

To our humiliation and shame we have to confess that there is too much truth in this view of life, even in a well ordered Christian community. The writer knows very well that his statements will not be very popular; and that there seems to be a little more impatience with them than usual just now.

"The prophet or preacher of righteousness claiming to base his exhortations or protest on Divine Law is not as a rule a popular character. The opportunist, whether in church or state, does not like his utterances. The man of prophetic conviction and courage is apt to be jeered at as a pedant or a prig, or an impractical philosopher, or a sentimental philanthropist; and yet the fact remains that the men of this type, and not the opportunists, are and have always been the true salt of their society, or let us rather say, they are the Promethean torch-bearers who bring fresh gifts of Divine fire into the life of men, generation by generation.

This is quite true and has always been true, but the work of true leaders would be less difficult and painful in our days, if Christian people generally grasped the great truth that life is one, and its different provinces are not to be shut off from each other. Slander is slander, and if it is used as a political trick, that does not make it any nobler. Greed is greed, whether it is greed of your neighbor's purse or of his territory. War can at best be a hateful necessity, and there is very little in it that is in harmony with the Christian spirit; or to use Mr. Gladstone's words quoted by the Bishop: "That which is morally wrong cannot be politically right." No doubt as this writer suggests, we need higher moral teaching, a loftier moral code, presented to our young people, but we must not put off this reform to the next generation, or the next generation may imitate our example in this respect also. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation!" We need to acknowledge at once that material, successful and earthly comfort have weakened the fibre of our moral nature. We have eaten, and in our fullness we have forgotten the Lord our God who is the King of righteousness. But we must come face to face with facts, and if after the teaching of centuries we come to the conclusion that public life can be separated from private life, and that the greatest thing in public life is a shifty cleverness, an insatiable greed, and a domineering spirit, then our public life must deteriorate; and when we have despised the still small voice we may hear in unexpected ways the voice of thunder saying: "That which is altogether just shalt thou do that thou mayest live"

Sabbath schools have been dragging on an attenuated existence for the past two months, especially in city congregations. Would it not be good policy to close the schools for these two months? More than half of the scholars are absent, often an equal per cent of the teachers are also away; and interest in the work of the class and of the school, is all but gone. We have heard the sage remark: "The devil takes no vacation;" but we are inclined to think that he often accomplishes his best work in a Sabbath school where the air of teacher and scholar is that of those who strictly perform a disagreeable duty.

LET IT PASS.

In the Divine economy no gift is given in order that it may rest with the recipient, but is given to sustain and enrich and then to be passed on. It is a part of God's working capital, and He does not propose that it shall be idle. So if the stream discharges itself into the lake, it is that it may flow out again over the land, or by underground channel to some lower outlet, or at any rate to be drawn up by the sun's rays and scattered as rain or dew over a wider surface to refresh vegetation. We say the fire devours, but it merely changes matter into other forms giving warmth in the process of change, and in these forms going to build up some other phase of life. So God's gifts flow endlessly on, accomplishing their appointed service, changing to suit the new exigency, and entering as largely as ever upon the new service.

The only one of God's creatures who at empts to interfere with this beneficent process, is man. He would often gather about him an accumulated store of God's blessings, sometimes to luxuriate in them, more often to contemplate them. It becomes a matter of small importance to him that in order to add to his hoard he deprives some other creature of what is necessary for life, and keeps back for himself a provision God has made for another. Nor is he less indifferent to the promise that a bountiful provision has been made for himself, and that, in hoarding for the future, he is discrediting the goodness and the wisdom of God in making such provision for him. Men become blind to the incurable result of thus interfering with the Divine plan. "Take from him the pound," is literally true in life. The man who abuses God's gifts in this way is not allowed to enjoy them. Even when accumulated their enjoyment is marred, and even their possession is brief in its tenure.

This is startlingly true of God's spiritual gifts. The life they are intended to sustain is infinitely more precious than mere bodily existence. The gifts themselves are inestimable, and their abuse is visited with swift punishment. The man who seeks to interrupt the course of one of God's spiritual gifts, only succeeds in divesting its course from himself. It was intimated that he should be a channel through whom it should flow to others, enriching his own life on its way, but his selfish spirit bars the way and it seeks another course.

Temporal prosperity and peaceful occupation seem to produce this selfish disposition among men. While a country is young its people are generous, and share with neighbors, and even with the stranger, the little they have. As the wealth of the country increases, and comforts and even luxuries are secured, the generous spirit is stifled and even the friend is denied a share of his bounties. In a land where the enjoyment of Christian privileges is not freely allowed, these are more highly prized, and more eagerly shared. The brother watches for an opportunity to give to a brother, and de-

lights to see him sharing with himself, in that which will keep alive the faith of both. But with us, where every Christian privilege is freely enjoyed we will offer to everything else under the sun before we will proffer the spiritual blessing. Yet God gave it to us that we might pass it on, and brings men next us that we may the more easily and quickly convey to him who also needs it. We cannot confine it. It is elusive as the light. We use it best, and gain most from it by seeming to direct it most effectively into the life of the one who is next us. It is given that we may pass it on.

ENGAGING A TEACHER.

School boards will soon be considering the question of securing a teacher for the next year. The first question considered will be, "Shall we keep the old teacher," and in some instances the answer will turn upon the apparent success of the pupils at the examinations. In five cases out of six, the teacher who is not re-engaged because a small percentage of the pupils passed suffers because the right has been done. It is so easy to drill pupils for passing examinations that the most incompetent teacher can accomplish the trick. And "incompetents" do learn and practice the trick, and take good care that the percentage passed is duly recorded by the local press, with certain modest remarks about the hard-working and enthusiastic teacher.

It is possible for a thoroughly competent teacher, who refuses to listen to the clamor for results at examinations, but resolutely strives and tries to develop the minds of the pupils, to fail entirely to pass a single pupil at the examinations. If, however, a discerning parent compares his child at the beginning of the year, with that child at the close, he will at once note a difference. The child is more observant, and observation is more accurate. Thought is busy, and conclusions that are a result of continuous thought are reached. His child cannot recite facts, but he can reason both ways from a given fact. But is that not education?

The personality of a teacher is rarely considered as a factor in determining the re-engagement or the first engagement. Yet the character of the teacher will bear an indelible mark upon most of the pupils in the year's intercourse. A teacher was placed in charge of a prominent school in A—County. He was well-read, and had the faculty of imparting instruction. He ranked as a good teacher. Morally he was deplorably bad, not positively bad, but weak. He remained two years. He passed many pupils that was creditable. He did nothing outwardly bad, but that community sank in moral tone most perceptibly. Character should count in engaging a teacher.

In a suggestive "Pastoral Letter" to young ministers, "L. A." in the New York Outlook says:—"The minister should never take his scales into the pulpit with him." There is a mine of wealth in that brief sentence. When listening to the preacher we want to hear from him of those things upon which he has arrived at decided convictions.