

Pastor and People.

One Thing Needful.

Many things are earnestly desired. Wealth, rank, fame, office, ease, amusement, and a long list of coveted possessions and enjoyments might be named. For those the wistful multitude sigh. For those the resolute toil and contend. And those the few whom the world esteems fortunate attain. Many are the objects of pursuit; but one thing is needful.

Strange to say, every possession which is not the most essential—but the only essential one, is that which is least desired and sought for by the mass of men. This would appear incredible did not our daily observation confirm the truth. Alas, our personal experience, as each of us examines his own heart, is sufficient to prove how inadequately we prize this inestimable boon and how feebly we strive to attain it. We are carried away by the quest for inferior things; we are often anxious and troubled lest we fail to secure them, or lest they slip from our eager grasp. And yet but one thing is needful.

It adds to the marvel that all other objects, even if attained, fail to satisfy the longings of an immortal spirit. Again and again the heart-sick searcher after happiness grasps the coveted prize, only to find that it cannot impart the bliss he seeks. He resumes the search only again to find that he pursues a goal which, like the horizon, flies before him. Yet strangely he neglects the very treasure which would confer both present and perpetual and ever-increasing joy—the one thing needful.

For of all that the human heart can attain, this treasure either is or of necessity includes all that is indestructible. Other possessions perish with the using. This is imperishable. It is that good part which shall not be taken away. Infinite love has not only offered an inconceivable precious gift, but has guaranteed an eternal possession of it.

The most earnest and indefatigable searcher for other objects may be and often is disappointed. He who truly seeks to obtain the greatest of all possessions never fails. Whosoever will, let him come. Ask, and ye shall receive. The promise is sure. We may rest upon it with unshaken faith. Let each one ask himself the solemn question—Is the one thing needful mine?

Pernicious Reading.

The Christian Weekly says truly that "the greatest peril of our times is that peril which threatens our youth from pernicious literature."

Says the Earl of Shaftesbury:—"No greater danger threatens us than that abundant, attractive, idolatrous, poisonous literature, of a sensational character, which is spreading over the whole surface of society."

Says the Contemporary Review:—"All the garbage that belongs to the history of crime and misery is raked together to produce a moral miasma throughout the land, in the shape of the most vulgar and brutal fiction."

The Newark Advertiser thus describes the character of fiction on which hundreds and thousands of children of America are feeding:—"The subject-matter of these papers is mainly cheap novels and romances, serially produced. They run at great length, in order that an interest once excited may be kept up for the benefit of the paper. We have counted as many as ten of these continued stories under way at the same time, but a new one is commenced weekly, or thereabouts, in order that the fresh stimulus of novelty may not be lost. The stories are written by men, and are very sorry to say, women, who are announced by an immense blow of trumpets as perfect prodigies, but whose prodigious talents are utterly unknown outside of the periodicals for which they write. The one end and aim of all is, for each to out-herd the others in working up the sensational. No respect is paid to the laws of possibility or even probability. Pirates and freebooters, brigands and murderers, love and hate, death and despair, are mingled, with as much ease as can be crowded into a hot, unwholesome stew, unsuited to any human beings, much less to those whose souls should be like the paper on which we write, and should be written on only with the tenderest care, and with words of gentleness and love."

One such sensational story paper, published in New York, has a circulation greater than that of all the religious weeklies in that city put together.

Two such papers nearly or quite equal, in their combined circulation, all the circulation of two religious papers of the United States.

What is done to counteract this? Are Christian parents suitably careful to keep in their households pure, healthful, attractive Christian literature? Do all who know and deplore the prevalent evil direct their influence, as they should, against it? Do they all receive into their own families, and seek to have circulated in their neighborhoods, a good religious paper? All can do something in this way; and it is one of the ways, and among the most effectual, of saving the rising generation from the demoralizing influence of the impure and sensational papers that abound.—United Presbyterian.

Costly Religion.

