

PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

THE FALSE PROPHET.

The active career of Mahomet Achmet, the False Prophet, dates from the summer of 1882, when Egyptian mismanagement in the Soudan was at its worst. Taking advantage of the revolt under Arabi Pasha in northern Egypt, he proclaimed himself the expected Mehdi, or successor of the Prophet. Many believers flocked to his standard, and he soon became as much of a disturbing element in the Soudan as was Arabi in the delta. His first encounter with an Egyptian force showed the fanatical zeal of his following, and the sanguinary character of his crusade. A battalion of troops sent to dislodge him from the island of Abbas in the Nile, some 200 miles south of Khartoum, were massacred to a man. Then followed a retreat southward to the mountains near Fashoda, in southern Kordofan, where his forces were augmented by convicts from the old Egyptian penal colony and the former slave traders of the White Nile. The Khedive's troops, demoralized by their first defeat and their practical isolation, hesitated to renew the campaign, and it was not until May that a force of 800 men were sent against him. The fanatical horde of the Mehdi made a furious attack, and but eighty of the Egyptians escaped to tell the tale. Following up his victory, the Prophet advanced at the head of 7,000 men to the north of El Obeid, the scene of the recent disaster, where in June he routed and almost annihilated an army of 3,500 regulars sent out by Giegler Pasha. He then marched eastward to Senaar, distant about 200 miles, thus gaining command of both the Blue and White Niles, and practically controlling the entire Soudan. This state of things continued until the re-establishment of the Khedive's authority in Egypt permitted a more aggressive campaign. The expedition under Hicks Pasha was then organized, and marching southward along the White Nile, drove the forces of Mehdi steadily before it. At El Obeid a terrible battle took place in which the latter lost 15,000 men, and the Egyptians occupied the town. Repeated defeats loosened the Mehdi's hold upon the natives, and, after an ineffectual attempt to besiege the place, he was forced to retire to Birka, while the expedition shortly after returned to Khartoum. Early last summer, however, Achmet again advanced northward along the White Nile, occupying El Obeid and other points in central and northern Kordofan. A few weeks later Hicks Pasha marched from Khartoum to meet him, and by the last of September had pushed as far south as El Obeid. Near that place he defeated the army of the Mehdi in two engagements, and October 4th was reported to be in possession of the town. Since that date the struggle has centered about the capital of Kordofan, Hicks Pasha maintaining a position near the river up to the time of the recent movement, and the Mehdi rousing the natives in all directions. As the defeat throws the Soudan proper into the hands of the Prophet, the Egyptian forces, numbering some 4,000 men, are to be concentrated at Khartoum, at the junction of the White and Blue Niles. Re-inforcements will also be sent to Suakim, on the Red Sea, to cover the road from that point to Berber, on the Nile, and insure an avenue for the retreat of the troops from Khartoum and Senaar. Should the Mehdi persist in his purpose of marching north, however, the small force that can now be opposed to him will hardly prove much of an obstacle, and in the event of its conquest, the road to lower Egypt will be absolutely open. The natural effect of the disaster, then, will be to compel the reversal of Mr. Gladstone's Egyptian policy, and the retention of a sufficient British force to insure the safety of the country.—*Interior.*

GRIEVING THE SPIRIT.

A voice has come to the earth, all the way from the eternal world warning, and commanding, and entreating us "to grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption." (Eph. iv. 30) To obey is to inherit blessing. Not to obey is to suffer irreparable loss.

There is a sin which grieves the Holy Ghost. I will speak very plainly. It is neglect of Christ Himself by reason of indolence. He was by your side this morning at six, calling you to the Scriptures, and to prayer, and to Himself, and you did not rise till half-

past seven, just in time to feed your body, too late to feed your soul. You saw many faces around the table, and they saw your face, but there was no light in it, none of heaven's joy, none of heaven's love. You had no time to see the face of God. And why do God's people rise so late? One reason is because they sit up so late. If you would rise early you must retire early. Nature makes two hours before midnight the best hours for refreshing, and when you spend those hours in self-indulgence you violate nature's law, you grieve nature's God. If I had the value in gold of what Christians eat and drink and burn between ten and twelve at night, I could sow the earth with Bibles! If I had the time that Christians waste between ten and twelve at night, I could preach the Gospel to every creature! If I had the grace that Christians lose between ten and twelve at night, I could convert the world!

I do not know of anything more likely to grieve the Holy Spirit than this habitual neglect of the Lord Jesus. He is very little sought after at all, and when He is, He is not sought after for His own sake, as the lover seeks after the one he loves. A coldness creeps over the soul when secret communion is uncultivated—a coldness that may terminate in the chill of death. It was not thus that Jesus lived with His Father. "He awakened (me) morning by morning, He wakeneth my ear"—such is the language in Isaiah l. 4. "My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord. In the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up." (Psa. v. 3) In the beginning of his ministry we find Him "rising up a great while before day" (Mark i. 35), and at its close, "all the people came early in the morning to Him in the temple." (Luke xxi. 38.) I plead, therefore, for this "Early Communion." It is the sure highway to the enjoyment of the "Real Presence." The last thought at night will be: "A day at court to-morrow with my Lord, my King! Jesus to awake me with the gentle touch of His right hand, and Jesus to be with me all the time." Once aroused after healthy sleep, never sleep again. It is God's call. "Grieve not the Spirit."

