

Pastor and People.

Holliness in Commerce.

It is quite time that the notion that we cannot be completely holy in business was exploded. Men who, in their Protestant fervor, recant the idea that peculiar sanctity belongs to a monk's cell, too often say, and in the utmost sincerity, when the claims of Christ to their full consecration are pressed upon them, "We cannot be entirely holy whilst engaged in commercial pursuits." This notion is highly dangerous, and is, moreover, absolutely false. What is there in commerce that is defiling? Is it the goods we handle, or the men we transact business with, or is it the principles that underlie commercial life? No one would for a moment plead that the mere handling of cotton, or wool, or silk, or iron, or silver, or gold, can defile. That which touches only the outer man can never make him unholy. Holliness is not a thing to be washed from the fingers' ends, but has its seat in the heart. Our Saviour shrank from no contact with the most guilty of his fellow men, yet he contracted no stain. Men can only contaminate as their principles, if evil, are accepted and acted upon. It is very true that the want of principle which characterizes some men in commerce is corruptive indeed, if we follow such an evil example, but need any man be dishonest because another is? Because others choose to walk in the path of iniquity, must we therefore step into the same road?

The cares of business, in an age of competition such as was never before known, are undoubtedly great. It would be very unwise to deny it. But it is altogether a mistake to suppose that business men are the only careful men. Every department of life feels the pressure of an age that is working at express speed; so that if commercial men feel the pressure, they do so in common with men of all ranks in society who live by toil of brain or hand.

It is urged that you cannot escape the contagion of wrong doing, that you must cut iron with steel and meet rascality with tricks. But not this utterly to deny the spirit of our faith, which insists upon universal love, and declares that candor, truth, and regard for others' interests, should characterize the Christian man, in every walk of life. Besides, this judgment is false, or there is not a truly religious man in the commercial world. He who practices the dishonest tricks of trade, or in any way conducts his business so as to break God's commandments, is not a Christian at all. But, thank God, there are many saints among business men. And they who see the deception and meet often with impurity, and so keenly feel the smart of wrong as to complain of their isolation in regard to commercial morality, forget the lesson which God once impressed on the mind of despoiled Elijah.

There really is nothing in commerce itself contrary to the spirit of true religion. Some of the holiest men have bought and sold. Some of the noblest philanthropists that ever loved God wholly, and served their generation faithfully and well, have been commercial men; and no man, whose calling is an honest one, need feel of coming up to the highest requirements of the Gospel; whatever may be his position in life. What was said to Paul is equally said to us: "My grace is sufficient for thee." What was said by Paul may be as confidently said by us: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." We say to business men, you may carry a heart ever washed in the Saviour's blood, and therefore unstained by sin, all through your worldly engagements. It is your privilege to rise above all temptation, above all wrong, above all care, and whilst engaged in your most ordinary transactions in the world, have a Christian experience which will enable you to sit with Christ Jesus in heavenly places.—Rev. W. Guyas Passoe, in Central Advocate.

Small Farms and Small Churches.

Agricultural writers are frequent in their praises of small farms, which brings careful culture, near neighbors, good roads, churches and school houses. The Christian Intelligencer thus improves the doctrine: "If small farms make near neighbors, is it not so with small churches likewise? In small Churches every member knows and is known of every other member; and what is of equal, or perhaps of greater importance, every member is a near neighbor of his pastor, is intimately known by him, and knows him intimately. Often in very large Churches the pastor is necessarily the greatest stranger in the parish; his visits are more visits of ceremony, and his calls are sufficiently formal to satisfy the most exacting requirements of fashionable etiquette. But in small Churches the pastor is able to get near, not only to the persons, but to the very hearts of his people. He knows his people and is known of them. If they meet with affliction or reverses, he suffers with them; if they are blessed with prosperity, he rejoices with them. He is always close enough at hand to aid them in the hour of temptation or of penitence, or to guide and counsel them when they are assailed with doubts and perplexities.

Then again, if more is raised to the acre on small farms, and if they are better tilled, should an average be struck, is not the same true of small Churches? Certainly, as a general rule, the pastor who has to till the hearts of one or two thousand, can scarcely be expected to "farm as closely," or to produce as large a crop proportionately, as the one who has only a few hundred to cultivate. There are many substantial reasons in favour of "close farming," both in the religious and in the material field. Let not those be discouraged, then, who are pastors or members of small churches, but let them both take a lesson from the husbandman who has but a few acres, but who makes of these few acres a garden which is free from weeds and noxious growths of all kinds, which is fertile to all good fruit, and which yields an abundant harvest.

