

to hear, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice, and be glad in it." I dwell upon this duty of church attendance for the reason that many laymen, bewildered and beguiled by the clamorous voices of the times, have come to look upon public worship as one of life's electives—a formality which may be dispensed with by any man who, on Sunday morning, can find something else to do.

And if I were a layman, and made it my business to go to church, I should be in my place on time, and ahead of it. I should feel humiliated if I found myself disturbing the worship of my brethren by stalling up the aisle five minutes after the service had begun. In short, I should have as much respect for the church of God as for an express train.

When once in the pew, I should keep my watch in my pocket. It is true we call the church on earth the church militant, but we need no minutemen in public worship. For twenty men to pull out their watches when the preacher comes forward to announce his text, each one of them closing the case with a click which sounds like the echo of a distant report of a pistol, is not seemly behavior for the house of God. In many cases the watch out is, of course, simply a thoughtless habit, and the men who are guilty of it, like certain other malefactors known to history, know not what they do. But the sound of a dozen closing watches is not fit music for public worship, and the sight of them is not inspiring to the one man who alone sees them all. If laymen have a burning curiosity to know how today's sermon compares in length with the sermon preached a week ago, why should they not club together and buy a large-faced clock, and hang it on the pulpit wall? It was Helen's babies, I believe, who wanted to see the wheels go round.

A man ought not to be avaricious in the house of God either of time or space. If he rents a pew, in one sense it is his own, but in a deeper sense it is the Lord's. To share the pew whenever possible with strangers is, to a full-grown Christian, a privilege and delight. We have heard much of the mistakes of Moses, but there is one mistake he never was guilty of—he never neglected the stranger within the Israelitish gates. I have known laymen who might profitably have gone to school to Moses. It is said that the early settlers of this country formed the practice of sitting each man at the end of his pew in order that he might get out of church without delay in case of attack by the Indians. The Indians are gone, but the habit survives. Indeed, it sometimes seems that some of the Indian has gotten into the man in the pew. For if it is not barbarous for a Christian man to scowl at strangers whose presence leaves less room for his coat, it would be difficult to say what barbarity is. If I were a layman, I should at the very start have a conference with the usher in my aisle, and assure him that, obedient to Paul's injunction, I should be "given to hospitality." Many an usher keeps a list of pewholders whom he labels "cranky." I should, at all hazards, keep off that list. When the dog in the manger gets into a Christian church the usher is the first man to come to grief. If I were a layman I should have two ambitions: I should want the approval of God and—the usher.

And after the sermon I should never leave the church without shaking hands with at least one human being. Shaking hands is a means of grace, and they who neglect it do so at their peril. If a man can engage in Christian worship and then walk down the aisle as though he were the only man in the church, he must be akin to those unfortunate individuals mentioned in the New Testament, the burden of whose cry was: "Let us alone!" If I were a layman I should ponder often this question: "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"—S. S. Times.

WHY I BELIEVE IN THE ATONEMENT.

Rev. Dr. M'Tavish, Deseronto.

At the outset we must try to get a clear idea of the term atonement. Dr. Hodge, an authority of the highest repute, objects to the use of the word atonement in expressing the work of Christ and would use instead the word satisfaction. Inasmuch as the former is the word used in the topic, we shall use it here. There are some who think that Jesus came to earth merely to show a good example—to show men how to live, and to show them how to die. There are others who think that God punished sin in Christ to show His hatred of it, and to preserve a measure of law and order in His moral universe. But by the term atonement we mean that Christ has made a true and proper satisfaction for sin by paying the full price, and by obtaining through His merits the acquittal of the sinner on the ground of justice.

I. We believe in the atonement, and in this view of it, because the Scriptures plainly teach it. "To the law and to the testimony!" What do we find? "Ye were redeemed by a price (I Cor. vi: 20). "Ye were redeemed from your vain conversation, not with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ" (I Peter i: 19). "Christ gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity" (Titus ii: 14). "In Whom ye have redemption through His blood" (Eph. i: 7). "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many." "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was laid upon Him and with His stripes we are healed." "Christ also has suffered for us, the just for the unjust" (I Peter iii: 18). These, and many other passages which might be adduced, clearly establish the view of the atonement that we have taken. We believe in the atonement because God has taught it.

