

IS IT BEGGING?

"Our minister is always begging." When a pastor presents the claims of Home Missions, of the heathen, of colleges, or of orphan homes, and urges that liberal contributions be made for them, or for any other worthy objects, people call it "begging." When a man receives many gifts through his earnest pleas he is said to be a "good beggar." But is this begging? Should it be called begging? Is it right to use the word? Is it truth? Who is it that asks? The Lord, through His servants. Who are they that are asked? The Lord's husbandmen, His stewards. What is asked? Only that which belongs to the Lord, and which His stewards owe. Why is it asked? That the work of the Lord may be done. The householder prepared his vineyard and left it in the hands of the husbandmen. "And when the time of the fruit drew near he sent his servants to the husbandmen that they might receive the fruits of it."—Matt. xxi. 34. Was the Lord of the vineyard begging when he required the husbandmen to "render him the fruits in their season?" Were the servants of the householder begging when he asked for that which was due to them? "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." Is the Lord a beggar, or were His servants, when they asked for their own? It is not begging. The word is false. It should not be thus used. It causes wrong ideas of the work of the pastor and of the act of giving. It keeps the Lord out of sight. It conceals His just claims. It degrades His servants and their work. It dishonors the holy office of the ministry. It ignores the relation of Lord and steward. It hides the obligations which grow out of this relation between God and man. It declares that giving is a duty to be discharged faithfully, freely, thankfully. Honor the Lord with thy substance; dishonor Him not with a beggar's dole.

OBJECTORS.

The people who are "opposed" to things are a social curiosity. At every turn they encounter something that does not please them, and then "I am opposed to it" is their protest and conscious release from all obligation and responsibility. It is a duty to be opposed to certain things; nobody can be in favor of everything. At the same time the chronic opposer is usually one who is either a constitutional fault-finder or an insincere person who wishes to shirk his duty and thus cover up his delinquencies. If money is asked, he is opposed to something and cannot give it. If work is wanted, he is again relieved by his convenient protest. If friendship be solicited, or brotherly kindness, charity, union in some line of Christian effort, help for work at home or far away—anything, indeed, that requires the least outlay of money or strength, he has something to which he can put himself in opposition and then settle down in satisfied contentment and repose. He is like the stick fastened in the bank of a stream that refuses to break off, but "opposes" and frets the water and keeps up a gurgie as it hurries by, but has only a little transient foam to show for its influence. Above and below it there is the green and flowery as if it had no existence.

TEACHING PURITY IN THE HOME.

By Mrs. A. Smith.

Many mothers do not realize the appalling fact that there are over sixty thousand girls into a life of shame every year, and that these unfortunates are coming, not from the slums of our cities, but from homes, country homes, refined homes, even Christian homes, for every reputable physician and purity worker knows that there are ruined girls where it is least suspected.

Where does the responsibility for this rest? I answer, primarily upon the mothers, because to them is given the first and greatest opportunity of molding the lives of their children into lines of purity, and a mother's influence is so potent that I fully believe very few of the impure men or degraded women could have become what they are if their mothers had given them, from their earliest years, pure and scientific knowledge on these subjects that so vitally affect their characters.

A striking confirmation of this belief was given me a few years ago when, in conversation with the superintendent of one of our Rescue Homes, I asked her how many unfortunate girls had been received there up to that time. She said about two hundred had been cared for since the Home was opened. I then asked: "Do you know whether these girls had been taught by their mothers, before leaving home, the proper care of themselves, or warned as to what temptations might be placed in their way?" The doctor answered emphatically: "I have talked with each one personally, and can assure you that, though most of the girls came from virtuous homes, not one mother had thus particularly warned her daughter, and only a few mothers had given even the vague injunction: 'Be good while you are gone.'"