"Add pray, let me hear what is the foundation of your religion?" asked a smart young revivalist of an old saint, who had grown wrinkled and hoary under the weight of years and trouble. "My son," replied the aged woman, "I have paid for my religion—not for my salvation, for Christ settled all that long ago; but my religion has cost me a good bit of trouble. It has been very expensive in many ways, inward and outward, I assure you. Now let me hear a little of what your religion has cost you, and then we shall be able to talk about the foundation." The young man said he would call another day, and wait for a more convenient season to go into all that. But she was a wise old woman, made wise unto salvation by divine teaching. A religion that costs nothing is worth nothing, and those who are brought up by some power into the school of grace know something of the cost.

My Lord, My Saviour, Come to Me.

A NEW HYMN, BY REV. WILLIAM COCHRANE, MIDDLEVILLE, ONT.

Attr: Ingleside—From the "Standard."

My Lord, my Saviour, come to me! Thy mercy is my only plea! My soul from sin and Satan free— My Lord, my Saviour, come, O, come!

The Son of God ere time began, And yet became the Son of Man, To heal the wound no other can— My Lord, my Saviour, come, O, come!

Thou camest from the home above To let me know the Father's love, And their transgressions all forgive— My Lord, my Saviour, come, O, come!

Thy life Thou gavest on the tree That so redeemed I should be, And reconciled unto Thee— My Lord, my Saviour, come, O, come!

A wound was open'd in Thy side, In which I all my sins might hide; And that in Thee I might abide— My Lord, my Saviour, come, O, come!

Thy blood alone the power contains To cleanse my soul from all its stains: That power shall last while life remains— My Lord, my Saviour, come, O, come!

O, let Thy Spirit dwell in me, That He may show me things from Thee— In Thy light I shall clearly see— My Lord, my Saviour, come, O, come!

Author of faith, my faith make strong, Fill heart with joy and lips with song; I'll cling to Thee my whole life long— My Lord, my Saviour, come, O, come!

So, while I run my earthly race Guide me by Thy heavenly grace; In glory, then, I'll see Thy face, Whene'er my Lord, my Saviour comes!

One Woman's Sphere.

She makes no pretence to any brilliance. She never has written a piece for the poet's corner in the local newspaper. She has no ambition to vote or hold office, except the office which she has held in her native village for over half a score of years. She never attended a Woman's Rights Convention; and if she had any property of her own, she is not so imbued with the principles of the Revolution that she would refuse to pay taxes without representation. She has probably graduated somewhere at some time, but her only recognized diploma is her own class of infant scholars. She does not read Virgil for recreation; and any member of the senior class at Vassar could puzzle her with problems from Euclid. Her knowledge of political economy is confined to that which makes her queen in her own realm; this she knows as only they know whom experience teaches. There is one book, and only one, in moral philosophy which she has much studied; that is the Bible, and to it she holds with an old-fashioned faith and love that modern skepticism has done nothing to weaken.

She is not a society girl. She does not know how to waltz or polka; she was probably never inside a theatre, and never heard an opera; she has no skill in the valuable art of small talk; she cannot flirt a fair, nor toss her head; nor smile a false smile while the heart frowns with disgust. She is no "fisher of men," and counts no long line of captives waiting in her train.

She has never married. That sphere which all the good books praise is not her sphere. She has neither husband nor children to care for, and neither to care for her. She is in a comfortable home, with competence and comfort secured to her by those who would take no other recompense than her unstinted love, and she might easily, and without reproach, join that quite too large body of women who have "nothing to do." But she would look at you with an amused and incredulous surprise if you were to tell her, in no spirit of flattery either, that she is quite the most useful and important member of the community.

