

"Go ... .. speak ... .. to the people ALL the words of this Life."

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POETRY.

WHAT CAN I DO TO-DAY?

What can I do to day? Not praise to win, or glory to attain; Not gold, or ease, or power, or love to gain. Or pleasure gay; But to impart Joy to some stricken heart, To send a heaven-born ray Of hope, some sad, despairing Soul to cheer— To lift some weighing doubt, Make truth more clear, Dispel some dawning fear, To lull some pain, Bring to the fold again, Some lamb astray: To brighten life for some one, Now and here, This let me do to-day.

—A. R. W., from the Altruist.

SELECTIONS.

CHURCHES OF THE CITY.

NO. 98—CHURCH OF CHRIST.

HISTORY OF THE DISCIPLES, OR CHRISTIANS, WHO AIM TO REPRISTINATE THE CHURCH—ALL ABOUT THEIR WORK IN TORONTO.

The Church of Christ on Denison Avenue, near Queen, is a congregation of a large body of people known in the religious world as "Disciples of Christ" or "Christians." As the Disciples are misunderstood in some localities, the following statement is made for the sake of information. They are most numerous in the States and Canada, where they number over 600,000 communicants, with over 3,000 congregations and over 4,000 ordained ministers. There are many congregations in Scotland, England, Ireland and Australia. In the States they support more than forty colleges, with several universities and numerous Bible schools for the education and training of young men for the ministry. They have some of the ablest religious journals of the day, notably the Christian Standard, of Cincinnati.

The Disciples are an active missionary people, supporting through their Foreign Board missionaries in China, India, Japan, Turkey, Denmark and Jamaica, with several evangelists in England.

THE DISTINCTIVE AIM OF THE DISCIPLES

is to advocate the unity of the Church on the basis of the Scriptures alone. The origin of their movement was a protest against strife and divisions among Christians and their consequent inefficiency in evangelizing the world. They have consistently and successfully maintained the position that "the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants." They maintain that the Scriptures are an all-sufficient rule of faith and practice to the exclusion of all human standards of faith as tests of orthodoxy. But they hold that the Old Testament was of authority among Jews under the Old Covenant, and "is essential to a proper understanding of the New, and contains valuable lessons in righteousness which are precious under all dispensations," and that the New Testament is of authority among Christians. This position "allows nothing to be received into the faith and worship of the church or to be made a term of communion among Christians that is not as old as the New Testament."

It goes back of all entanglements of tradition and opinion, and "takes up things as the apostles gave them and left them." It seeks a restoration of the church in its faith, its ordinances and its fruits as we see it in the beginning. On this position as to faith and fellowship, they say: "Where the Scriptures speak we speak, and where they are silent we are silent."

The Disciples recognize the fact that there are people of God in all denominations, and rejoice in the spread of truth and in the good accomplished by them, and seek to co-operate with all Christians as far as they can in extending the reign of Christ.

But they insist, as do the Scriptures, that divisions and schisms in the Body of Christ are a hindrance to the evangelization of the world; that unity and peace are essential to the realiza-

tion of the church in the divine conception, and until unity is restored the work of the church will not be attained.

IN EVANGELIZING THE WORLD.

The things that divide are human standards and denominationalisms; the things in which all can agree are the Scriptures and what they command. On this Bible position the Disciples agree with all evangelical Christians in maintaining the Divinity and the exalted character and office of Jesus Christ. The Bible makes the church and not sects, a divine institution. It asks obedience to Christ, and not to church authority. It may require the giving up of love of party and prejudice, but it will not require the loss of conscience to seek a Christian union in Christ alone.

BAPTISM MUST BE BY IMMERSION.

This is the position of the Disciples on the matter of church unity and its rule of faith. With regard to baptism they hold that this was the Apostolic Catholic baptism as all evangelical people concede. It is recognized now as catholic, while sprinkling is not, and it can be accepted by all without yielding of conscience by any. The Disciples hold the Lord's Supper, not as a sacrament, but as a memorial celebration of the Lord's death on every Lord's Day. The Bible name of Disciple or Christian—and not a denominational name—is to be worn by all believers.

Another article of their creed states:—"It may be possible to unite men in the faith and love of Jesus, the Christ, so as to have one common brotherhood in all the earth inspired by a common faith, and hope and love; but it is not possible to establish a catholic brotherhood on any creed of man's devising." Bible things should be called by Bible names. It has been well said, "when an individual is unable to express his religious sentiments without using unscriptural expressions it is prima facie evidence that his views are not in the Bible."

