

Pastor and People.

ABIDE WITH US

Abide with us, dear Saviour,
For we Thy words have heard,
Our hearts have burned within us,
Our love been deeply stirred.
We would not have Thee leave us,
We cannot rest alone;
Come, Thou, and with us dwelling,
To us Thyself make known.

Abide with us, dear Saviour,
In childhood's happy days;
And guide our earliest footsteps
In Thine unerring ways.
May hearts so pure and tender
Be filled with love to Thee,
And thus in life's glad morning,
May all Thy children be.

Abide with us, dear Saviour,
When we begin to share,
The battle and the struggle,
The burden and the care.
For we can never conquer,
We never can endure,
Without Thine aid to keep us
Unflinching, true, and pure.

Abide with us, dear Saviour,
When winter clouds the sky;
And whisper that the summer
Is coming by-and-by.
And when the sun shines brightly,
We need Thy presence still,
That we may not forget Thee,
Nor wander from Thy will.

Abide with us, dear Saviour,
When fiercely beats the gale
For should we face the tempest
Unaided, we must fail.
But shipwreck cannot reach us,
No waves can overtake him
If Thou art in the vessel,
Thy hand upon the helm.

Abide with us, dear Saviour,
When evening shadows fall,
And we from labour resting
Await the homeward call.
Be with us on the journey,
And when the end we see,
May we, in peace unbroken,
Abide at home with Thee.

F. J. W.

MUSIC IN WORSHIP.

The worship of God is twofold in its element. It is, firstly, a devout attending to, and reception of, messages from God. It is, secondly, the devout expression to God of the purposes and feelings most appropriate to our moral and spiritual condition. In portions of the service God speaks to us. In other portions we speak to God. God speaks to the people in the reading of the Scriptures in the sermon; in certain didactic psalms and hymns, and in the benedictions.

The people reply to God in prayers, hymns and psalms; and sometimes by aid of reverential music, with inaudible confessions and thanksgiving most acceptable to God and blessed in their effects upon the worshippers.

It would be possible for all the services of worship to be musically rendered, both the communications from God and the returning confessions, thanksgivings and adorations to Him.

In practice, however, large portions of the services of worship are spoken and not sung.

This covers the whole ground. There is nothing more, so far as the purpose of this article is concerned, to be mentioned or thought of. When God is not, in some way, speaking authoritatively to the people, they, without musical aid, are speaking to Him.

From these simple and indisputable facts it is easy to infer that any element in the music which does not aid the worshipers in receiving divine truth, or in expressing appropriate emotions and resolutions to God, is out of place and hurtful. For instance, any musical performance, however excellent, for the mere sake of itself, is an unwelcome intrusion—unwelcome, that is, to the devout and unworldly. Whatever, in music, does not aid in worship, should be resisted and thrust out.

No soloist or choir should be allowed to sing anything which is not either a message from God or a message to God. No organist should be allowed to introduce a single note of unhallowed, unworshipful tendency.

How far church music has wandered from its proper sphere all the readers of this article are too well aware.

Not a few church organists destroy or at least injure the effect of sermons and prayers by boisterous, roaring postludes.

An eminent clergyman who had long suffered sorely from organ preludes and postludes, once complained to the writer by the use of the following quotation: "A sower went forth to sow; then cometh the organist and snatcheth away that which was sown."

The reader is invited to ponder this question: Should not the organist who seizes the opportunity of the postlude to air his vanity upon the full organ, without regard to worship or the feelings of the people, be promptly discharged?

In the Madison Square Presbyterian Church, in New York, some years ago, Henry Gratten Guinness had preached a powerful and impressive discourse, which obviously pro-

duced a deep effect upon the crowded congregation. The organist followed the benediction with a stormy, irreverential scramble of sounds. The noble and sensible preacher thundered, "Stop that organ," and the ungodly rattle ceased.

