

## Our Contributors.

### CONCERNING HELPFUL MEN AND THINGS.

BY KNOXIAN.

One of the most important and searching questions that can be put about a man is, Does he help good causes? If he puts his voice, influence, money and work behind the good causes within his sphere and helps to push them on, he is a pretty good kind of a man. He may not groan or whine, or snivel or bewail, or lament or find fault, but he is worth more to society and to the church of God than a thousand men given to exercises of that kind.

There is a great deal said in our day about the efficiency and inefficiency of ministers. When all the criticism that has any sense in it is boiled down, it comes mainly to this, is the minister helpful? If he is helpful, he is a good minister; if he is not helpful to anybody, he is made in vain.

Helpful sermons are the best sermons. Pastoral visitation that helps the family to bear the burdens and discharge the duties of life is the best kind of visitation. In fact, it is the only kind worth making. Visits to the sickroom that turn the thoughts of the sufferer from ailments to bright and hopeful things, are the only visits that do any good.

To be helpful, a minister need not be learned or eloquent, but there is one thing he must always be—he must be thoroughly unselfish. If a minister is continually thinking about himself, continually trying to save himself, trying how little he can get off with, he will never be helpful to the best sense of the word. Helping others nearly always involves more or less self-sacrifice and unless one is prepared to make the sacrifice he may as well give up the idea of being helpful.

People in trouble are always willing to be helped by their minister, people in church may not be all willing. Some of them do not feel any need of help. Mr. Pharisaical Highmind comes in with a patronizing sit-away-for-I-am-holier-than-thou kind of air and as he looks around upon the ordinary worshippers he seems to say, "You may need something here, but as for me I am far above any such condition." Mr. Nibble says by his impertinent cheek, "I am here to criticise the sermon and the singing and the appearance of the congregation. Of course, I don't want any help. Of course not. My business is to criticise and find fault and make small, ill-natured remarks. I don't need need anything." Mr. Rounder says, "I just dropped in here while on my usual tour among the churches. I want the best seat in the church and plenty of room. Of course I don't need any help and don't want any. A man can go around among the churches and sit in the best seat and put in no collection without any help."

No preacher can help these people. If no good is done them the fault is their own. Paul himself often failed among such people. The great majority of people, however, in any respectable congregation, are willing to be helped, some of them anxious to be helped, and the preacher who can help the largest number, other things being equal or nearly so, is the best preacher.

The elder who helps is the right kind of elder. He may help in any one of a dozen ways. The main thing is to help on the good work in the best way he can.

The business managers who help are the right kind of officials. Without them the work could never go on. In fact, the value of any kind of an office in the church may be estimated by the amount and kind of the help it enables any one to give. The measure of his help is the exact measure of his usefulness.

The usefulness of a private Christian may be accurately determined by the amount of help he gives to good causes. Our Master is the great helper and the more we help the more we resemble Him.

What havoc this help test would make among speeches. How long would a Parliamentary session last if the speeches had to be all helpful. Presbytery meetings might sometimes be greatly shortened if speeches were limited to those that help the despatch

of business. Some tea-meeting would not last an hour after tea was over if none but helpful speeches were delivered. Just count the number of really helpful speeches you hear during this coming winter at meetings of any kind.

In these days of economy some patron of ecclesiastical industry may be tempted to ask in a voice of thunder what real help is given to any good cause by those monster religious demonstrations that are becoming so common. It might puzzle even a good Baptist to say what help the recent Baptist demonstration in Toronto gave to any good cause.

One of the questions every sensible man should ask about the increasing number of societies and organizations of one kind and another that are continually springing up is, What help do they give to any good object? Do any of them exhaust their strength in running their own machinery?

Are you a helpful kind of a person? Do you ever stand and look while others help? Do you ever hinder when you ought to help?

### THE GREAT EVANGELIST.

BY MISS HANNAH J. GRAHAM.

In view of Mr. Moody's anticipated visit to Toronto, a few random notes of one of the services in connection with the great evangelistic campaign, organized and so successfully carried on by him during the Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893, might not prove uninteresting to those who honour the great evangelist for his work's sake.

