

PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

"WALK IN WISDOM TOWARD THEM THAT ARE WITHOUT."

Be natural. Be yourselves. Do not try to be somebody else. Do not have a Christian face occasionally masking your own face, a Christian voice taking the place of your own voice, a Christian language besides your own language. Of course, when you speak of the things of Christ, you must use certain words that belong to these things; but they are plain, simple, common words. Do not go out of the way to find others. Do not use too many of the expressions that may be very current among us and that we suppose everybody understands, but that everybody does not understand. Yea, more, to many they even give offence; and in that way, at the very moment when we are doing our best to lead the soul toward God and toward Christ, we are putting hindrances in his way. Be natural. Speak plainly. Christians are often charged with affectation. One says, "They seem to be walking on stilts." But that should not be laid to the account of their religion. Unnaturalness does not come from having too much religion, but from not having enough. The more we have of true faith and true life, the more natural we will be, and the more like Christ we will be. What could be more natural than the ways and words of Christ?

Be true. Be perfectly true. That does not simply mean, do not tell lies. It means, be transparent. Let men be able to see through you, to perceive that there is no guile, that there are no hidden motives, that while you profess to love God more than anything else, you are not loving other things more than God.

Be humble. Christ was so humble that he could say, without our being in the least shocked or even struck by it, "I am meek and lowly in heart." And if he was such, what ought we to be? Be humble under a sense of your sinfulness, under a sense of what you have been, under a sense of what there is in you that needs the constant cleansing of the blood of Christ, and the constant power of the Spirit of God. Be humble under the weight of God's mercies to you; then you will walk softly before others. Do not try to impress them with a sense of your superiority to them; if you do you will miss the mark altogether and make the contrary impression.

Be holy. While I would say, let us avoid anything unnatural, I would say much more loudly, let us avoid the slightest appearance of evil—of tampering with sin. Let us avoid making light of sin, either in our lives or in our conversation. Let us be consistent. This is true Christian eloquence and true Christian influence. Remember what Peter says to wives who have unbelieving husbands. Observe, the advice he gives to the wife is simply to obey her husband: "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the Word, they also may without the Word be won by the conversation"—that is, by the conduct—"of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear" (1 Peter iii. 1, 2).

Thus let it appear, from your conduct, that your religion is not a matter of theory, of emotion, of talk, but a matter of fact. Indeed, if you please, let the very word "religion" alone; it is very seldom we find it in the Bible. But let there be seen in your daily life the flowing of a stream the source of which is in heaven. Let the impression go out from your daily walk and conversation that whatever you do is real, that it is founded and grounded on reality. I read a few days ago about a young man who was converted, and who was asked afterward, "Under whose preaching were you converted?" His reply was: "I was not converted under anybody's preaching; I was converted under my aunt's practising."

Again, if you will walk in wisdom toward them that are without—in the wisdom that cometh from above, that is first pure, then peaceable—

Be happy. Is that a command? It is. The Bible is full of it. "Rejoice." "Rejoice evermore." "Rejoice in the Lord." "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full." Christ spoke thus a few hours before He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." It is a deep joy, then, not inconsistent with suffering. If there is sunshine on your countenance others will believe that "the Lord our God is a sun and shield," and that Christ is "the Light of

the world." But, if we speak to them of that Sun and of that Light and they never see anything but darkness and gloominess in us, if they observe that the clouds or earth are sufficient to obscure the light which we profess to have received from heaven, they will not believe in it.

Be kind. Do not simply love them, but *show* that you love them. Be kind in very deed. Be thoughtful. Show your love to them in action. Not very long ago Mr. Weyland, of the London City Mission, was speaking in a meeting at Paris. He told us an incident with which you are perhaps familiar, and which took place in this town. There was a man, quite an infidel, who was dangerously ill, and a colporteur went to see him. The man would not receive him, and asked him never to come again. The colporteur after a few words left the house; but he noticed that the man was very poor. There seemed to be none of the things necessary to health about his home. What did the colporteur do? He did not go and write an address about charity, but he went to the grocer's and he sent provisions to the man. A little time after he went again. He was well received. The man said, "If you please, sir, was it you who sent those provisions?" "Well, yes, it was; but do not let us talk about that." "It was very kind of you. I treated you with so much discourtesy, and you were so good to me! My unbelieving friends, who profess to love me, have not done anything for me; but here you have sent me these provisions. Please read me something out of your book." He read to him and visited him again and again. Before that man died he was brought to a knowledge of Christ. The work had been begun by an act of kindness.

A little while ago I read an account of what happened to Pastor Funcke, of Bremen, who is well-known in Germany. He went to see a working-man, whom he describes as a tall, strong man, with a red beard, living in a miserable little place up a flight of rickety stairs. The man would not listen to him at all, but flew into a passion, saying, "I don't want to hear anything about your God. I don't believe there is a God." Then, clenching his fist, he said, "This is my god!" and, bringing it down on the table with a thump, he added: "If ever I find you on these premises again I will put my god into your face!" The pastor went away; but a few days later, hearing that the man was out of employment, he busied himself in finding a situation for him.

