Christian Citizenship.

Preached before the N. B. E. Association by Rev. L. M. Weeks, and published by request of Association.

"Render, therefore, unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's."—Matt. 22: 21.

Christianity identifies a man with all the relations of life. At no threshold are we permitted to stand and declare to the religion of Jesus: "Thus far shalt thou come and no further; here shall thy proud steps be stayed." It claims divine sanction for placing everywhere a thought of justice, of righteousness, and of truth.

If a man were a good servant, master, husband, father or citizen before yielding himself to the Lord Jesus, he is a better man in all these relations after that sublime moment. At the very least he is actuated by different and better motives. Henceforth he feels that the most unimportant action of the daily life must maintain a relation to the glory of God, and much more the greater and more public actions. Christianity rather than taking hold of a man to draw him away from the home and society, leaves him there; but leaves him with a new thought, new desire, new motive, new love,—"the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." Hence the Quebec Trappist monk rising at 1 o'clock in the morning, performing religious exercises, going forth to his work at 8, taking his first and only meal at 14, and, in passing his brother monks, uttering but one sentence, "Remember death;" nor the life of the nun shut away from the world by high walls and iron bars, is neither the ideal Christian life nor the realization of the thought of the Christ in the text.

Every Christian holds relations reaching out in two distinct and opposite directions—Godward and Stateward. And it is to the obligations and responsibilities consequent upon these relations that I would now hold your thought.

Without doing violence to the proper interpretation of the text, the word "God" may be allowed to stand for the church of God, and "Cæsar" for the State. "Render therefore unto the church the things which belong to the church; and unto the State the things that belong to the State."

1. *It is only deserved loyalty to the church that her membership do her work under her authority.* In vain do we search the inspired records to find that a part of her membership must or even may perform a part of her work independent of the church. Here every Christian finds play for his best endeavors and the consecration of his highest powers. Here old and young, female and male, learned and unlearned, may unite in one divinely strong and life-long effort for the elevation to the lofty virtues of evangelical morality the lost ones in the East, and lost in the West, and lost at our own doors. In this organization we may mingle our prayers and tears, and from her sacred precincts should go out influences which shall touch and bless the antipodes.

Turning away from all human societies, here both sexes and all classes of the membership may heartily join in that grand song of unswerving loyalty to the society of Christ's own founding:

"I love Thy church, O God:
Her walls before Thee stand
Dear as the apple of Thine eye,
And graven on Thy hand.

For *her* my tears shall fall,
For *her* my prayers ascend;
To *her* my toils and cares be given,
Till cares and toils shall end."

2. *The Gospel ministry should receive the honor and support which God requires.* But we fear there are churches in this Association which would install a pastor, shirk the payment of his salary so far as they can, dominate and discourage him, and then allow the union as pastor and people to be severed with about as much carefulness and prayerfulness as would be exercised in the dismission of a common laborer from a day's work. Think of it, brother delegates, and see if in this regard we are rendering unto God the things which belong to God.

3. *The Christian press deserves support.* It is a great and grand agent for good. Adverting to our own denominational paper, it gives the best and purest Christian thought for the family and the church, ably sustains the doctrines of the Bible, gives religious intelligence which sends the heart heavenward thrilled with new interest and joy, and thus assists the Christian parent in rendering—returning—to God that which has been placed in our hands, stamped with His image and superscription—the child soul. Yet how many Baptist families have secular papers and even the *Herald*, *Family Herald* and *Star*, coming week by week into the home and hastily devoured while the religious paper, if taken, is laid aside with but a cursory examination, and in far too many cases is not taken at all.

Oh! if such parents could only return their children to God as the man did the talent to his master—in just the condition it was when bestowed—it would not seem so terrible; but these can never be, the child will become through our care or carelessness either better or worse. Parents, if these papers and all such literature had sufficient brilliancy to light a fire, I would rather a thousand times put them and the money they cost, if need be, in the stove than that any star which God has put in the family to shine forever in His kingdom should be extinguished in eternity's night. Let us see to it on our return home that the *Fireside* is taken to a hotter fireside than the publishers here intended; and that all such papers as the *Star* have their light extinguished in the blackness of the stove-pipe.