II. We believe in the view of the atonement as presented, because it is the only one which comports with scriptural views of God. "God is love." And because He loves sinners, it is natural that He should desire to save them. Of course he could pardon freely without any atonement being made, but this would be done at the expense of His justice. But God is just as well as loving, and so must demand the penalty when His law is violated. When we accept the view that we have taken, we can understand how God can be just and the justifier of those who believe in Jesus.

III. We believe in the atonement as we have viewed it because it seems to meet the needs of men of all classes and conditions. When this view of it is accepted, its tendency always is to humble the sinner, to make him hate sin, to impress on him the need of a Saviour, to give him a lofty conception of God's character, and to induce him to trust entirely in Christ for salvation. Whatever exalts Christ in the eyes of a sinner, and humbles a sinner in his own eyes, is productive of good. This seems to have ever been the result when this view of the atonement has been earnestly and lovingly presented. Those who reject it, and who regard Christ as coming to the world merely to show an example of righteous living and triumphant dying are apt to fall into dreamy speculations of "sweetness and light." But it is one thing to admire goodness; it is another and very different thing to abhor that which is evil, to cleave to that which is good, to be humble because of sin, and to rest implicitly for salvation on a Saviour's almighty arm. To look upon the death of Christ in any other light than as an atonement for the sins of the world is to take the very heart out of the Gospel, to rob Christianity of its strongest features and to deprive man of one of the highest incentives to holy living. One of the great secrets of Paul's strength of purpose, of his true devotion, of his holy ambition and of his dauntless courage was

that he was able to say, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world."

DIVINE INFLUENCE IN EVERY-DAY LIFE.

In the fine correspondence column in the British Weekly, conducted by Rev. R. J. Campbell, one asks, How far may we expect the Divine influence to be exerted on our behalf in matters of everyday life, especially such matters as relate to the simplest necessities of existence, food, clothing and shelter, and the support of family and home? The writer then goes on to state a hypothetical case:—"A man in a certain line of business is being undersold by unscrupulous rivals and crushed out. His resources are not equal to the strain, and after years of effort—prayerful effort, mind you!—he slips slowly but surely behind. How far may such a man expect Divine influence to act in his favour? God Himself being love, may not this man rely on Him for help, or is he to suffer ruin and shame?"

To the foregoing enquiry, Mr. Campbell makes the following reply:

"One cannot help suspecting that the experience here described is being lived at the moment, perhaps by our correspondent himself. Most certainly the spiritual man is entitled to claim the protection and guidance of God in everything great and small. The life of faith is the victorious life, but by faith should not be understood setting up some purely external desire, and firmly believing that God will grant it. Rather it is that attitude of mind and heart which assumes the guidance of God in everything, and knows that come what may, all will be well with the righteous man. By all being well I do not, of course, mean success as the world counts it. Imagine how it would be with righteousness if you could, count with mathematical certainty upon integrity bringing riches, and depravity bringing indigence or misfortune. In the long run, of course, it must be so, or God would not be just; but it needs more than this life to square the account. The life of faith, then, is the life lived by the man who determines to do right, whatever comes, and to trust to God to bring him through. If you, sir, are such a man you may rely upon it that though you may have to work hard all your life, and remain poor, God's 'well done' within your heart will be no mere fancy. He will keep you and yours from being overwhelmed by the world you are facing so bravely in His great name."

Notice has been received by several Presbyteries from Winnipeg Presbytery notifying them of their application to have Rev. E. B. Chestnut, a Baptist minister, taken into the Presbyterian ministry. Rev. Mr. Chestnut was originally a Presbyterian and pastor of the Haynes-avenue church. Then he joined the Baptists. There was some irregularity, and he found himself once more a Presbyterian. He went back to the Baptists again, however, and is now anxious to return. Mr. Chestnut appears to be of too mercurial temperament for the staid atmosphere of Presbyterianism; but if the General Assembly should decide in granting the Winnipeg application it should be on the condition suggested by Hamilton Presbytery—a probation of at least two years. Certainly his frequent changes do not commend his present request for favorable consideration.

Ex-Presidential candidate William J. Bryan, who is a good Presbyterian, has been making a stirring missionary address at the U. S. General Assembly at Winona.