

A FALSE BALANCE

False balances are an abomination. This is a text that requires no argument. Few texts do. When a preacher falls under the necessity of proving his text he had better exchange or look up an old sermon. Truth enquires the way to no brain. It knows where the Min. lives, and is an old acquaintance. Sermons unfold, but do not confirm. This existed already. Balances are common. We are all weighted and registered somewhere. Sometimes correctly but not always. It frequently happens that the balances register too much or too little. They accommodate themselves to our own purpose. Few men are capable of judging themselves justly. Some have an excess of modesty, not many perhaps, but a few. Just enough to keep the word alive. But conceit is by no means the worst of faults. Conceited men are usually satisfied, which is a great deal. The trouble is we hold our balances too high. This is especially true when about to weigh ourselves. As the bard says:

"If self the wavering balance shake,
It's rarely right adjusted."

Self is a factor in all judgment. As one judges, so is he. We know a minister whose estimates of his own weight, and that of the public, is to him a source of constant perplexity. He cannot understand why others do not see the same figures upon the beam that he does. The last time we met him he had a theory which, by this time, has possibly crystallized into a fact. That is, the public had strabismus. It was wall-eyed. He was waiting for the 'ides to arrive and lift the churches up to the same plane as himself. We would not, for an increase of salary, disillusion that brother. He is happy, so why break the spell of his enchantment.

But the balances are not always to blame. They weigh correctly, only the standard is wrong. What is the ordinary standard of life? The catechism says it is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. That is what it should be, but, unfortunately, should be and is, do not always live on the same street. The other day we buried an old friend. His life was long and full. The question most frequently asked was as to the size of his estate. An answer in dollars and cents was expected. Accordingly as the golden beam went up or down, his life was estimated as a success or failure. The good or evil that he had done was buried in his grave, and nothing left but a roll of bills. The size of the roll determined his worth. His case is one of millions. The age is given over to accumulation. It was always so, perhaps, which only makes the situation. Our want is not so much a new set of scales as a new adjustment of the ones we have. Until one can own the earth and still be poor there will not be proper judgment of life. Those who have helped the world lived by this rule. Paul counted his own life as nothing that he might advance the welfare of his fellows. He weighed things in the balances of righteousness. There is an invisible world in which we are all living. The material will grow old and die, but the spiritual will live forever. A man's life consists not in the abundance of his possessions, but in himself.

FOR DAILY READING.

- M., Sept. 18. Home missions at heart. Rom. 9: 1-7.
T., Sept. 10. Working for them. 2 Cor. 6: 1-12.
W., Sept. 20. Giving for them. 2 Cor. 8: 1-6.
T., Sept. 21. Village endeavors. Mark 6: 1-6.
F., Sept. 22. Neighborhood missions. Mark 5: 15-20.
S., Sept. 23. For our country. Matt. 4: 23-25.
Sun., Sept. 24. Topic—The home mission work of our denomination. Matt. 9: 35-38; 10, 1-16.

WHY A TOTAL ABSTAINER?

Dr. Thomas Gauthrie gave these four reasons for being a total abstainer: "First my health is stronger; second my head is clearer; third my heart is lighter; fourth my purse is heavier." Let every young man who reads these lines adopt this principle and live by it and his life will be happier and his soul safer. There is here an argument for a strong boy, one that should hold a place in the ambition of every young man. There is here the argument of a clear brain, which no man, young or old, can neglect and make successful headway against the competitors of this age. A clear brain is as necessary as a strong body. There is here the argument of a light and joyous heart. While trouble will come to the abstainer as it must come to all mankind, yet none of those ill winds which flow from the intoxicating cup will be his, none of those sullen and melancholy hours which follow in the wake of the bacchanal. He will awake from his slumber to greet the dawn of each new day free from the humiliation of the past night and the memories of his dishonor. There is the argument of a full purse. You cannot empty your purse into the saloon-keeper's wallet and keep it in your own. If you supply his, yours must go empty. Many a magnificent fortune has been dissolved in the wine-cup, and if you are weak enough to indulge you are too weak to avoid the consequences of your indulgence.

INSCRIPTION IN A GUEST CHAMBER

A large upper chamber whose window opened toward the sun-rising. The name of the chamber was Peace.—John Bunyan.
Whoever you are, guest of an hour, I wish you well, peace be with you.—Pastor Wagner, in *The Simple Life*.