But you say, Your subscription is paid and don't expire till the end of the year. Well, granted. But if I have bought poison for my family, is it not better to lose my money and throw the poison away? But while we grant the poison, there is also, you say, good nutritious food—sermons and all that. Now, to my mind this is worse than if they contained no sermons at all. Illustration: A few months ago in Dorchester, a number of fine hunting dogs were killed. How? By a good piece of bread and butter with a little poison on,—not a tenth as much poison as nutritious food. And probably the cause argued that with so much good and so little bad, not much harm could come. But harm did come. And as with the physical, so with the intellectual and spiritual. In the literature I have characterized, the sermon and Sunday column excite my suspicion. *Here* is the deceptive element. The fish would not take the hook except for the bait, nor the dog the poison except for the bread; nor many a Christian family the literature I am speaking of only that the sermon is there.

But you are not convinced that these love and murder stories are poisonous. Well, let us see. The other night, in the dark, a Halifax newspaper man went into the pantry for something to eat. In a short time he declared he was poisoned. How did he know? By the symptoms developed. And it transpired that he had eaten a patty containing rough-on-rats. And in this Association scores upon scores of young men and women, members of the churches, have but little relish for the worship and service of God. Why? The mind and heart are poisoned. How? By the literature I am denouncing. But, in our own paper and Book Room you have nutritious food without intellectual and moral Paris-green and rough-on-rats. In addition to his denominational organ, every Baptist should take, if he can, two good secular papers—one on each side in politics, to keep him well-balanced.

4. *Baptists should not be bound to any political party.* Our Saviour and Lord not only refused to unite Himself with a party, but even to decide one question in national politics. And the first churches followed in His steps.

I firmly believe that along this line a peril of unusual seriousness threatens Christianity in our day. Instead of looking forth, "fair as the moon and clear as the sun," the church is lagging, lagging, while party politics is rapidly advancing to an inglorious triumph over right and righteousness.

Look at a few facts which may clearly open up this thought. Religious society and civil society are profoundly distinct, and must ever remain so. Civil government exists for the protection of the rights of its citizens, and also to secure to all the greatest possible sum of well-being, with the least possible evil. *But it cannot cross the threshold of religious conscience.* It should not interfere in questions of doctrine. And to unite the two societies, or to subordinate the one to the other, is to press the dominant society beyond its natural functions and rob the other of its God-given rights. But the premier of Quebec has placed himself in the latter pitiable and unenviable position on the marriage question. There is a conflict between the ecclesiastical law of the church of Rome and the law of Canada. The case in point is that of ex-priest Martin, who left the church of Rome on the other side of the water, married, and came over to Quebec. They have two children. They were married by a Protestant. Now, Canadian law recognizes them as married. But, according to Roman Catholic law, a priest cannot get married,—no other priest will perform the ceremony for him, and if a Protestant minister officiate, the priest is still recognized as a priest, and unmarried; his wife is not his *wife*, and his children are base-born. Here, then, Canadian law, which recognizes Protestant and Catholic marriages as *equally* legal, and Catholic law, which declares all Protestant marriages to be *illegal*, conflict. And in this conflict the Quebec premier publicly admits, I understand, that, as a ruler of the State who is a Roman Catholic, he must put himself on the side of the church, thus governing the State by the church.

But brother delegates, I humbly submit that Mr. Mercier would better realize the desire of our Lord by persistently keeping church and State separate.

Yet if he is bound to bring them together and control the State by the church, he had better prove to the country that it is unscriptural for priests to be married; that the church is to control marriages, and that marriage is a sacrament of the church.

When this is accomplished, Protestants may not feel so badly in being robbed of their rights by a church whose antagonism to the doctrines of the Bible is equalled only by her antagonism to the liberties and rights of those outside her membership.

