

WHAT DOES IT SIGNIFY?

"Well, I think I will take this dress. It is more than I expected to pay, and is really too expensive, but it is so becoming and so pretty that I must have it. Besides, it is absolutely necessary to keep up appearances these days. We will manage to afford it some way."

"Is it really time for another subscription? I could not have believed it was a year since I gave the last. I see most of the ladies give only one or two dollars; I do not know why I should give five. I know the object is a very worthy one, but we are all feeling the hard times, and there are so many calls I really cannot afford it. It is hard to find money to live with these days, and any benevolence is a sacrifice."

"Well, wife, I ordered a carriage on my way up town to take us to-night. It rains, but it would not do for us to stay at home. I promised Mr. B—— we would certainly come, and everybody will expect us. It would be a great pity to disappoint ourselves and them. You can wrap up, and the enjoyment will be quite refreshing after the work of the day."

"I don't think I will go to the prayer-meeting this evening. The weather is quite disagreeable out, and I have been tramping the streets on business all day; I am really too tired to enjoy it. I suppose there will be only a few out, and our pastor will expect us, and will be disappointed, but I think my place this evening is at home."

"I declare, it is nearly midnight! Never mind, what does it signify now and then? What with good music and agreeable society the evening has passed so quickly I could not have believed it was much past ten!"

"It was too bad of our minister to have kept us so long to-night. I thought it was understood that prayer-meeting was to be only an hour long, and it is sometimes nearly an hour and a half before we are dismissed. Half-past nine is too late to be out. If the deacons would make shorter prayers, and the dominie would not have so much to say, it would be better. I believe I shall stop going if this is to be the way of it."

Has our stenographer been taking the speeches of some so-called Christian people? Have you never heard any similar? Have you ever yourself spoken or thought such? What do they signify? Much, very much. They are fearfully significant of hearts loving the world and the things of the world far more than the things of God. They are significant of money, time, affections freely bestowed on carnal self, the world's things and the world's company, and grudgingly withheld, or more grudgingly given to God and the cause of God. They are like straws floating on the surface of the stream, deeply significant of the direction in which the current of the heart's affections is flowing.

The manifest worldliness of a large portion of the Church in these days is a very serious subject, and one that demands the attention of every lover of the Lord Jesus Christ. It has been published, as said by one of our most prominent ministers, that if two-thirds of the present membership were stricken from the rolls the Church would have greater moral power in the presence of the world than it has to-day. Whether this is true or not, it cannot be gainsaid that there is very much of inconsistency in the professions of many church people, and very much of worldliness in their lives. And it is just because professing Christians have fallen under this controlling spirit of worldliness—the greed of gain, the lust of power, the ambition to make a fair show in the flesh—that they have so often fallen into grievous iniquity and brought reproach upon the cause of Christ.

It is very easy to say what the world must think of all this, but a more serious and important question is, what do we think of ourselves? The Bible says, "Where the treasure is there will the heart be also," and "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." "Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?" "If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him." "Purify your hearts, ye double minded." *Ilus. Chris. Weekly.*

"WHO SHALL ROLL AWAY THE STONE?"

That which weeping ones were saying,
Eighteen hundred years ago,
We, the same weak faith betraying,
Say in our sad hours of woe.
Looking at some trouble lying
In the dark and dread unknown,
We, too, often ask with sighing,
"Who shall roll away the stone?"

Thus with care our spirits crushing,
When they might from care be free,
And, in joyous song outgushing,
Rise in rapture, Lord, to Thee.
For, before the way was ended,
Oft we've had with joy to own
Angels have from heaven descended,
And have rolled away the stone.

Many a storm-cloud sweeping o'er us
Never pours on us its rain;
Many a grief we see before us
Never comes to cause us pain.
 Ofttimes in the feared "to-morrow"
Sunshine comes,—the cloud has flown!
Ask not then in foolish sorrow,
"Who shall roll away the stone?"

Burden not thy soul with sadness;
Make a wiser, better choice;
Drink the wine of life with gladness;
God doth bid thee, man, "rejoice!"
In to-day's bright sunlight basking,
Leave to-morrow's cares alone;
Sorrow not present joys by asking,
"Who shall roll away the stone?"

—George Washington Moon.

HOW EVERY MAN CAN HELP THE TEMPERANCE CAUSE.