Keep company with the good, and thou wilt be one of them.

The Mother in Israel.

No character in the church is more justly entitled to love and reverence than the aged mother in Israel, who, having spent her life in the service of the Master, now calmly awaits His summons. Patient, kind, charitable, ever ready to do a good work, and always in her place, unless provoked by the growing infirmities of age, she exemplifies, in a high degree, the qualities of a meek and lowly follower of Christ. With a simple and sublime faith in the promises of the Bible, and with a heart softened into a quiet resignation, by the troubles and sorrows through which she has passed her thoughts are continually going forward to heaven which she soon expects to reach.

The companions of her youth have all passed away, except a few, scattered here and there, amidst a younger generation. Year after year she has wept over the graves of her loved ones, one by one the ties which bound her to the earth have been severed, and now she looks back over the weary journey of life, with a heart full of regrets, but aglow with thankfulness for the blessings she has received. In the faithful performance of her humble duties, she has done much for the upbuilding of the church. Her life has been well spent, and though her labours may be lightly regarded on earth, in a very short while she will receive from her Master an abundant reward.

Who can estimate the value of the homeward of the Christian mother? As the presiding spirit of the hearth-stone, in her humble sphere, devoting her life, with all its energies and wealth of affection, to the interest of the children which God has given her, she sows the seeds which, in after years, produce the grandest results. How many are brought into the fold of the Church, mainly by her influence! How many an erring soul has been checked in his downward career by the recollection of a pious mother's efforts in his behalf! How many a wayward boy has been brought to repentance and life by the efficacy of a mother's prayers, which were treasured up to God, and answered in his own good time! What tender associations, of church and of God, cluster around the memory of a sainted mother, and who can estimate the power of those subtle and indefinable influences, which, springing from her teaching and example, follow the child through life?

In all the world there is no more touching picture of unselfish devotion, than that of the woman, who, through years of anxiety, suffering and sacrifice, gives her chief thought and constant effort to the training of her children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and in heaven, no brighter crown will deck the brow of the redeemed, than that of the faithful mother in Israel, however humble or poor she may have been on earth.—G. H. B., in Christian Observer.

The Duty of Being Lovable.

"A new commandment."

If my neighbour finds it as hard to love me as I do to love him, I am sorry for him. Christ's words mean something more positive than the quiescent goodwill which wishes no harm, and in an emergency, would do a kindness. But if there is nothing lovable in a person, how can you love him, except in this negative, benevolent spirit? Christ loved us in our "low estate," and his children should thus love one another. So the loyal Christian enlarges his heart and broadens his sympathies to live out the spirit of his Master. Yet human nature asserts itself. Antagonistic temperaments recoil from each other. Good people are often very disagreeable. Coarse manners and coarse tastes are repulsive, though found in the church. Tiresome people are boring, even if Christians. Our nerves are tortured, our sensibilities shocked, our temper exasperated by brothers and sisters in the church. There are some who act as if they did not want you to love them. To be let alone is all they want. How shall we have tenderness and sympathy and warm affection, when the heart does not find anything to fasten on?

Christ's "new commandment" must have a reflex meaning. If we are required to love, it is implied that we make ourselves lovable. Are we not to soften the asperities of our temper, "round the sharp knobs of character," change the repellent manners into a genial approachableness, and sweeten the severities of our virtues so that our condemnation of another's wrong shall be sorrowful rather than stern? Is it not a duty to avoid those habits which are uncomfortable to others; to check the indulgence of personal peculiarities which may be even more disagreeable than faults, and to cultivate those graces of heart and manner which make our presence a pleasure to others? Are we not to exercise ourselves continually in active, generous service, using all our faculties and opportunities in such a way that others can always believe in us, finding us an inspiration, strength and joy? Sir Philip Sydney speaks of

"A sweet, attractive kind of grace; A full assurance given by looks, Continual comfort in a face, The incitements of gospel books."

If we were all seeking to grow into the likeness of Christ, in little things as well as in great, this brotherly love would spring spontaneous in the heart, and we should find continual comfort in each other's faces.

I read the "new commandment" again, and underlying the familiar words I seem to see the corresponding precept: "Be lovable to one another. I look across to my neighbor over the way, and in striving to be lovable myself, lo! I find him so. Has he, too, been studying the lesson, or are my eyes just opened to see the good in him? Possibly we shall find it easier to love our neighbor than to be always deriving of his love.—Christian at W. H.