By and by the man heard of this. He went to him and said, "Is this true, sir, that you took the trouble to find me this employment?" "Why, yes, it is true." "Well," he said, "all Christians are not hypocrites!" That was to him a discovery, it seems. He invited the pastor to his house and listened to him. "And now," says M. Funcke, "he, his wife and children are among the best of my church members and theirs is one of the happiest homes in the parish." Surely this was "walking in wisdom toward them that are without."—*Pastor Theodore Monod, Paris.*

DEALING WITH DOUBTERS.

At the late Presbyterian Council, Dr. McCosh gave some instances of dealing with young men inclined to scepticism that are interesting.

In this country four out of the twelve hundred students who, trained under able Christian instructors, have graduated in Princeton since I became connected with it, have left its walls believing in nothing. Let me give their subsequent career. With the first—an able student—I talked and prayed when he went away. Two years after I heard of him conducting prayer-meetings; a year after he was elected by the College to deliver the Master's Oration, and he came back to give a noble defence of Christianity in the place where his fellow-students had known him as doubting of everything; and he is now a minister of the Gospel. The second was a good student in English literature; and I sent for him, after graduation, talked with him, and asked him to pray with me. He replied that I might pray if I chose; but as for himself, he did not believe in a God to pray to. I simply remarked that he had a pious mother, who was praying for him, and that I should not wonder if, in answer to her prayers, I found him coming back and asking me to pray with him. I gave him a letter which helped him to procure a position in a public office. Two years or so passed away, and I heard nothing of him. But one day I was in a hotel, hundreds of miles away, when a gentleman came up to

me and asked if I was President of Princeton College. Upon my allowing that I was, he said, "But what makes you rear infidels?" I assured him that we did not. He then told me that he had been obliged to listen from day to day in his boarding-house to the most rabid scoffing he had ever listened to. I named the young man at once, and told him that he had not got his infidelity from us. Feeling that he had teased me enough, the gentleman now said: "I may as well tell you the issue. That young man went down to his mother's house to convert her to infidelity, and she *floored* him; and he is now addressing Young Men's Christian Associations and is thinking of the ministry." Some time after he called on me, and, sitting in the same part of my study in which he had refused to pray with me, asked me to guide his devotions. He is now a minister of the Word. A third was led astray by the book "On the Supernatural." I have little opportunity of meeting with him; but I have heard of him within the last few months taking part in a Sunday school and opening it with prayer. The fourth was known in college as having given up all faith. I sent for him, after his graduation, and asked him what profession he meant to follow. He replied, somewhat sorrowfully, that he absolutely did not know what to turn himself to. "A lawyer?" I asked him. But he said he had no taste for it. He would like to be a journalist, he went on to say; but he was afraid of the temptations to which he would thereby be exposed. I then asked him if he would like to be a minister of the Gospel. He sprang from his seat and declared there was nothing that he would like so much; but that he had no faith in anything. He made only one request—that I would allow him to come back another year and study under me as a post-graduate. We parted after we had prayed. He came back the following year, to study higher science and philosophy. He is now an advanced student in a theological seminary.

I have hesitated as to whether I should tell these things in public; but I have a testimony to bear, and I may not have many other opportunities of bearing it.

VIRTUE IN FASHION.

A floating paragraph gives the news that it is "fashionable" at present in New York for young men of fortune to be strictly moral. Deep drinking has "gone out." Debauchery is reckoned "low." "Our best young men," remarks the writer, "are steady and moral."

It seems at first highly ridiculous to think of good morals as a fashionable usage, a feature of the season, like plush sacques, and the new way of waltzing. We shall perhaps see it announced hereafter in the fashion papers that looseness, now strictly confined to pantaloons, is to be totally banished from behaviour; and that it is no longer *comme il faut* to carry a night-key.

Who knows but we shall read that obedience to parents is *de rigueur* in the circles of fashion, and no young man is admitted to the best society unaccompanied by his mother!

But perhaps the notion of good conduct being fashionable is not quite so ridiculous as it seems. Vice has been fashionable; why not virtue?

Vice was in very high fashion for two or three centuries, counting from Francis I., king of France, the first king in modern times who was constantly and notoriously dissolute. His bad example was followed by his successor, and copied by Charles II., of England. It corrupted nearly every court in Europe; and where the court was corrupt, the nobility was likely to be less so.

For at least two hundred years the conspicuous and splendid classes in every leading nation were dissolute and debauched, even down to our own day. In 1750, for example, there was scarcely a virtuous court in Europe; and with the exception of the court of George III., there was none in the present century until Queen Victoria ascended the English throne.

If a young man of fortune behaved like a civilized and intelligent being—i.e., if he was temperate, moral, studious and thoughtful—he was apt to be regarded as wanting in "spirit;" and vast numbers of young men affected debauchery, as well as practised it merely to avoid this reproach.

The ideal young man is, of course, above such unworthy considerations; but then, the ideal young man is—ideal. There are a good many of the other kind—the real, the actual young men, who are proud