

Pastor and People.

SOWING.

Sow with a generous hand;
Pause not for toil or pain;
Weary not in the summer's heat,
Nor through the cold spring rain;
But patiently wait till the autumn comes
For the sheaves of golden grain.
Sow, and by faith look upward,
Where the starry light appears;
For in joy you shall reap the harvest,
You have sown to-day in tears.

—A. Procter.

GAMBLING DEAUNCED.

The vice of gambling is becoming alarmingly prevalent. In England it competes with intemperance for the unenviable distinction of being regarded as the chief national sin. All the great cities of the continent of Europe are crowded with temptations to indulge in this vice. In the United States it is computed that the betting on horse-racing alone exceeds \$250,000,000 a year. In this young country, there is sufficient gambling to awaken serious apprehension. In fashionable clubs and hotels, and even in their own homes, respectable citizens stake money on cards, not so much with the idea of winning, as for the purpose of increasing, by virtue of an added risk, the pleasure and excitement of the game. Sometimes men of ability and influence spend whole nights in gambling for high stakes, and, though they may be well able to bear the loss of whatever money they may lose, and may be in no great danger themselves of sinking to the low level of the professional gambler, their conduct fosters in the hearts of younger men a passion for gambling which may bring them into the lonely horror of the prison cell, or the hopeless darkness of a suicide's grave. Another, and little less reprehensible custom, is that which prevails when men happen to meet, of deciding by the throw of the dice which of them shall pay for some common refreshment they are all to enjoy. Even ladies are so forgetful of the horrible evils that follow in the train of this pernicious practice, and so forgetful, too, of the restraining and elevating influence they should always exert, as to be found publicly betting on the result of a horse race, a boat race, a lacrosse game, or a cricket match. He was quite ready to admit that there is a great deal of gambling done in which the gambling passion is conspicuously absent. But when a well-to-do business man wagers 50 cents on a race, without a single thought of winning, how can he condemn an employe who risks, perhaps, \$30 on the same event, and must steal from his employer in order to pay his wager? Is there in principle any difference between the man who, with a shrug of his shoulders, puts twenty-five cents into a pool, and the man who squanders his own and his wife's fortune, yes, even his children's bread on the great race tracks of England and America? Gambling is to be condemned on various accounts. First, it is unmeasurably selfish. It is an attempt to get another's gold without giving an equivalent therefor. The fact that two men run equal risk doubles the evil and the selfishness. In the second place, it is the acme of covetousness. Gambling is fed by a desire or passion for the possession of another's money. Betting tempts the exercise of the worst passions, and is not merely unworthy of a scholar and a gentleman, but of a rational collier or bargeman. The habit of gambling is intrinsically savage, morally unchristian, and the devil is its father, and with it he maddens and unsettles the mind. In the next place it is the enemy of true manhood. To get money or value without legitimate, honest toil, saps the moral fibre, and unfits a man for a healthy discharge of his honorable and regular duties. In the fourth place, it is unutterably silly, because both cannot win. Fifthly, it is condemned even by the world, whenever the world's moral sense is allowed to find

free and honest expression as witness the expressions, "gambling hell," and "professional gambler." No greater insult can be offered to the man of the world than to call him a professional gambler. Lastly, it has laid its polluting hand on nearly every form of innocent recreation and legitimate, manly sport. Its very name is a lie, because "gamble," is the diminutive of game in the sense of a recreation. Man is so constituted as to need games and amusements, but gambling defiles them. Horse racing, ball playing, boating, lacrosse, etc., have all been besmirched. The very worst evils that have grown out of this feature of the works of the curse, are the attempts to bribe players to sell their consciences, so that some villainous trader on other people's blood may make a few dirty dollars. These men dare not go out and contend in the arena themselves. They are the leeches that are dragging honest sport in the mire, and making what should be a benefit to our youth a temptation and a snare. Those who wish to see young men tempted to sell their souls, may countenance this sort of thing; but those who wish to see a healthy rivalry in athletics, that will tend to the physical development of our young men, should join in a vigorous and determined effort to break the clutch of professional gamblers on athletic events of every character.—Rev. E. D. McLaren, Vancouver.

