

Miscellaneous.

WHAT DO YE MORE THAN OTHERS.

Argument after argument has been advanced to substantiate the claims of Christianity, volume after volume of theological lore has gone forth to silence the doubt of the skeptics, and yet the world, to a great extent, continues to scoff. There must be a reason for this. It can not be because Christianity in itself is deficient. A divine system, it must be perfect. How, then, can we explain the existence of this widespread indifference and opposition to Christianity?

The natural tendency of the human heart to love darkness rather than light, may reasonably account for much; but that there is another reason than this, the candid mind is forced to acknowledge. There is but one argument which a skeptic world dares not to attempt to meet—the unanswerable argument of an exalted Christian life. This is one proof of the divinity of our religion that scientists themselves do not attempt to reason away. The Master knew the value of such testimony when He said to His Disciples, "Ye are the light of the world." Alas, that the light is so often darkness!

It is not, What *think* ye more than others? but What *do ye!* that decides as to who is a follower of Christ. Fine-spun theories may serve to entertain those whose religion consists in going to church on Sunday; but theories, be they ever so fine, will not convert the world. It is living, earnest Christian living, that is wanted. The various religious bodies all over the civilized world are staggering under the load of worldly, indifferent members—a burden as onerous as Sinbad e'er had in his "Old Man of the Sea."

The line between the church and the world is often so indistinct as not to be noticed at all. What wonder, then, that the world should think it useless to turn aside from aught it holds dear, when those who profess a higher life are walking in the same broad paths of selfish ease and reckless folly.

If the millions who profess the name of Christ were to make that profession good in their daily lives, can there be any doubt as to the result? Could such an overwhelming influence remain unfeelt? So, then, the greatest reformatory power the church can possibly wield is to reform itself. Let us bring the subject directly home to each of us. What are you, brother or sister, *doing* more than others who do not profess to do anything? Are you following any more closely the divine example? Are you more faithful, loving and kind? Do you cultivate a broader charity than they? Do you bear and forbear, forgive as you would be forgiven, help to raise the fallen, cheer the faint? Do you sacrifice self first, last and always, remembering only Him who lived and died for you? Do you thus "let your light so shine that others, seeing your good works, may be constrained to glorify your Father which is in heaven?"

Never has there been such a general, wide-spread interest in preaching the gospel to all the world as now. What are we doing, fellow-Christians, in this work? It is all very well to theorize about missions and missionary plan, if by so doing hard feeling is not engendered and the important work neglected. The work is to be done. What part of it are you doing? To be a Christian means to give—give yourself, your time, labor, money and prayers for the advancement of the Master's cause. Do you do this? "A stingy Christian" sounds like a contradiction, for the Christian spirit is, of necessity, a liberal spirit.

Yet how sad to see numbers professing to be Christians, abundantly blessed with the world's goods, yet doling out a pittance from year to year toward the support of the gospel. There are too many who economize on the Lord. Fine houses,

fine furniture, extravagant living, must all be had, but really it is quite another thing when called on to contribute to the Lord's treasury.

What a privilege to be children of God—heirs, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ! But the privilege brings with it a weight of responsibility—a responsibility, however, which it should be the Christian's greatest joy to discharge. Did we who have named the name of Christ fully realize that the world is looking at us, judging the Master's cause by our unworthy lives, surely we would make greater efforts to adorn our profession. "No man lives to himself alone," and often our lightest, most thoughtless acts are destined to have a wonderful influence for good or ill. A professing Christian is known to do some unkind thing—take an undue advantage of some one—is seen engaged in questionable pastimes, and God alone can measure the harm done to the cause of the Master.

A Christian woman sits back in her easy chair and turns a deaf ear to some poor creature's cry of distress. Think you it ends there? Not so. That unheeded cry is sadly recorded above and here below. Some scoffing heart is moved to scoff still more at the abundance of precept and paucity of practice among church members.

We can not all do great things for the Master, but God measures the deed by the motive below it; and there are none—but can show forth His glory if they will only upon their hearts and take Him in. To have it observed, "Why, I did n't know you were a Christian," is a sad comment on either man or woman. It is not necessary to go forth heralded by a trumpet, but it is obligatory to so live that the world shall know the faith you profess. There is a beauty and pathos in the old song,

"Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb,
And shall I fear to own His cause,
Or blush to speak His name?"

that is often overlooked.

