

The Last of the Christians.

I had been travelling in Northern Europe, amid the snows and pine forests of Russia and Finland, and had gone south through Sweden to Denmark. From the shores of Denmark I could see the faint outline of the Swedish coast across the blue waters of the Baltic. It was spring-time, and the great beech forests for which Denmark is celebrated had just burst into leaf, and were clothed with the tender green of foliage transpierced with sunshine, and presenting a spectacle of exceeding loveliness. Not far from one of these forests a great and busy city was spread out by the sea. The roofs and the steeples of the churches rose high above the picturesque mass of its houses, while the streets were crowded with a gay and pleasure-loving people. I fear from what I heard that not a few of the churches were like the beautiful empty perfume bottles one sometimes sees, from which all the fragrance has long since departed. Socialism and scepticism were rife among the masses of the city whose alienation from religion in all its forms was only too notorious. But there remained in the city one man in whom even the sceptics and socialists believed—a quiet, gentle man, who said little, but did much for the relief of the poor, the suffering, and distressed. They called him 'the last of the Christians.' As I expressed a desire to become acquainted with him, the friends with whom I was staying arranged for an interview. He was a rich man, living in the neighborhood of the city in the utmost plainness and simplicity, who had converted his mansion, surrounded by pleasant gardens, into a home for persons recovering from illness. Only such as could not afford to pay for their board and lodging were received, and these were housed, fed and nursed free of charge, the owner of the mansion living among them, eating at the same table with them, and ministering to their physical and spiritual wants with the utmost kindness, as if, indeed, he were a servant in the establishment rather than the master of the house. My friend told me that his liberality to the poor in the city was so great that none who needed help were ever refused. His whole means, and all his time and his strength, were consecrated to this beautiful service for others. It may be imagined that I looked at him with peculiar interest. He was a man of about forty years of age, slight in build, with an intelligent, kind, serious aspect, gentle in manner, rather reticent, but when drawn into conversation, brightened with sympathetic feeling. He was entirely free from all pride and affectation. No hedges seemed to grow around him, no barriers in the way of intercourse with his fellow-men. I looked round his roomy house. The hall was full of the hats and coats of the patients who were enjoying their evening meal in the dining room, whose windows were stocked with plants, and opened on the pleasant lawn. The patients seemed to be men and women of the so-called humbler classes, and an air of quiet enjoyment pervaded the place, which made it difficult to believe that the guests were people recovering from illness. Some little children were among them, and received a considerable share of loving attention. There was a harmonium in the room, and

at evening prayers the place was crowded with a company of people whose looks expressed their sense of freedom from care and worry, and their appreciation of the peaceful repose of this Christian home. I noticed that the master of the house went about among them in the quiet, business-like way in which a gardener attends to his plants, as he gently moves along when he is watering them in a greenhouse. There was no hurry or flurry—just wise and needful ministrations, and a busy, watchful attention to every want.

The next day I had a long talk with this remarkable man, and tried to ascertain what were the Scripture passages in the Bible which most deeply influenced him. I found that they were the Gospel narratives describing the life of our Lord and his practical teachings. He pointed out with serious emphasis the words, 'Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things I say?' and the precept, 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.' As we read together these and other similar sentences from the Master's lips, I felt I touched the spring which fed the beautiful life-service I beheld. So this was the man the sceptics and socialists called 'the last of the Christians.' Thus by this name did they unwittingly acknowledge the grace and purity of the religion they rejected. Thus did they express their judgment as to the character and worth of the mass of religious profession by which they were surrounded, their sense of the fact that it had lost its truth and reality; thus did they confess, however, that the Spirit of Christ had not wholly left the world, that there was still one in their midst who possessed and exemplified it. 'The last of the Christians!' Was he the last? Of course not, but these men called him so. What did they see, and what did they fail to see, to lead them to give this man such a name? In the churches they saw well-dressed people and heard good words; but here they saw a plain man doing good deeds. Here was the clear shining of a Christian life. This is what is wanted: more genuine followers of Jesus Christ, of the power of whose great example we read: 'the life was the light of men.' In this age of profession and preaching, of books and churches, what is most of all needed for the enlightenment and Christianization of an unbelieving and alienated world is just 'living epistles known and read of all men.'—'Regions Beyond.'

