

PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

FOR WHAT DO WE GO TO CHURCH?

"Where have you been this long time? I have not seen you at church for several Sabbaths, nor at evening meetings for a long time."

"No, I haven't been a great deal lately I drop in occasionally at the hall, but to tell the truth, there's such a coldness and distance in church members, so little inclination to make acquaintance with strangers, that my husband's about discouraged as to taking a seat in any church."

"Ah, I'm sorry for that, for though there's too much truth about the coldness apparent in church members, and I have felt it as much as any one, yet I am sorry you are inclined to give up attending on that account for I am afraid you will be a loser by it."

"I don't know but I shall be; but now, Mrs. Norton, do you think it right for church members to see strangers come Sabbath after Sabbath to church, take their place week after week in prayer-meetings, and never by look or word make them welcome, greet them cordially as brethren of the same family?"

"No, I do not. I deplore these things as much as any one can, but let me tell you, Mrs. Weston, how I'm getting comforted, and ceasing to care for it. I ask myself—as I come down the aisle and out of the church with these unspeakable ones—for what do I go to the house of God? Is it to meet human beings, gain their friendship, or to meet my God, have audience with Him, get so lifted up out of this world's trifles as to be unmindful of slights from my fellows, if only I may bring home to combat sin with, the strength from above?"

Mrs. Weston looked at her friend a moment as they parted at the corner of the street for their several homes, and said:—

"I don't know but you are right, but I never thought of it in this light."

"Think it over now, won't you, Mrs. Weston, and pray do not decide to give up church attendance, will you? Good-by," and they parted.

Now it is not for want of looking at it in *this* way that our churches are thinning out year by year, religious interest declining even in the hearts of professed disciples? Are children now-a-days early instructed as to the real reason they should attend upon worship of the sanctuary?—that it is for something beside fairs, festivals, barter and money-getting, and a good time generally? Should these be the attractions to draw them there? Alas that the higher and more spiritual attractions are so seldom impressed upon their young minds!

There is a good deal of truth in your correspondent's words, under the heading of "Stranger Within the Gates," as I myself have more than once met with this "air of polite surprise" when kindly accosting strangers in church. Truly there is "another side" to this question. But is it not possible the churches have so long ignored strangers in the prayers offered, the friendly advances, as to make it a matter of surprise to them when met with courtesy, and so occasion this half-hearted acceptance of civilities?

But I am far from thinking Christians feel as indifferent toward strangers as they appear often to do. I think in their hearts they give them a warm welcome, but from over-sensitiveness, the fear of seeming obtrusive, they wait to be "introduced;" that word should never be used in connection with Christian brethren, believers in the same Christ, strangers though they be.

In face of all repulses and "icicles" let all church members continue to "show themselves friendly."—*Watchman.*

THE ETERNAL VERITIES.

The Rev. Moses D. Hoge, of Richmond, addressing the graduating classes of Jefferson Medical College, and of the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania, said: While I accept the Bible in its totality as the Word of God, with an assured belief in its inspiration, I come to speak to you of some of the facts outside of Revelation, which give confirmation, emphasis and immediate practical and personal interest to the truths within that Revelation. I wish to show how secular history and literature, how classic and pagan writers, how infidel scoffers in ancient and modern times, how venerable tradition and recent discovery, how the admitted beliefs of men who make no

profession of the Christian faith, how the consensus of great thinkers and the common sense of plain, unlettered men, all unite to confirm, to elucidate and enforce the truths of Revelation.

I do this to counteract the popular impression that Christianity is a religion of abstract dogmas, difficult to define and hard to comprehend. The theories which men invent and the creeds they formulate may be true or false, but, whether true or false, the underlying facts remain and are not changed by all the speculations which either faith or unbelief may frame. You may build upon the living rock an edifice of granite or a Montreal ice palace, but the stability of the one and the fragility of the other does not affect the rock beneath. So there are certainties with regard to a man's spiritual character and condition which would remain certainties forever, were there no creeds, no church, no Bible. It is important to remember this, because the impression is as common as it is erroneous that Christianity is something which owes its origin to the Bible, whereas the facts which are cardinal to Christianity had to exist before the Scriptures were written.

Let me enumerate some of the certainties of religion which are independent of revelation. We do not have to go to the Bible to ascertain that man is a sinner. It is certain that sin has a reflex action awakening the sense of guilt in the soul and exciting a foreboding of retribution. Christ is a matter of history, for besides the testimony of the Evangelists, there is that of Tacitus and Pliny, of Celsus, Lucian, and Julian. Christ held his own place in chronology and history, as really as Pontius Pilate, who condemned him, or Tiberius Caesar, in whose reign he was crucified. It is a certainty that no character was ever subjected to such scrutiny as that of Christ and that no character was regarded with such admiration, just in proportion to the intensity of that scrutiny, and that no character ever was the theme of such eulogy from men who differed about everything else. No character, it is certain, is such a model for young men. No one ever lived who so impressed himself upon the political history, the art, the literature, the social life of the world. It is certain, too, that society must have religion, and that the Christian religion has the best capacity for becoming the religion of the world. So, then, it is deserving of the attention of every rational man. Christianity makes life worth living, and crowns the noblest life with an immortality of happiness and of joy

THIRTY MONTHS OF PROHIBITION.