"If Christ were installed again in all His divine authority in the church from which He has been largely excluded by the teaching of men it would soon be healed of all division and cleansed of all tradition."

THEIR FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

The government of the church among Disciples is congregational, being under the care of a presbytery or eldership chosen and set apart for this work. But for the purpose of evangelization and mission work at home and abroad they have district, State or provincial and general conventions and organizations through which the churches co-operate.

The Church of Christ, on Denison Avenue, was organized with eleven members in February, 1882, by Elder James Kilgour, of Guelph. It met at first in Occident Hall on Sundays, while the prayer-meeting met from house to house. It struggled for several years under the usual discouragements incident to mission work under peculiar hindrances. It depended at first largely upon members within itself for ministrations and edification and with help somewhat irregularly given by preachers as they could be obtained. In February, 1886, with a membership of forty-six the congregation moved to the present church house on Denison Avenue where it became better known and its influence more widely extended.

In June, 1887, James Lédiard, the evangelist in the employ of the Ontario co-operation, began preaching for the congregation. His services were very valuable in unifying and strengthening the church. In December, 1887, J. R. Gaff, A. M., of Philadelphia, Pa., was called from the pastorate of the Fourth Christian Church of that city to become its minister and began work in January, 1888. The church was re-organized in its official Board and its methods of work enlarged. The membership of the church, which was then 98, has increased to 139. A deep and growing interest is felt in the congregation, and persons are being regularly added. The church is

UNDER THE OVERSIGHT OF AN ELDERSHIP,

of which the minister is president. The official Board meets once a month, and the work of the congregation is divided among committees. The Board consists at present of James Menzies, G. J. Barclay, Wm. Forrester, Dr. James McCullough, W. B. Malcolm, J. R. Gaff, as elders, and

W. J. Forrester, Thos. Harris, Reuben Butchart, Jas. Stewart and C. C. Pomeroy, deacons.

The song service of the congregation is led by a choir and precentor, and the worship is maintained in simplicity. In raising money for home service and missions the injunction of the Apostle is followed in weekly contributions, and giving is counted a religious service.

The prayer meeting is held on Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock and is well attended. A meeting for Bible study and inquiry is held every Thursday evening at 8 o'clock Church street. There is an interesting Sunday-school in connection with the church, the care of which is under the official Board of the church together with the officers and teachers of the school. The increasing interests of the congregation demand a new and more favorably situated house of worship, and the congregation is now at work in that direction, and it is hoped will soon attain its desire.—Toronto Telegram.

SENSATIONALISM, WHAT IS IT?

Sensationalism is a good, comfortable, convenient word, especially for purposes of condemnation, provided that no definition of its meaning be either given or attempted. In fact, it is as convenient, as elastic and as unknowable as the Jesuits' "proximate power" over which Pascal makes such delicious, but to the victims, such exhorting fun. If left undefined it is as handy a brick-bat as any preacher could desire for the purpose of throwing at the head of a more popular "brother" whom the common people may seem to hear with some measure of enthusiasm. But let every one beware of "condescending on particulars." Red-nosed Bardolph's well-known exposition of "accommodate" is alone equal to the occasion—"Accommodated; that is when a man is, as they say, accommodated; or when a man is—being—whereby—he may be thought to be accommodated, which is an excellent thing." Exactly! And so sensationalism as applied to preaching. The dictionaries tell us that it has a very intimate connection with "feeling." The staid, authoritative arbiters of taste more than hint that it is next door neighbor to folly.

A rising young Scottish preacher with the good, honest, combative name of MacNeill, who is at present carrying "Auld Reekie" by storm and threatening to become a Dr. Chalmers and Charles Spurgeon rolled into one, lately took it upon him to champion both the word and the thing, and that in the following fashion. He had for his text the story of the rich young ruler, and apropos of the incident remarked that:—

"The Gospel at the time of which the text spoke was the sensation of the hour. Nobody from top to bottom of society could be indifferent to it. To-day it was otherwise. When the pulpit lost its power, the Gospel was as salt without its savor. It was then a dull, unprofitable thing, and was just about to be numbered among the things which were. The fact was that they had taken the sensation out of the Gospel now-a-days. Sensation rightly used was a grand thing, without which they could not live. In that sense, the Gospel ought to be the sensation of the hour, and the liveliest meeting they could possibly attend ought to be, not the theatre, or the music hall, for they were as dull as ditch water, but the church. The Gospel is the beginning was a fresh, breezy, sensational thing, and that was what made it. Take the old absoluteness out of its tone and utterance and it was not worth preaching."

