

SPARKS FROM OTHER ANVILS.

Christian Guardian:—"Prayer is a mighty engine of achievement," says Sir Oliver Lodge, the scientist, "but we have ceased to believe it. Why should we be so incredulous?" If we will not learn from the poor native Christian of India, perhaps we will from the great British thinker, or from the great British poet, that "more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." If the church would come to have a fresh faith in the power of prayer there would begin a new era of achievement and victory in the name of Christ.

Presbyterian Standard:—It is not a good sign to hear preachers talking over much about the old theology, apologizing for the use of the old nomenclature—such terms as justification, regeneration, sanctification, and then dwelling over much upon the fatherhood of God rather than upon sin, the atoning blood of Christ, and the sovereign mercies of God as the reason why we have not been consumed. Our Saviour did not talk that way. He recognised the justice, as well as love of God, whereby it is impossible for Him to clear the guilty.

Maritime Baptist:—It is no easy thing to be a true and successful minister of Jesus Christ, because it is such a grandly unselfish and enriching service unto which the messenger of the Cross is bidden. What is most valuable costs most. It is only in connection with stout enemies that signal triumphs are won. To the very noblest qualities in men the word of the Christian pastor and preacher appeals, and if in the home these same qualities are early appealed to, then candidates for the ministry, we may feel sure, will be forthcoming in numbers more nearly equal to the world's need.

Herald and Presbyter:—There is need for more positive personal work. This tells mightily where it is employed. If more of it were being done we would see greater results. And we need more money for our benevolent and missionary causes. We could raise more if we were determined to do so. We need to use more intelligent and consecrated power. The Church of Jesus Christ could do twice as much next year as it did last. All that is needed is a determined spirit. We break down and make failure, more than from any other cause, from a simple lack of genuine Christian enterprise.

United Presbyterian:—The kingdom of God is set up, and we fall in duty if we do not seek to make it universal, in the reign of righteousness, in the general uplift of the world, in all purity, holiness and love. In estimating the value of mission work we must ask the question, not simply how many have believed, but what has been their influence? Are they lifting men to a higher conception of life, and is God becoming enthroned in the community?

Presbyterian Witness:—We fondly hope, and we firmly believe, that our people, young and old, are striving to attain higher standards of well doing. They try to be good and helpful neighbors; they hear the moan of hunger, the cry of distress. Sympathies are quicker and find wider scope. It is true that the thief, the cheat, the swindler finds more scope. But this is because population is larger, and the ways of deceiving the credulous are more abundant.

Suffer not your thoughts to dwell on the injury you have received, or the provoking words that have been spoken to you. Not only learn the art of neglecting them at the time you receive them, but let them grow less and less every moment, until they die out of your mind.

THE SECRET OF GOODNESS.

By Rev. S. H. Gray, M.A.

It has been frequently noted that great work, in whatever sphere of man's effort it be, always bears the mark of ease in accomplishment. If we behold in it the signs of immense effort and strain, we shall find in it also some curtailment of power, some uncertainty of grasp, which indicates, more plainly than words, that the worker was not wholly at one with his work, and wrought laboriously because he did not see clearly. When one enters the office of the great financier, he wonders at the apparent ease, and even unconcern, with which great enterprises are set afoot. One is amazed to read how simply and almost carelessly the great Shakespeare got the subjects of his immortal dramas, and how little apparent effort is visible in those very passages that have won the admiration of the world. In these cases, and in the case of all great workers, the seeming ease and naturalness of their work is the outcome of a spirit that moved with freedom and light in the region of its achievement.

There are in the works and words of the best of God's people the same marks of ease and naturalness. Great deeds and words do not come from hard-driven natures. They are not the outcome of hasty and spasmodic efforts to do great things; they are rather the fine flowers of the inner life, the perfect fruit of a spirit in harmony with God's will, running the way of His commandments, because He has set the heart at liberty.

The secret of a truly good life is, then, not far to seek. It is mainly a matter of heart, of the breadth and fineness and trust of the spirit. Religious faith and love are at the root of all good works and words. If Christ is much to us, it is certain we shall work the work of Him that sent us, and that, not in hasty, spasmodic efforts, but with the ease and naturalness that are born of love.