Humiliating as it is to acknowledge it, especially to a mocking world, there are too many Christians who, from their conduct, seem to "fear to own His cause," and "blush to speak His name." They will talk with you on any subject you choose, political, scientific, literary, or social, but not once do they mention the name of Him who died to save them; not once do they urge upon friends and companions to obey His will. They seem to think that the pulpit must supply all the preaching for the benefit of the world, forgetful of, or indifferent to, the fact that Christian life may constitute a better sermon than ever emanated from the brain of man. They neglected the apostle's charge to be "living epistles, known and read of all men."

Christianity is essentially practical. It should enter into the smallest details of our lives, as well as into matters accounted of great magnitude. And often when least we expect it, a simple word or kindly act may be the means of causing some rebellious heart to acknowledge that there is reality as well as beauty in the religion of Christ. We can scarcely overestimate the influence we may thus exert. Let me give an example:

A laborer was engaged in spading up a strawberry bed, and relieved himself from time to time by swearing at the hard, rocky ground.

The young lady who had employed him sat by the window overlooking the garden, and necessarily overheard him.

"I can't stand that," she exclaimed, as oath followed oath.

"Oh, you'd better let him alone," remarked some member of the family. "No telling what he might say, if you go out there lecturing him."

"My strawberry bed shall not be spaded with oaths, that's one thing certain," replied the girl; and out to the garden she went. Kindly but firmly she told the man that she could not permit the use of such language.

"Beg pardon, Miss," said the burly laborer, "but you see this ground is powerful hard, an' enough to make a fellow cuss."

"Beg His pardon whose name you have profaned," said the young girl. "Swearing surely does not make the ground any softer, and I do wish you would give up such a sinful habit."

The man looked at her in astonishment. Evidently he was not used to being so taken to task. For a few moments the young lady talked to him on the sinfulness of swearing, and then left him to his work. No more oaths were heard while that strawberry bed was being spaded.

Six months later the young lady was astonished by a rough-looking laborer speaking to her on the railroad car.

"Excuse me," said the man, politely; "but I wanted to tell you that I have never sworn an oath since that day I worked for you."

"Oh!" exclaimed the girl, "are you the man who spaded my strawberry bed for me?"

"I'm the man," he responded. "I saw that you did not remember me; but I wanted to tell you that I hadn't forgotten what you said to me that day, and that I never will forget. You see," he added, almost apologetically, "nobody ever talked to me that way before."

Such a little thing for a Christian to do, and yet no one had ever done it before! With such instances as this coming under our notice often and again, have we the right to neglect those things which we call little?

One of the fundamental principles of Christianity can be expressed in the simple word *help*. It brings to mind God's help to us—it bids us help our fellow beings. There is a great work for Christians to do in this world. Are you willing to help? If so, "What do ye more than others?"—*Allie B. Lewis, in the Disciple.*

ON THE SUPREME AUTHORITY OF REVELATION.

If the New Testament be a message from God, it behooves us to make an entire and unconditional surrender of our minds, to all the duty and to all the information which it sets before us.

There is, perhaps, nothing more thoroughly beyond the cognizance of the human faculties, than the truths of religion, and the ways of that mighty Being who is the object of it; and yet nothing, we will venture to say, has been made the subject of more hardy and adventurous speculation. We make no allusion at present to deists, who reject the authority of the New Testament, because the plan and the disposition of the Almighty which is recorded there, is different from that plan and that dispensation which they have chosen to ascribe to him. We speak of Christians who profess to admit the authority of this record, but who have tainted the purity of their profession by not acting upon its exclusive authority; who have mingled their own thoughts and their own fancy with its information; who, instead of repairing in every question, and in every difficulty, to the principle of "What readest thou," have abridged the sovereignty of this principle, by appealing to others, of which we undertake to make out the incompetency; who, in addition to the word of God, talk also of the reason of the thing or the standard of orthodoxy; and have in fact brought down the Bible from the high place which belongs to it, as the only tribunal to which the appeal should be made, or from which the decision should be looked for.

But it is not merely among partisans or the advocates of a system that we meet with this indifference to the authority of what is written. It lies at the bottom of a great deal of that looseness, both in practice and speculation, which we meet with every day in society, and which we often hear expressed in familiar conversation. Whence that list of maxims which are so indolently conceived, but which, at the same time, are so faithfully proceeded upon? "We have all our passions and infirmities; but we have honest hearts and that will make up for them. Men are not all cast in the same mould. God will not call us to task too rigidly for our foibles; at least this is our opinion, and God can never be