Make up your mind that God does not look at your professions or intentions, but at your life. His Spirit is a "discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Diversities of Glory.

There is a poeage in glory. There are distinctions and diversities among the holy and happy spirits of heaven. They do not all walk on the same dead level of felicity and honor, nor all on the same supreme heights. There are degrees of exaltation and dignity. They are all holy and happy. They all wear the likeness of Christ. They sing one song. But there is still room for a diversity of joy and reward. When John looked in through the open gate he saw some whose garments shone with an exceeding lustre, distinguishing them from their fellows; and he could not forbear asking, "Who are these that are arrayed in white raiment, and whence came they?" And Daniel testifies that "they which turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."

It is on this testimony of Daniel that I wish to dwell. Suppose a man converted on his death-bed, his last breath expended on his first believing prayer, and receiving like the dying thief, as he leaves this world, the pledge of Jesus, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." He goes up, indeed, to the celestial city. He is saved. But he goes alone. None of all whom he has known in the fellowship of this life pass through the pearly gate. In how many associations he has walked and talked and labored. But while those ties were on him he was not a lover of Jesus. He had never pleaded with one soul, nor prayed for or with one soul, to bring him to the Saviour. He is saved, but nobody else is saved as the fruit of his faithful witnessing for the Master. Must not this fact affect his reward in heaven?

Or take an indolent or timid Christian, who has for many years been comforted by the hope that Christ has accepted him, who has prayed daily, "Thy kingdom come," and who has helped to maintain Christian ordinances, but who has no knowledge that any soul has ever been brought to repent and believe in Jesus through his personal, direct, efficient interposition, and who goes home to the presence of his Lord in the evening of his days with only this uneventful story of his earthly experience—he may indeed cast his crown with not one jewel sparkling in its golden rim.

How different it will be with the faithful and untiring laborer who has instrumentally led many sons and daughters to glory! They will cluster around him amid the groves of the celestial Eden. They will seize his robes and his lauds, and hang upon him with every demonstration of immortal love and gratitude. "But for you," they will say, one after another, "I had not been here in this blessed heaven!" "But for you I never had crossed the threshold of the house of prayer!" "But for you I had never left my vice and follies!" "But for you I had never given up my cold scepticism!" "But for you I had never bent my stubborn knees to ask forgiveness through a Saviour's blood!" "I owe my joy, my crown, my song, my hermitage in Jesus and his great salvation, to your fidelity! You would not give me up. I resisted you, and struggled against the light and the truth, but you kept your hold of me till I came to the crucifix and found pardon and peace!" Think of his emotion as he hears such testimonies.

And Jesus will call him near and thank him, with words sweeter than music, for his unresting earthly labours in telling the story of the cross, and persuading men to trust that redeeming grace.

Al! it will be true in demonstrations more than we can anticipate, that they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever. Brethren and friends, don't you covet these heavenly honors and joys! It does not require learning to win them. You need not speak with eloquent lips. Wit-out the influence of place and position you may win this reward. Souls are waiting for you. Salvation is staked on your pleading, praying and working. Every man in the community is accessible to you. Begin, and the work will grow more facile and more precious every day. There will be an absorbing taste and relish for it as you proceed. Do not wanting in this earnest type of effort in these burdened and fatal days.—Rev. A. L. Stone, D.D., in the Pacific.

Church Choirs.

The religious earnestness of Mr. Moody has been much commented on, and not at all exaggerated. The same intense religious earnestness characterizes all that is done as well as all that is said. It is illustrated by the selection of the chorus choir of 250 voices. All the choirs of Brooklyn were invited to send delegates. But one condition was attached: Mr. Saukey would take no singer that was not a Christian. He would have no voice singing the invitation to Christ that was not consecrated to Christ. And when the delegates came together he selected from them the most earnest Christians, not the best singers. Christ in the heart, not all in the lips, was the first requisite. Many of the excluded singers are indignant. But there are two results: Mr. Saukey's choir conducts not a concert but a ministry of Christian song; and all Brooklyn choirs are made to believe that there is one man at least who counts love for Christ as more important than musical skill, in the service of praise. The consequence, too, is a choir in earnest, with no laughing, toying, flirting. It is refreshing to see as much Christian earnestness in the choir as in the pulpit.—Lyman Abbott, in The Advance.

