

The Rev. Silas K. Hocking.

BY ARLEY LANE.

Not a seat vacant, said the brother at the door. The floor was full, and despite the general instructions of the police the aisles also were full of chairs. The faraway gallery was crowded, likewise the steps to the gallery. Fact was, continued the brother, that twice as many people as the place would hold had arrived an hour before the time announced for the commencement of service. Herein lay suggestiveness. I asked him whether the people had come to worship God or to hear the celebrity? He smiled, and said that God alone could tell. Asked whether the Baptists were heavy novel readers, and whether the general body approved of novel-writing pastors, he smiled expressively and said that times changed, and men must change with them. Asked whether this sort of opportunism was openly preached from the pulpits of the faith, or tacitly adopted as an essentially worldly course which should be kept in the background, he smiled a third time with more expression than ever, and said that, now he came to think of it, there was room for one on the chancel steps. Would that do? If so, and a side door were not finally closed—

In two minutes I was squatting on the friendly steps, looking at the small of the preacher's back through an atmosphere like that of the kitchen on an old-fashioned washing day. Truly the preacher's reception was not wanting in warmth.

He turned toward the organ while a hymn was sung, and then I perceived that he had reached the fifties; that he was tall and thin; that he was slightly bald; had a healthy complexion, an aquiline nose, and a beard that would have done honour to General Booth, or Shylock, or Father Christmas, or Father Abraham. Perched in the pill-box pulpit he seemed to the manor born. Methought I divined his early history, the history of many a good man and true, especially among the Non-conformists, those happy professors of the highly developed, old-fashioned conscience, which they claim as the true origin of the greatness of England. After the hymn came prayer; a prayer that was in a measure a sermon on the efficacy of prayer. We did not pray as we ought; how strange, when the Lord, the Omnipotent, waited to give all we asked. Men need lack nothing; what they wanted was prayer and faith. Not only people but pastors came short in this matter. There need be no empty churches; all could be filled with faithful prayer.

The formal preliminaries having been performed, we settled for the sermon. The gas was turned down, while the preacher stood up. His text, he said, would be found in Malachi. Here the congregation did a great turning over of leaves. Clearly the good Baptists were verifying the text, and my respect for them rose proportionately. They actually knew the location of Malachi, perhaps of Habakkuk, possibly of Obadiah; wonderful acknowledgments to him who only knows the whereabouts of Genesis and Revelations. Will a man rob God? read out in determined tones, the Rev. Silas K. Hocking. Then more resignedly he repeated the question. Will a man rob God? Afterwards he paused a moment to allow the text to sink into our minds (if any), and to take our measure and the nature of the general environment.

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Mr. Hocking restrained himself at first, stating his case in a judicial way. As he warmed he began to swim, uniting his hands in front and striking out like Holbein crossing the Channel. His next stage of heat saw him cutting down oaks like a pioneer in a primeval forest. Subsiding into comparative gentleness he commenced sowing, gently dropping seeds from his right hand, whether wheat, or tares, or turnips was lost in conjecture. Warming again, he brandished an imaginary sabre and hewed his way through hostile legions like a Light Dragoon. How could a man rob God? he asked, in comparative calm. Did not God give us all? Had we anything but what God gave us? No. How then, could we rob God? By withholding His due! Could a man rob his wife who was dependent on him for everything? When he gave her food clothing, shelter? Yes; there were more things than money and money's worth. There was companionship, sympathy, love. In like manner we could rob our children, though they had nothing. A woman who wasted her time and thought on dress and company was a robber. Children needed more than food and discipline. They need love and had a right to it. Without it they grew up cold, hard, morose. We wedded them love.

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And children owed love. They were expensive luxuries, but if they loved us we were more than repaid. Was there any young man present who came from the country, and who was a little careless about writing to his mother? Let him write her that very night, and let him be sure to make the mother feel that he loved her. That would be a precious letter; no young man, devoid of the experience of life, could know how precious. The older we grew the more we prized our parents.