Is this not pretty near the size of the thing? Once grant the truth of the Gospel story and the logical conclusion must be that it will cause a pretty big sensation. If it does not the reason is evident. The unbeliever's actual salutation to a preacher after his eloquent sermon might have been somewhat brusque, but it was neither unnatural nor unfounded:—"You don't believe all that any more than I do. Why, man alive, if I believed all you have been saying I could not sleep in my bed, I could not think of anything else. I could not speak about anything else. It would haunt me in my dreams. I would button-hole every person I met to tell him about it. I'd go to the ends of the earth to repeat the facts and to tell the story. No! you don't believe it, no more do I!"—The Globe.

Why should we misknow one another, fight not against the enemy but against ourselves, from mere difference of uniform?—Carlyle.

FAITH AND FANATICISM.

Faith listens to God's voice, and follows where Scripture leads it by the hand.

Fanaticism has inward light and mysterious voices and new revelations, and scorns the sober ways, the good old paths of the written record.

Faith compares scripture with scripture, and with docile patience gathers from its sundry places the entire mind of the Spirit. Fanaticism, when it deigns to consult the Word at all, is proud and precipitate, and pouncing on the text which serves its turn, has no tolerance for any other which would restrict or expand its meaning.

Faith has a creed of many articles, and the decalogue has ten commands. Fanaticism resolves morality into a solitary virtue, and its orthodoxy is summed up in a single tenet! Such a fanatic, had he heard on temple-roof a whisper in his ear, "Cast thyself down hence," would scarcely have hesitated to ascertain whether the voice came from a good spirit or a demon; or had he paused for a moment, and then been reminded of the promise, "For he shall give his angels charge concerning thee," he would have felt it a crime to hesitate. But he that believeth will not make such haste; and after hearing both the suggestion and the scripture proof, that great Believer to whom it was addressed held up to the proposal the torch of truth, and declared it presumptuous and heaven provoking.

Reader, try the spirits. Error is often plausible, and the most ensnaring errors are those which have an obvious resemblance to truth. Even though the outside coating is not brass but real gold, the leaden coin is none the less a counterfeit; and like the devil's temptation, wrapt up in a scripture saying. Many false doctrines come now a days with a sacred or a spiritual glamor round them, quoting texts and uttering Bible phrases. But the question is not, Who has got a text on his side? but, Who has got the Bible?—not, who can produce certain sentences torn from their connection and reft from the purpose which their connection gives them? but, looking at scripture in its integrity—having regard to its general drift, as well as to the bearing of these special passages—who is it that makes the fairest appeal to the statute book of heaven?—Dr. James Hamilton.

CHILD-SUFFERING.

DID YOU EVER THINK OF IT?

A child enjoys himself more heartily, when he does enjoy himself, than an older person does. That everybody admits. A child suffers at heart more keenly, when he does suffer at heart, than does an older person. That is not recognized by everybody. A child's power of enjoyment is made a proverb. A child's power of mental suffering is hardly thought of by the world generally. Now and then the deliberate suicide of a child because of some little disappointment to which an adult would hardly have given a second thought, startles the community, and is spoken of as a very remarkable occurrence. Yet, as a matter of fact, and as a matter of course, a child's intenser sensitiveness gives it the same added power of suffering as of enjoyment; and the little ones about us have a harder time of it in the days of their childhood than we know anything about—save as we remember our childhood, and retain more or less of its freshness in our maturer years. We say that we "take things more philosophically as we grow older;" which is only another way of saying that we grow tougher-hearted. But even if this be the case, with ourselves, let us remember that the little ones who lack our measure of philosophy deserve, therefore, a larger share of our sympathy. It is good to have the lightheartedness of a child. It is hard to have the heart-racking sorrows of a child. Children deserve our love, and they need our pity. Moreover, because children are so sensitive, they demand consideration of treatment from us all. It is a cruel thing to disregard a child's feelings. It is a perilous thing also; for children are the charge, as well as the example, of the followers of Jesus. "Whosoever shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble," says Jesus, "it were better for him if a great mill-stone was hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea."—Sunday School Times.