

PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

"HAVE YOU NOT A WORD FOR JESUS?"

A QUESTION FOR ALL WHO LOVE HIM.

I.

Have you not a word for Jesus? not a word to say for Him? He is listening through the chorus of the burning seraphim! HE IS LISTENING; does He hear you speaking of the things of earth, Only of its passing pleasure, selfish sorrow, empty mirth? He has spoken words of blessing, pardon, peace, and love to you, Glorious hopes and gracious comforts, strong and tender, sweet and true; Does He hear you telling others something of His love untold, Overflowings of thanksgiving for His mercies manifold?

II.

Have you not a word for Jesus? Will the world His praise proclaim? Who shall speak if ye are silent? ye who know and love His name. You, whom He hath called and chosen His own witnesses to be, Will you tell your gracious Master, "Lord, we cannot speak for Thee?" "Cannot!" though He suffered for you, died because He loved you so! "Cannot!" though he has forgiven, making scarlet white as snow! "Cannot!" though His grace abounding in your freely promised aid! "Cannot!" though HE stands beside you, though HE says, "Be not afraid!"

III.

Have you not a word for Jesus? Some, perchance, while ye are dumb, Wait weary for your message, hoping you will bid them "come;" Never telling hidden sorrows, lingering just outside the door, Longing for your hand to lead them into rest for evermore. Yours may be the joy and honour His redeemed ones to bring, Jewels for the coronation of your coming Lord and King. Will you cast away the gladness thus your Master's joy to share, All because a word for Jesus seems too much for you to dare?

IV.

What shall be our word for Jesus? Master, give it day by day; Ever as the need arises, teach Thy children what to say. Give us holy love and patience; grant us deep humility, That of self we may be emptied, and our hearts be full of Thee; Give us zeal and faith and fervour, make us winning, make us wise, Single-hearted, strong and fearless,—Thou hast called us, we will rise! Let the might of Thy good Spirit go with every loving word; And by hearts prepared and opened be our message always heard!

V.

Yes, we have a word for Jesus! Living echoes we will be Of Thine own sweet words of blessing, of Thy gracious "Come to Me." Jesus, Master! yes, we love Thee, and to prove our love would lay Fruit of lips which Thou wilt open, at Thy blessed feet to-day. Many an effort it may cost us, many a heart-beat, many a fear, But Thou knowest, and wilt strengthen, and Thy help is always near. Give us grace to follow fully, vanquishing our faithless shame, Feebly it may be, but truly, witnessing for Thy dear Name.

VI.

Yes, we have a word for Jesus! we will bravely speak for Thee, And Thy bold and faithful soldiers, Saviour, we would henceforth be: In Thy name set up our banners, while Thine own shall wave above, With Thy crimson Name of Mercy, and Thy golden Name of Love. Help us lovingly to labour, looking for Thy present smile, Looking for Thy promised blessing, through the brightening "little while." Words for Thee in weakness spoken, Thou wilt here accept and own, And confess them in Thy glory, when we see Thee on Thy throne.

—Frances Ridley Havergal.

A GOOD RULE FOR TRAVELLERS.—It is a good and safe rule to sojourn in every place as if you meant to spend your life there, never omitting an opportunity of doing a kindness, or speaking a true word, or making a friend. Seeds thus sown by the wayside often bring forth an abundant harvest. You might so spend your summer among the people that they and their descendants should be better and happier, through time and eternity, for your works and your example.

COFFEE AND COCOA AS SOCIAL REFORMERS.

BY THE REV. W. G. BLAIR, D.D., LL.D.

(Continued.)

And now for the important question of meat and drink. The Liverpool Company do not deal in cooked meats, but only in cocoa, tea, and coffee, and in bread and butter, though meat pies and bread and cheese may be had. In the common room you may have a pint of cocoa or coffee, or a gill of tea, for a penny, and half a pint of cocoa or coffee for a halfpenny. The materials are all of the best quality, and are purchased in large quantities, making the profit larger. At first, we believe, cocoa was the favorite article; but now coffee is treading hard upon its heels. It used to be thought that cocoa was more nutritious, and therefore a better substitute for stimulants, and for that reason more popular; but now it looks as if coffee would carry the day.

In all the Liverpool houses facilities are afforded on the spot for customers signing the abstinence pledge. This is often of great importance. In connection with some of them there is a social gathering and entertainment on Saturday evenings, designed to furnish the people with combined recreation and moral influence. There are no religious services in direct connection with the rooms.