Perhaps you would never tell her so. The lawyer, who is now in Congress playing at law-making, or the minister, who preaches with a fidelity which a noble life makes eloquent to a more than an admiring, a loving congregation, or the manufacturer, whose mills down in the valley feed a hundred families, would perhaps fill a larger place in your vision. But there are at least eighty little voters who would put her first in the village—and no one second. They are the eighty members of her Sabbath-school infant class. Last week she had them all under the trees in a summer picnic, and never a belle rejoiced in the glory of a midnight ball as she did in the delightfully unconscious glory of that afternoon party. They are hers by a triple right—as a teacher in the primary department of the common school, as leader in song and study in the infant department every Sabbath, and as a loving Christian friend through all the week. How many there are in the village, growing up to manhood and womanhood, who have received their first lessons from her lips and life! How many more there will be ere her work is done, if the good Father leaves her to complete it! For years make no impression on her; in the sympathies of childhood she has found the famous and long-sought Elixir of Life, and drinking daily of it, seems to endow herself with a marvellous immortality. And though every year her charge changes—every year new applicants come to take the place of graduates—she is unchanged, and the stream of life runs by her, instead of bearing her on its course, as it does most of us. Completed her work will be, however, by and by; and when it is, and she enters through the door which she has opened to so many hearts and lives, and goes up the shining way towards which she has directed so many little feet, no one will be more surprised than she to find, in the choral welcome of an outpouring host, the full meaning of the promise made to the faithful follower of the Lord—the promise of "an abundant entrance" into the heaven whose light is the Lamb, and whose glory is that of the full fruition of a self-sacrificing love.—Christian Union.

When one asked a learned physician how early the education of a child should begin, he replied:—"Twenty years before he is born. Good mothers make good children."

The Old Catholics.

This body of seceders from the Roman Catholic Church, to resuscitate, as their name implies, the earlier forms of Catholic doctrine and order, appear to be making some progress. It is also, year by year, showing more assimilation to genuine Protestantism.

It is now a well-organized body. Its third Synod has just been held at Bonn. There were present 81 priests and 76 delegates from Old Catholic communities. Dr. Von Schult read the report of the condition of the movement. There are now 85 communities in Prussia, 44 in Baden, 5 in Hesse, 3 in Birkensfeld, 81 in Bavaria, and one in Wurtemberg. The whole number of persons belonging to it is 17,208; in Bavaria, 10,110, in Hesse, 1,042, in Oldenburg, 240, in Wurtemberg, 228. The number of Old Catholic priests is in Germany 50. The rest of the meeting was devoted to the discussion of regulations regarding the ritual. Dr. Schult reported on the motions respecting celibacy. Many opinions were expressed, and it was agreed to pass over all motions on the subject to the order of the day. It was further agreed to leave it to the representatives to decide when the question should again be brought before the Synod. It was also decided that processions were no longer in accord with the spirit of the age, and that, therefore, no new ones should be introduced, and that any proposals to change those already in existence should be laid before the representatives.

A correspondent of the Guardian gives the following account of the Swiss Old Catholics, who number 78,890. These are actually enrolled members, and there is, outside them, a large body of "Liberal" Catholics, who repudiate the Vatican novelties, but are not so openly aggressive toward Papalism. The Canton of Berne contains the largest proportion of Old Catholics—22,000—and next to it comes Geneva, with 12,000. Only the northern and western cantons have been influenced by the movement, and in some there is but one town and congregation where any body of Old Catholics exists. Thus in Basel there is one congregation of 4,000 souls, in Zurich one of 8,000, and in the Canton of Neuchatel one, in the manufacturing town of Chaux-de-Fonds. Besides Berne and Geneva, the Cantons of Aargau and Soleure (Soleure) are those in which the Old Catholic movement has been successful—successful, that is, comparatively; for the Ultramontanes claim to have as many followers in the Canton of Geneva alone as the Reformers have in the whole of Switzerland. Still, this Canton has eleven Old Catholic congregations, and in Geneva three rectors and four curates are at work. It is curious to note that, of these, one rector and all four curates are married, the example of Pere Hyacinthe being too strong for them, although they now hold aloof from his circumscribed work at Geneva. It is curious also to note that the title, "Eglise Chretienne Catholique," which was at first the badge of the Old Catholic body, is now handed over to the following of the eloquent Parisian orator, and the epithet, "Eglise Catholique Nationale" is adopted instead. When the Bishop for this growing Church is elected and consecrated, in the person of Professor Herzog, we may hope that a greater impetus will be given to the Reform movement, and greater accessions be made to the Old Catholic Church in Switzerland.—United Presbyterian.

