

## Pastor and People.

### DO NOT PASS THEM BY.

A valued correspondent, W. H., sends the following bit of experience, which was related to him by an old minister. It may serve as a useful hint to young ministers in their pastoral labours:

My first charge was in a rural neighbourhood. It was my practice to go round among the families of the congregation and pay them pastoral visits. When I was leaving one house I had visited, I asked whether I ought to call at the next house on my way home ward. I was told, however, that it would not be of any use, for the master of the house was very intemperate and rude in his manners. Being thus warned, I passed the gate of the prohibited dwelling, but I said to myself, "Why not call at any rate? It can do no harm." I turned back and entered the gate, encountering the owner of the place, who was unharnessing his team. He spoke quite civilly, and asked me to go into the house and wait till he should dispose of the horses.

On entering the humble dwelling, I saw a number of children seated near the stove, while the mother was busy in a corner hatcheling flax. She looked up for a moment, but did not rise, nor ask me to be seated. I sat down near the children, and began to converse with them. I found that they were quite intelligent and I proceeded to ask them some questions from the Shorter Catechism, which they answered readily and correctly. As soon as the first question was asked, the woman left her work and came and sat beside me. To my great surprise I found that the little ones were thoroughly drilled in the Catechism, and were well acquainted with the Scriptures. The fact was that the woman mistook me for the sheriff, and supposed that I had come to levy an execution. The husband was a worthless fellow, who did little for the family, but the mother had been well brought up herself, and she carefully trained her little ones. I had a most interesting visit with the family, but the husband took care not to make his appearance. The family thus excavated, were attended to by the members of my congregation, and they began to attend Sabbath School and public worship. The girls grew up intelligent and attractive, and in due time were well married. The father improved somewhat in his conduct, but never became a church member. For myself, I learned a lesson of experience which proved highly useful. My motto afterwards was to pass no house in my pastoral visits without attempting to find an entrance.

### A TOUCHING STORY.

An interesting, instructive and touching story is told by H. L. Hastings, of Boston, in a recent work on the corruptions of the New Testament. It is as follows:

Not long since, three little children, a boy of ten years, with his two little sisters, one seven and the other four, living in Klum, in Eastern Prussia, wished to go to Sedalia, in the State of Missouri, to join their parents who were already settled in America. None of their relatives were so situated as to be able to accompany them, and hence they were under the necessity of taking their journey alone. An aunt in Berlin furnished each of the young travellers with a little book, on the first page of which she wrote the name, age, birthplace and destination of the bearer, writing below in large letters, in German and English and French, a *single sentence* taken from that book. And she told them whenever they found themselves in any trouble or difficulty, to just stand still and open those little books, and hold them up before them.

The children started from their German home, travelled until they reached the seaport, embarked on board the steamer, crossed the great Atlantic, landed in America, travelled by rail more than a thousand miles westward into the heart of Missouri, showing their little passports when needful, to all with whom they came in contact; and in no case did they fail to obtain every kindness, tenderness and protection which could be given, every heart warming with love and every hand being stretched forth in helpfulness to the little ones who were thus cast upon the kindness of passing strangers whom they had never seen before, and will never see again, but through whose kind assistance they safely reached the far-off home of their grateful and rejoicing parents.

What little book was this, which proved to them such a precious passport? Was it a volume of the decrees and laws of an Alexander, a Caesar or a Charlemagne? Was it an ukase of the Russian autocrat, or a decree of the Emperor of Germany, which made for them a way over land and sea? No! It was none of these. It was a copy of that same New Testament which has been so wonderfully preserved through these eighteen hundred years. And what was the sentence in German and English and French, which commanded the attention, the respect and service of strangers of whatever nationality? Was it a passage from an Eastern Veda? A maxim of Confucius? An utterance of Buddha? A command of some high and mighty potentate? A com-

mendation from some vast and influential brotherhood? No! It was none of these. The sentence which opened their way and proved to them more effective than the mandate of a monarch, or the safe conduct of an emperor, was this: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of one of these, ye have done it unto Me," saith Jesus Christ.

### SCOTLAND.

WRITTEN IN THE ABBEY OF HOLYROOD.

Thy towers, Oh, Scotland, and thy walls,  
Ramparts and palaces of thine,  
Thy cloisters and thine ancient halls,  
Where, like the wind's voice in the pine,  
The holy chant, moaned through the shade,  
Or laughed, the braquet manifold—  
Dim churches, where our mothers prayed;  
Towers, where our fathers fought of old!

God's fanes and castles of dead kings;  
Temples, the steel kept for the Lord;  
Strongholds, whose cross was as a sword;  
Love's haunts, where old harp music rings,  
Though song and singer both be dead—  
Sin-coloured, crime-stained masonry  
Now dim with how much mystery  
Were once with splendour girdled!

I love the woodway winding down  
To the grim, vaulted gates, where frown  
The mouldering turrets, and, half seen,  
The manor, mailed with ivy green;  
I love the flight of startled birds  
From dusty towers where, in unrest,  
Their black battalions lurk, like words,  
Hid in a vagrant singer's breast!

I love the old kirk, brooding o'er  
The still tombs as a quiet dove  
Covers the dear fruits of her love;  
The citadel, moss-crust'd, hoar,  
That clings along the mountain side,  
Where the steep waters hurtle down,  
Its wings outspread above the town,  
Like an eagle in its pitch of pride.

The poet, like a bird of flight,  
Through all swift times of day and night,  
Seeks evermore, on tireless wings,  
Dim, haunted ruins, mossy springs;  
And where proud palaces lie low,  
Their granite foreheads in the dust,  
He knows, the great dead, being so,  
Sing the best songs of hope and trust.