I urge on you the duty of self-denial for the sake of others. If you are fond of drink, abandon it before it be too late for your own sake; if you are not fond of it, it will cost you nothing to give it up. We are all face to face with a hideous, a degrading, a colossal evil. The legislature either cannot or will not help us. Warning, preaching, moral influence, even extended education, fails to help us; increased wages, diminished hours of work, only deepen our peril and our loss. There is one way, and one way only; but that is a certain and an easy way by which not merely to check, but even to annihilate, the curse. It is that every one of us should cease to contribute to this monster evil the penny of a contribution or the shadow of an example. The use of that deadly, peculiar and wholly unnecessary substance is so far inseparable from the abuse, that where the individual use is, there the national abuse will be. Unrestricted liquor traffic will, to the end of time, mean for myriads intense temptation; temptation means drunkenness; drunkenness means degradation, horror, ruin, crime. You are a Christian. Will you give up a needless luxury to help in saving others from a blasting curse? You are a patriot. Will you give up a poor tickling of the palate, an unwholesome tingling of the brain, to rescue your nation from a blighting degradation? If you do not help, at least be ashamed to hinder. Call not those fanatics who would clear their conscience from every taint of so dangerous a leaven. Do not gild a self-indulgence with the Ophir gold of Holy Scriptures or hide the forehead of a luxury under the phylactery of a scribe.

Not long ago there was in a certain colliery an explosion by which four hundred miners were suddenly hurled, amid shattered ruins, into horrible death. It was caused by a single miner who had opened his safety-lamp to light his pipe. To that pipe of tobacco were sacrificed four hundred precious lives of fathers, of husbands and of sons; and alas! on the bodies of not a few of those who perished in that fiery blast were found duplicate keys by which, hitherto with impunity, they had done the same. Alas! my brethren, England and Scotland are such a mine; they are full of the explosive fire-damp of intemperance. In all societies it hangs dense around us in the perilous and pestilential air. Do not say that there is none of this flaming peril around you; that you may open your safety-lamp and no harm come of it. It may be so; it may not be so. You could not, you would not, do it if you were sure that there was danger; for that

—as you see at once—would be a deadly selfishness and an atrocious crime. But you cannot be sure that there is not danger. Is the gain worth the risk? Is the transient and animal indulgence worth the permanent and eternal peril? No harm may come to you; but if harm comes to others who are re-assured by your example, you, even you, will have helped to perpetuate a frightful curse, whose effects, in shattering blast after shattering blast, shall be flapped in echoes of ruin and of misery, too late for penitence, amid generations yet unborn.—*From an address by Canon Farrar.*

WHO IS CHRIST?

The Christian world was a few years since taken by surprise at the enlightened sentiments publicly and boldly avowed by Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen, an educated native of India, and one of the founders of the new sect of the Brahma Somaj, from which so much was expected in overthrowing the superstition of that country, and in making a way for the advance of the truth. He is a man of learning and ability, having enjoyed a thorough English education, together with the advantage of European travel. He occasionally appears before the public, and always excites interest and hope in thoughtful minds that his inquiries in regard to the highest subjects of thought may yet bring him into the true and full light of the gospel.

He recently delivered a lecture in the Town Hall of Calcutta on the suggestive topic, "Who is Christ?" He stated frankly that he was not a Christian, but confessed that he must speak of Christ, and that his love of Christ constrained him to speak of Him, and his loyalty to Him was his only apology. India, he said, needs Christ, and eagerly and earnestly asks, "Who is this Christ whose ideas and institutions are taking their root on all sides in our soil?"

Perhaps there is no more impressive proof of the power with which Christian thought is penetrating the leading minds of India than the following passage from this lecture. When educated Indians can openly and fearlessly avow such radical ideas to their countrymen, it ought to silence the silly taunt that missionaries are effecting nothing by their lives and labours.

"Who rules India? What power is it that sways the destinies of India at the present moment? You are mistaken if you think that it is the ability of Lord Lytton in the cabinet, or the military genius of Sir Frederick Haines in the field, that rule India. It is not politics; it is not diplomacy that has laid a firm hold of the Indian heart. It is not the glittering bayonet nor the fiery cannon that influences us. No, none of these can hold India in subjection. Armies never conquered the heart of a nation. You cannot deny that your hearts have been touched, conquered, and subjugated by a superior power. That power is Christ. Christ rules British India, and not the British government. England has sent us a tremendous moral force in the life and character of that mighty Prophet to conquer and hold this vast empire. None but Jesus! none but Jesus! none but Jesus! ever deserved this bright, this precious diadem—India; and Christ shall have it."—*N. Y. Christian Weekly.*

THE POISON OF A SNEER.

Of all the forms of evil influence that of sneering at religion on the part of young people is perhaps most mischievous, and especially so, where they are supposed to have been born and bred in Christian families. Not only is a sneer inspired by a more subtle form of depravity than ordinary unbelief, but it weighs more with the young, with far less reason. An argument against religion counts for so much, according to the weight of it; and when it is inspired by honest doubt, there is supposed to be a certain manliness about it which becomes a redeeming feature in one's lack of faith. But a sneer is as likely as anything to be a pure piece of prejudice and malignity. It does not imply any sincere and intelligent thinking, and still less any respect for the sincere and intelligent thinking of others. It is utterly void of a good impulse or motive, and seems to be a pure excitation of