

The Christian

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EDITORIAL.

REMUNERATIVE LABOR.

The young are ambitious to perform great things. While simple duties are irksome to them, they engage in things beyond their strength with extraordinary zest. This ambition cleaves to our riper years and is fanned by sensational reports of faith cures and other marvellous works. How glad we would be to get rain by praying for it, or to have it stopped when it destroys our property or thwarts our plans. How delightful to have our prayer for the recovery of sick friends answered.

James wrote his general epistle in the age of miracles, and tells the sick to call in the elders of the church to pray over them in certain form, assuring them that such prayer would save the sick, etc. He refers to Elias' case to show how effectual the prayer of a righteous man was at such time. But James, like Paul, shows a more excellent way and gives to every Christian to the end of time a work as much above miracles as the heavens are above the earth: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death and shall hide a multitude of sins."—(James v: 19-20.)

Scaffolds are necessary in building a house, but when it is finished they are removed as an unnecessary encumbrance. But children sometimes admire these scaffolds as the most interesting articles on the premises. When God's great building was in course of establishment miracles were necessary to gain men's attention and belief, but when thousands of Jews and Gentiles were saved and Christianity established and the apostles had passed away, these miracles, no longer necessary, ceased, notwithstanding men's childish attachment to them. This Paul explains in the 13th chapter of first Corinthians.—When he was a child he thought, understood and spoke as a child; but when he became a man he put away childish things. He approved the more excellent way. Could we call down rain or heal the sick it might only prove a temporal benefit to some while it was an injury to others; but to convert a sinner is a universal and eternal good, and a Christian has the privilege of doing this while time and changes last.

We will consider:

I. The erring one. James speaks as if this might happen to any of the brethren, showing that all should be humble. Many, like Peter, are ready to exclaim: "Though all men should deny Thee, yet will not I." This is the very way to fall, for God resisteth the proud, Satan marks the self-confident and exalted man, and desires to have him! (1). We may err from false teaching. Many did so in ancient times. The love of novelty makes new

doctrines attractive, and the pride that exults in thinking that we know more than others, binds us fast in error's chains. (2). We may err by keeping the company of the careless and irreligious until we grow to like them, and lose our interest in secret prayer, in the house of God, in his family, and his word.

II. To avoid the erring one. This is the work of faith and labor of love. It is considered a most difficult work, but the love of Jesus prompts it, and confidence in his promise and grace encourages persistent and self-denying labor—labor which is highly beneficial to the worker himself. If we turn the sinner to the truth we must be well acquainted with the truth and we will earnestly seek for it. We need to have the Holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts by faith, and we will constantly and believingly pray for the Holy Spirit. We need to live a holy life, and we will fervently and prayerfully strive to lead such a life. It makes the mission of Christ increasingly dear to us for he came to seek and to save that which was lost, and in proportion to his condescending love to us in making us instrumental in turning sinners to himself will our love and gratitude to Him abound. Who can describe the blessedness of being ardently engaged in that work that brought Jesus from the skies, caused all his sufferings on earth, and for which he is constantly interceding in heaven! This leads us to consider.

III. Let him know. The Holy Spirit by James says— "Let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death and shall hide a multitude of sins."

The boy who raises a signal and prevents a large train filled with passengers from running on the bridge recently undermined by floods, nor how much joy he has caused to many hearts. He knows only that he has saved a whole train from destruction and many persons from sudden death. He that turns the sinner from the error of his ways can't know how much evil he prevents or how much good he has accomplished, because he can't know the value of a soul or the evil of sin. But he is assured that he saves a soul from death and hides a multitude of sins. Who can describe a man's loss when he loses his soul? We have some faint idea of a man's loss when his intellect is gone, but we cannot conceive how great is the loss of his soul. It would be dreadful to himself and mankind if Newton had lost his intellect in early life. What a spectacle to behold the Prince of Philosophers reduced to a raving maniac, living only to be a misery to himself and a terror to others. But even this sight would not describe a lost soul. Jesus asks: "what it would profit a man if he were to gain the whole world and lose his own soul." Were a man so rich as to have all the treasures of earth at his command, so powerful as to have all the armies and navies of the world waiting to obey his orders, and after a little to lose himself and to be forever in a worse state than the poor maniac, what would all this deceitful wealth and power avail him? Money deceives hands, power will not continue, heaven and earth shall pass away, but the soul lives on to deplore its guilt and realize its horrors where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. Jesus knew the value of a soul and humbled himself and became obedient to the death of the cross to save it. Again who is able to conceive the malignity of sin or estimate its consequence. If one sin in Eden had filled the earth with woe and weeping ever since, what shall we say of a multitude of sins. To turn the erring one is to save a soul from death and to hide a multitude of sins. Let the faithful worker know this. This makes the fact certain that the one who errs from the truth if not converted will lose his soul. He has turned away from a loving Saviour and

strengthens the hands of his exulting enemies. He virtually says to these enemies: The Lord is not my shepherd, I find none of his green pastures; His ordinance and worship are not my delight, I have rather found him to be a wilderness and now seek to share your enjoyments and to go with you on the broad road, thus making sure work for a lost eternity. Yet such an one can be saved, because the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin, and when he ascended on high he received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. (Ps. lxxviii: 18). Nothing is more touching than Jesus' tenderness to the erring. Think of the parable of the prodigal, Luke xv.; or of his loving look on Peter when he had just denied him. Hear him telling of the joy there is in Heaven among the angels when one sinner repents. Hear his doing apologies and prayers for his murderers, and learn how gladly he forgives the erring one who turns from his iniquity.

Christian reader do you know of any one who has erred from the truth? If so what do you think of the work of converting him? Do you say I have enough to do to look after myself; he has the same privileges that I have. Or do you even go so far as to say "Am I my brother's keeper." This was Cain's reply to God even when his brother's blood cried for vengeance. If you saw your brother in danger of death you would do all in your power to relieve him. Can you feel unconcerned about the death of his soul? James describes the glorious work as that of an individual, "And one convert him, let him know." Why, Christian reader, could you not be that one? Why not have that knowledge? God is able to give you the wisdom to win souls, to take you into nearer fellowship with himself, and to make you the rejoicing instrument of saving souls from death and hiding multitudes of sins by leading the lost to the Saviour. "They that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." D. C.

THE rumsellers and their political allies are attempting to perpetrate upon the people of Canada one of the most insolent outrages of the age. But the time is not far distant, and the recent action of the Senate in passing the amendment permitting the sale of light wines, ales, and beer in counties where the Scott Act is or may hereafter be brought in operation, will awaken in the people a just resentment and hasten the day when upon the heads of these *triflers* of the people's rights and desires, will fall a righteous retribution. Of course these amendments will not become law until passed by the Commons.

IN THIS ISSUE we give a full account of sister Smith's death, believing it will meet a deep desire on the part of our readers to learn the circumstances attending the last moments of one so closely related, and lovingly known to many of us. She was a native of Cornwallis, N. S., and was married to Bro. Smith in St. John, October, 20th, 1874, by Bro. Ford, at the home of our now deeply lamented Brother, Milton Barnes. And we can assuredly say that from no portion of our great Brotherhood goes forth a warmer sympathy and a stronger desire, that our beloved Brother and little ones may be Divinely sustained and cheered in their hour of bitter grief, than from the brethren living in these three Provinces.

From a card written by Bro. Blenus, we clip the following: "I have taken charge of the Christian Church in the city of Jacksonville, Florida, and my address from this date will be—35, West Beaver Street, Jacksonville, Florida. I will write you an 'occasional.'" I have just closed a meeting with 11 additions. T. H. BLENUS."