

The Gethsemane of Life.

For every one of us, sooner or later, the Gethsemane of life must come. It may be the Gethsemane of struggle and poverty and care; it may be the Gethsemane of long and weary sickness; it may be the Gethsemane of farewells that wring the heart by the deathbeds of those we love; it may be the Gethsemane of remorse and of well-nigh despair for sins that we will not but which we say we cannot, overcome. Well, my brethren, in that Gethsemane—aye, even in that Gethsemane of sin—no angel merely, but Christ himself, who bore the burden of our sins, will, if we seek him, come to comfort us. He will it, being in an agony, we pray. He can be touched, he is touched, with the feeling of our infirmities. He, too, has trodden the winepress of agony alone; he, too, has lain face downwards in the night upon the ground; and the comfort which then came to him he has bequeathed to us—even the comfort, the help, the peace, the recovery, the light, the hope, the faith, the sustaining arm, the healing anodyne of prayer.—Dean Farrar.

The Giver of All Good.

The tendency of success is to make us forget God. There is no doubt at all about that. The Psalms are full of that teaching, and so are the Words of our Lord. Prosperity engenders the feeling that we are equal to anything. The rich man's wealth, as Solomon says, is his strong city. He entrenches himself in it, he fortifies himself in it, he feels secure in it. He is secure against chance, secure against accidents, secure against any reasonable or unreasonable kind of bad fortune, secure against Providence, secure against God. His very sense of being independent overleaps itself, and fails, before he knows it, into a kind of practical atheism. Well, here is a direction for the use of memory by prosperous and successful men. "Remember the Lord thy God; for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth." It is only when we remember God that the getting of wealth ceases to be an end in itself. It is only when we remember God that the sense of responsibility attaches to success and to the possession of wealth. The man who is making money almost unconsciously begins to feel as if he were independent. Of course, there is a legitimate sense in which independence is to be aimed at, as Burns says:

"But for the glorious privilege
Of being independent."

But how little, when we think of it, independence can really be! The most prosperous man is not independent of his neighbors, of his servants, of the forces of nature; and still less is he independent of God; and he should remember God and his dependence upon him if his prosperity is not to do him harm instead of good. A full cup is ill to carry, and it is only the recollection of the Lord our God that gives a steady hand.—James Denny, D. D.

Every day let us renew the consecration to God's service; every day let us in His strength pledge ourselves afresh to do His will, even in the veriest trifle.—Madam Guyon.

Looking unto Jesus we are comforted and strengthened in our trials. His sufferings were immeasurably great, and yet God loved him with the infinite fullness of his divine nature. Can we ask to be exempt when the beloved Son carried such a burden of sorrow?

Our Young People

For Dominion Presbyterian.

General Topic—Fidelity to Pledges: "I Promise."

Ps. 65: 1-4; 61: 1-8; 116: 12-14.

BY REV. WM. A. STEWART, M. A.

The Christian Endeavor Society has now successfully withstood the hostile criticism of the world for over twenty years. Whilst no part of its constitution has escaped unchallenged it has been around the "Pledge" that the fiercest warfare has been waged. Little wonder: this is its vital spot, and it is our conviction that the Society's servicable and prosperous career is largely due to the fact that so many redoubtable champions have risen up to defend and uphold it.

Our suggestions on the general topic may be arranged into two divisions—Pledges to God and Pledges to men.

PLEDGES TO GOD, after the manner of vows, oaths, covenants are both reasonable and Scriptural—They abound in the Old Testament where fidelity to a comprehensive code of religious duties formed the chief element of religion under the Mosaic dispensation. In the New Testament these pledges seem to drop into the back ground, and a large number of people in the Christian Church regard their general usefulness with suspicion. Many feel that multiplying pledges to God tends to discredit *the great resolve*; and although it is urged, and not without reason, that special pledges are merely commemorative and supplementary, yet it has always seemed to others that everything in the line of duty and perhaps even of privilege is abundantly provided for by the grand act of the Christian's primary consecration.

PLEDGES TO MEN. These may again be sub-divided into religious and secular pledges. Religious pledges safeguard the Church upon earth and when seriously undertaken and faithfully observed are the bulwarks of its institutions. It is to be regretted that so few are called for and that so little importance is attached to those that presently exist. Much of what is amiss in the Church to day may be traced to this source. Pledges are lines of demarcation and surely the lines separating two such opposite institutions as the Church and the World should neither be few or faint. Not to mention higher purposes they serve to bring the subject in question to a point showing clearly where we stand not only to ourselves but also to the opposite party, and the fundamental importance of this point cannot be over estimated. The prosperity and success of the Church depend upon it.

As to secular pledges it is sometimes said there are promises and promises. That is true. There are promises the nature of which designedly conditional—whether the conditions are either expressed or understood; and there are others from which all contingences have been deliberately stripped. It is well that a perfect understanding should always exist as to the character of such promises. Violation of the stricter sort is a grievous sin. It is a sin against God; for we cannot sin against each other in this respect without sinning against God. The species of infidelity is to be shunned as ominous, it lays the axe at the root of all nobility of character. So insidious is the

vice that even tampering with it is most perilous. Our yea should be yea, and our nay nay. It is the part of all strong and beautiful natures to spare others the shock of disappointment; and even at the expense of inconvenience and loss to avoid the appearance of this evil.

What a beautiful example the Savior offers us in this connection. So far removed was he from causing disappointment it was his way always to *exceed* His promise. If He said to the disciples "Give ye them to eat," He provided that all should be filled with baskets full over. If he said to the widow of Nain, bereft of her only son and support, "Weep not." He forthwith raised the dead for her, and gave the son again into the loving arms of his mother.

L'Amable.

Daily Reading.

Mon., Apr. 22.—Covenant making. Exod. 19: 1-8
Tues., Apr. 23.—God's pledge to us. Ps. 111: 1-10
Wed., Apr. 24.—The need of pledges. Deut. 29: 9-13
Thurs., Apr. 25.—A pledge "to God." Eccl. 5: 1-7
Fri., Apr. 26.—Its sacredness. Num. 3: 2; Deut. 23: 21-23.
Sat., Apr. 27.—Personal influence.
Sun., Apr. 28.—TOPIC 30 Fidelity to pledges: "I promise." Ps. 65: 1-4; 61: 1-8; 116: 12-14.

If the clock goes fitfully, nobody knows the time of day; and, if our allotted task is a necessary link in the chain of another man's work, you are his clock, and he ought to be able to rely on you.—John Stuart Blackie.

As soon as any body of men band themselves together for a common object—whether it be making a railway or regenerating a world—they must come to an understanding, and promise loyalty. This is their covenant, which no man need accept unless he please, but which, after acceptance, he must keep.—John Watson, D. D.

King Edward's signature,—just a drop of ink drawn out a few inches,—can make a man's fortune for life; nay, it can condemn a man to death. How careful he must be in using it? Let us all see to it that our signature is as honorable as any king's. When we set our name to anything, let us put our whole lives back of it.

Simple Patience.

Quiet enduring is often greater and grander than the most demonstrative and noisy daring. Bearing torture and pain on the rack, without a groan or cry, has often marked the superiority of the Christian martyr over the intensest struggle of the gladiator in the multitude-encircled royal arena. As in the world's more prominent and distinguished contests, so in the simpler but not less important tests of moral and spiritual power in the every day life of the believer's soul. To bear is often more than to do. As Bushnell says, "It is not necessary for all men to be great in action. The greatest and sublimest power is simple patience."—S. S. Times.