We wouldn't give much for a lugubrious Christian, for he would work alongside a cheerful one. The cheerful one will out-run him. There is no need of sombreness in Christian service, if what the Scriptures tell us is true. "All thy ways are pleasantness, and all thy paths are peace." God has placed some people in a very easy place to love and serve Him. And yet how many there are knowing this, feeling it, and yet do nothing. If such did their duty, the circumstances of others would not make it as hard to become Christians and live up to the highest professions.

Life Insurance.

The subject of "Life Insurance" was brought under our notice a few days ago by our Toronto correspondent, whose remarks on the subject were pertinent and seasonable. Our correspondent referred particularly to the insurance of the lives of ministers, who, as a class, we regret to say, are very insufficiently remunerated.

When we take into account the sum expended on their education, the position in society they are expected to maintain, their contributions to charitable and philanthropic objects, the support and education of their families, and, in addition, to exhibit one of the apostolic qualifications of a Bishop,—"given to hospitality," and then think of the small pittance doled out to them in the shape of salary, which would be spurred by a respectable mechanic or book canvasser, we are forced to the conclusion that, as a means of providing for the families of such ministers the congregations should exercise a little self-denial, and show their appreciation of such labours by taking out a policy on the life of their minister, which, in general, would only be a small thing to the members individually, and in very many cases would save many of these families from being a burden to the Church or an object of charity to the public in the community, in which they live.

From a circular just issued by the General Agent of the Union Mutual Life Insurance Company, Toronto, we notice that this excellent Company has a scheme which will meet the want referred to, and which we heartily commend to the careful consideration of the various congregations both in cities and rural districts. We give below an extract from our correspondent's letter, but in reference to which we would say that in our opinion he places the average of ministerial income too high, as we fear that \$600 to \$800 would come much nearer the correct sum for the income of many of the country ministers.

"I cannot think of any work which the ladies of a congregation could engage in which would be attended with more blessed results. It would save many families from being thrown as a charity upon their neighbours and friends, and very often upon the Church at large. It is true that a few ministers have large salaries. For these I do not plead; but it is well known that the average salary is not above \$1000; and with such an income how can any man keep up a respectable position, as a minister is expected to do, and educate his family, which, in some cases, consists of five or six, and probably all daughters, and save anything to put past as a provision in case of death. Let our Christian people remember the words of him, 'who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor.' Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me."

There are many reasons which might be urged for the performance of this duty other than the grounds of charity, and by which the people would be benefited. It would free the minister from many cares which would distract his mind, and he could the more fully devote himself to his high calling, and would more effectively do the "work of an evangelist, and give full proof of his ministry." It would enable him to purchase such books occasionally as he might require to keep himself abreast of the literature of the day, and successfully meet the arguments which are often hurled against our common Christianity. It is often said that ministers are behind the age; and we might say in reply, how can the people expect it otherwise when they will not furnish the necessary means by which information is to be obtained? Some people think that if a minister has a "Book of Common Prayer," or a copy of the "Confession of Faith" and of "Boston's Fourfold State," or an edition of Wesley's sermon in his library, that he should drive scepticisms, infidels and universalists before him like chaff before the summer's threshing-floor. The Apostle Paul was no common theologian, and writing to Timothy he says, "Bring the books, but especially the parchments;" and if ministers are to give their people the "heavenly oil," "the finest of the wheat," and systematically bring from the treasury of the Gospel "things new and old," they must be in a position to buy a good book occasionally. Congregations often put forward the cry of poverty, but many of them spend thoughtlessly and carelessly much larger sums, for which they receive no more present or future benefit than would accomplish what we have suggested.

Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."—Kingston News.

God Governs Barns.

A wealthy capitalist, who had made the most of his own fortune, and what was harder, took care of it, gives the following as the secret of his success: "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of thine increase; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses burst forth with new wine." The philosophy of the matter is simply this, that God governs barns. We are willing to allow that He governs nations, and guides congresses, and directs battle fields. But Solomon, moreover, knew that He presides over wheat fields, stables, and wine-presses. We acknowledge that God is to be worshipped in church with prayers and psalms; but Solomon will have it that He is to be praised also with threshing implements and grain wagons.

SOME one ascribes to Charles Francis Adams the remark that the thing necessary for a revival of business in this country was a revival of religion. "Moody first, mammon afterward."

TRIBUTATION may come as a flood into the church, we may be disappointed even in the brethren; but those who have the eye fixed on Christ "hold on their way," the word which they have heard, and which they keep, is a strong link binding them to Him, who is more than all else to them.

An Abuse of Language.