So much for general arrangements and general results. But may we not go a little more narrowly into the movement, and ascertain some of its results in individual cases? How is it viewed by what we may call "the drinking classes," and what has its effect been on any of them? Some of our friends have furnished us with a few illustrations of its working in the case of individuals, which we are sure will be read with much interest.

We begin with the case of a woman, a Scotchwoman, too, who told her story thus to Mr. Garrett. "The cocoa-room has been the means of a new life to me. Before it was opened I had no clothes, and only a hole in which to live. My one thought was whiskey. All my light and comfort and joy was in the spirit-vaults. One morning I had but a half-penny; I was cold and miserable, and as I could do nothing with the halfpenny to get spirits, I came in and got a half-pint of cocoa. It was so warm and nourishing that it took away all my longing for drink. I went to work, and at breakfast-time I came in and had a pint more. Since then everything has gone well with me. I have never touched the whiskey; but I have bought some warm clothes, and have got out of the cellar where I used to live, and have taken a nice little room, where I can live like a Christian."

And may the great teacher show her how to live like a Christian! Poor creature, there is an awful honesty in her confession—"all my light, and comfort, and joy was in the spirit-vaults." They were a god to her—but what a god! One remembers the apology of Maggie Mucklebackit, for her love of a dram, when the laird denounced it: "Aye, aye, it's easy for your honour, and the like o' you gentle-folks to say sae, that hae stouth and routh, and fire and fending, and meat and claiht, and sit dry and canny by the fire-side; but an' ye wanted fire, and meat, and dry claise, and were deen' o' cauld, and had a sair heart,—whilk is warst ava'—wi' just tippence in your pouch,—wadna' ye be glad to buy a dram wi't, to be eilding and claes, and a supper and heart's ease into the bargain, till the morn's morning?" If our Liverpool friend is to be relied on, much less than "tippence" can be exchanged for much better than a dram, and happy is the toiling, struggling, exposed man or woman that has the chance.

Here is the testimony of a working man. "The cocoa-room has nearly made me into a teetotaler. For twenty years I had always begun the day with three-pennorth of rum, and I had a few drinks during the day. When, however, this cocoa-room was opened, I determined to try it. I got a pint of cocoa as I came to my work. It only cost me a penny and I felt better than I did with my three-pennorth of rum. I said to myself, this will pay; so I came again at breakfast-time, and I have constantly come ever since; that's more than three months ago, and I have never tasted nor wanted a drop of drink since."

It is interesting to see, in many cases, how anxious people are to be emancipated from a wicked and degrading habit, or from what tends thereto, if only they knew the way. It is one of the things that inspire hope in the battle with drunkenness; the bondage is so loathsome and so horrible that surely the victims would fain escape, if it were not that to escape is more difficult than to endure.

Here is an interesting anonymous letter to Mr. Garrett. "DEAR SIR,—Excuse me for taking up your time with a letter, but I want to thank you for starting the cocoa-rooms. I have for many years been a drunkard. I have tried again and again to be sober, but if I was sober for a week I was soon down again and lower than ever. I have heard you and John Gough, and all the best temperance speakers, but it all fell off me like water from a duck's back. I thought, there was no hope for me. But the cocoa-room was opened, and as soon as I saw it, I said, this is just what I want. I went in, and have continued to do so ever since. That is now two months, and everything seems changed for the better. I go home at night now, and help my little girl to learn her lessons, and my missus looks so happy, and the child seems so puzzled, that I feel almost ready to tell them how it is, but I won't yet, for fear I don't hold out. However, that's another reason why I am writing to you. I don't know how it is, but from the first day I went into the cocoa-room I always feel as if you were standing by my side. And I want you to pray that God may help me. I shall know by my feelings whether you do or no. If God helps me I shall conquer after all, and that will be a good thing for me and mine. I will write again after a time, and tell you how I get on, but please do not forget what I have said. Yours gratefully, A WORKING MAN."

The evening meetings in connection with some of the cocoa-rooms have not been without effect. A short time ago, the excellent manager, Mr. Peskett, referring to a visit which I had lately paid to one of them, announced that I was anxious to learn whether they were exercising a useful influence. A number of letters, received in answer to this

appeal, throw light on this question. Here is one, in excellent hand-writing, from one who says—and his letter bears evidence of it—that but for the intoxicating cup, he might have been in a high position in the social scale. He had heard a few judicious words spoken in the hall of the cocoa-room by an abstainer, who had once been a victim of intemperance, that induced him to try once more the temperance pledge. "Since then I have been a regular attendant at your meetings, and have not only been entertained but felt myself strengthened in my determination, that by the help of God I will never more taste intoxicating drink."

