

CHURCH PRAYER MEETING.

Heart-Fevers and their Cure.

HEART FEVERS AND THEIR CURE. 1 Tim. 1. 2. - There is such a thing as what one has called "heart-fever." That is what I mean: She was a house mother, with many little children clinging to her; with the house-keeping altogether on her hands; in circumstances too straitened for hired help; with ten thousand duties calling with many voices and in varying keys. This morning it had gone hardly with her. It seemed as though her duties had tumbled in upon her like a kind of chaos. She had been pestered, flurried, worried. The breakfast would not get right that her husband might get off early to his work; the children had been unusually noisy and demanding, and jostling each other as they were making ready for school. It was one of those mornings, gray and chill, which sometimes break in upon the sky inside the home as well as upon the horizon beyond the home. And she had not been peaceful through it all and cool and steady. She had been irritated, petulant, quick with sharp speech to husband and to children in a word, she had been heart feverish; poor woman, assailed so, you could hardly blame her.

But she was a Christian, and knew that hers was neither the Christian mood nor action.

At last things finished themselves—breakfast done, husband gone, children at school, and there was a moment of quiet. She was utterly discouraged. She felt that she had sadly failed. She had been feverishly stirred up toward others. Now, when she came to think about it, she was feverishly stirred up against herself. She opened her Bible to the story of the Master's healing the house matron in Capernaum—Peter's wife's mother, restless and burning with malarial fever. And this was what she came to: "He touched her hand and the fever left her; and she arose and ministered unto them." "Ah," said she, "If I could have had that touch before I began my morning's work, the fever would have left me, and I should have been prepared to minister sweetly and peacefully to my family."

Yes, there is such a thing as a heart-fever. We are restless and flurried and burning inside. A cool and quiet peace has left us.

There are many causes for such heart-fevers—causes as various as our human lives. An unlooked for crowd of duties; some sudden slump of plans you had laid carefully, which you thought were fixed and finished, like a bridge well built across a stream and ready for traffic; fears which will haunt; disciplines that will come; sorrows that will darken; discontents that do harass; envies that will burn a thousand things like these, which every heart sooner or later knows of.

And the results of heart-fever? One result is, it prevents the best ministry and service. "I am always nervous until I get the knife in my hand," a great surgeon said to me. But it was precisely the fact that when he had seized the knife he was no longer nervous; that then he was cool and steady in his heart that made him so splendid a surgeon.

Well, this is but illustration. Everywhere heart-fever prevents the best ministry for the self, for others, Godward, manward.

Our Scripture is Paul's prayer for and benediction upon Timothy. And such a prayer and benediction were specially necessary for Timothy. In a sense we idealize too much the characters who figure in our Bibles. Timothy was naturally and dispositionally subject to heart-fever. He was not one of these strong, self-asserting, naturally cool natures. He was by no means a born pioneer. He was shrinking, dependent, unself-asserting in the dispositional make of him. And he was in a place of exceptional difficulty—in Ephesus, amid flaunting idolatry and superstition, in a place drenched with licentiousness, amid turbulent Christians; and he was away from Paul. He was in just the place to be smitten with heart fever, and so to fail in the best ministry and highest service.

And our Scripture gives the cure for heart-fever—peace. The meaning of the word is significant. The Greek root means "to join;" and our English word "peace" is from an Anglo-Saxon word which also means "to join." That is to say, war has ceased; there are no longer contending parties; things are joined. Analyze this peace a little.

(a) It is peace with God.

(b) It is peace with one's self.

(c) It is peace with one's surroundings. It is

"A peace which suffers and is strong,
Trusts where it cannot see,
Deems not the trial way too long,
But leaves the end with Thee."

Yes, peace—the joining of things in the soul and with outward things and with God—is the cure for heart fever.

How can we get it? Not by strain and struggle; not directly, but indirectly.

Look at our Scripture again that we may learn how we may gain this cure for heart-fever.

(A) By remembering the *grace* of God. Grace is leniency, favour. Our religion does not start first in us toward God, it starts first in God toward us.

(B) By remembering the *mercy* of God. Mercy is the Divine sympathetic compassion.

(C) By remembering through whom this grace and mercy are ministered—from God, *our Father*, and Jesus Christ *our Lord*; the grace and the mercy disclosing themselves and illustrated in and brought close to us in the incarnate God, Jesus Christ.

I am very sure that when heart-fevers burn and agitate, if we will but remember that our Father, God is grace and mercy, and that these are brought to us in Jesus Christ, and then will hold ourselves a little in the vision of Jesus Christ, peace will come, and so our heart-fever shall find its cure.

Christian Endeavor.

PRAYER MEETING TOPIC.—Our Topic for Feb. 18., is "For what does our denomination stand?" It is well to get the pastor to lead this meeting, which will be a grand opportunity for the young people to learn something about the history, polity, and doctrines of our Church. In these days of truckling to Rome, it is well that our young people should know something of the persecution and trial their forefathers underwent in the struggle for freedom and purity of worship.

"The Social Committee and its Work." Since we announced the subject of our post-card symposium, our attention has been called to a little pamphlet, with the above title, emanating from Christian Endeavour headquarters, and prefaced by a few words by Dr. Clark. We have read it through, and are sorry to have to take exception to the greater part of it, being as we believe, contrary to the spirit and purpose of Christian Endeavour work. While fully recognizing the necessity and importance of the social committee, we can not agree with the method of work suggested here; tableaux, costume socials, secular concerts, with these things we believe the Endeavour Society has nothing to do. We deny the proposition that young people *must be amused*; Dr. Cuyler says, "it is the mark of a baby to be everlastingly crying for amusements." Healthful recreation and amusement are good things in their place, but the meeting room of the Christian Endeavour society is not their place. But, it is objected, if we do not supply *harmless* amusement, our young people may go elsewhere and find *harmful* amusement. If you want to keep your young people from harmful amusements, the best and surest method is to get them saved and filled with the Holy Spirit of God, and then you need have no anxiety, And this, in our idea, is the purpose of our work.

We have spoken strongly, because we believe that if there is one thing that will injure the Endeavour movement, it is this mixing of the sacred and secular. We do not think these methods prevail to any great extent in Canada, but it will be necessary to guard against them. In the meantime do not let what we have said interfere with what you wish to put on your post card. We want to hear both sides.