

Pastor and People.

REVIVE US AGAIN.

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"Will thou not revive us again, O that Thy people may rejoice in Thee?"—Psalm LXXV. 6.

The great religious movement which has taken place in Britain during the past year forms one of the most wonderful chapters in the history of the Christian Church. The work of evangelization, as carried on by Moody and Sankey, has challenged the admiration, and called forth the gratitude, of the whole Christian world. Not since the days of Whitfield and Wesley has the same wide-spread interest been excited in the subject of personal religion. Tens of thousands, who all their lifetime kept aloof from churches and religious meetings, crowded to hear the simple preaching of the gospel. Multitudes of "such as should be saved" were added unto the Church. Ministers of the Gospel, forgetting their theological differences, and discarding their denominational prejudices, fought shoulder to shoulder "the battle of the Lord against the mighty." In the spirit of Pentecostal times "they all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." No man can calculate the results of this mighty work of revival in the Church and the world. Only in eternity will they become known. But the Churches have been awakened and inspired with new life. Christian workers have had their souls kindled into a zeal that is consuming them. Many are rejoicing who have been "delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

There have not been wanting those who sneered at this revival. Not men belonging to the brutal, degraded class who throw off all restraint—yet have a latent feeling of reverence for religion—but men who pride themselves on their culture, and regard themselves to be the true apostles of Progress, who banish God from the Universe, and defy Intellect, who scout religion as a superstition. They ridiculed the whole movement; but their scorn could no more check its progress and influence than it could stay the stars in their courses. It had been foretold that in these last days such "scorners should appear." From the beginning of the world religious awakenings have had their detractors; revivalists have had to "endure the contradiction of sinners."

It is to be devoutly desired that a tide of grace like that which has swept over the United Kingdom may flow over our land. We should earnestly pray that similar results may follow the evangelistic labors which are to be commenced on this continent by these eminent revivalists on the last Sunday of this month. Every one who delights to see the kingdom of Christ extending its limits should entreat the Lord "to open the windows of heaven, and pour them out a blessing that there may not be room to receive it." There are tens of thousands throughout the land to be won for Christ. Their salvation should be a matter of deep concern to Christians. Whatever efforts are made to rescue them from perdition, to redeem them from their cruel, degrading, bondage, and incline them to live and work for Christ, ought to receive any co-operation we can give. Let us daily plead with God to prosper the work that is to be carried on for His glory.

There is no reference to any particular historical occasion in this Psalm. It is a prayer of the Church for deliverance from present evils. The recollection of former mercies is used as a plea for their renewal. "As thou hast had pity upon thy people heretofore, so have pity on them now. Revisit us again in mercy, raise us from the dead or dying state in which we now are, and give us, as thy people, fresh occasion to rejoice in our relation to Thee, and in our union to Thee."

This is an appropriate prayer in our day. There is much need of a revival of religion. There are gigantic evils obstructing the growth and activity of the Church which we should ask God to remove. There are powerful, active, enemies for whose overthrow we should pray. The Church requires to be awakened and apply its vast resources for the conquest of the world. There is a lack of earnestness among Christians for the prosecution of the great work of saving sinners. They do not grapple so boldly or heartily with this task as the necessities of the case demand. They have not enough of the spirit of self-denial and devotion to Christ.

1. One of the mightiest of these influences which retard the work of Christ is worldliness. No one can be blind to the fact that attachment to the outward, attachment to the Transitory, attachment to the Unreal, is one of the ruling passions of this generation. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is controlling the thoughts and the conduct of men. It is annihilating the love of the Usener and the Eternal. It is exercising a powerful spell over all classes of the people. The spirit has penetrated the Church and permeated it. Many professing Christians are under its paralyzing and hardening influence. No wonder that there is a slumber as of a drowsy land, an unaccountable negligence in regard to the souls of many Christian men, a feeling that we are just at the awful pause before some fearful explosion. Christians take the world's way; they mingle in its strife, blunting the edge of their spiritual nature. They are also mixed up with the world's company, sitting at the world's table, happy with the world's joys and pleasures, singing the world's songs, and their bleeding Lord hanging at their side, a ghastly thought or action doing dishonor to him. The world has said to the Church "Come a little down to us, and we will rise a little up to you, and we can shake hands and agree." This is called *liberality, charity, large-heartedness*, and he who dares to dissent is called a bigot, a man of extreme views. This spirit of the world manifests itself in various forms.

