

## PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

### WINDOWS IN SERMONS.

Quaint Thomas Fuller says. "Reasons are the pillars of the fabric of a sermon; but similitudes are the windows which give the best light." The comparison is very happy and suggestive. Often when didactic speech fails to enlighten our hearers, we may make them see our meaning by opening a window and letting in the pleasant light of analogy. To every preacher of righteousness as well as to Noah there comes the direction, "A window shalt thou make in the ark." You may go round about with laborious definitions and explanations and yet leave your hearers in the dark, but a thoroughly suitable metaphor will wonderfully clear the sense. There should, if possible, be one good metaphor in the shortest address, even as Ezekiel, in his vision of the temple, saw that even to the little chambers there were windows suitable to their size.

Windows greatly add to the pleasure and agreeableness of a habitation, and so do illustrations make a sermon pleasurable and interesting. A windowless chamber attracts no one. Our congregations hear us with pleasure when we give them a fair measure of imagery; when an anecdote is being told they rest, take breath, and give play to their imaginations, and thus prepare themselves for the sterner work which lies before them in listening to our profounder expositions. Even the little children open their eyes and ears, and a smile brightens up their faces; for they, too, rejoice in the light which streams in through our windows.

Every architect will tell you that he looks upon his windows as an opportunity for introducing ornament into his design. Of course ornament is not the main point to be considered, but still many little excellences go to make up perfection, and this is one of the many, and therefore it should not be overlooked. When Wisdom built her house she hewed out seven pillars for glory and for beauty as well as for the support of the structure; and shall we think that the meanest hovel is good enough for "the beauty of holiness?" Truth is a king's daughter, and her raiment should be of wrought gold; her house is a palace, and it should be adorned with "windows of agate and gates of carbuncle."

Illustrations tend to enliven and quicken the attention of an audience. Windows, when they will open, which, alas, is not often the case in our places of worship, are a great blessing, by refreshing and reviving the audience with a little pure air, and enlivening the poor mortals who have been rendered sleepy by the stagnant atmosphere of the meeting-house. A window should, according to its name, be a wind door, and admit the wind to refresh the audience; even so an original figure, a noble image, a quaint comparison, a rich allegory, should open upon the hearers a stream of happy thought, which will pass over them like a life-giving breeze, arousing them from their apathy, and quickening their faculties to receive the truth. Those who are accustomed to the soporific sermonizings of dignified divines would marvel greatly if they could see the enthusiasm and lively delight with which congregations listen to speech through which there blows a breeze of happy, natural illustration.

While we thus commend illustrations for necessary uses, it must be remembered that they are not the strength of a sermon any more than a window is the strength of a house; and for this reason, among others, they should not be too numerous. Too many openings for light may seriously detract from the stability of a building. A glass house is not the most comfortable of abodes, and, besides suffering from other inconveniences, it is very tempting to stone-throwers. When a critical adversary attacks our metaphors he makes short work of them. To friendly minds images are arguments, but to opponents they are opportunities for attack; the enemy climbs up by the window. Comparisons are swords with two edges which cut both ways; and frequently what seems a sharp and telling illustration may be wittily turned against you, so as to cause a laugh at your expense; therefore do not rely upon your metaphors and parables.

It is scarcely necessary to add that illustrations must never be low or mean. They may not be high-flown, but they should always be in good taste. They may be homely, and yet most beautifully; but rough and coarse they never should be. A house is dis-

honoured by having dirty windows, with panes cobwebbed and begrimed, and here and there patched with brown paper, or stuffed up with rags; such windows are the insignia of a hovel rather than a house. About our illustrations there must never be even the slightest trace of taint; nor the suspicion of anything that would shock the most delicate modesty. We like not that window out of which Jezebel is looking. Like the bells upon the horses, our lightest expressions must be holiness unto the Lord. We will gather our flowers always and only from Emmanuel's land, and Jesus himself shall be their savour and sweetness; so that when He lingers at the lattice to hear us speak of himself He may say, "Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue."—*C. H. Spurgeon, in "Sword and Trowel."*

### SOCIAL DRINKING.

A few weeks ago, a notable company of gentlemen assembled in the ample parlours of the venerable and much beloved William E. Dodge in this city to listen to an essay, by Judge Noah Davis, on the relations of crime to the habit of intemperate drinking. The company was notable for its respectability, its number of public men, and the further fact that it contained many who were well known to be wine-drinkers,—unattached to any temperance organization. No one could have listened to Judge Davis' disclosure of the facts of his subject without the conviction that it was a subject worthy the attention of every philanthropist, every political economist, and every well-wisher of society present, whether temperance men or not. These facts, gathered from many quarters, and from the best authorities, were most significant in fastening upon the use of alcohol the responsibility for most of the crimes and poverty of society. Some of them were astounding, even to temperance men themselves, and there were none present, we presume, who did not feel that Judge Davis had done a rare favour to the cause of temperance in thus putting into its service his resources of knowledge and his persuasive voice. How many were convinced by the facts detailed that evening that they ought to give up the habit of social drinking, we cannot tell. The probabilities are that none were so moved, for this habit of social drinking, or rather the considerations that go with it, are very despotic. The idea that a man cannot be hospitable without the offer of wine to his guests is so fixed in the minds of most well-to-do people in this city that they will permit no consideration to interfere with it. People in the country, in the ordinary walks of life, have no conception of the despotic character of this idea. There are literally thousands of respectable men in New York who would consider their character and social standing seriously compromised by giving a dinner to a company of ladies and gentlemen without the offer of wine. It is not that they care for it themselves, particularly. It is quite possible, or likely, indeed, that they would be glad, for many reasons, to banish the wine-cup from their tables, but they do not dare to do it. It is also true that such is the power of this idea upon many temperance men that they refrain altogether from giving dinners, lest their guests should feel the omission of wine to be a hardship and an outrage upon the customs of common hospitality.