REFLECTIONS OF A BUSINESS MAN.

Some years ago, I was called to face a serious question. This is how it came to me. It was the last day of the year. I had gone home from business a little earlier than usual, and was now sitting alone in my library. My mind somehow fell to thinking on last things. I thought of the last day of my own personal life, of the last generation of mankind, and now, by a swift turn backward, I reflected on the last words of Christ before He left the world. Instantly these words stood out before me as if printed in large capitals, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." I immediately rose to my feet and walked the room. These words had never so impressed me before. I had been accustomed to raising some objections to Foreign Missions. But here was a plain, yet solemn commandment from the lips of Christ. It seemed as if He were in the room. I cannot describe the strange vividness with which the thought flashed upon me, that it was the main business of the Church, in fact, the one thing for which it existed, to carry the Gospel throughout the world, and to do it as quickly as possible. And I reflected, somewhat uneasily, that I was a member of that Church. Then the question came almost as forcibly as if I had heard a voice, "What does this last commandment mean to you?"

I again sat down, resolving before the New Year should come, to find some light on this question. The light came. Let me state, in a few words, the conclusion which I then reached, and the experiences which have followed.

If I were a young man, of suitable qualifications, I should certainly feel that this word of Christ was a pretty direct message to myself. I am sure I should not dare, in such times as these, to take up any other calling until I had seriously considered whether I ought not to be a foreign missionary. I am convinced that the next fifty years will be the most remarkable in the history of mankind. The nations are being touched with a common life, and brought near together. I believe, with many others, that pagan systems are soon to meet with rapid and far-reaching changes. It looks to me as if no other field of work were so urgent, or so full of promise. If ever God called young men to go to the heathen, I believe He is calling now.

But I am no longer a young man. I am the father of five children, for

whose rearing I am responsible. I have come to the conclusion, that the last commandment of our Lord has a special application to Christian parents. It seems much clearer to me than it used to, that children are to be trained primarily and mainly with reference to the work of the kingdom. I hope that each member of my family will come to feel a sort of personal obligation for the spread of the Gospel in the world. And, if to some bright son or daughter of our household, the Spirit of God shall whisper a special call, wife and I have agreed that we shall not stand in the way. No ambitions for their professional, or social, or pecuniary success, will allow us to hush the voice of the Spirit, and so imperil the very foundations of their Christian character. I am a man in only very moderate circumstances, still, I could not escape the conviction that the last commandment included me. As is, perhaps, usual at such a season of the year, I looked over my habits of expenditure. I saw that I was spending more upon certain luxuries than for the salvation of the world. To my astonishment, I found that I had paid more for a family concert ticket, and two or three times more for an excursion, than I had given during the whole year for the Lord's work in foreign lands. It did not take me long to decide that this was wrong management. I recalled the statement of a distinguished acquaintance of mine, who once said: "I settle the matter at the beginning of the year whether, consistently with other duties, I can take in the regular prayer-meeting of my Church. I cannot possibly stand the strain," he said, "of having this question come up for settlement every week." It seems to me a good rule respecting benevolent gifts. I felt that I could not stand the strain of having the matter come up for fresh settlement every time I heard an appeal. Nor did it seem to me to be quite the manly thing to do so. And so, with the coming of the New Year, I adopted the plan of giving a certain proportion of my income. This I have found to be delightful beyond expression. The vexed question of "how much," is disposed of, and Christian stewardship has come to have a real significance.

I want to add, that through the providence of God, I have been blessed with some means. The last commandment rings in my ears, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel." I cannot directly preach, but yet I am sure that I have a very definite part in this great work. If I cannot go, I can send—and a better man than myself at that. For some time I have been paying all the expenses of a certain foreign missionary. He is my representative on the field. I occasionally hear his work with great interest and delight. Nothing could induce us to surrender the joy of this service. If I continue to be prospered, I am planning to undertake soon the support of two native evangelists in Japan.