Church choirs should be instructed that churches are not the places for mere musical performances, aside from the uses of worship. A vain vocal exploit in church worship is as much out of place as a Gatling gun in Paradise, and, to devout worshippers, utterly unwelcome and abominable.—*C. C. Kimball, in Musical Herald*

FIFTEEN MINUTES A DAY.

An excellent amateur pianist was recently asked how she had managed to keep up her music. She was over forty, and had reared a large family. She had never been rich, and she had had more social burdens to carry than fall to the lot of most women.

"How have you ever done it?" reiterated her friend, who had long ago lost the musical skill which she had gained at an expense of years of study and thousands of dollars.

"I have done it," replied the other, "by practising fifteen minutes a day, whenever I could not get more. Sometimes, for several months together, I have been able to practice two or three hours each day. Now and then I have taken a term of lessons, so as to keep up with the times, but, however busy and burdened I have been, unless actually ill in bed, I have practised at least fifteen minutes every day. That has 'tided me over' from one period of leisure to another, until now I have still my one talent, at least as well improved as it ever was, with which to entertain my friends and amuse myself."

It is amazing to those who have tried it to see what can be accomplished by laying aside even a small portion of time daily for a set purpose. You find your habits of religious devotion wavering. "The cares of this life" are choking out the better growths. Seize a fraction of your time and lay it aside for reading the Bible and for prayer. If you take it as soon as possible after breakfast, you will be sure to get it. Do not curtail your sleep for any purpose. The duty of sleep is just as binding as the duty of prayer. Women will never amount to anything in any department until they learn that the care of their health is a sacred duty.

Do you find your mental furnishings growing rusty and dim? By reading a good book fifteen minutes each day, you can effectually renew your mental vigour.

You cannot master an art by working fifteen minutes a day upon it; but the fruit of years of study in literature, music or painting can be conserved through busy months by the devotion of even a few minutes daily, if you can get no more time, to hard practice. Then the health can be greatly benefitted by even a short stroll in the open air when it is impossible to take longer ones. It is like the proverbial saving of the pennies and gathering up of the fragments. The results are simply astonishing. —*Kate Upson Clark, in Christian Union.*

PREACH THE TRUTH.

The following incident, related by Dr. A. T. Pierson, may bring a reinforcement of courage to some preachers to preach the truth that men most need, regardless of the hearers' tastes or position in life: "At the funeral of a rich and popular but dissipated man who died of delirium tremens, I felt it my duty to be very plain in addressing a large number of men who attended the funeral, with words of warning. So after a few words of reference to the dead, I began a pointed appeal to the hundreds of his unconverted business associates who came to the last rites. I asked them that old question of profit and loss, 'What shall a man be profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' With as much plainness as I could, I applied that question to many who, as I knew, never showed themselves within church doors. Of course they took offence. Many came that day, expecting that the 'officiating clergyman' would pay homage to a rich and popular man, and gloss over with polite varnish his life of profligacy and inebriety. They hoped to get some salve to their own consciences from the ointment of praise with which such a man would be anointed for burial. The disappointment of a few was both outspoken and violent. One man went away angrily cursing and swearing at me and declaring that he would put it in his will that I should never have any part in his funeral ceremonies. Any minister of the Gospel who seeks first of all to be true to himself and to God as well as man, knows at what sacrifice of feeling truth has sometimes to be told, and conscience obeyed. But sooner or later the compensation comes. And in this case it came very unexpectedly and markedly. Within a few months God smote that man with an incurable disease; and, as he belonged to my congregation, it became now my duty to offer him such consolation and help as I could. Hesitatingly I ventured to call upon him; and to my surprise he was not only glad to see me, but begged me to come often, which I did. He clung to me like a little child—opened his whole heart to me, confessed his own life-long sins, besought me to pray for him and with him, and before he died wrote me a letter, which is among the precious things preserved with great care. In that letter he says, after paying the most loving tribute to whatever attentions I had paid him during his illness, 'Always tell men the truth; be honest with them under all circumstances. They may be offended at the time, but they will believe in you and trust you in the end.'"

DRESS PLAINLY.