Baptists cannot render into the State and Cæsar the things which respectively belong to them by allying themselves with a party led by such a man. We can never afford to forget, brethren, that loyalty to the State is as much of God as loyalty to the church. And Canada with her almost infinite resources of developed and undeveloped wealth, and her national boundaries, more extensive than the United States, is yet not large enough nor wealthy enough to contain a political party or even a man of the Mercier sort.

Another thought: Rum is a foe to the highest interests of the State. But what treatment does this vital question receive at the hands of party men? The estimates of public expenditure by the Federal government for 1889 were about fifty million dollars. Now, a part of this is received from duty on goods coming from other lands. And this duty is the *main* question dividing the two great political parties. One party declares that we should have only a revenue tariff, leaving such industries as cotton factories and sugar refineries to contend with their lines of goods coming in on this tariff. The other, that we should have a protective tariff,—one which would in some measure protect these industries.

But we submit that no Baptist can afford to waste his physical and financial, his mental and moral powers over this comparatively unimportant subject while the almost infinitely more important liquor question—a business costing this Dominion probably three times the whole public expenditure and ten times the difference in the tariffs—is practically relegated to the platforms of the temperance organizations.

Oh this rum business! This curse of all curses! How it blights as it touches the head, the heart, the home, society and the soul! Yet, brother delegates, Baptists will stand close on one side of the fence, liquor dealers close on the other side and they will smile benignly on each other as they clasp hands and together lift their party candidate, who all the while was standing on the fence, into political power.

I tell you, if Baptists were to stand away from the fence and cry: "Who is on the Lord's side,—the side of happy homes, fair prospects, true manhood,—let him come unto us," there would be, on the part of others, such a gathering about such a standard that politicians would look so ridiculously lonely on the fence they would climb down, some on one side and some on the other. Then in Parliament there would be still two parties, but they would not occupy their time contending about a few dollars in revenue,—on the one hand would be the representatives of the best and highest interests of the State and on the other hand the representatives of—the saloon.

But just here a question may be raised in some minds, Do I mean that Baptists should unite with the Third party, so called? Well, I have thought this matter somewhat carefully. And I am convinced that Baptists, in rendering unto the nation and the Lord the things which belong to them, have no need whatever of temperance, political, or any such organizations or parties. Well aware I am that this is a step in advance of popular feeling and thought. And in the presence of those who have given their lives to such parties, and in the presence of gray hairs, it may seem audacious in me to take such a position as this. I do it merely because I am convinced of the soundness of the position. With all the strength of my nature I believe that the church of the living God in the majesty of her divine authority is all sufficient to control her members in head and heart, in voice and vote. If *she* cannot, what *other* organization can?

While the main aim of the Third party is *our* aim—prohibition of the liquor traffic—yet its constitution and methods are not always those to which a Baptist should subscribe. This is so in the United States, and I believe that in Canada it will be so. And we can effect the same object without organic union with this party any more than with any other party. As a denomination we are for prohibition pure and simple. But the fact that other organizations work along the same line or aim at the same object, is no reason why Baptists should nullify the church by leaving her to join them.

And the Equal Rights party individually leaving their churches and banding themselves together, greatly reflect upon their churches, while they only now grasp the principle which we have always tenaciously held and persistently and consistently exemplified. And equal rights is a principle for which Baptists must in the future contend as firmly as ever, *and more unitedly*. For instance, if it is right for the State to take from the public exchequer money for religious purposes, even in behalf of those who have forfeited their liberty to the State, then it is right that all denominations should receive an equitable share. But if it is not right, and we firmly believe it is not, then a great wrong is being continued in this Dominion. We have an illustration in the conduct of the maritime penitentiary at Dorchester.

The government at Ottawa pays the Catholic priest of Dorchester $550, and the Episcopalian rector another $550 per annum for a religious service from each once a week. Now, we hold that the State has no right to pay any church any money for any religious purpose, and that a great wrong is committed by the payment of this money.

