devil and is mad; why hear ye Him?" (John x. 20). There are some infidels to-day who speak in a similar disrespectful way of Christ. They reject His word, they look with some degree of contempt upon those who follow Him and they belittle the efforts of the Church to proclaim His name unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

But it matters not how Christ is rejected, whether blandly or sorrowfully or hesitatingly or disdainfully, the simple fact is that He is rejected, and those who decline under any pretext to accept Him and His offers of mercy must suffer the consequences of their sin and folly.

What are the consequences? Perhaps it may be as well to let the Bible speak for itself on this point. "Because when I called and ye refused," etc. (Prov. i. 24). "Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way and ye shall seek Me and shall die in your sins; whither I go ye cannot come" (John viii. 21-23). "If we deny Him, He also will deny us" (II. Tim. ii. 12). "For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when He shall come in His own glory and in His Father's and of the holy angels" (Luke ix. 26; Mark viii. 38). Here is a question which neither men nor devils, nor angels can answer: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

Beware that ye do not slight the gospel, whose threatenings are more to be dreaded than those of the law; inasmuch as the gospel is a revelation of a higher nature, and has been confirmed by more striking and more abundant miracles, wrought by divine power.—Professor Stuart.