

the best pie that it can, starches the collar to the best stiffness, keeps the house dusted, and the meals prompt. It hangs the most tasteful pictures that can be procured upon the walls. It knows how to wear a perpetual smile and smooth away the coming frown. It gives moderate due attention to mind, to culture, to pleasure, to society; it is faithful to all the higher duties of life; it respects in all exactness and integrity the duties and privileges of higher spiritual living—that of which the world knows little, ridicules, and has not learned to prize. It makes some opportunities—makes many, it may be—but most generally it waits for the opportunities as they arise in this God's world, as the life of the community or church presents them; but when the opportunity is at hand, it always meets it, and does it according to the full standard of the Christ-rule.

I think that I ought to state as a special characteristic of Methodist piety, its *simplicity*. It is simply frank, ingenuous piety, without assumption, without hypocrisy, without adulteration. Methodism came into the lives of its first followers in the way of simply purifying and cleansing them. They did not change their trades, they did them as of yore, only they put into them the habit of simple, trustful piety. It was like a spring. It bubbled up all the day and night. It naturally flowed forth. These were men of God, and simply acted the piety that they had within, at thinking about self.

A prominent characteristic of Methodism has always been that she believes in the "new birth." She believes that perverse, sinful men may become new creatures. Their evil natures may be rectified, and they may be saved to the higher life, and from the fate of the sinner in the next world. This can be done in a moment by the power of Almighty God. It is always done in God's own way to all those who submit themselves to him. Methodism backs this theory of hers with a long list of testimonies of men of every tongue, of every land almost; so that one can only doubt against facts. If ye have faith it shall be done unto you.

Thou who art a sinner, do not sweat, and struggle, and strive impotently to break the power of the sins that you cannot conquer! Stop sinning at once, and pray constantly to God to give you the victory, and he will. Strive on! Hold on!

Methodism is Earnest.

This is a characteristic without which men would never become true Methodists at all. It is, and always has been, religion in earnest. Who was it that termed it "Christianity with its sleeves rolled up"? Its spirit is to know the truth and to do the right—to stand by the truth and right, no matter what the consequences. Its spirit has ever been to stand by any reform that means the amelioration of human society, and to further to the utmost the saving of souls from sin and spiritual death.

For that reason, prayer-meetings and religious services have always been more frequent in Methodism than in any other faith. There is much attention paid to charities, with a long list of church collections. She keeps her sewing circles running, and is though she might herein improve—proportionate to her means, considerate for the poor. There is generally more visiting from house to house expected of Methodist preachers, and she keeps, so to speak, more spiritual irons in the fire.

The Methodist Church has always been a church of *devotion*. It believes in the devout, the pious spirit. This is noticeable in the spirit of reverence toward all things good and noble, the esteem of the Bible, but more especially relevant in the two important characteristics of her spirit of devotion. We state the less important first—regular and

spiritual, not formal, attendance on all church devotions; and especially the other—the maintenance of the individual, private habit and life of prayer and faith. Let the religious stream be ever flowing, consciously, actively flowing through the conscious life, washing the bank of sensation until it is often and almost always felt.

This is rather a peculiar tenet of our church. Religion is not so much a thing hoped for, or a thing believed to exist, or a creed, but a consciously present and an every-day-felt life.

Methodism inculcates rather a rigid type of piety. It is doubtless as well that she does. Religion is not irreligion. The saint and the sinner can scarcely expect to walk the same path.

Religion is, moreover, from its nature, self denial. It is abstinence from evil. It is bearing the cross for Christ's sake. It is walking in the strait and narrow path of obedience to God's law. It is praying to the Heavenly Father, "Not my will, but thine, be done."

Yet pleasure and happiness are not excluded from life in Methodism or in any other church. God has not excluded joy and peace from the lives of those who keep his natural laws. In fact, the law-abiding man, like the law-abiding citizen, obtains the largest total of joy, the law-breaker ultimately the least. Christ directly declared, "My peace I leave with you." So, also, a joyous experience has been considered a fundamental evidence in Methodism of religious life—of whether one is converted at all. There are but two principles at the basis of Methodism's rule of pleasure: The first is, "Never do evil." The second, "Be considerate of your neighbour, that your example lead him not to offend unto his soul's defeat or loss."