Arriving at the Haymarket Theatre, nearly an hour before the time, we found a dense crowd extending from the entrance into the middle of the street, waiting for the doors to open. Half an hour later I stood on tip-toe to survey the multitudes who were gathering from all directions.

What a sea of faces met my eyes! For about a quarter of mile on each side of the theatre the people were so closely packed that they could scarcely breathe or stir. A lady remarked to me as we gazed on the throng, "This verse always comes to me when I see the crowds that follow Moody: 'And if I be lifted up will draw all men unto me.' If more ministers," she continued, "would exalt Christ more, there would be more Moodys and fewer empty churches."

When the doors opened the inevitable rush and crush commenced, and we were all obliged to run in order to obtain seats, a rather novel experience for decorous Presbyterians. Within five or ten minutes from the time of opening the whole theatre, audience room, private boxes and three galleries was filled to overflowing, with more than six thousand listeners, hundreds being turned away. The regular meeting was preceded by a service of song, lasting for about 15 minutes.

The inspiring words and exquisite harmony produced by this grand chorus of so many thousand voices seemed almost to transport one from the cares of this work-a-day world to Zion's Mount Pisgah, from which our spiritual eyes caught a nearer glimpse of the Promised Land.

The hymns of praise begun on earth lifted our hearts from the visible to the invisible church above, till they appeared to blend in unison with the hallelujahs of the white-robed saints around the throne.

Sometimes Mr. Moody would ask the people occupying one gallery to sing a verse very softly. Then the other galleries would join in the refrain until the whole of this vast assemblage sang with "one heart, one voice."

Never have I heard singing so inspiring, melodious and impressive.

The attention of all was fixed on the great evangelist as he spoke on the parable of the excuses contained in the fourteenth chapter of St. Luke, taking for his subject, "The popular excuses of modern times," some of which were the following: 1st—Disbelief in the infallibility of the Scriptures. Nearly all the sceptics that he had ever met with were forced to confess that they had never read the Bible through.

He had found one who, when questioned closely, could repeat the verse "Jesus wept,"

One man told him that he was too intelligent to believe what he could not understand. "Why, man," Mr. Moody replied, "you are taking things on trust every day of your life. Can you understand your body? 'No.' Can you see your brains? 'No.' Well, how do you know you've got any?"

It is not intelligence but downright ignorance that makes a man disbelieve the Bible. It is because he's a fool. God says so. "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God." 2nd excuse, "hypocrites in the church." Wherever you turn you are confronted with this excuse, the most contemptible of all, hypocrites! hypocrites! hypocrites!

Ever since the days of the arch-hypocrite who sold his Lord for thirty pieces of silver, there have been hypocrites in the church. But for every one you will find in the church, you will find ten outside of it. Have you no quacks among the doctors? No sharpers among the lawyers? No cheats among the merchants? You have. Well, then, why don't you play the part of a wise man and get out of the business?

If you hear a man always canting about hypocrites you may be sure you haven't to go very far in order to find one.

3rd excuse, "I haven't got the proper feeling."

There is no such thing as feeling. I think the word is only mentioned twice in the whole Bible. Isaac once trusted to his feeling and made a grand mistake. All you are required to do is to believe.

4th excuse, "predestination." Some one says, "If I am to be saved I'll be saved, and if I'm not I'll be lost."

You have nothing to do with that, leave that to God. All He requires of you is to accept the invitation and "whosoever believeth on me shall not perish but shall have eternal life." What is surer than that when God says it. It often seems to me that after Jesus had ascended into heaven, He looked down from the throne of His glory, and seeing so many poor souls groping about in the dark and stumbling over Paul's doctrine of predestination, He came to John when he was in the Isle of Patmos, and said: "John, before you seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, just put in one more 'whosoever.'" "The Spirit and the Bride say Come, and let him that heareth say Come, and whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely." Thank God for that "whosoever." It is not Mr. Moody or mister anybody else, but whosoever.

If I were to get an invitation to a marriage supper, and on the card was written, "Whosoever will may come." I would just read it and go. Why? Because I'm one of the whosoever.

5th excuse, "I haven't got time, business too pressing." Time for business and worldly pleasure!