(a) *In the love of riches.* Wealth is the chief end of most men in our day. They regard "treasure on earth" as "the one thing needful." Its possession confers social power and influence. It enables a man to gratify his tastes and appetites. It secures for him the admiration and homage of a cer-

tain number whose sycophancy feeds his pride or vanity. It is the standard by which men are measured and ranked. A philosophical estimate of men and things is not sufficient proof against the inroads of the sentiment which makes the possession of fortune a title to respect and honor. It is the prevalence of this fallacious notion regarding money, taken in connection with its power of gratifying human selfishness and vanity, that makes men so intensely eager to acquire it. The desire to be rich consumes them like a fever. It moon-polishes their thoughts. It tempteth them to sacrifice principle, to fling their scruples to the winds. It is destructive to conscience. It blights the moral nature. Few escape its demoralizing influence. Competition in business and commercial circles has become so close and keen that large profits can be made, generally, only at the expense of integrity. Startling disclosures of dishonest transactions, for the sake of gain, by men who enjoyed the public confidence are being constantly made. Members of the Church exhibit the same eagerness, and stoop to the same tricks of trade and sharp practices, to get rich. They do not purge their hearts from this worldly heaven. It dwarfs their spiritual life. It prevents them setting "their affections on things above." It prevents them from giving liberally and cheerfully for the work of the Church. The Israelites had no sooner been redeemed from Egyptian bondage than "they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into a golden calf, and bowed down and worshipped it. But Christians, who have been redeemed from the curse of sin, present the more degrading spectacle of forgetting Him who bought them, and offering homage to the golden dollar. Invaded by this spirit the Church is exposed to great peril. It is becoming enervated. It is sinking into forgetfulness of its grand purpose of regenerating the world instead of becoming conformed to it. We need to be quickened and revived. We need to be delivered from the bondage of this accursed passion. We need to be rescued from the power of this mighty enchantment. We require to be convinced of our spiritual poverty and nakedness; of the necessity of seeking the enduring treasure of righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Oh, for times of refreshing from on high! Will thou not revive us again, O Lord that we may cease to set our hearts on getting uncertain riches, and "lay up in store for ourselves a good foundation against the time to come that we may lay hold on eternal life."

(b) *In the love of luxury.* The rapid development of the resources of this country, and the consequent increase of riches have begotten a spirit of luxury which was unknown a few years ago. What shall we eat? what shall we drink? where-withal shall we be clothed? what manner of house shall we dwell in, and after what fashion shall we furnish it? what shall we ride in? what round of pleasure shall we pursue? these are the thoughts which unduly engross people's attention at the present day. "Take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry," is the creed which many believe and practice. They live for animal enjoyment, to satisfy "all the fleshly lusts that war against the soul." They pamper their bodies. This indulgence in luxuries is not confined to people of wealth. The marvellous discoveries of science and the development of the mechanical arts have cheapened many of the luxuries of life, and placed them within reach of people of moderate means. Society in consequence of the luxurious mode of living that prevails, is becoming leavened with a refined sensualism, though it presents so many evidences of being cultured and polished. Though the most skilful and cunning efforts are made to conceal its corruption, the poisonous fester breaks forth here and there and scandalizes us, and fills us with horror. That immorality is frightfully in the ascendant, no one who is watching current events can fail to see; and all who are capable of judging trace its increase to the growing luxury of the age, which emasculates the moral and spiritual nature. It makes men goss. It lowers the tone of their thoughts. It makes them indifferent to religion—first to its spirit and then to its form. I do not advocate asceticism. All the fruits of our progressive civilization are conferred upon us by Providence for our use. "Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving." But Christians should "use the world as not abusing it." They should be temperate in all things, "as those that strive for the mastery." They should keep under the body, and bring it into subjection to their spiritual nature. "They that are Christians have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts."