We have called these things to notice for a special reason. The company of wine-drinkers who made up so large a portion of the number that filled Mr. Dodge's rooms on the occasion referred to must have been profoundly impressed by the revelations and arguments of Judge Davis. They could not have failed to feel that by these revelations they had been brought face to face with a great duty,—not, perhaps, the duty of stopping social drinking, and all responsible connection with it, but the duty of doing something to seal the fountains of this drink which has contributed so largely to the spread of crime and poverty and misery. A man must, indeed, be a brute who can contemplate the facts of intemperance without being moved to remedy them. They are too horrible to contemplate long at a time, and every good citizen must feel that the world cannot improve until, in some measure, the supplies of drink are dried up.

Our reason for writing this article is to call attention to the fact that there is something about this habit of social wine-drinking that kills the motives to work for temperance among those who suffer by coarse and destructive habits of drink. Temperance is very rarely directly laboured for by those who drink wine.

As a rule, with almost no exceptions at all, the man who drinks wine with his dinner does not undertake any work to keep his humble neighbours temperate. As a rule, too, the wine-drinking clergyman says nothing about intemperance in his pulpit, when it is demonstrably the most terrible scourge that afflicts the world. There seems to be something in the touch of wine that paralyzes the ministerial tongue, on the topic of drink.

We fully understand the power of social influence to hold to the wine cup as the symbol of hospitality. It is one of the most relentless despotisms from which the world suffers, and exactly here is its worst result. We do not suppose that a very large number of drunkards are made by wine drunk at the table, in respectable homes. There is a percentage of intemperate men made undoubtedly here, but perhaps the worst social result that comes of this habit is its paralyzing effect upon reform—its paralyzing effect upon those whose judgments are convinced, and whose wishes for society are all that they should be. It is only the total abstainer who can be relied upon to work for temperance—who ever has been relied upon to work for temperance; and of Mr. Dodge's company of amiable and gentlemanly wine-drinkers, it is safe to conclude that not one will join hands with him in temperance labour—with Judge Davis' awful facts sounding in his ears—who does not first cut off his own supplies.—*J. G. Holland, in Scribner for March.*

### THE CASUISTRY OF THE CONFESSIONAL.

The mistress and the Irish cook are in colloquy. "Indade, missus, and what for should I stale from ye? I must go and tell it all to the priest. I kneel down to confess me sins; and he asks me so many questions; there's nothing in me that he doesn't find out. I daren't tell *him* a lie. I must tell him just what I took from ye, and all about it; the tay, the sugar, the coffee, and all unbeknownst to ye. He asks me jist what it was all worth; and I must tell him to a penny; for I mustn't tell a lie to *him*, ye know. 'Is that all,' he says, says he. 'Ye stop and think, and tell me ivery thing;' and his eyes look into me very sowl. And I takes care to put it high enough, to be sure of me sowl. Then he says to me, says he, 'Have ye got the money wid ye?' I says, 'Yes, Father B.' Ye know ye must have the money about ye whin ye go to confess. And thin he points up to the poor-box, hanging there before me eyes; and he says, says he, 'See that ye don't lave this house, till ye've put ivery penny of that ye stole into the box yonder, forment the post.' And I must do it, missus, just as he tells me, with his eyes looking at me so; or I go home wid a lie to the priest; and thin what's the good of confessing, and what becomes of me sowl? So what's the good to me, if I stales your sugar?"

The above was a veritable occurrence in the city of Boston, not long ago. It carries internal evidence of truth, so far as this—that an Irish servant would not be likely to originate the adroit casuistry of giving to the poor the proceeds of her pilfering. Some shrewder mind than hers started that idea. But is that the casuistry of the confessional? A certain old Book declares of the Almighty, "I hate robbery for burnt offering."—*Congregationalist.*

WE read of a town in the West which has no police or constables, and in two years has spent but seven dollars of its poor fund. It has a population of three thousand. The cause of this happy condition is in the fact that it has no liquor shops.

MEN are habitually striving after place and power, as if there was happiness in being great and distinguished. If we read history or scrutinize the lives we see in our own day, we will conclude that the chief misery of the world is lodged in those who have reached public elevation.

YOU are to find Christian joy in your duties in the family, and in your duties outside of the family; in your every-day life at home and in society. The great truths of God's love, of the redeeming power of the Holy Ghost, of the watchfulness of God over men, and of his helpfulness toward them, are to have such an effect on your mind that when you enter upon your daily tasks you shall have power of hope in you so that you can extract joy from common things. There is where you must get your joy—in nature; in society; in social intercourse; in all things. Paul said he rejoiced even in infirmities.