After all, Methodism is only

Another Name for Christianity.

It was and is only a reformation of that which had practically ceased to be. Christianity was dead. It lived in name: it had almost ceased to be in fact in John Wesley's day. He simply re-introduced Christianity among men. Methodism is a minor name, it is only an echo. Its real name is Christianity. John Wesley is himself nothing but an echo of a real name, which is Christ. John Wesley simply replaced in the world that life which Jesus had placed first among his disciples, the fishermen and men of the common people, nearly eighteen hundred years before.

Reproduce that picture of Jesus preaching in Galilee, in and around Jerusalem, in Perea beyond Jordan, in Samaria, in Decaples, and the region about Tyre and Sidon. He is the teacher, and the people of the village or the city are coming to hear his teaching, and the multitude are going away to their homes to live in simplicity the doctrine that he taught. Put by its side John Wesley preaching to Cornish miners, or the people of the interior towns and cities of Great Britain, or the great London itself, it is the same essential picture. It is Christianity in its intrinsic purity. Methodism was a revival of primitive Christianity.

The disciples, the Marys, and Marthas, were the first Methodists. All these humbler ones of whom we hear nothing in the record who separated themselves from the world and lived entirely for Christ, were the first Methodists. All those citizens of Asia Minor and of Greece who left their idol-worship and its impure cult to be loyal, if need be, unto death to Jesus, their Saviour, were the first Methodists. Those of any age, who live Christianity, are Methodists. What John Wesley did, more than aught else, was to preach this truth. Quit this shamming! Be neither hypocritical nor half-hearted. Be Christian to the core. Methodism was the resurrection of an old life that was dead. It was Christianity revived.

And so Methodism, which is only unimpeded religious life,

May Exist in Every Man

who will have it. To be found, it needs only to be sought. Those who consecrate themselves to God and right, are its receivers; those who take the law of Christ as the ruling law of life, receive this higher life. Methodism simply offers the genuine article, religion, to all who will receive it. Methodism seems to say: "Here are we, a body of men in earnest in religion. Would you be in earnest, too? Then come with us! Work with us! We would gladly welcome you."

And now, may God, the Father of us all, with the help of Jesus the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, keep the Methodist Church, what it has ever been, a church of genuine piety, we pray, in Christ's name! Amen!

Days of the Week.

In the museum at Berlin, in the hall devoted to northern antiquities, they have representations of the idols from which the names of the days of the week are derived.

From the idol of the sun comes Sunday. This idol is represented with his face like the sun, holding a burning wheel, with both hands on his breast, signifying his course round the world.

The idol of the moon, from which comes Monday, is habited in a short coat, like a man, but holding the moon in his hands.

Tuisco, from which comes Tuesday, was one of the most ancient and popular gods of the Germans, and is represented in his garments of skin, according to their popular manner of clothing. The third day of the week was dedicated to his worship.

Woden, from which comes Wednesday, was a valiant prince among the Saxons. His image was prayed to for victory.

Thor, from which comes Thursday, is seated in a bed, with twelve stars over his head, holding a sceptre in his hand.

Friga, from which we have Friday, is represented with a drawn sword in his right hand and a bow in his left.

Sater, from which is Saturday, has the appearance of perfect wretchedness. He is thin-visaged, long-haired, with a long beard. He carried a pail of water in his right hand, wherein are fruits and flowers.—*Selected.*

The time has come for the reorganization of Chautauqua Circles. These local literary societies have accomplished a great work in the past, and there should be no diminishing of interest. If any members who have finished a part of the course feel like abandoning the ranks, let them take new courage, and continue at least until the end of the four years' course.

We have repeatedly urged the advisability, especially in cities or larger towns, of providing, in connection with every church, a reading-room, where young people, strangers, and especially the poorer portion of the congregation, could find the leading Church papers and magazines. Under proper supervision, this room could become quite a useful factor in Church economy; it would, at least during long winter evenings, take away the dungeon-like appearance from many church edifices, and be the means of keeping multitudes of young men out of bad places. There are endless varieties of suitable exercises that may be planned, and by means of which the thoughtless can be awakened and the cause of Christ be advanced.