

Living Preachers.

A GOOD CONSCIENCE.

BY THE EDITOR.

Pray for us; for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly."—Heb. xiii. 18.

IT is related of Augustine that he had two wishes—one was that he could have seen Christ in the flesh, the other, that he could have heard Paul preach.

Another of the fathers, reading this, said that he would add a third to the two wishes of Augustine—that, hearing Paul preach, his text and theme should be *conscience*.

As the maid Rhoda, knew Peter's voice at the door, so may we know Paul's voice by the high value he sets on a "good conscience." His highest aim was to have a good conscience. He says before the Sanhedrim, "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." Before Felix he says: "Herein do I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men." Writing to the Corinthians: "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience."

There are three matters of considerable importance in connection with this great theme (*a good conscience*) suggested by the text; the *history* of a good conscience, or *how one may get it*; the *fruits* of a good conscience, or *how one may know it*; and lastly, the advantages of a good conscience, or *why one should seek it*.

I. THE HISTORY OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE.

I. How can one find a good conscience? In his state of innocence, Adam had no need of seeking a good conscience. As he came from the hands of his creator, all the members of his body and all the faculties of the soul were perfect. Conscience, then single, a clear dry light, filled the soul with light; it was then an echo of God's voice; it was then an infallible witness for truth and holiness; it reflected the face of God as the mountain lake on a calm day reflects the face of nature. But the fall destroyed all the perfection of man. Adam lost his position, his