But a greater and a graver wrong is being there committed and perpetuated from week to week. What is it? It is this: All other denominations are excluded from holding service there, even at their own expense. And Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist prisoners are *forced* to attend the Episcopalian service. We hold that they never have and never can forfeit their religious conscience to the State, yet our government has taken control of their religious conscience and has grandly fitted up a chapel, at public expense, then bound the religious conscience of the prisoner in chains by forcing him to attend religious services and to hear doctrines in which he has no faith, yea, which he believes to be contrary to God's will and Word. You can better justify the slavery of the South than justify this.

Again, bribery and corruption are deep rooted and wide spread. Of this we have evidence every year,—evidence this year.

Can any Christian citizen read of the Rykert scandal, Middleton scandal, Blair scandal without a blush of shame? Think of the premier of the Province rising in his place in parliament and seriously declaring that it is a well known fact that candidates obtain their seats through bribery.

You cry "Down with such a man!" But wait. Did he state the truth? Yes. Well, now further, do politicians pay out money just for the fun of paying it out? No. Then, why? Because each candidate is well aware that the other candidate will buy the votes. But what makes it possible for either to buy? Why a Christian community, Christian churches, corrupt enough to sell. If the constituencies had enough Christian manhood to stand up and say, when offered a bribe, "No, we cannot. Away with it. The franchise is a sacred privilege and duty. We must exercise it according to the measure of our convictions, not according to the measure of your purse," candidates would rejoice to hold their cash, and in parliament they would feel that they could not stoop to a mean word or act, for this would *misrepresent* a constituency of such honor, integrity and true manhood.

But as it is, you sell your vote and therefore have nothing to say as to how the candidate shall use it. It is his, and he only properly represents you when he sells his vote at the highest price. Who then is to be downed, the professed politician who buys or the professed Christian who sells? Let your own hearts give the reply.

But you say, there may be isolated cases, but bribery is not widespread. How is then that scarcely a constituency is contested by election but a seat is contested in the courts? Bribery is widespread. But we have suffered so long that our moral sensibilities are blunted. (This point was forcibly illustrated, but we leave the illustrations out.)

Brother delegates, I wonder, not that the premier made the statement he did, but in view of the corrupt condition of politics it is matter for regret that he did not move the repeal of the entire election law. We need a law making bribery for election purposes treason against the State, and punishable accordingly.

Standing in the presence of such appalling corruption, how can Baptists ally themselves with either party and yet be true to God and the State? A union with the party constitutes us a partaker of the sin.

But you ask, how can we obtain these desirable ends without joining the different societies which have these ends in view? I am not now dealing with methods, but principles, yet I venture to say we may learn a lesson from the Roman Catholic church. They join no temperance organizations nor political parties, but by *united* effort they get what they want.

We want complete separation of church and State; complete prohibition of the liquor traffic; equal rights for all and a pure ballot. Any methods for effecting these ends can be easily put in operation when with all the heart and mind and soul and strength Baptists grasp the principle of the text and feel that they are under divine tribute to "render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that belong to God."

"De Neahness."

When I first found her I thought she was not quite right in her mind. She was a very black negro, so black that, to quote a common saying of the colored people, "a piece of charcoal would make a white mark on her."

After I had visited her several times I was compelled to believe, not only that she was entirely sane, but that my own religious experience was quite elementary.

She was nearly seventy years old, entirely blind and entirely destitute. She had buried eleven children, and was dependent on the only child that survived, a boy of fifteen years, for all her living. Her cabin was one which a thrifty New England farmer would be ashamed to use as a hen-house, and she sat alone in the dark, sometimes for days together.

No, not alone. That was a mistake. I do not remember how it came about, but one day, as I was speaking to her about her poverty and distress, she said: "I sit heah in de da'k all day, but it seems to me dat a great shinin' light do fill my soul. An' God says to me, 'Twel not be ver' long befo' yo' be wid Me in glory.' De neahness ob Him den almost pains me. I feel, I feel Him in de da'k. An' say, 'Good God, lub me truly well, for I am dy servant.' And He draw ver' neah."

