

Religious Barrenness.

BY REV. JOHN HALL, D. D.

The new convert of Christ often promises himself great fruitfulness. He has found such a Saviour, and is so impressed with His beauty that he expects to commend Him in many, and to enjoy unbroken gladness in obeying and glorifying Him.

There are general causes and particular. We shall look at this time, at the former. Human nature is one of these. We rush into a thing with enthusiasm, and soon grow tired of it. It loses the charm of novelty.

The evil in our nature is another of these. It is the heart, appetite, passions and the like "choke the seed" of divine truth by inclining us to evil service.

Then, in the first place, temptations are a fearful power for evil. They assail about. They come from the world, by which we do not mean the globe, or even human life as such, but human life as it is parted from God and His law.

On another line, adversity often mars spiritual health. It hardens and embitters the spirit in many cases. Sometimes it paralyzes feeling. Sometimes faith is lost in human sincerity, and then faith in divine goodness wavers.

Two correspondents address us on similar themes—one on Christian science, the other on faith cure. They both assume that we have made no investigation into these matters, that we write of them without knowledge, and they ask us to give them a patient and candid consideration.

Do not believe this philosophy. It is idealism applied to medicine, and we do not believe in idealism. The body is a reality, and it is not an emanation of the spirit, but the organ of the spirit.

Faith cure assumes that faith consists in trusting everything to God; that faith is a passive virtue; that its song is, "Oh, to be nothing, nothing!" In the spiritual realm it says, "Believe that you are saved, and you are saved; in the physical realm it says, "Believe that you are cured, and you are cured."

Many Christians have to endure the solitude of unshared labor. The serving God in a way which is exceedingly useful, but not at all noticeable. How very sweet to many workers are those little corners of the newspapers and magazines which describe their labors and successes.

A Tonic for the Tired. Wash the faces as they go by on a crowded street, and just notice what a tired look many of them wear. If we could read all the hearts around us, we would find multitudes who are weary in spirit, and sometimes faint for sorrow in the grave.

What the Deacon Said. "Yes," said the deacon, "there's many a man that calls himself honest, that's never so much as inquired what another is doing for something."

Well, in those years I was telling you about, it was said to me, "Cheated the Lord out of His due," for I had, for one time I paid a tit to our church, but I didn't give a cent to anything else.

Will you want me to take a religious paper, or will I wouldn't I hear 'em? Told her that was nonsense. I didn't believe any of the apostles ever took religious papers. The Bible was enough for them, and it ought to be for other folks.

Many a time have I been in the woods in early spring to gather May flowers, especially that pride of our New England valleys, the trailing arbutus. Brushing aside the brown and rustling autumn leaves, I have discovered a tiny spray of peary pink and white, and a few inches farther along another spray, and at another, and pulling up one spray I have found that the other were springing from one root far under the leaves—many blossoms, but one hidden root. Such is a true life.

Reason for Our Unfaith. Two correspondents address us on similar themes—one on Christian science, the other on faith cure. They both assume that we have made no investigation into these matters, that we write of them without knowledge, and they ask us to give them a patient and candid consideration.

The Highest Good. Does your soul regard earthly things as the highest, the best, the most which relates to them as your weightiest employment? Then your soul like the waves of the sea, which are driven and blown by the wind; it is given up to eternal disquiet and transient change.

On Moral and Spiritual Appetites. God has made provision that certain functions of our physical nature shall be discharged, by endorsing us with what we call appetites. These appetites are constant reminders to us of the duties we owe our bodies.

The Mother's Prayer. More than thirty years ago one lovely Sabbath morning, eight young men, students in a law school, were walking along the bank of a stream that flows into the Potomac river, not far from the city of Washington.

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