

Christ's Teaching About the Old Testament.

It is difficult for us to remember that the only Bible which the disciples had in the lifetime of our Lord, and for a long time afterward, was the Old Testament. It was this which our Lord Himself had so thoroughly by heart and to which He so constantly appealed. The home life in Nazareth was shaped by its teachings. The suggestions of the tempter were repelled by words quoted from its books. In the recurring differences with scribes and Pharisees He, not less than they, referred the question at issue to a right interpretation of its commandments. Yet we read and ourselves feel, after all these centuries, that His handling is different from theirs, and that "he spake as one having authority and not as the scribes."

He found a deeper meaning than they had found. To the Sadducees, who called in question the resurrection, He showed that the name of God—the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob—was not a mere string of historic reminiscences, but the key to an enduring relation. He explained the law of divorce as an accommodation to the hardness of the ancient people's hearts. He spiritualized the moral law with an addition of, "But I say unto you," that sets before us an inner holiness undreamed of before.

Our Lord appealed to the Scriptures of the Old Testament for their testimony to Himself. "These are they which bear witness of me." They were prophecy of Him and His work in record of events, in aspiration of saints, in words of foretelling. Their meaning is made clear by His earthly life and death and by the Holy Spirit's work. With this clue we shall find the traces of His presence everywhere, and all along the way signposts that lead to His appearing.

Every man is bound to read these records of God's revelation through humanity in the brightest light which God has given him. If we bring this illumination of the Holy Spirit's teaching to the study of the Old Testament, we shall find in it a true guide to the nobler Christian life. The letter of many of its enactments is done away; the spirit of reverence, love and service that informed it can never perish.

We shall find the path along which God led humanity until the time was ripe for Christ's appearing. We shall find the witness of God's purpose for the race and for ourselves. We shall come in penitence with David to feel the need of Christ; in sorrowing perplexity with Jeremiah to look for His dominion; in glad anticipation with Isaiah to understand the burdens He must bear and the glory that shall follow.

In this light of fulfilment and attainment, by the guidance of God's Spirit even down to the present, which reveals the depth of revelation. We need the various helpfulness of that human experience with God which the Old Testament records. It is less and more to us than to the contemporaries of Jesus. Less, because we have, over and above it, the brighter light of fulfilment in Jesus and the church. More, because this very fulfilment is as full of illumination, brightening every corner and giving meaning to every mystery which its books contain. The Old Testament without Christ is the Interpreter's House, where many things are written of those who went before for our instruction and delight.—The Congregationalist.

Christian people must be dedicated to God.

Our Young People

General Topic.—The Saloon Power Doomed

Ps. 37 : 1-10.

BY REV. W. A. STEWART, M. A.

"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink" The burden of this Old Testament message is that the face of the Lord is against all those for evil who put the intoxicating cup in their neighbor's way. Drunkards, we are told, shall not inherit the kingdom of God; but this is a curse launched against the drunkard makers. It is very broad. It not only denounces the bar tender but it includes all who in any way engage in the traffic, or further the work. Is there one solitary ray of hope for those against whom the face of the Lord is turned for evil? Who shall comfort whom the Almighty has cursed? A gentleman once advertised for a competent coachman. In order to test the several applicants, he asked how near to the edge of a precipice they could drive his carriage and pair. One man said he could easily drive within six inches of the edge; another said he would undertake to pass the wheels within four and a half inches of the cliff. At last a cannie Scotchman was asked how near he would undertake to drive. "Please sir," said this man, "I would like to keep as far back from the edge as possible." That man pleased best and he got the situation.

And so about the liquor question it is idle to ask who is most to blame—whether the drunkard, or the bar tender, the landlord or the tenant, the voter or the member of Parliament. Let us all keep back from the danger as far as possible, by vigorously opposing the traffic and by doing everything possible to rid the country of this great evil.

One would like to believe that the growing intelligence and morality of the people is about to pronounce the doom of the saloon power. Surely neither intelligence nor morality would require to advance much to accomplish this end. Statesmen, Judges, Clergymen—not to speak of the great body of our good citizens—are convinced of the enormity of the evil. Oh that some drastic measure may soon be devised to revolutionize the drinking habits of our country and destroy forever the ruinous forces of the saloon.

L'Amable, Ont.

Daily Readings.

- Mon., Sept. 16.—Why liquor is evil.
Prov. 20 : 1 ; Dan. 5 : 1-5
- Tues., Sept. 17.—Why abstinence is best.
Rom. 14 : 17-23
- Wed., Sept. 18.—Why liquor-selling is sin.
Hab. 2 : 5-8, 12, 15
- Thurs., Sept. 19.—Why men sell liquor.
1 Tim. 6 : 3-10
- Fri., Sept. 20.—Why the church should oppose it.
Ps. 97 : 10 ; Rom. 12 : 21
- Sat., Sept. 21.—God's face is against it.
Jer. 22 : 13-17 ; Mic. 2 : 1-3
- Sun., Sept. 22.—TOPIC. The saloon power doomed. Ps. 37 : 1-10. Temperance meeting.

Temperance organizations are of value if we work them and do not expect them to do our work for us. Often, however, men think they have conquered the saloon power when they have got a president and a secretary and a set of by-laws.

The Law of Church Life.

"And the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved" (Acts ii. 47) This was because the disciples were ceaseless in their efforts to win the lost to Jesus. They were commanded to "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations" They understood this to be the supreme command, and that the Church's first and greatest mission was one of conquest. They understood perfectly well that failing to do this, their whole cause would prove a failure. Unquestionably the same work of conquest would have been perpetuated until this day, had the Church "continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching" and the aggressive and vigorous methods employed by them. No church can long preserve distinctive Christian peculiarities that fails to gather from the world those that are being saved. Some may think that, because the pastor is popular, the pews crowded, and the finances in good condition, that there is no need of evangelistic effort. Such thought cannot long dominate in the policy of any church without that church lapsing into the Laodicean state (Rev. iii. 14-20). No church, no matter how learned and eloquent its pastor; how beautiful and inviting its house of worship; how attractive, interesting, and enjoyable its order and forms of worship; and how numerous, select, cultured, and influential its patrons, can long retain spiritual life and vigour that does not add to its membership those that are being saved. A society without spiritual life and vigour is not of the Church of Christ, though it be called by all the saints in the calendar—"Philadelphia Presbyterian."

Prayer.

Our Father, Thou hast in Christ Jesus Thy Son brought us to listen to music not elsewhere to be heard. We wonder at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth; never man spake like this man. May we read His words not with wonder and admiration only, but with trust and thankfulness, and accept them in a spirit of obedience, that they may be turned into life and conduct and service. How great is the kingdom of God; yet how small are we, how unable to lay ourselves upon the infinite space covered by the purpose of God; may we therefore be humble, obedient, docile, expectant, always hoping for larger light and more room and better opportunity to work in. For this spirit we bless Thee; This is none other than a miracle of grace. May our sincerity be without guile, may our faithfulness express the honesty of the soul, may our hearts go out to Thee for Thy grace. Satisfy us early with Thy loving kindness, and abundantly delight us with Thy goodness. And this we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.—Selected.

It is enervating and corrupting to mingle with men whose delights are altogether physical, and who are happiest when ministering to the flesh.—Chas. E. Jefferson, D. D.