Country Ministers.

Many people make the great blunder of supposing that our city pulpits monopolize the ministerial talent of the country. It is a very natural blunder, for people to make; and yet is a blunder, nevertheless. Every great city has its great men in all professions. But where it has one great man, it has scores of small ones. To one who has served ministerially in country and city churches, the error of the popular estimate is seen. We know of dozens of ministerial brothers, serving in country churches, many of them in small, out-of-the-way parishes, who, judged either by the standard of scholarship, or zeal, or of pulpit efficiency, are able to stand side by side with those who represent the highest average of talent in our city pulpits. Indeed, we do not hesitate to say that, in our opinion, taking them man for man, the preachers in the country churches, so far as New England goes, will outrank on the average the preachers of the cities. A man must be very strong in his originality; he must be intensely personal in his characteristics, in order to resist those influences in city life which are calculated to level him downward, in the scale of personal power. In the country, a man can grow naturally. He furnishes the standard of judgment to his parish, in himself. His development is normal and not artificial. His study of character can be more thorough, and his knowledge of life, while less varied, less complex, less than perhaps, can be more individualistic than it can be in the city. There is also a moral education possible to the preacher in a country parish that is not possible to one who conducts a great, swiftly-working metropolitan organization. He who can look out through his study window upon a wide landscape or a stretch of ocean, or who lives within sight of the solemn hills, who can retire at will from the noise of human activity into the sweet and suggestive quietude of nature—has possibilities of spiritual culture which are denied those who live amid the noise and rumble, and narrow prospect of our city streets, Meadows and forests, and the solemn ocean shores, the quiet of the night, and the peacefulness of undisturbed days, can teach one as neither books, nor statues of bronze, nor the sight of human faces can ever do. "I will lift mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my strength."—Golden Rule.

The best days of the saint's life are those in which he sheds the most good.

"No man hath a silver cross," was the apostle's assertion, years ago, and it is just as true now as then. Only He who gives us to us, and He who bears the cross knows its weight. God only knows the strength, and He who has a desire to be useful for every burden.

Froude on Scotchmen.

When the historian Froude was elected Rector of the University of St. Andrew's he delivered an inaugural address, as is customary on such occasions. The following extracts on John Knox and Scotchmen generally are interesting:—

"Many years ago, he said, when I first studied the history of the Reformation in Scotland, I read a story of a slave in a French galley who was one morning bending wearily over his oar. The day was breaking and rising out of the gray waters a line of cliffs was visible, and the white houses of a town and a church tower. The rower was a man unused to such service, worn with toil and watching, and likely, it was thought, to die. A companion touched him, pointed to the shore, and asked him if he knew it. 'Yes,' he answered, 'I know it well. I see the steeples of the place where God first opened my mouth in public to His glory; and I know that how weak soever I now appear, I shall not depart out of this life till my tongue glorify His name in the same place.' Gentlemen, that town was St. Andrew's; that galley slave was John Knox; and we know that he did come back and did glorify God in this place and in others to some purpose."