Now, I say that the luxuries and over-refinements of the age—all the manifold softnesses whereby art contrives to make life easy, and to soothe the little wearinesses, and minister to the little whims of the opulent, are seriously affecting the life of the church, and increasing the religious indifference of the community. They are making men worldly-minded, solicitous only about earthly things. They cease from their view the interests of the soul, the higher life of faith, the work of the church, the need of multiplied effort to evangelize the world and crush the powers of evil. Christians have not escaped this withering influence. The love of many has waxed cold. Their zeal has flagged. They have lost the interest they once had in the work of Christ. And have its chilling effects not been visible on us? Have we not been stricken with this spiritual pestilence? Has not the love of ease and enjoyment often hindered you from the performance of religious duties, from attendance at our Sunday service, from giving your money to advance the work of saving sinners and redeeming the world to Christ? I have heard men excuse their absence from church by saying that they were tired. Through love of the world they overtaxed their strength during the week, and on Sunday they yielded to the lust of the flesh for indulgence. Others have urged the plea of a wet day or muddy roads. The flesh lusted for ease and comfort, and they gratified it. If you would get to heaven it must be, not by frequenting the lap of luxury and self-indulgence, but by self-denial, by suffering

for Christ's sake. "He pleased not Himself." Shall His servants consult their own pleasure instead of their duty to Him. You expose yourself to pelting storms and fatigue in minding your own things; are you to do less if you would be mindful of the things of Christ? There are too many luxuries, ease-loving Christians in the church. We need the fire of the Holy Ghost to purify us from these encraving influences, and inflame us with earnestness and zeal. "Will Thou not revive us again, O Lord, that we may rejoice in Thee."

(c) Another form in which worldliness is seen is devotion to fashion. The extravagances of fashion I need not dwell upon. The world has gone mad in this regard. The love of show, of display, is one of the besetting sins of the times. People attempt to outshine their neighbours. They must have the latest style of dress, of carriage, of furniture, of ornament. All this is bad enough, but there is a lower deep still. The observance of the fashion and display of society involves a great expenditure. The gratification of this spirit tempts many to live beyond their means. It leads them into pecuniary embarrassment, or into dishonesty. One of the crying evils of the day is that some in their extravagant, reckless, desire for show, live beyond their income, gratify their vanity at the expense of their creditors, and then rob them by going into insolvency. But worse than all this—God is robbed. The silver and the gold which are His, and which should be cast into His treasury, are misappropriated. The progress of Christ's kingdom is hindered in consequence. The money unnecessarily sacrificed on the altar of fashion and splendour in a single year in our land, would maintain hundreds of missionaries among the heathen. Surely there is need of reformation here. Thousands are groaning and waiting to be delivered from this cruel social tyranny, which, like the Car of Juggernaut, crushes many of its most devout worshippers. This idolatry has its attached followers among us. Some devote too much attention and means to finery and vain show. There are those who profess to be Christians who have yielded homage to this spirit. I tell you it is detrimental to your spiritual life. It is hurtful to the spiritual welfare of others who are kept away from the house of God, because necessity compels them to disregard fashion. We want to be revived, awakened, stimulated to cultivate adornments of character, "whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report," for the fashion and glory of this world are passing away.