The intolerable demand of the Vatican upon the government of Spain, rolled under the name of "religious unity," is the same thing in effect which was enforced in Spain by Philip, of execrable memory; the same "religious unity" which he endeavored, at the cost of the best blood of the Netherlands, to impose upon that unhappy country. The brave Netherlands imperilled their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honour, rather than accept this fatal gift of "religious unity," or, in other words, religious intolerance and slavery of the conscience, now offered to the partly emancipated Spaniards. It would be the disgrace of Christianity if the attempt should succeed, and the freedom to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, lately obtained by Spanish Protestants, should be thus taken away from them again.

The unity of Christians is a precious object, for which the Master himself prayed fervently. So far as Protestantism is concerned, the cause has lately made most rapid advances, and to some sanguine believers the time seemed to be rapidly approaching when all shall be one in fellowship. In many respects even the wall of separation between Romanism and other forms of Christianity seemed to be growing thinner. The demand for the re-establishment of the Spanish Concordat, however, is an attempt to build the wall mountain high, and to establish "unity" in the same way that Russia established "order" in Warsaw, namely, by the extinction of liberty. The Vatican note makes a show of consideration for the "supreme necessities of Spain," but the concession only goes far enough to show that the only hope for freedom of conscience in that country is in a firm resistance to the inadmissible pretensions of the Vatican. Its consent to negotiate only goes so far as to contemplate drawing up "an understanding on the same principles in another form." It is the principle, however, and not the form, which is detestable, and any disguise it may take will be an affront to the spirit of the age, and to the spirit of the Christian religion.—N. Y. Journal of Commerce.

Random Readings.

MANY who have escaped the rocks of gross sin have been cast away on the sands of self righteousness.

THERE is no coming at the fair heaven of eternal glory without sailing through the narrow strait of repentance.

How miserable is the condition of those men who spend their time as if it were given to them, not lent!—Bishop Hall.

To a heart that is full of joy, all it sees is joyful; but to a sad heart all is sad. Change of heart is the greatest change.

THERE are some inns which are never empty, but as fast as one guest goes out another comes in. Such is the heart of an unregenerate man.

DR. BELLows once said that the way in which the Unitarian Gospel was proclaimed reminded him of a decayed gentleman who turned out to sell matches, and cried, rather feebly, "Matches! matches!" and then aside, "O! I hope nobody will hear me!"

Passing along the road the other day, we thought we had found a very beautiful knife. On picking it up, it was found to be only a handle without a blade. So do we hear very beautiful sermons—well-written and well-read—but they are without a blade. They cut out no corners of sin, and carve out no models of piety. Sermons must have blades.

EVERY true hermit grows by patience. People who have always been prosperous are seldom the most worthy, and never the most strong. He who has not been compelled to suffer, has probably not begun to learn how to be magnanimous; as it is only by patience and fortitude that we can know what it is to overcome evils, or feel the pleasure of forgiving them.

PEOPLE are always talking of perseverance, and courage, and fortitude; but patience is the finest and worthiest part of fortitude, and the rarest, too. I have known twenty persevering girls to one patient one; but it is only the twenty-first one who can do her work out and out and enjoy it. For patience lies at the root of all pleasures, as well as of all powers.—Ruskin.

A MAN of deep religious experience is always effective. I care not how poor his voice is, or how uncomely his countenance, or how awkward his gestures, or how shabby his clothes, or how lame his grammar. By taking good care of our own vineyard, we learn how to help others in the care of their vineyard. If you cannot raise grapes in your garden, you cannot raise them in mine.—Zalmage.

JOHN HOWARD, the philanthropist, never neglected the duty of family prayer, though there were but one, and that one a servant, to join him; always declaring, that where he had a tent, God should have an altar. Wherever he was when the time came, the duty was attended to. The presence of no one was allowed to interfere with it; and every call of business must wait outside the locked door till it was ended.

The man who goes about to humble himself, and to amend, after a fall into sin, before he looks to Christ, only gets hardness into his heart, and attempts to purgo away sin by sin. Nothing must stand between the sinner and the Saviour. It is the believer's privilege and duty at all times to behold the Lamb of God as having put away his sin; and thus looking to Him, the heart will be melted into sweet contrition.—Sir Richard Hill.

We hold to earth and earthly things by so many more links of thought, if not of affection, that it is far harder to keep our views to heaven clear and strong; when this life is so busy, and therefore, so full of reality to us, another life seems by comparison unreal. This is our condition, and its peculiar temptations, but we must not succumb to it, and strive to overcome them, for I think we may not try to flee from it.—Dr. Arnold.