In discoursing on the advantages enjoyed by his hearers as educated men to benefit the world, the orator spoke as follows:—"In the first place you are Scots; you are come of a fine stock, and much will be expected of you. If we except the Athenians and the Jews, no people so few in number have scored so deep a mark in the world's history as you have done; no people have a juster right to be proud of their blood. I suppose if any one of you were asked whether he would prefer to be the son of a Scotch peasant, or to be the heir of an Indian Rajah with twenty lacs of rupees, he would not hesitate about his answer. We should none of us object to the rupees, but I doubt if the Scot ever breathed who would have sold his birthright for them. Well, then, nobility creates obligations; all blood is noble here, and noble life should go along with it. It is not for nothing that you here and we in England come, both of us, of our respective races; we inherit honorable traditions and memories; we inherit qualities in our bone and blood which have been earned for us, no thanks to ourselves, by twenty generations of ancestors. Our fortunes are now linked together for good and evil, never more to be divided. But when we examine our several contributions to the common stock the account is more in your favor than ours."

"More than once," Mr. Froude continued, "you saved English Protestantism. You may have to save it again, for all that I know; at the rate at which our English, parsons are running. You gave us the Stuart, but you helped us to get rid of them. Even now you are teaching us what, unless we saw it before our eyes, no Englishman would believe to be possible, that a member of Parliament can be elected without bribery. For shrewdness of head, thorough-going completeness, contempt of compromise and moral backbone, no set of people were started in life more generously provided. You did not make these things; it takes many generations to breed high qualities, either of mind or body. But you have them; they are a fine capital to commence business with, and they create large obligations. So much for what you bring with you into the world, and the other part of your equipment is only second to it—I mean your education."

Mr. Froude then passes a high eulogium on the Scottish parish schools originated by Knox, etc., etc.

Is Romanism on the Increase?

In answer to this question Ravenstein's Denominational Statistics makes the following statement:

"There are now nearly a million Roman Catholics in England and Wales, and these are divided according to their nationality, thus—English Roman Catholics, 179,000; foreigners, 52,000; Irish, 742,500. This is one side of the subject; now look at the other. In 1801 the population of Great Britain and Ireland was about fifteen millions and three quarters, of whom four millions and a quarter were Roman Catholics, or twenty-seven per cent. of the whole population. Now, the population is nearly thirty-one millions and a half, of whom a little more than five millions and a half are Roman Catholics, or only eighteen per cent. of the whole population. In other words, while the Roman Catholics have increased at the rate of twenty-eight per cent., the Protestants have increased at the rate of one hundred and twenty per cent. Protestantism has therefore been advancing nearly five times faster than Romanism since the beginning of the present century."

Knocking Around.

Dr. Dio Lewis having learned the minimum quantity of food on which life can be sustained, advises all young men to marry and settle down in life. His idea is that "until a man is married his life is lacking in that which best develops his manhood." He administers this rebuke to that class who are anxious to see the world before marrying; "Seeing the world as the young man does who has to earn his living as he goes, along amounts to very little. What he does see is nothing that helps him fight the battle of life more successfully. It only keeps him from habits which are in direct antagonism to a direct and happy and successful life, and when he gets through 'knocking about,' he has nothing to show for the misspent years save the habits, which he must overcome if he would make anything of himself. Do you call that gain or loss? So, young man, take the advice of a man who has kept his eyes open for more years than you have lived, probably, and don't 'knock around.' If you think I have overdrawn the picture, look around you, and out of the men you know select those who have 'knocked around,' and see if they do not bear witness to the truth of every assertion I have made concerning the class they represent. Are they men you envy? I tell you, boys, 'knocking around' makes a man good for nothing else, and I tell you, boys, you have a desire to be good for something higher in life."

Random Readings.

Receive Christ into your heart, and He will receive you into His Kingdom.

Where there is much provision for the flesh, there is commonly little rest for the mind.

That which gives us occasion for sorrow should give us occasion for prayer.—Henry.

If we would have God to be careful of us, we must be careful of the things He has committed to our trust.

When we permit the world, the flesh and the devil to enter the heart, everything that is good walks out.

Have the courage to speak to a friend in a "seedy" coat, even though you are in company with a rich one, and richly attired.

Said one man to another, "If it wasn't Sunday, how much would you take for that lumber?" "If it wasn't Sunday, I'd tell you," was the proper reply.