I have now told you what the Great Commission means to me. What does it mean to you? "How much owest thou unto my Lord? Sit down quickly, and write."—*Missionary Herald*.

BIBLE STUDY IN THE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE.

The principal thing a young man is to preach, ought to be the principal thing in which he should be taught in preparing him to preach. The preacher of the Gospel is not to originate truth. He is simply to declare truth that has already been furnished to his hand. He is to possess himself of that truth, and let it possess him, and then bring it to the attention of men through his own personality. Scripturalness ever has been, and ever will be, the badge of true Gospel preaching. A preacher's strength lies in the ever-present consciousness that the

truth he is uttering, is the truth of God, and a kindred consciousness in the minds of his hearers.

Bible truth is what the preacher is to preach. Bible truth, then, ought to be taught him pre-eminently. If he is to be, in an eminent sense, a "man of one book," he ought to be a man instructed in an eminent degree in one book. However much he may know of other books, if he does not know the Bible, comprehensively and analytically, he is not equipped as he ought to be for "preaching the Word." Nothing need be omitted from the course as it now stands in our seminaries, but the direct and persistent study of the Bible in the English tongue, supplemented by whatever knowledge of Hebrew or Greek the students may have attained, should be added. No man should be encouraged to present himself for licensure to preach, till he is ready to stand a searching examination in the Bible as a book, and as the original source from which all Christian teaching is derived. Hebrew and Greek exegesis in the very nature of things, must be somewhat microscopical, and have reference to grammatical and literary details, which renders it impossible to go over any great amount of ground in Bible study. A more complete and comprehensive study of the Bible—the whole Bible—is desirable for men who are to draw upon it for the subject matter of their preaching to the people.

Presbyteries ordain young men to "preach the Word," but the one thing about which they do not examine them, to ascertain their knowledge, is this same Word of God. The fact is, that it has not been required of the young man, in his preparation, to acquaint himself thoroughly and familiarly with the entire contents of the entire Word. This has been one of the electives in his course. In what Presbytery was a candidate for ordination ever called upon to give an analysis of the contents of the prophecy of Isaiah, or to analyze and give in outline the history of the planting of the Church, in the Acts? He will be asked about all sorts of "ousions" and "isms" dead and forgotten, and which he ought to be asked about, but he will probably not be asked to give a summary of the contents of Exodus or the Epistle to the Galatians.

What would more Bible study in the seminary do for the young preacher?

1. It would make his theology less scholastic, and more Biblical; less theoretical, and more practical; and so would influence his preaching in the same direction. Biblical theology is the preacher's theology.

2. It would tend to make the subject matter of his sermons more Biblical. The weak spot in the teaching of the times is, that it does not use and honour the Word of God enough. There is a great deal of able preaching nowadays in which the sword of the Spirit does not lie hidden; sermons that delight but do not cleave asunder "joint and marrow;" sermons that the Spirit of the living God cannot use to convert men's souls. God honours most the preaching that most honours His Word. There is many a preacher to-day, lamenting the barrenness of his ministry, who may find the secret of it right here.

3. It would tend to bring preaching down out of the clouds, and more within range of the average hearer. Close contact between the sermon and the Bible keeps the preacher from getting away from his hearers. More Biblical, and less metaphysical preaching is wanted.

4. It will help to tide us over the dangers arising out of the Higher Criticism. Let the young men study the Bible more, as well as study about the Bible, and the two things will hold each other in equilibrium. Scholasticism will not lord it over faith and piety. Let the light be turned on the Bible—the whitest light the age can produce—but let the hearts of the young men be kept always open to and under the radiant light of the Word itself, and it will all come out right eventually. The Bible can stand all the light that can be turned upon it. The young men will be better fitted to preach the more its light radiates upon them.—*Mahoning*.