One day I prayed with her. She said, as she rose from her knees, "Yo' must know God. It seems like yo' hab de neahness."

"What do you mean by 'the neahness?'" I asked.

"De soul ob God touch mine truly," she said, and was very quiet for a long time.

I was at work in my study one day, when word came for me to go and see Aunt Rachel. A great calamity had befallen her. I hastened to her cabin. Her boy had been brought home that morning dead. While he was cleaning out an old well a piece of the brick curb had fallen in upon him and killed him instantly.

Aunt Rachel was quite calm. "He was de las' one," she said as she groped with her blind hands to feel her boy's face. "De las' one! O Lawd, draw neah me now! For I shall be lonely now widout yo'. I crave the neahness ob yo' soul by mine to give me patience twel de daylight shine from yo' face into mine, dear Lawd!"

Ah, thou despised one of many, lowly on earth, sitting alone with God in the outer darkness, but with the inner light. The tears fall on the page as I write the story. But I doubt not that in the great light of the hereafter I shall see thee very close to the Light of the world, thine eyes open to behold Him, and the nearness of thy soul to His an eternal joy.—*Youth's Companion.*

Going On.

Mrs. Cameron lived a very active, useful, laborious life, and had filled a most important place in her circle. But sickness, which comes to all, came to her, and she was laid aside. No one could do the work she had done, and so it remained undone.

Most pathetic and pitiful was her inquiry: "Why couldn't I go on? why must I be laid aside when there is so much to do, and I would so gladly work?"

Perhaps Milton, in the sonnet "On his Blindness," gave as good an answer to that query as any one has given:

"God doth not need
Either man's work or His own gifts; who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best; His state
Is kingly; thousands at His bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait."

When we have made certain progress in our text-book, or failed to do so, another is put into our hand by the Great Teacher, and we are compelled to spell out its pages, often through our tears. How often can we see no meaning, no coherence, in them. They are but a jumble of unpronounceable jargon, and we stumble and flounder along helpless and hopeless. But the pages must be gone over, and we may find consolation in the assurance: "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

In a recent sermon Bishop Vincent said, in substance, as follows: "When I was in Denver some time ago, Bishop Warren, pointing to some freight cars, said to me: 'There are seven carloads of organ.' A man might have walked up one side of the cars and down the other, and then said: 'Don't tell me there's any music here.' But when the organ was set up with every part in place in the glorious fane for which it was built, and a master-hand swept its keys, what volumes of melody and harmony have I heard from it? We must wait till God has finished His work in us, and then shall we see how all things are for our good."

We may seem to be going backward, losing ground; but we are going on all the same. If He chooses that we shall leave this task unfinished and begin on that, shall we say Him nay?

If he takes *all* work from our hands and bids us sit in idleness, we may even then go on trusting in Him.

When Christ went before Pilate, to the cross, to the tomb, He was still going on. When He "descended into hell," He was still going on. These were but stages in the highway to the throne.

Recollections of Three Days With Miss Alcott.

Being in Boston in the summer of 1883, seeking employment, I happened to meet Miss Alcott in an office in quest of help. She remarked that it was unusual for her to disclose her identity to persons seemingly desirous of entering her service, because she had so often been the victim of those who went to her merely because of their curiosity to see her, and not with any intention of performing the services she required. For some reason she departed from this rule in my case, and I, surprised at thus unexpectedly meeting the great author, exclaimed almost involuntarily, "Are you Jo?" She afterwards told me that this amused her so that she related the circumstance at home.

Not being suited to the domestic service required, I remained but three days in the Alcott homestead, in classic Concord, the home in life of Emerson, the Concord philosopher, of Hawthorne and Thoreau; as well as of Miss Alcott and her father. During this short period I learned from her own lips many interesting facts concerning the life and work of the children's favorite author.

