

Spiritual Hindrances.

REV. JOSEPH HAMILTON.

I was lately travelling on the New York Central Railway. On that road there is a special train called the Empire State Express. This is not only a very fast train, but you can depend on her absolutely that she will be on time. To secure that end, however, not only is there a well-constructed and very powerful engine, but the train never consists of more than four coaches. Quite often there are passengers enough to fill one or two coaches more, but never more than four are taken. It has been found by experiment and close calculation that the engine cannot take more than four coaches and keep the record for being on time. I was struck with the wisdom of this plan, and I thought, moreover, how much wiser some of us would be if we acted on the same principle in the spiritual life. Men hitch themselves on to too many loads of the world to make good time. Some of us might be nearer heaven today—perhaps some of us might be in heaven today—if we had not hampered and hindered our spiritual advance by dragging after us coaches full of worldly business or worldly cares or worldly pleasures. Let us see that we are not hindered by any load of worldliness. There are grades on the road-bed of that train where she would lose time if weighted any heavier; and there are steep grades in our life here and there where we need to go as light of the world as we can, else we may reach the goal very late, or possibly not reach it at all.

Mimico.

The Only Terms.

The perfect knowledge of God is to be attained only by the perfectly consecrated life. The human soul is a mirror on which the light of God shines; and only the pure mirror reflects the perfect image. We can have real peace only when we are sure that God is directing and supporting us in all the perplexing experiences of life; and we cannot have that certainty unless our hearts are pure, for it is only the pure heart that can see God. The glorious promise of Christ is, that if we confess our sins he is faithful and just, not only to forgive us our sins, but also to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.—Louis Albert Banks.

Never Failed.

You cannot find any place in Scripture where a man was ever sent by God to do work in which he failed. God sent Moses to Egypt to bring three millions of bondmen out of the house of bondage into the promised land. Did he fail? It looked, at first, as if he were going to. If we had been in the court when Pharaoh said to Moses, "Who is God, that I should obey him?" and ordered him out of his presence, we might have thought it meant failure. But did it? God sent Elijah to stand before Ahab, and it was a bold thing when he told him there should be neither dew nor rain; but didn't he lock up the heavens for three years and six months? Now here is God sending his dearly beloved Son from his bosom, from the throne, down into this world. Do you think he is going to fail? Thanks be to God, he can save to the uttermost, and there is not a man who may not find it so, if he is willing to be saved.—Selected.

George: "With the assurance of your love I could conquer the world." Grace: "That will not be necessary. All you have to do is to conquer papa."—London Titt-Bits.

Our Young People

**Missions: Growth of the Kingdom.—
Topic for Sabbath Sept. 29.**

WATCH IT GROW.

BY AMOS R. WELLS.

Nothing is quite so fascinating to me as watching things grow. All parts of the process are marvellous,—the hopeful burial of the seed, the first timid showing above the soil, the sudden leap into the air and sunshine, the leaves, the flower, the fruit,—it is all wonderful. It is like a vision of God at His work of creation.

And of all growing things, nothing is so delightful to watch as the growing church of God. We know how the seed was buried in blackness and death, the blood of many a martyr being the seed of the church. We can trace the slow upliftings, as the uplifted Christ began to draw men toward Himself. Antioch, Macedonia, Corinth, Rome, Constantine, Luther, Knox, Calvin, the Puritans, Carey,—we can see the leaves unfolding, the stem thickening and lengthening, the branches widening out.

In an especial sense, of recent years, the church has been growing. Missions have won a foothold in many lands. Religion is getting a stronger and more practical hold on the world. Think: within a hundred years missions, the Sunday school, the Y.M.C.A., the W.C.T.U., and the Christian Endeavor Society! It is no dead stock that bears such fruit!

Now no rightly constituted man can watch a thing grow without wanting to do something to hasten and increase its growth. There is inspiration in the sight. We are not, childlike, to keep pulling up the roots to see whether the plant is alive; there is altogether too much of that in current discussions. But let us heap on rich loam. Let us water the ground with our grateful tears. Let us keep off all hurtful insects. Let us loosen the soil for the air and the rain. And as the fruit matures let us gather it in, with shouts of praise and thanksgiving.—Christian End. World.

For Daily Reading.

Mon., Sept. 23.—The kingdom begun. Mark 1: 6-15
Tues., Sept. 24.—God's promise. Mark 4: 26-32
Wed., Sept. 25.—Man's part. Luke 10: 1-9
Thurs., Sept. 26.—Prayer and missions. Acts 13: 1-5
Fri., Sept. 27.—Progress of the gospel. Isa. 35: 1-10
Sat., Sept. 28.—Its future success. Jer. 31: 31-34
Sun., Sept. 29.—Missions growth of the kingdom. Ps. 72

As Constantine was tracing the bounds of the city of Byzantium, a looker-on expressed surprise at the vastness of the area which he was including. Constantine said, "I am following One who is leading." An admirable motto for the organizers of missionary work.

The contrast between the little ante-Pentecostal church in Jerusalem of 120 members and the millions upon millions among almost all nations now, is great in the arithmetical figures, but the Omniscient One alone knows the number of the saved for eternity, the multitude of true and obedient believers in the crucified Jesus.—R. M. Paterson, D. D.

Thou Shalt Not Tempt the Lord Thy God.

What did the Master mean? Simply this, that we are not to presume on God's promises in such a way as to go unnecessarily into danger. When in the line of duty we can go anywhere, do anything, confident that the result, whatever it may be, will be made to work for our good. But there is no promise when we fly in the face of knowledge. That is a fact which we need to apply in all parts of our lives. It is a Christian duty to take precautions, and to avail ourselves of every discovery and every safeguard of which we have knowledge. It is either a false interpretation of the meaning of God's word, or a case of mock heroics, when one says with reference to sickness or anything else of the sort, that "If they are to have it, they will have it, no matter what they do," and refuses to avoid the dangers which might bring it about.

Science has made tremendous strides in the treatment of disease. It is no longer satisfied with combating of symptoms; it looks for the cause, and seeks to prevent both its development and spread. The result, in the practical stamping out of certain disorders, and the control of others, is too plain to require an argument; but the means is not always pleasant. It is not pleasant to have the home placarded with a quarantine card, to be forbidden to leave the house, or to allow the entrance of friends and loved ones from outside. It is not pleasant to submit to either the isolation or the subsequent disinfection. When death ensues, it seems hard to comply with the law demanding a strictly private funeral, within twenty-four hours of death, and which in some cases refuses even to allow the body to be dressed for the grave. There is the feeling that these things are unnecessary, and it is remembered that they were unknown a generation ago. Friends insist on breaking the quarantine and "running the risks"; members of the family go out and mingle with others; weak officials fail to enforce the law; physicians neglect to report the cases on account of the inconvenience it entails, or the possible loss of business. The disease spreads, and suffering and sorrow follow in its wake.

Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God by flying in the face of knowledge and of warning. We owe a duty not only to ourselves and to our families, but to the community at large, that no acts of ours recklessly scatter the germs of disease.

It is not a question of our convenience, or of what was done in the past, or even of what we "believe" in the matter, but of what the wisdom of the age declares to be so. If through our neglect or carelessness, sickness or death ensue, we are morally responsible.

The Lord expects us to use common sense in our lives; and to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin.—Lutheran Observer.

Religious Intelligence: United action by even the best men for the best purposes will not bring about the millennium, but it will help more than all other agencies to inaugurate a clean, honorable, and business-like administration of public affairs, and that is all that reasonable men hope for and expect.