There is a sun-lit chamber
Where peace and quiet dwell;
The wearied guest finds tranquil rest
And a faith that all is well.

Who rests within that chamber
Gets healing in his soul;
God gives to His beloved ones
In sleep, and makes them whole.

Who tarries in that chamber
Goes forth with courage high;
With new-born hope, all ill to cope
Or hush a bairnie's cry.

May rest, too, be thy portion
Who tarriest in this place.
Peace without guile, and often while
Glimpse of the Father's face.
Mrs. C. B. Fisher in *Presbyterian Banner*.

EARLY PIETY

The command of God is to seek him early in life, and the promise is that he will receive and bless those who thus come to him. Youth is favorable to grace. The mind is not yet filled with worldly things, habits are not yet confirmed, associations are not yet settled. The child is more in sympathy with the finer and more spiritual things, because it is not warped and perverted by the evil that surrounds it and develops within. A life thus under the grace of God from childhood is purer and stronger in later years. It has had a solid growth, and is firm in its texture and grain. It works up into whatever it is used for with more beauty than if part was spent in sin. It is a sweeter life, for there are no memories of sinful days which left their mark on the soul. It is a life nearer to that of the Child Jesus, whose unfolding was divine.—Exchange.

In the white mansions of our God
Are the pleasures sweet and fair;
No soul that bows beneath the rod
Hath ever sorrowing there.

HOME MISSIONS

Some Bible Hints.

It would have been far easier for Jesus to have stayed in some city, such as Capernaum or Jerusalem, and established a synagogue; and if even He could not draw men to Himself, but must go to them, how much more must we! (v. 35.)

Compassion (v. 36) is the basis of all home-mission work—Christ's love for suffering men.

The fact that the sheep want no shepherd, that perhaps they have gone away on purpose from all shepherdly care, makes no difference to our Lord (v. 36).

In material husbandry the harvest is plentiful where the soil is rich and the tilling easy, but in spiritual husbandry the harvest is plentiful where the soil is poor and the tilling difficult (v. 37).

Suggestive Thoughts.

The old Puritan State of Massachusetts illustrates the need of home missions, for one-fifth of its population is made up of recently-arrived Armenians, Finns, French, Germans, Greeks, Swedes, Norwegians, Poles, and Syrians.

In Utah there are in all only about 5,300 Christians, but there are about 220,000 Mormons.

There are about 260,000 Indians in the United States, and happily, by the allotment of their lands in severalty, these are rapidly becoming merged in the body of our citizens.

In Cuba, at the close of the fourth year's work of American missionaries, there were 100 churches and preaching stations, 150 pastors and preachers, 3,500 church members, 600 candidates for membership, and 4,000 scholars in the Sunday schools.

A Few Illustrations.

The Christian women among the Sioux Indians give to missions more than one dollar each every year.

In New York City not long ago, a young Chinese girl, the daughter of a Christian mother, was sold for \$300 to a Chinaman whom she had never seen, and forced to become his wife.

In New York recently they sold a fine church building in the upper part of the city, because there were too many foreigners in the neighborhood. Then they sent the money to the board of foreign missions.—Rev. Charles Stelzle.

Love of God and love of country are the two noblest passions in a human heart; and these two unite in home missions. A man without a country is an exile in the world, and a man without God is an orphan in eternity.—Henry van Dike, D.D.

To Think About.

What do I definitely know about the home-mission work of my denomination?

Among what people in the United States is my denomination at work?

What is the present condition of home-mission work in my denomination?

PULLING TOGETHER

The heart of the interdenominational Christian Endeavor society is its union work, and every Endeavorer should contribute some thought and energy to his local union.

See that committee conferences are organized—meetings of those that are engaged in the same line of work—missionary work, for example, that they may exchange methods, and receive instruction from specialists.

Union prayer meetings may be held occasionally, when they will not interfere with local church services.

Societies may exchange leaders, and may now and then send "fraternal delegates" to the meetings of other societies.

Union socials are delightful affairs, if they are well thought out and held often enough for real acquaintance.

Union study classes—the pastors approving both themes and leaders—are great inspirations to those that take part in them.