She had hard struggles with fortune before she achieved the first great success of her life in the publication of "Little Women." At one time she went into a family as a servant, where preparations were being made for a dinner party. Among the guests was Wendell Phillips, who was a friend of Bronson Alcott, the father of Louisa. Her kind employer urged her to occupy a seat at the table, so that Mr. Phillips should not discover that poverty had forced her to accept a menial position. But the independent girl refused, and insisted upon performing her duties as usual. Mr. Phillips showed his tact by conversing with his friend's daughter as if nothing unusual had occurred.

The origin of "Little Women" is thus described by the author: I had not previously received large sums for any literary work, say $10 for a story. A publisher said to me, "Write a story about girls." "I know none intimately except my sisters," I replied. "Write about them, then," he said. The story was commenced, and it was agreed in family conclave that it was expedient to introduce into it more romance than really occurred, and also to place it earlier in the lives of the four heroines. Thus "Beth" really died later in life, and Amy's marriage is also antedated. "Jo" herself has never married; so the story of the "Professor" and the "Bhaergarten" is pure myth. Many famous persons, including Hawthorne, have imagined themselves the original of "Laurie."

The story netted $100,000! though it was not at first favorably received by the publisher, and from that time on, as "nothing succeeds like success," Miss Alcott was in constant receipt of letters offering "any price for a story."

A connection of the Longfellow family told me she did not believe the poet had ever received for any single manuscript a remuneration proportional to this.

This great uplift enabled Miss Alcott to do liberal things for her family, indeed she always assumed responsibility in this respect, even before she obtained generous prices for her writings.

None of her family excepting herself have ever achieved more than a very moderate success in business. Miss Alcott's genial sister, Mrs. Pratt (Meg), lived with her during her later years, and relieved her of so many household cares in so able a manner as to suggest a doubt whether the incident of the spoiling of the currant jelly was founded upon fact; but she assured me it was, that she never was a success as a cook. The little cottage where "John" and "Meg" with the children lived, was in Chelsea, a suburb of Boston. Meg's children, "Daisy" and "Denie," though in the story a boy and girl, were in reality two boys, or young men when I saw them. They too have since entered the field of authorship. I was invited to the "den" where their bicycles and other implements of boyish spirit were kept. The walks were covered with German favors and so forth, the "and so forth" including certain reminders of their girl friends, and their mother related with evident relish that she sometimes found similar articles in their pockets.

Prof. Alcott had long been dangerously ill when I went there. Recently a trained English nurse had been employed to care for him, one who had served Charles Dickens and Francis Ridley Havergal in the same capacity. She related to Miss Alcott that she had greatly entertained the invalid novelist by reading to him passages from "Little Women." Miss Alcott was much worn out with anxiety in regard to her father, and had also recently added to her cares by taking to her home Lulu Nieriker, the child of her dead sister May, the "Amy" of the story. Lulu's father is a Swiss, and remained in his native country, whilst Lulu was brought here by a messenger sent by her aunt, in accordance with the request of her mother, who died in Paris about the time of the child's birth.

The walls of the house were hung with Amy's paintings, which vividly recalled the humorous accounts of her artistic efforts, with which "Little Women" abounds. The child naturally desired to be constantly in the society of her gifted aunt, and to receive directly those delightful narratives, which in printed form are scattered broadcast, and eagerly read by even "children of a larger growth."

Miss Alcott's thumb was long paralyzed. This explains why her autographs appear to be written partly in back hand and partly in ordinary writing, and in the latter part of her life she made this a reason for declining requests for autographs. She did little of her later work in Concord, where the atmosphere might be supposed to favor authorship, her best writing having been done in Boston.

She was said by her sister to be partial to solitude, upon which even she does not venture to intrude, although she often received as many as one hundred visits "in a single day."

Many of her delightful characters had no foundation in fact, but were mere creations of her fancy.—*C. M. G.*

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