But you say, "I cannot talk to my children on such matters." Then listen to this solemn warning from the pulpit: "Oh, mother, no modesty, no timidity or false conception of purity may rightly hold you back from telling your daughter the secret and mystery of life, and warning her against its desecration. If ignorance led her into sin, it is you, mother, more than your daughter who must answer before God's great white throne." Strongly indeed these words are echoed when the keeper of a notorious haunt of vice said lately to a mission worker who was visiting its inmates: "Yes, you may come here and talk to the girls all you want to, but I tell you if their mothers had talked to them at home there would be none of them here now to need you."

Says the late Bishop Clark: "There is an evil threatening our children which I believe to be the most insidious and perilous. It blights their childhood and vitiates their physical energies; it weakens their minds and makes them unfit for study. It has a frightful prevalence in our land to-day." If any mother thinks this picture overdrawn, a plain talk with some reputable physician, or a study of the causes which bring many of the inmates to our "Homes for the Feeble Minded" would convince her to the contrary.

"But I cannot talk to my child on such delicate topics," says many a mother. Listen further to the words of the venerable bishop: "You may say that delicacy forbids allusion in any form to this subject. It is not delicacy so much as a base, mean cowardice. You are afraid to speak to your child, and you are content to stand quietly by and see him sink helplessly into hell."

South African gold to the value of £143,271 was landed from the liner Kildonan Castle at Southampton, the largest consignment ever shipped from Africa.

CONCERNING BLIND UNBELIEF.

By C. H. Wetherbe.

He who is under the dominion of unbelief, in respect to God and His revelations to mankind, is spiritually blind, however intelligent and educated he may be in a general way. One feature of this blindness consists in the subject's conceit that he sees most clearly and even more accurately than do those Christians who unreservedly believe in God and the Bible. The victims of destructive criticism imagine that they have a truer and more worthwhile faith in the Bible than ordinary and honest-minded Christians have.

An article is at hand, written by Charles Hallock, A.M., who, it may be, is a minister, and he dogmatically says: "In this age of higher intelligence, science teaches us that the operations of nature go on regardless of men's conduct, good or bad, though it was once believed (in Lot's time) that a modicum of upright people would suffice to save a community!" This has reference to Sodom and its wicked inhabitants, and Abraham's pleading with God to spare the city if a certain number of righteous people could be found within the place. The sacred narrative shows that God would have spared the city if there were only ten righteous persons in it. This was God's promise to Abraham, and yet Mr. Hallock sneeringly disbelieves that Bible statement. He scouts the idea that the presence in that city of any number of God's people would have prevented God from destroying the sinning ones, and the city itself. And this man claims to be a Christian! He would be indignant if someone should tell him that he is a downright skeptic, which he really is. He is scientifically blind. He believes that he possesses the "higher intelligence," which enables him to know better than to accept the Bible statement that God would have spared Sodom from destruction for the sake of ten godly citizens.

In the lofty pride of his intellect, this man will reject anything and everything in the Bible which is contrary to the teachings of science! Great is the science of hisrical criticism! In the estimation of its victims it is far superior to true faith in God's Word! It dares to deny those promises of God which do not accord with its scholarly decisions. How dense is such bold blindness!

Inspired with the feeling that it would be a disgrace to propagate the Yiddish dialect in the Holy City, a mob gathered around the office of the Yiddish paper, the 'Pardes,' recently started in Jerusalem, and demolished it.

A petition signed by hundreds of people from all parts of Scotland has been presented to the Government urging the speedier ending of the opium traffic on account of its acknowledged immorality, and the relaxation, in favor of China, of the treaty obligations, seeing that our Ambassador at Peking looked upon these as a hindrance to the success of her effort.

The report of the Registrar-General for Ireland on the vital statistics for the year 1908 shows that the deaths from tuberculosis of all forms were 386 less than in 1907. The twenty-two principal Irish towns in 1908 also exhibited a decrease in tubercular mortality, the recorded deaths from this cause numbering 4,170, as contrasted with 4,418 in 1907, and 4,290 in 1906. The report of the local Government board states that the question of prevalence of tuberculosis continues to hold public attention, and sanitary authorities as well as the individual members of the community are being influenced by the knowledge that tuberculosis is largely a preventable disease.