2. Another influence which obstructs the work of Christ is intemperance. This is the most terrible curse that desolates the country, the source of nine-tenths of the crime and misery and ruin that stare you in the face wherever you go. It is the most effective agency which the Evil One wields for the preservation of his empire on the earth. Tens of thousands go down every year into the drunkard's grave, and into eternal perdition, yet the army of intemperance maintains its numbers. It is largely recruited from the class who pride themselves on being moderate drinkers. They find prohibition to the service extremely easy. Happily public sentiment is growing stronger year by year in favour of total abstinence, and the young and rising generation are largely abstainers from what intoxicates and poisons and demoralizes. Those in advanced life among us who are addicted to strong drink, are the victims of the circumstances of their youth, or of early training. They acquired the habit when popular opinion was still unenlightened regarding its moral delinquency. What a grand moral triumph would theirs be, if they denied themselves, and no more touched the noxious thing! What a happiness to their families, what a blessing to all, not even excepting the liquor-sellers, would it be! Intemperance is one of the most serious hindrances to the progress of religion. Generally a man who indulges in the vice keeps aloof from all religious influences. The services of religion can have no attraction for him. The rebukes of conscience in the House of God make him uneasy. His feelings are brutalized. You require him first to become sober and temperate before he can become religious. Self denial is the law of the Christian life, and a man cannot continue to indulge what is a positive vice and be a Christian. It is impossible while still in bondage to a fleshly lust to be the servant of Christ. "No man can serve two masters. His servant you are to whom you give obedience. Members of the Church, are you doing your duty unless you wholly renounce this habit? We need to be awakened to a true sense of the meanness which this evil lays upon the religious life of individuals and of the Church. Temperance organizations are accomplishing much, but we ought to look for an outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon ourselves and upon all the churches and the country, till multitudes of those who are stricken with the leprosy of drunkenness, may be quickened with new life, and made new men in Christ Jesus. Lord wilt thou not revive Thy work everywhere, that men may be called out of drunkenness into sobriety, and that Thy people may rejoice in Thee?"

3. Another influence which obstructs the work of Christ is scientific materialism. The study of science has assumed a prominent place in our day. It has made wonderful discoveries in the heavens above, in the earth beneath, and in the depths of the sea, for all of which we are profoundly thankful. Many would have us suppose, from their vain boasting, that science is to be the regenerator of mankind, and that it will give the religion of the Bible into the region of superstition. God is superseded by force—blind, impersonal, force by which all things were created, which produces thought in the human brain. Miracles are impossible, prayer is of no avail, the immortality of the soul is not to be a conscious immortality. This is the cold, checkered substitute which scientific materialists would give us for the blessed Gospel which teaches us that we have a Father in heaven whose image we bear, who has loved us with an everlasting love, who has sent His Son into the world in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, and who has brought life and immortality clearly to light. The irreligious views of these men, so eminent in the scientific world, are sown broadcast in every Christian community through the

newspapers and magazines. They are staggering the faith of many, and confirming many in their indifference and worldliness and sin. Like a fatal blight they are affecting the vitality of the Church. In Britain the high priests of science from their lofty thrones proclaimed with loud swelling words their anti-religious dogmas, and called upon all Christian nations and peoples to fall down and worship the image that they had set up. But "our God whom we serve," "chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise." He made two men of simple education the instruments of his power, and by them stirred the kingdom to its very heart and centre, and proved to high and low, rich and poor, that "effectual, fervent prayer availed much," and that the preaching of a crucified Saviour is mighty in redeeming men from iniquity, and transforming them into wicker and nobler members of society. The Lord has revived the nation, and the Churches and his people are rejoicing that the cloud of scientific materialism has been dispelled. We need to be delivered from its paralyzing influence. We need to have the simple Gospel preached with greater earnestness and faithfulness. We want to have Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God, held up to the admiration and the faith of a world lying in wickedness. We want profiting Christians to be living Gospels, adorning and commending the doctrines of religion to sinners; above all we want to be visited with the reviving power of the Divine Spirit; quicken and purify all classes and Churches, that glory may dwell in our land.