A LITTLE WHILE.

Beyond the smiling and the weeping,
I shall be soon;
Beyond the waking and the sleeping,
Beyond the sowing and the reaping,
I shall be soon.

REFRAIN—

Love, rest and home,
Sweet home, sweet home!
Lord, tarry not, but come.

Beyond the blooming and the fading,
I shall be soon;
Beyond the shining and the shading,
Beyond the hoping and the dreading,
I shall be soon.

Love, rest and home, etc.

Beyond the rising and the setting,
I shall be soon;
Beyond the calming and the fretting,
Beyond remembrance and forgetting,
I shall be soon.

Love, rest and home, etc.

Beyond the parting and the meeting,
I shall be soon;
Beyond the farewell and the greeting,
Beyond the pulse's fever beating,
I shall be soon.

Love, rest and home, etc.

Beyond the frost-chain and the fever,
I shall be soon;
Beyond the rock-waste and the river,
Beyond the ever and the never,
I shall be soon.

Love, rest and home, etc.

—Horatius Bonar.

A PLEA FOR AGED PASTORS.

The class spoken of is to be pitied. The pulpit demand in our day is largely for young men—for men of good looks, neat dress, melodious voice, pleasing address, glib tongue, wit and eloquence. These are the qualifications and accomplishments mainly looked at, and in requisition. Compared with these the sound knowledge and matured judgment, the ripe experience and tried piety of the aged pass for nothing. Few congregations, when vacant, can be prevailed on to choose for pastor a man who has passed beyond the age of fifty years. This seems to be largely the

dead line. Having passed this period, some pastors are obliged to either retire from the active ministry or else take a lower place—a place not wanted by the younger brethren.

And what becomes of the men so unceremoniously thrust out, on account of years and antiquated style and manners? Some have died of a broken heart. The treatment which they received was more than weakened nature could bear. The grave proved kinder and more merciful to them than the men whom they had loved so tenderly, and for whose salvation they had prayed and laboured so assiduously. Others have been obliged to seek fields elsewhere—inferior fields, requiring long rides, and exposure to heat and cold. They are compelled to perform tasks which sorely tax their strength. Bowed down with the weight of years, afflicted with rheumatic and other pains, they labour on amidst weariness, and aches, and sores, objects of pity and distress. Is it right, is it Christian, thus to deal with the hoary-headed, bowed, and weary servants of the Most High? Can the divine blessing rest upon a people thus forgetful and neglectful of one of its holiest duties? Let common justice, let conscience, let the word of God answer.

Whence, then, are ministers to derive their support when they can no longer support themselves? Are they to starve? If not, who is to feed them? Somebody must do it. Have they a claim on any one for support? If they have, who is it? Who else but those for whose welfare they have laboured and worn out their lives. It is the duty of the congregations whom they have served, to look after their interests and supply their lacks. Congregations are under sacred and solemn obligation, either to pay their pastors a salary large enough to enable them to lay by a portion of it for their wants of old age, or else to pay them a pension after their retirement from office. The Lord has ordained that they who preach the Gospel shall live of the Gospel (1 Cor. 8: 14): Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God. (Heb. 13: 7.) You are to remember your pastors in their wants, not only when they speak to you, but also after they have spoken to you—"who have spoken unto you the Word of God." This is the will and command of God.

Let congregations ponder this matter, and view it in the light of God's truth: or weigh it in the balances of right and justice; and they will see this to be their duty.—*The Workman.*

THE OLD WAY AND THE TRUE WAY.

It is frequently asserted that the old reasoning on the evidence of Christianity, or of such a fact as that of the resurrection, will no longer answer in view of modern objections. It might have been done, they say, fifty years ago, but "the higher criticism has given us a new aspect to the matter." Paley and Lardner did very well as against the most shallow infidels of their day, but there has risen a race of unbelieving Anakim far surpassing Hume and Voltaire. The defender of the Scripture needs new armour to meet them. German Rationalism has rendered all the old arguments obsolete. This is repeated continually. By sheer reiteration, often without the attempt to give any evidence, the impression is produced on the minds of the young that there has arisen some new and terrible form of doubt, some most formidable difficulty unknown to other times, and unassailable by any former arguments. It is an undefined spectre. It is everywhere haunting our modern literature, though taking no precise form. It is the shadowy presence of some new enemy, never clearly seen, but who has rendered unavailing, it is said, all former tactics, whether of assaults or defence.

In defending Christianity, if it can be defended, we must make a new start, and proceed upon grounds differing altogether from the old. Now, this is an impudent falsehood. We say it unhesitatingly. There are no such new difficulties as to be entitled to the name. There is no substantial objection to the Gospel, or to the Bible generally that has not been known to scholars and thinking men for more than a thousand years. Some aspects of Bible authorship have been changed, some ecclesiastical writings have been pronounced spurious, though very few that had not always been suspected; some new various readings have been discovered, but in no respects, or in the most unessential respects, have they changed the general aspect even of the critical field, much less that great