A courtier riding with his sovereign amidst the acclamations and splendor of a triumphal procession, asked him, "What is wanting here?" And very emphatic was the reply, "Permanence."

If man would become innocent he must become obedient. Some individuals profess to give themselves to the Lord, but not to the brethren. We should spend for the brethren as well as for self.

The average length of human life certainly does not exceed forty years. In this time the first tenth is consumed in idle infancy, while ten hours a day throughout life are required for eating and sleeping.

Do you feel that you love Christ? "was asked of an aged and dying Christian. "Dearer than that," was the reply; "Christ loves me." Rest in Christ's love to you, rather than in your love to Him.

The name only of Christ does not make a Christian, but he must also possess the truth as it is in Christ, for many there be who walk in Christ's name, but few who walk in His truth.

If a minister has that love of study which would lead him to redeem the time, a country church is best. But there are few men who will study except under pressure. Rubbing against people keeps one alive.—Thornwell.

No man has a right to consider himself on the road to heaven—any further than he is rendering to God present obedience; and no man who is willing to turn with hearty repentance from his past transgressions need despair of forgiveness and salvation.

When a Christian man complains that he is full of doubts and fears, and has no joy in the Lord as he used to have, and no enjoyment in prayer or labor for Jesus; if you find out that he neglects all week-night service, never goes to prayer-meeting, reads anything rather than his Bible, and has no time for meditation, you need not inquire further into his spiritual malady.

O, what a blessing is Sunday! (interposed between the waves of worldly business like the divine path of the Israelites through Jordan.) There is nothing in which I would advise you to be more strictly conscientious than in keeping the Sabbath holy. I can truly declare that to me the Sabbath has been invaluable.—Wilberforce.

O, ye Christians only know what floods of light Christ pours upon the Word for those who trust in Him alone for it, methinks there would be many more illuminated pulpits too! And if all knew the sweet effulgence shed forth upon the truly trustful soul in prayer, there would be fewer dark closets than there are.

Be ye then as friends to these friendless, Be ye then as feet to these lame, To the weak ones whose sorrows are endless, Before they can give them a name, Who are branded with brands that they know not—

Even poverty, sickness, and shame. Greater, with angels to teach them, Their lives will be cared for, and bloom; For your kindness they cannot reach them, Only here for your love there is room; Let them know what it is to be cared for, Before they go down to the tomb.

"It is perhaps one of the evil tendencies of the age," says Dr. Charles Hodge, "to push religion out-of-doors; to allow her no home but the street or public assembly; to withhold from her all food except the excitement of loud professions and external manifestations. This is to destroy her power. It is to cut her off from the source of her strength, and to transform the meek and holy visitor from heaven into the noisy and bustling inhabitant of earth. It is so much easier to be religious outwardly than inwardly; to be active in church duties than to keep the heart with all diligence; that we are in danger of preferring the form of religion to its power."

Woman's work for Missions is constantly assuming new importance. At home, it proves to be one of the most powerful auxiliaries ever summoned to aid in awakening attention, arousing interest, and inducing contributions. In heathen lands, it has called into operation a vast system of agencies, before almost unknown, but which aids powerfully in helping to evangelize the natives, among whom it is employed. The Board of Foreign Missions of our church, reported that last year the Woman's Societies contributed not less than \$60,000 to aid on their work. The American Board reports, that in the first four years of their present financial year, over \$84,000 were contributed for their assistance. The labors of the ladies employed by the Societies in heathen lands are signally blessed. The jealousy between the sexes in nearly all the countries with a low grade of civilization, or rather the jealousy of the male owners of the zenana or harem, precludes the access of the regular minister of the Word. But the lady missionary finds a warm and ready welcome. She can teach a thousand home-arts, which will benefit and delight those whom she visits. They soon learn to honor and long for her civilization, refinement and religion. And so the Gospel operates; its silent leaven permeating among the inert, unexpecting, but Divinely prepared world, till the whole is leavened.