Were the power of these mighty influences to be broken, were the Church to be delivered from the curse which these terrible evils are laying upon its energies, were a widespread interest in things pertaining to God and holiness, to be awakened, and a revival of pure and undefiled religion to take place throughout the land, what cause for rejoicing in God His people would have. It would be an assurance to us that He cherisheth "the Church which He has purchased with His own blood," and will never leave it to be overthrown, however much it may be buffeted and assailed; that He is not unmindful of His covenant, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;" and that the whole world which groaneth and travaileth under the cruel and degrading dominion of sin shall yet be delivered from this bondage, and the cry of them that are in darkness or oppressed, shall no more be heard in it at all, and "all things shall be subdued unto Christ," "that God may be all in all."

Let me say a word or two to you who are praying people. Earnestly and without ceasing entreat God to revive His work among us, to help us throw off the religious torpor into which we have fallen, to seek after greater personal holiness, to be filled with anxiety for the salvation of our families, our neighbours, our friends. Wrestle with Him; do not let Him go until he send us these blessings. He has pledged us His word that He will do so. He desires His conversion of the world. He sent His well-beloved Son to die for its redemption. He wants you to labour for His glorious consummation. He will send you help from on high for this purpose. Let your help ever be in the name of the Lord. "Not by might, nor by wisdom, nor by power, but by His spirit" will you achieve this result.

You who "are of the world" surely want to be revived. You do not want to "continue in sin," "dead in trespasses," unregenerate "without hope." You must pray for the quickening Spirit. Seek Him who has come into the world that you "might have life." Give no rest to your soul until you have found Him. Our heart's desire and prayer is that you may be saved. We wish above all things that you may be quickened together with Christ. Covet earnestly this best gift. Trust in Him. Be His. Work for Him. Bring forth fruit for Him. Bear witness in the world that you have "become dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Church Debts.

The way in which church edifices are built now-a-days really necessitates a new formula of dedication. How would this read?—"We dedicate this edifice to Thee, our Lord, and Master; we give it to Thee and Thy cause and kingdom, subject to a mortgage of \$150,000. We bequeath it to our children and our children's children, as the greatest boon we can confer on them, (subject to the above mortgage aforesaid), and we trust that they will have the grace and the money to pay the interest and lift the mortgage. Preserve it from fire and foreclosure, we pray Thee, and make it abundantly useful to Thyself—subject, of course, to the aforesaid mortgage."

The offering of a structure to the Almighty, as the gift of an organization of devotees who have not paid for it, and do not own it, strikes the ordinary mind as a very strange thing; yet it is safe to say that not one church in twenty is built in America without incurring a debt, larger or smaller. A more commodious and a more elegant building is wanted. A subscription is made that will not more than half cover its cost, and money enough is borrowed to complete it. The whole property is mortgaged for all that it will carry, the financial authorities are saddled with a floating debt, which they can only handle on their own personal responsibility, and then comes taxation for interest, sufficient to keep the church always in distress. This sort of church enterprise is so common that it has become commonplace. The children of this world do not build railroads with capital stock paid in, but they build them with bonds. The children of light really do not seem to be less wise in their generation, in the way in which they build their churches. Indeed, we think the latter can give the former several points, and beat them; for the paying success of a church depends upon more contingencies than the success of a railroad, and its bonds really ought not to sell for more than fifty cents on the dollar "flat."—Scribner.

QUARRELS would be short if the fault was only on one side.

Faith is in Christ Alone.

You must by all means remember this. You must not put your trust for salvation in your conversion, or in your church, or in your religion, or in the opinion of others, or in the "way you feel," but only in Christ. Faith in the best of these will not save you—only faith in Jesus.

Many people have faith in themselves: they believe they are Christians; but that is not true faith. Many have faith in their feelings: "they feel all right;" but that does not save sinners. Many have similar feelings concerning their Church: they think it is the "true church," and they have joined it; but no true church can save a soul without Jesus. All these things may be good and proper, but nothing ever saves except faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And now, if you feel that you have this faith but partially developed, let your prayers be, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." And may Jesus, who is the "author of your faith," be also its "finisher."—*More Light*, by Rev. David R. Breed.