Oh, Scotland, guard thy ruins well;  
Thou hast no worthier thing to guard,  
Nor any other tale to tell  
That holds such music for thy bard,  
In these thy fame, thy glory dwell;  
Though vultures take thy heart in fee  
These stones thou still hast left to thee—  
Oh, Scotland, guard thy ruins well!

—Charles Vance Thompson.

### THE SABBATH.

"Thus the Heavens were finished, and the earth, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made, and rested on the seventh day from all the work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it for in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made."

Now begins the seventh day, the day of rest, or the Sabbath of the earth, when the globe and its inhabitants are completed.

Since the beginning of this day no new creation has taken place. God rests as the Creator of the visible universe. The forces of nature are in that admirable equilibrium which we now behold, and which is necessary to our existence.

No more mountains or continents are formed, no new species of plants or animals are created. Nature goes on steadily in its wonted path. All movement, all progress has passed into the realm of mankind which is now accomplishing its task.

The seventh day is, then, the present age of our globe; the age in which we live, and which was prepared for the development of mankind. The narrative of Moses seems to indicate this fact; for at the end of each of the six working days of creation we find an *evening*. But the morning of the seventh is not followed by any *evening*. The day is still open. When the evening shall come the last hour of humanity shall strike.

This view of the Sabbath of creation has been objected to on account of the form of the command of the Decalogue relating to the observance of the Sabbath. But those who object confound God's Sabbath with man's Sabbath, and forget the words of Christ that our Sabbath was made for man who needs it, and not for God.

God rests as a creator of the material world only to become active; nay, Creator in the spiritual world. His Sabbath work is love to man—the redemption. His creation is that of the new man, born anew of the Spirit in the heart of the natural man. So man is commanded to imitate God in leaving once in seven

days the work of this material world, to turn all his attention and devote his powers to the things of Heaven.

There are, therefore, *three* Sabbaths:

1. God's Sabbath, after the material creation.
2. The Sabbath of humanity, the promised millennium, after the toil and struggle of the six working days of history.
3. The Sabbath of the individual, short-lived man, the day of rest of twenty-four hours made for him according to his measure.

The length of the day in each is of no account. The plan, in all, is the same, and contains the same idea—six days of work and struggle in the material world, followed by a day of peace, of rest from the daily toil and activity in the higher world of the Spirit. For the Sabbath is not only a day of rest, it is the day of the Lord.—*Dr. Guyot.*

### HOW TO CURE GOSSIP.

Adopt this rule: Let all who come to you with stories about mutual acquaintances know that you intend, as soon as your duties allow, to wait upon the parties spoken of disparagingly and repeat just what was said, and who said it. Still better, take out your memorandum-book, and ask the party to allow you to copy the words, so that you can make no mistake.

You will have to do this probably not more than three times. It will fly among your acquaintances on the wings of the gossips, and persons who come to talk against other persons in your presence will begin to feel as if they were testifying under oath.

But you ask, "will it not be mean to go off and detail conversation?" Not at all when your interlocutor understands that he must not talk against an absent person in your presence without expecting you to convey the words to the absent person and the name of the speaker. Moreover, what right has any man or woman to approach you and bind you to secrecy and then poison your mind against another? If there be any difference in your obligations, are you not bound more to the man who is absent than to the one who is present? If you can thus help to kill gossip it will not matter if you lose a friend or two; such friends as these, who talk against others to you, are the very persons to talk against you to then.

Try our rule. We know it to be good. We use it. It is known in the church of which we are pastor that if any one speak to us disparagingly of an absent member, we hold it our duty to go to that absent member immediately and report the conversation and the names; or, still better, to make the party disparaging face the party disparaged. We have almost none of this to do. Amid the many annoyances which necessarily come to the pastor of a large church, and still larger congregation, we think that we are as free from the annoyance of gossips as it is possible for a man to be who lives amongst his fellow-men.

Try our rule, try it faithfully, with meekness and charity, and if it does not work well, let us know.—*Rev. Dr. Deems.*

### CHRIST'S INTERCESSION.

There arises from all parts of the world, at the morning and the evening, and through the labours of the day, a perpetual incense of adoration and of petition. It contains the sum of the deepest wants of the human race in its fears and hopes, its anguish and thankfulness. It is laden with sighs, with tears, with penitence, with faith, with submission. The broken heart, the bruised spirit, the stifled murmur, the ardent hope, the haunting fear, the mother's darling wish, the child's simple prayer, all the burdens of the soul, all wants and desires nowhere else uttered, meet together in that sound of many voices which ascends into the ears of the Lord God of Hosts. And mingled with all these utterances and cravings is one other voice, one other prayer—their symphony, their melody, their accord, deeper than all these, tenderer than all these, mightier than all these—the tones of One who knows us better than we know ourselves, and who loves us better than we love ourselves, and who brings all these myriad fragile petitions into one prevalent intercession, purified by His own holiness and the hallowing power of His work.—*Prof. H. B. Smith.*

### GOD'S INSTRUMENTS.

The *Christian-at-Work* cites the following striking illustrations:

Often God chooses the humblest instruments. All history teaches the same truth. Moses was the son of a poor Levite; Gideon was a thresher; David was a shepherd boy; Amos was a herdsman; the apostles were ignorant and unlearned; Zwingli was a shepherd; Melancthon, the great theologian of the Reformation, was an armourer; Luther was a child of a poor miner; Fuller was a farm servant; Carey, the originator of the plan of translating the Bible into the language of the millions of Hindoostan, was a shoemaker; Morrison, who translated the Bible into the Chinese language, was a lastmaker; Dr. Milne was a herd-boy; Adam Clarke was the son of an Irish cotter; John Foster was a weaver; Jay, of Bath, was a herdsman.