Northfield Summer Conferences and Bible School.

SEVEN GATHERINGS SCHEDULED FOR
1904.

Twenty-three years of Conferences has seen the little assembly of God's people who met at Northfield, first in 1880, steadily develop into an interminable series of religious gatherings, of which seven are to be held this summer. Already the advance inquiries concerning Conference dates and speakers promise an unusually large attendance. As in past years the Northfield management have thrown open the Northfield Seminary buildings and arranged for other accommodations at 'Camp Northfield,' and 'The Northfield,' a neatly appointed hotel open the entire season, and in addition, several hundred tents will be located on the school campus. Reduced railway rates have

been secured and a graduated scale of living expenses is maintained so that none may be debarred from sharing the helpful teaching of Northfield. Further details of this will be furnished by A. G. Moody, who has charge of the business end of the Northfield work. Following is a list of the separate Conferences and their speakers:

Student Conference, July 1 to 20, inclusive. Mr. John R. Mott will preside, with Mr. O. G. Frantz in charge of the music. The speakers thus far secured are: Mr. Robert E. Speer, the Rev. Johnston Ross, England, the Rev. Charles Cuthbert Hall, D.D., Prof. R. A. Falconer, and George Sherwood Eddy, India.

Northfield Summer Bible School, July 1 to 29 inclusive. The purpose of this school is to provide longer and more consecutive courses in Bible study than can be obtained at the Conferences. No tuition fees are charged.

Young Women's Conference, July 12 to 19 inclusive. Meetings are held mornings and evenings, the afternoons being set aside for social times and recreation. Among the speakers already announced are: The Rev. J. R. Miller, D.D., Mr. Robert E. Speer, the Rev. G. Campbell Morgan, D.D., Dr. Wilton Merle Smith, Miss Margaret M. Slattery, Mrs. Margaret Sangster, Mrs. W. A. Montgomery, Mrs. Margaret Bottome.

Summer School for Women's Missionary Societies, July 12 to 19, inclusive. This is an interdenominational Conference of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions for the United States and Canada. Among the speakers who will be present at this Conference are: Dr. Cline, Mr. Robert E. Speer, Mrs. W. A. Montgomery, Rochester, Dr. Gamewell, China, Miss Ellen Stone, Mrs. Margaret Sangster.

Summer School for Sunday School Workers, July 16 to 25, inclusive. This Conference is planned with the idea of studying intelligently the problems confronting Sunday Schools, of systematizing the work and equipping the workers. A partial schedule of the speakers includes: The Rev. G. Campbell Morgan, D.D., Miss Margaret M. Slattery, Miss Marion Thomas, Mr. E. P. St. John, Miss Florence H. Darnell, Mrs. J. W. Barnes, Mrs. M. G. Kennedy, Mr. Marion Lawrence.

General Conference of Christian Workers, July 29 to August 14, inclusive. Mr. W. R. Moody will preside. The music of the Conference will be under the direction of Mr. George C. Stebbins, and Mr. Lewis S. Chafer. Speakers expected are: Prebendary Webb Penloe, London, the Rev. G. Campbell Morgan, D.D., the Rev. Cleland B. McAfee, the Rev. Howard W. Pope, the Rev. Len G. Broughton.

Post Conference Addresses, August 15 to September 12, inclusive. To be delivered by Prebendary Webb-Penloe and others.

Beyond.

Never a word is said
But it trembles in the air,
And the truant voice has sped
To vibrate everywhere;
And perhaps far off in eternal years
The echo may ring upon our ears.

Never are kind acts done,
To wipe the weeping eyes,
But, like flashes of the sun,
They signal to the skies;
And up above the angels read
How we have helped the sorer need.

Never a day is given
But it tones the after-years,
And it carries up to heaven
Its sunshine or its tears:
While the to-morrows stand and wait
The silent mutes by the outer gate.

There is no end to the sky,
And the stars are everywhere;
And time is eternity,
And the here is over there;
For the common deeds of the common day
Are ringing bells in the far away.
—Henry Burton, in 'Temperance Record.'