In his famous Christmas Sermon, Robert Louis Stevenson said: "If you are sure that God, in the long run, means kindness by you, you should be happy; and, if happy, surely you should be kind." Can we not verify his words out of our own experience? Have we been one day, one hour, supremely, truly happy? Then we have known that very day and hour what it is to be truly generous and kind, in other words, truly good.

If we might admit the sunlight of the gospel into our souls, live as the forgiven, grateful, happy children of God, would we not be good in the sense that goodness, kindness, would become the easy and natural expression of the trusting and happy heart within? To attain that right relation to God in Christ is one great end and aim of Christian thought and effort. Our deeds and words will then take care of themselves.

Dundas, Ont.

SAFE IN HIS HANDS.

In His hands we are safe; we falter on
Through storm and mire;
Above, beside, around us, there is One
Will never tire.

What though we fall, and bruised and
wounded lie,
Our lips in dust,
God's arm shall lift us up to victory;
In Him we trust.

For neither life, nor death, nor things
below,
Nor things above,
Shall sever us, that we should ever go
From this great love.

The truest words we ever speak
Are words of cheer.
Life has its shade, its valleys deep;
But round our feet the shadows creep,
To prove the sunlight near.

HOUSE OF THE INTERPRETER.*

By Robert E. Speer.

Life is a school. The whole world is a school. The history of humanity is the story of a great scheme of education. God has been the teacher, and by the most wonderful and commanding system ever dreamed of, he has been training the world. Man has done his worst to spoil the plan of God. It is clear that other evil influences have attacked it. Paul believed firmly that there were great malignant spiritual forces which were warring against the good designs of God. But nothing has been strong enough to overthrow God's purpose. He has bent all evil out of its malicious courses and torn from it some discipline for the training of the world in wisdom and character.

Each individual life is an education. Whatever comes to it from God is part of its discipline. It is possible, of course, that evil may come in and mar it. We see ruined and wasted lives all about us. God is not responsible for this. His school would never spoil or expel a scholar. The damage we see is the one pain and grief of God. Men bring it on themselves against their great Teacher's counsel and entreaty. But there is much that he does allow to come upon them. Only it is never greater than they can bear. What he sends is not the fire that consumes the gold or the knife that cuts the flesh. It is the fire that burns away the dross and the knife that cuts away the bar-nacles.

Education is not an end. It is a means. Its end is twofold—character and service. Boys and girls and men and women are taught in order that they may be better and stronger themselves and in order that they may do more for others. The two go together. The attainments that are not used in human service are sure to shrivel or to lose their sweetness. The strongest and best deeds can only spring from true and devoted characters. God's purpose in working upon us is that we may be made fit to be his fellow workers, fit for his fellowship, and fit for participation in his deeds.

Dr. Babcock's familiar verses draw us the picture and teach us the lesson of life as a school—

"Lord, let me make this rule,
To think of life as school,
And try my best
To stand each test,
And do my work,
And nothing shirk.

"Some day the bell will sound,
Some day my heart will bound,
As with a shout
That school is out
And lessons done,
I homeward run"

The glory of this school is that the teacher is our Father. What a joyful school that would be on earth where the father of the children was their teacher, too, so that all would be done always in the love and interest of the family life. Well, it is so in the great school of the world. The teacher is our Father. He will teach us wisely. His love will never fail nor err.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.

- Mon.—Picture of a preacher (1 Tim. 4: 6-15).
- Tues.—The dusty room (Rom. 7: 7-15).
- Wed.—Passion and patience (Jas. 5: 1-6).
- Thurs.—The fire and oil (Zech. 4: 1-6).
- Fri.—Valiant and despondent (Acts 14: 20-23; Luke 8: 33).
- Sat.—The dream of judgment (Rev. 20: 11-15).

One truth a man lives is worth a thousand he only utters.

* Y. P. Topic, Sunday, May 9, 1909—The House of the Interpreter (Eccl. 12: 9-14; Jas. 1: 19-25).