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A REVIVAL

1916

OUR GUARANTEE

No advertisement is allowed in our Columns until we are satisfied that the advertiser is absolutely reliable and that any subscriber can safely do business with him. If any subscriber is defrauded E. H. Heath Co., Ltd., will make good the loss resulting therefrom. If the event takes place within 30 days of date advertisement appeared, and complaint be made to us in writing with proofs, not later than ten days after its occurring, and provided, also, the subscriber in writing to the advertiser, stated that his advertisement was seen in "The Canadian Thresherman and Farmer." Be careful when writing an advertiser to say that you saw the advertisement in "The Canadian Thresherman and Farmer."

THE mean man, it has been said, rarely addresses himself to God unless he is in a hole; and it is in line with historic precedent that when the preachers can no longer endure the staring rebuke of empty pews, they "pool their interests" in a great revival. That things with us are not what they ought to be cannot be denied, and that some quickening of the national life at this time would be a good thing is the burden of many hearts. If any manner of regenerating grape-shot will bring it about, let us up and at it, but having had a somewhat extended experience of these spasmodic quickenings, we would not again pin our faith to much in human effort of the kind on which we had banked in the past.

* * *

Of the sensational features in revival procedure that make a strong appeal to the emotions, our feeling is that a heavy discount must be provided for. At the same time we have no part with those who condemn utterly this or any method of waking up a sleeping soul. Billy Sunday, General Booth and the like shall have no discouraging note from us. God bless them all, for

they are at least sincere and terribly in earnest. What is more to the purpose—they have a finer "catch" in their baskets than many of the splendidly equipped fellows we had been accustomed to fish with.

* * *

It is a humiliating circumstance that the Ministerial Association of Winnipeg should find it necessary to take the initiative in a "revival," and the panic it reveals in our religious "headquarters staff" is a direct indictment of the churches—of the pew no less, and probably far more, than the pulpit. Therefore, in any contemplated movement towards the "deepening of the spiritual life," let us first of all have a clean up in the church. We have, however, long since blotted out that arbitrary line between the church building and the man who either never enters it, or takes his ordinances in homeopathic doses.

* * *

It was said of Lord Brougham that he was the most dependable man of his day in the sense that if he undertook to accomplish anything, he could rely on his own continuity of habit to "deliver the goods." Brougham's best friend never would have proclaimed him a saint, and yet he affirmed: "Under God, I owe everything to habit." Well, then, suppose the church seriously tried the effect of a frontal attack upon the habits and disposition of its own flabby membership before sending skirmishing parties into the hedges and highways? Those of us who mastered the shorter catechism of course, know "all about" the statement of the case for

Christian living. Its canons are as familiar as the black letter title of the morning paper, and yet where will one find human nature with the paint off as in the average church court of the city congregation? If "The World for Christ" is the one reason for the church's existence, where do we stand to-day?

* * *

As he entered Oxford University to deliver a lecture on the fine arts in Florence, John Ruskin found a little girl on the doorstep, dirty and ragged, and wearing the cast-off shoes of a grown person. He delivered his lecture to a splendid audience, but the thought of that little girl took all the heart out of it. That one little forlorn waif, he thought, challenged the British Empire—and he was right. We renounce that conception of "religious activity" that seeks to out-class everything in sight in splendid architecture, while there is a single hungry, ill-clad creature remaining on the city streets. We no longer take any stock in that post-mortem paradise promised to a fellow mortal who hasn't the means to taste at least a little bit of his heaven here and now. We don't care what form this revival may assume, if it will but incarnate the Living Christ, Who, by the way, rebuked certain teachers of His day who handed out a stone when the people asked for bread. Heaven is a "hazy hallucination" to that one who cannot find a fair portion of it in this fine world of sunshine, with its rainbow promise of unending seed-time and harvest. Some of us have, and many have not found it, and the revival that does not compel the full man to pass on a bit to the needy one in this world is a mockery and a sham. Practical Christianity! What is there practical in so-called "believers" whimpering over the future state of their souls, when the Founder of their religion told them in specific words to pray for their daily bread *this day* and to pray for the kingdom to *come on earth* so that things would be as well arranged here as they are beyond the sunset?

* * *

A great Canadian church is now making a frantic effort to wipe out a deficit of \$170,000 on its Mission and Social Service account, and there are scores of settlements that have not yet been reached. Many worthy souls cannot honestly contribute a dollar of this, but there is one spiritual banquet hall of our city that is now paying for *its music alone* what would go far to feed *five settlements*. And one of its members sent in his cheque for a slice of the war loan equal to *three times the whole sum* of the above deficit! If the pillars of the church scarcely are saved, where will the lost lambs of the prairie appear?

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