Time to spend in decking these perishing bodies! But no time to think of the eternal welfare of a soul that is to live forever. Death will not ask you if you can spare time, and when its chilly arms encircle you, you cannot look back over the years of your life and say to your Judge, "I had no time to attend to my soul's salvation."

6th. Procrastination is one of the most common excuses. I am continually meeting men and women who politely say, "I am sure, Mr. Moody, it is very kind, indeed, of you to take such interest in a mere stranger, but I really can't attend to it now. I'll see you again about the matter." I've had people coming to see me again for the last thirty years and they haven't got around yet.

7th excuse, "I don't want to give up worldly pleasure." These people don't want to go about with a sober face. They think God is a hard master. A Christian should be the happiest, sunniest man on earth, and if he is not, it is because he's got the dyspepsia or something else wrong with him.

You think you are free, but you are the servants of sin, and sin is a hard master. You know it. I can see in your faces to-day that sin is a hard master. Jesus says, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." Let me ask the Christians present in this assembly if they have found God a hard master. "No," answered hundreds of voices, heartily and spontaneously. "I have trusted my Sa-

viour for more than thirty years," said Moody, "and He is more precious to me now than He was then."

8th excuse, "If I started I might not be able to maintain a Christian profession." That is God's work, not yours. He never begins a work and leaves it unfinished. Only trust him to perform it for "whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." God does not save any one to-day to cast him into hell in a week or a month. He saves with an everlasting salvation. Gather up all the excuses and label them His. That is what they were from the beginning, simply trumped up to gloss over some sin. For it is some cherished sin that is keeping you away from the marriage feast.

After a few beautiful words of pathetic exhortation, Mr. Moody asked all those who for the first time, trusting in the strength of God, would say, "I will, trusting in His strength, be present at the marriage supper of the Lamb."

And as "I will" broke the stillness rising from many voices, some low and tremulous, others glad and triumphant, there was joy among God's children on earth as well as in the presence of the angels in Heaven.

"Are there no little ones here who will be there too," said Mr. Moody. Then the joyous refrain was taken up in lisping accents by the lips of many little children, and as it died away Mr. Moody softly repeated, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

A hallowed influence seemed to pervade the whole place, and one could not help feeling that many were there born of the Spirit, who will gather around the Master's table to drink of the wine that is ever new in the Father's Kingdom. To many the Haymarket Theatre was none other than the house of God, and the very gate of heaven. Like the disciples upon the Mount of Transfiguration, we would fain have tabernacled there but, like them, we too had to descend to the din and hurry of this sin-burdened, Sabbath-breaking city, feeling in our inmost souls that it was good for us to be there. Mr. Moody is a plain, common-sense, man who has a heart beating in touch with humanity. "By incident, illustration and simile, the way of salvation is put so clearly, simply and forcibly in the language of everyday life, that the hearer is amazed, charmed and convinced."

He never attempts eloquence. Those who go to hear a great oratorical display are disappointed, yet a more convincing speaker never addressed an audience. You look at him wondering where his wonderful power lies, and failing to discover the secret you marvel and are forced to "take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus." Time has streaked his hair with grey; but his popularity is still in the ascending scale, his arduous zeal unabated, and the mighty influence which his life has exerted upon the world seems to be "as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

### RETURNED MISSIONARIES.

MR. EDITOR,—This year (1894) has witnessed the home coming of an unusual number of foreign missionaries. Some of these have returned to enjoy their regular furlough. But, unhappily, the number from various fields of those returned invalided is woefully on the increase. *Divitiis miseris!* truly, will our worthy Foreign Missionary secretary think. In these circumstances, the question how should returned missionaries spend their time becomes an interesting one. For the purpose of this discussion, let us divide these missionaries into two classes.

1. Those who return ill, or from some enervating climate like India, fit only for the Sanitarium. How should a compassionate church, a prudent church, expect that they should spend their days? Surely not, arranged for a public meeting on landing at Rimouski and expect even a lady to begin at once (Actual fact). Nor, certainly should the General Assembly in its expiring hour jauntily authorize its poor missionary his due share of "stirring up the churches"