The prohibitory law, in Kansas, went into effect on May 1st, 1881. At that time there were 708 saloons in sixty-six counties (from the remaining 15 frontier counties, I have no statistics in actual figures). About Dec. 15th, the secretary of the State Temperance Union gathered statistics from these sixty-six counties, showing at that time there were 313 saloons in existence, a decrease of 395 in about thirty months. But in 41 counties of the 66, there were no saloons at all. During the 30 months, there was a total number of 729 convictions for violation of the prohibitory law, with an aggregate of fines amounting to \$95,200. In addition to this, 81 saloon keepers were imprisoned in the county gaol, on an average of fifty days each. During these 30 months, there were 75 acquittals and 59 hung juries.

Of the 313 open saloons, 160 of them are in Leavenworth, and a large majority of the remainder in Atchison, Wyandotte, and Kansas City, Kan. (A part of Kansas City reaches across the State line into Kansas, and has a population of 5,000.) Hence the places where prohibition has failed in Kansas, are almost entirely confined to the towns bordering on Missouri. In this there are several notable exceptions, as for instance, Fort Scott and Paola. And unless Missouri will soon strike for prohibition, our chief difficulty in the enforcement of the law will be near the State line. Since these statistics were gathered (about two months ago), district courts have been and are still, in session all over the State, and convictions have occurred throughout the State, except in the border towns above mentioned. Within the two months, the larger towns of Topeka, Lawrence, Wichita, and others have rid themselves of the pest. It is safe, therefore, to conclude that at this time there are not more than 200 open saloons in all the 81 counties of Kansas.

During the time that prohibition has existed in Kansas, our population has increased over 12 per cent.; and had there been no prohibition, the whiskey

interest would, no doubt, have increased in about the same ratio, which would now give the 66 counties above mentioned, 800 saloons. But under the law, we have only about 200, or a loss of about 600 saloons. Thus we have an increase of population of about 12 per cent., but a decrease of 75 per cent. of the whiskey interest.

We believe these statistics are close approximations to the real status of prohibition in our State, and therefore present a reliable basis from which to formulate a conclusion as to the working of the law in Kansas. It is a decided success, and especially when it is considered that this law has met the fiercest opposition through every avenue known to the liquor interest. During the issue in Iowa and Ohio, the liquor men of Kansas sent men there to work clandestinely to defeat prohibition, while they still declared it was a failure here. Their public cry is, "failure," but secretly they feel that their business is stabbed to the heart. Let every State and every community be encouraged, and let the watchword be, onward, and by and by, this great incoming tide will sweep away every saloon on our shores. May God hasten the day, and let all the people say, Amen.

THE UNSEEN WORTH OF LOVING DEEDS.

Dorcas used only a little needle, but how she set the needle going through the earth! Mary had an alabaster box of ointment. It was not worth much, I suppose, but she dropped it upon the feet of the saviour, and the fragrance of it is in the Church to-day. I do not know that Mary was a strong-minded woman, or that she was wealthy or beautiful; perhaps she did not move in the very best society, but there is one thing I do know—she could love. Wherever the Gospel of the Son of God is preached that story is told out. I suppose Mary forgot all about herself, but she loved the master and she poured that ointment out upon Him. Eighteen centuries have rolled away, but the name of Mary of Bethany is as fresh as it ever was. I suppose there is no woman's name so fresh as her's except the name of Mary the mother of the Saviour. I can imagine some man when Christ was on earth prophesying that that story would be told in the nineteenth century and not a man on the face of the earth would have believed it. We look back on the days of miracles, but we forget that we are living in the days of miracles. Missionary societies in New York and London have put the story of Mary into 250 languages and have sent out millions of copies of it. That story will live as long as the Church of God is upon earth. She made herself immortal by that one act. Nothing you do for Jesus Christ is small. I suppose if reporters had been living in the days of Mary, and heard on the streets of Jerusalem, that she had broken that alabaster box upon Him they would not have thought it was worth noticing; but it has outlived everything else that took place then. If they had seen that widow cast those two mites into the treasury of the Lord they would have said, "There will be no one in Jerusalem who will care for that." But see? Eighteen centuries have rolled away and that story has outlived everything else that occurred there. If a man gave a thousand pounds to the temple the Jerusalem reporters would have published that in their papers. When the widow cast in her mite the Lord saw her act, and He said, "She hath given more than all of them."—*D. L. Moody.*

THE VALUE OF A RELIGIOUS NEWS-PAPER IN THE HOME.

Our good friend and namesake the Philadelphia *Presbyterian*, presents the following for the thoughtful consideration of its constituents. We hasten to give our readers the same privilege:—

A correspondent says for the religious newspaper that which we feel somewhat reluctant to say for ourselves, but which ought to be said by some one:

Many people express astonishment at the amount of pernicious literature which is read in these days; but it is more of an astonishment to see how little they do to check it. It is not sufficient merely to restrain our children from reading bad books and papers. Human nature is too active and too "live" to be kept right by mere negations. You must give it its true food; in other words, you must substitute good for bad.

It is at home that the children begin to form habits and tastes. As the family was the first institution that God created in the world, it lies at the foundation of