Random Readings.

It is a fearful thing when a man and all his hopes die together. But "the righteous hath hope in his death."

The Jesuits, said Boileau, "are a people who lengthen the creed and shorten the decalogue."

A MODERN essayist defines gossip to be the "putting of two and two together and making five of them."

THE moment one's eternal Christian activity out runs the life grown within, that moment he becomes hollow, insincere and in a degree hypocritical. He is playing a part, he is "acting," and not really working.

THAT instrument will make no music that hath but some strings in tune. If, when God strikes on the string of joy and gladness we answer pleasantly, but when he touches upon that of sorrow and humiliation we suit it not, we are broken instruments that make no melody unto God.—*Dr. Owen*.

COMPARATIVELY few are destroyed by outrageous and flaming vices, such as blasphemy, theft, drunkenness, or uncleanness; but crowds are perishing by that deadly smoke of indifference which casts its stifling clouds of carelessness around them, and sends them asleep into everlasting destruction.

THE leanness of the earthen vessel which conveys to others the Gospel treasure, takes nothing from the value of the treasure. A dying hand may sign a deed of gift of incalculable value. A shepherd's boy may point out the way to a philosopher. A beggar may be the bearer of an invaluable present.—*Cecil*.

IN the moral training of the young, we need more attention paid to what may be called Christian character. Child to be taught that the soul is immortal, and that it is to be saved by the blood of Christ. The mighty qualities of the soul are to be better and needed as much as ever.—*David Malice*.

MAN'S material frame is adapted to his inward nature. His upward look and speaking eye are the outlet of the soul. As the soul grows nobler it lets itself be seen more distinctly, even though features that have sprung from the dust of the ground. It thins and makes transparent ever more its walls of clay. There is a struggle of the inner life to assimilate the outer form to itself, which is prophetic of something coming.—*Rev. John Kerr*.

How full of meaning is the fact that we have nothing told us of the life of our Lord between the twelfth and thirtieth years! What a testimony against all our striving and snatching at hasty results, our impatience, our desire to glitter before the world, against the plucking of the unripe fruit of the mind and the turning of that into a season of stunted and premature harvest, which should have been a season of patient sowing, of earnest culture, and silent ripening of the powers.—*Trench*.

THESE FOLK, if you aspire to be a son of consolation—if you would partake of the priestly gift of sympathy—if you would pour something beyond commonplace consolation into a tempted heart—if you would pass through the intercourse of daily life with the delicate tact which never inflicts pain—if, to that most acute of human ailments, mental doubt, you are ever to give effectual succor, you must be content to pay the price of the costly education. Like him, you must suffer—being tempted.—*F. W. Robertson*.

"EDUCATION does not commence with the alphabet. It begins with a mother's look, with a father's nod of approbation or a sigh of reproof, with a sister's gentle pressure of the hand, or a brother's noble act of forbearance, with handfuls of flowers in green and daisy meadow, with birds' nests admired but not touched, with creeping ants and almost imperceptible ommets, with humming bees and glass beehives, with pleasant walks in shady lanes, and with thoughts directed in sweet and kindly tones, and words to mature to acts of benevolence, to deeds of virtue, and to the sense of all good, to God Himself."

THE church needs a change in quality as well as quantity of membership. One-half the professed Christians amount to nothing. They go to church. They pay pew rents. They have a kind regard for all religious institutions. But as to any firm grip of the truth, any enthusiastic service for Christ, any cheerful self-denial, any overmastering prayer, any capacity to strike hard blows for God, they are a failure. One of two things these half-and-half professors ought to do—either withdraw their names from the church-roll, or else go so near the fire as to get warm. Do you not know that your present position is an absurdity? You profess to be living for God and heaven, but all the world knows you are lying. Wake up! Do something before you are dead. Either help pull the Lord's chariot, or get out of the way.