Some one has given the following reasons why people should dress plainly on Sunday. These are as valid any other day in the week: It would lessen the burden of many who now find it hard to maintain their place in society. It would lessen the force of temptations which often lead men to barter honesty and honour for display. If there was less strife in dress in church, people in moderate circumstances would be more inclined to attend. Universal moderation in dress at church would improve the worship by the removal of many wandering thoughts. It would enable all classes of people to attend church in unfavourable weather. It would lessen, on the part of the rich, the temptation to vanity. It would lessen, on the part of the poor, the temptation to be envious and malicious. It would save valuable time on the Sabbath. It would relieve our means from a serious pressure, and thus enable us to do more for good enterprises.

SERMONS.

There are two ways of regarding a sermon—either as a human composition or a divine message. If we look upon it entirely as the first, and require our clergymen to finish it with the utmost care and learning for our better delight, whether of ear or intellect, we shall be necessarily led to expect much formality and stateliness in its delivery, and think that all is not well if the pulpit has not a golden fringe around it and a goodly cushion in front of it; but we shall, at the same time, consider the treatise thus prepared as something to which it is our duty to listen without restlessness for half-an-hour or three-quarters, but which, when that duty has been decorously performed, we may dismiss from our minds in happy confidence of being provided with another when next it shall be necessary. But if once we begin to regard the preacher, whatever his faults, as a man sent with a message to us, which is a matter of life or death whether we hear or refuse; if we look upon him as set in charge over many spirits in danger of ruin, and having allowed to him but an hour or two in the seven days to speak of them, if we make some endeavour to conceive how precious those hours ought to be to him—a small advantage on the side of God, after his flock has been exposed for six days together to the world's temptations, and he has been forced to watch the thorn and the thistle springing up in their hearts, and to see what wheat he had scattered there snatched from the wayside by this wild bird and the other; and at last, when, breathless and weary with the week's labour, they give him this interval of imperfect and languid hearing, he has but thirty minutes to get at the separate hearts of a thousand men to convince them of their weakness, shame them for all their sins, warn them of all their dangers, to try by this way and that to stir the hard fastenings of those doors where the Master Himself has stood and knocked, yet none opened—thirty minutes to raise the dead in? Let us but once understand and feel this, and we shall look with changed eyes upon that slippery of gay furniture about the place from which the message of judgment must be delivered, which either breathes upon the dry bones that they may live, or, if ineffectual, remains recorded in condemnation, perhaps against the utterer and listener alike, but assuredly against one of them. —*John Ruskin.*

TO MAKE A HAPPY HOME.

1. Learn to govern yourselves, and to be gentle and patient.
2. Guard your tempers, especially in seasons of ill-health, irritation and trouble, and soften them by prayer, penitence, and a sense of your own shortcomings and errors.
3. Never speak or act until you have prayed over your words or acts, and concluded that Christ would have done so in your place.
4. Remember that, valuable as is the gift of speech, the gift of silence is often much more valuable.
5. Do not expect too much from others, but remember that all have an evil nature, whose development we must expect, and which we should forbear and forgive, as we often desire forbearance and forgiveness ourselves.
6. Never retort a sharp or angry word. It is the second word that makes the quarrel.
7. Beware of the first disagreement.
8. Learn to speak in a gentle tone of voice.
9. Learn to say kind and pleasant things whenever an opportunity offers.
10. Study the character of each, and sympathize with all in their troubles, however small.
11. Do not neglect little things, if they can affect the comfort of others in the smallest degree.
12. Avoid moods and pets and fits of sulkiness.
13. Learn to deny yourself, and to prefer others.
14. Beware of meddlers and tale bearers.
15. Never charge a bad motive if a good one is conceivable.
16. Be gentle, but firm, with children.
17. Do not allow your children to go away from home at night without knowing where they are.
18. Do not allow them to go where they please on the Sabbath.

A MEMORIAL window has been erected in Thread Street Church, Paisley, in memory of Professor James Thomson, D.D., first minister of the congregation, who died in 1843. It is the gift of members who sat under his ministry, or their families.