

Dr. Wilkie and the General Assembly

MR. EDITOR: I see by the report of the proceedings of the General Assembly given in your paper that Dr. Wilkie's appeal and the memorial sent in by many members of the church asking for investigation of the Central India Mission have not been without effect. It was not a question of friendship for Dr. Wilkie but a question of simple justice involving the honor of the Presbyterian church. It is gratifying to the lovers of justice to know that the last Assembly has pronounced on Dr. Wilkie's character to his credit. It has said nothing about his traducers, but the members of the Presbyterian church are capable of drawing logical inferences.

It is to be hoped that the commission that has been appointed will shew itself to be composed of men of judicial mind, fearless, thorough and impartial in their inquiry, and just as fearless, candid and thorough in their pronouncement. They are appointed to sift out truth—the whole truth and to declare it, and it is to be hoped that their finding will contain internal evidence of thoroughness and impartiality. If it be of such a nature as to arouse suspicion that they have glossed over faults, kept back facts, or in other words have been guided by the policy which seems to have been that of the F. M. C. for years—hide what might be feared would hinder the cause, or gain "no good end" as the committee would say, they may depend upon it they will do more to destroy confidence in the cause than open candour will. "Truth will stand when a thing's failing."

THE DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN is to be commended for its manly independence in opening its columns to the expression of opinions and free discussion of questions of interest to the church at large. Aside from your valuable paper, the Presbyterian church has no paper now that can be called the people's paper, and can be said to be free to allow full expression to free thought, as was characteristic of the old "Canada Presbyterian," which has been much missed by many.

Thanking you for courtesy in granting space for this, I am, Yours Sincerely,

VIR.

Grace Before Meat.

Our Heavenly Father, we thank thee for this daily bread. May it nourish us so that we may serve thee. Feed us with the bread of life and ever keep us in thy love; we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Our Father, Giver of every good and perfect gift, we acknowledge thy care and love for us in our daily bread. Bless this food to our use, and may we be thankful and content. Whether we eat or drink we would glorify thee. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Daily Readings.

Mon., July 27.—Our enemies, Acts 9: 23-25
Tues., July 28.—A "messenger of Satan," Acts 19: 23-27
Wed., July 29.—Tent making, 2 Thes. 3: 1-12
Thurs., July 30.—Poverty, 1 Cor. 4: 9-13
Fri., July 31.—Glorying in weakness, 2 Cor. 12: 5, 6
Sat., Aug. 1.—"For my brethren's sake," Rom. 9: 1-5
Sun., Aug. 2.—Topic, *Lessons from Paul: How we may overcome our hindrances.* 2 Cor. 12: 7-10; 10: 10

Time was, is past, thou canst not it recall;
Time is, thou hast—employ the portion small;
Time future is not, and may never be;
Time present is the only time for thee.

Our Young People

Sun., Aug. 2.—Lessons from Paul: Excuses for not Joining the Church. How we May Overcome Our Hindrances.

BY NEWELL DWIGHT HILLIS.

2 Cor. 12: 7-10; 10: 10.

An Obstacle Race.

A favourite race with good riders is the "obstacle race," where all sorts of difficulties are placed in the way, and he who surmounts them all most completely wins the prize. No race upon smooth ground can possibly prove the horse and rider as this test of obstacles does. The harder the course the more strenuous and exciting the race.

Doing things easily is not the best experience for any of us. It is doing the hard things that develops unused powers. Thwarted and humbled, the soul learns things it otherwise would never seek to know. Headed off in the direction it ignorantly chooses for itself, it finds a better way.

In every difficulty a lesson is set for us. Every hindrance hides help behind its frowning mask. "We gain the strength of the temptation we resist." Failure can be the starting point of a better success. We are meant to

".....rise on stepping-stones
Of our dead selves to higher things."

To ask God to take away our difficulties is a weak and mistaken prayer. Paul saw this mistake, after he had made it, and left it on record for us that we should avoid making it, too.

Some Common Hindrances.

Poverty seems a thorn in the flesh to many minds. But oftentimes the holiest men have deliberately chosen poverty, so as to be free to follow God. Jesus Christ himself chose to be poor with nowhere to lay his head.

Illness and infirmity are commonly counted hindrances. But a strong soul works often in a frail body. Many a cripple, many an invalid, has run a victorious race. Milton was blind, yet he wrote the greatest epic in the language to the glory of God, and to his own enduring fame.

Ridicule and opposition appear mighty hindrances to the timid disciple. But if God is with us, it makes no matter who is against us. God means to teach us courage and faith by just such obstacles. He wants us to overcome, and he will help us if we trust in him and go forward.

Strength and Weakness.

The weakest moments in a man's life are when he thinks he is strong. Careless strength is always being betrayed into danger. Samson was at his weakest when he thought himself strong enough to disobey God. He became strong when in blindness and captivity he called upon God to help him, and pulled down the temple of the Philistines with his manacled hands.

When we realize our utter weakness we are ready to trust utterly to God's strength. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." Emptied of self and pride, we are prepared to be filled with the Spirit and to glory in our weakness, since the indwelling power of God is our strength.

What Our Scripture Suggests.

God is too good to us to take away a blessing though it is causing us pain.

God makes our weak hours our strong ones by giving us then more of his own strength.

You will not join a Church because of inconsistent Church members! Consistency, then, is the word you wish to emphasize. Very well. Here is the world of trade and commerce. To-morrow, merchants will adulterate their goods, traders will tamper with their weights, milkmen will water their milk, drapers will sell cotton for silk, clerks will steal money from the bank, and the whole kingdom of trade stands for hypocrites and lies. Since you do not care to associate with hypocrites, withdraw from business and pledge yourself never again to enter the kingdom of commerce. If inconsistent members keep you out of the Church, why do not inconsistent members keep you out of business?

Here is the kingdom of love and marriage. To-morrow some man will play false to his marriage vow, and some woman will profane the holiest sanctities, and those who have solemnly pledged themselves to the law of love will stand forth clothed with hypocrisy as with a garment. But does their inconsistency mean that you can never find your home, and that you can never stand at a marriage altar, and never swear fealty in the name of an eternal friendship? Why, there are spots on the sun, but we need the sun for harvest. To be consistent, you must give up the Venus de Milo, because there is a flaw in the marble. We must pull down the Parthenon, because there are black stains on the columns. Now, something is wrong in the man who refuses allegiance to the Church because of inconsistency, but turns around and gives allegiance to a hundred other institutions in the very face of greater inconsistencies.

There are many poor pupils in schools and colleges; but when you find some youth who is far from being the ideal scholar, do not rail against the college and the university. The poorer the scholar, the more necessary the maintenance of the school in which he studies; and if some men in the Church are sinful and weak and full of error, it is the more necessary to strengthen the Church, that manhood may be uplifted and strengthened. Unconsciously, he who urges the inconsistency of Christians and rails against their errors, has forged a weapon that turns against himself.

How ungenerous are all these excuses, as well as how wicked! We live in God's world. He hath fitted up this world-house as no prince hath ever fitted up the halls of a palace. We breathe His air, are warmed by His summers, we feed upon His harvests, we are pilgrims who stoop and drink at His fountains. The angel of His providence goes before us to prepare life's way; the angel of His mercy follows after us to recover us from our transgressions. And how shall men meet such overflowing generosity save with instant obedience?

God keeps a school for his children here on earth, and one of his best teachers is named Disappointment. He is a rough teacher; severe in tone and harsh in handling, sometimes, but his tuition is worth all it costs. Many of our best lessons through life have been taught us by that same old schoolmaster, Disappointment.—Theodore L. Cuyler.