I consider your cocoa-rooms, apart from their connection with the temperance question, a great boon, not only to the working classes but to clerks and others with limited means; but in conjunction with your efforts to spread the cause of total abstinence, I firmly believe your success will be glorious, and from my heart I wish you God speed."

Another writes—"I can safely say that the cocoa-rooms have done me all the good in the world, for I used to drink heavy, and was thoughtless of home and family, and now thank God, I can say that I feel very happy. . . . I have seen a great deal of good done in the cocoa-rooms, and in the eight months that I have been a total abstainer I have got a great many to sign the pledge and join the Good Templars; and the best of it is, as yet, none of them has broken their pledge; and it is my advice to all who drink, to give it up at once, for it only robs the pocket, takes away the senses, and drives a man to an untimely grave. And my advice to all is to give it up at once, for since I gave it up I feel a better man than ever I felt. And I thank the cocoa-rooms for it, for they are the best thing that ever was brought into Liverpool."

In some of these letters one misses the tone of men, not only rescued from intemperance, but rescued through God's grace from sin and all its fruits. They are no doubt most sincere; they joy over the freedom they have gained from a miserable habit, and are most anxious never again to fall into it; but who knows how soon, in the reaction of the mind, the old habit may resume its sway? Their pleas for prayer are touching, but the assistance they crave is somewhat bare and limited. The question is raised, Is it wise for Christian men, establishing these cocoa-shops, to limit them to temporal benefits? ought they not to be missions as well, teaching the people how vain any outward reformation must be, and inviting them to commit soul, body, and spirit to the Saviour, whose Spirit alone gives the strength to conquer in the battle with sin?

Some earnest Christian philanthropists have this conviction very strongly, and in the British Workman Public-house movement, with which the town of Leeds has been especially associated, the missionary element is an essential part of the scheme. Miss Cotton's Coffee-room—but we believe we should now call her Lady Hope—is conducted on the same principle—as a help to an earnest Christian mission. Wherever the refreshment-room is an appendage to a mission, it is indispensable that it carry conspicuously Christian colours, and have earnest Christian services. From this point of view, the fact that such refreshment-rooms can hardly be made self-sustaining is not felt to be an insuperable difficulty. Lady Hope owns that hers is not remunerative, but from the mission standpoint this drawback is counterbalanced a hundred-fold by its priceless benefits in other respects. But it is evident that there must be more coffee-rooms than missions. It is true that Christian men can never content themselves with promoting the mere temporal benefit of any district; but it is not necessary to turn every coffee-shop into a mission hall. Lady Hope's own remarks on this subject are wise and salutary.

"Do you think coffee-rooms without mission-work are quite useless?"

"No; coffee rooms ought to be established in every street, in order to compete with the fearful trade which is now almost monopolised by the gin-palaces. 'We have no where else to go,' say the poor; and the fact is too evident. The fact, however, is also evident that if proper places of refreshment, without any intoxicating liquors, are provided, the people are thankful for them, and even now show their appreciation of the effort made for them. In a few years' time, when the movement has more widely spread, we may hope to see the taste of the populace decidedly improved, some of the terrible havoc of the past having been repaired by the introduction of better refreshments and purer resorts than the dens of evil where beer and spirits are sold."

"At the same time, in every town and village, besides these shops, a place of resort is required for the working men. In these records I have endeavoured, by illustrative cases, to show that to make such resorts truly beneficial a higher than any human agency is needed. A divine remedy, and that contained in the Word of God, is all-essential for the cure of all diseases, mental and spiritual—and in how many cases even physical! as in the case of the drunkard reformed."

One very important and blessed result of successful cocoa refreshment-rooms will be to make the reduction of licensed public-houses a much easier task than it is at present. The wearisome argument that public-houses "are needed" in a district will fall to the ground if working people make it apparent that the cocoa-shop fulfils all real necessities far better than the licensed tavern. Publicans will not be so able to prove themselves martyrs when they are relegated to a non-alcoholic employment. The cry for compensation, should many licences be withdrawn, will wax fainter and feebler. The great drink confederacy, which threatens so many disasters to the country, will be greatly lessened. The prospect is, indeed, so blessed that it seems too good to be true. It looks as if "Time would run back to fetch the Age of Gold." May God himself smile on the enterprise, and guide it to further triumphs! May it be found not only that the corner has been turned, but that a glorious path has been entered on, along which the masses of our labouring population will advance to purer enjoyments, higher ends of living, and more experience of the life that is hid with Christ in God!

* "More about our Coffee-Room." By Elizabeth R. Cotton [now Lady Hope]. London. 1878.