The human race needed for its full moral development more love. Other things essential: love supreme. Think how much was comprised in that one word—Love!

If we did not serve God we robbed Him in the most vital sense of the word. If we put business or pleasure first we were robbers of God? Anything beyond hunting up our smallest change for the collection?

The Reverend Silas was pungent, piquant, practical, and pleasant. I have not read his novels, my conception of the religious love-story being derived from the Sunday magazines of my early days, in which the lovers mostly conversed of the respective states of their respective souls from the post-sermon point of view; proposing, accepting, and kissing between texts, and bringing up a large family, principally as it seemed on religious tracts. But if Mr. Silas K. Hocking can write as well as he can preach, I should have no objection to number myself among his disciples. Meanwhile, he must be content with a following which, according to the publishers, is more than twice as large as that of Miss Marie Corelli.

Health and Home Hints

Candied Lemon Peel.—Remove the peel in spiral form and cook until it is tender, changing the water several times. When done drain and roll in flour. Make a syrup of water and sugar and when it boils drop in the peel, cooking it until it is clear. Remove from syrup and place on dry plates in a warm, not hot, oven, for an hour or more. Orange peel may be candied in the same way.

HOW RELIEF CAME.

An Interesting Story From An Icelandic Settlement.

From the Logberg, Winnipeg, Man.

The readers of Logberg have long been familiar with the virtues of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills through the well authenticated cures published in these columns each week. Many of our readers are also able to vouch for cures which have come under their own observation. This week "Logberg" has received a letter from one of its readers, Mr. B. Waiterson, a prosperous farmer living at Bru, in which he gives his own experience in the hope that it may benefit some other sufferer. Mr. Waiterson says: "Some years ago I was suffering so greatly from rheumatism in my limbs that I was for a long time unable to do any work. I tried in many ways to obtain a cure, both by patent medicines and medicine prescribed by doctors, but without obtaining any benefit. I saw Dr. Williams' Pink Pills advertised in the Logberg as being a cure for this trouble and determined to give it a trial. I bought a dozen boxes and before half of them were used I felt a great change for the better. This improvement continued from day to day, and before I had used all the pills I was completely cured. Since that time I have never had an attack of this trouble. After this I used the pills in several other cases and no other medicine has been so beneficial to me. I feel it my duty to publicly give testimony to the merits of this wonderful medicine so others similarly afflicted may be led to try it."

If you are weak or ailing; if your nerves are tired and jaded, or your blood is out of condition, you will be wise to use Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, which are an unfailing cure for all blood and nerve troubles. But be sure and get the genuine, with the full name "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People" on the wrapper around every box. Sold by all medicine dealers or sent post paid at 50 cents a box or six boxes for \$2.50 by writing direct to the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

Dressing for Vegetable and Egg Salads.—Mix the yolks of three eggs with two teaspoonfuls of salt, one tablespoonful of sugar, one teaspoonful of mustard, and half a teaspoonful of paprika. Beat well, then add two tablespoonfuls of melted butter, a cup of thick cream, half a cupful of hot vinegar, and the whites of three eggs beaten stiff. Cook over hot water, stirring continuously till of the consistency of soft custard. Keep in a glass on ice, and this dressing will be good for several weeks.

Peach Sponge.—To make peach sponge, pare and remove the stones from one pound of nice ripe peaches. Boil together half a pound of sugar and half a pint of water for just a moment; skim and add the peaches. Cook two minutes; take from the fire and press through a sieve; add the juice of one lemon. Stir in half a box of gelatine that has been soaked in half a cupful of cold water for half an hour; stir until the mixture begins to congeal, and then fold in the well-beaten whites of three eggs. Turn into a mould, and stand at once in a cool place. Make a sauce from the yolks of the eggs, three tablespoonfuls of sugar and a pint of milk. Cook as you would a soft custard. Add a little grated rind of a lemon, and stand the mixture in a cool, dry place. Apples, pears or any other small fruits may be substituted for peaches.