

BUDS AND BLOSSOMS,

AND

Friendly Greetings.

"Israel shall blossom and bud and fill the world with fruit."


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Incense From The Temple Censer.

CHRISTIANS OUT OF THE CHURCH.

 HERE are two kinds of what may be called outside Christians, i. e., disobedient Christians. The first are those who were once members of the church, but who through neglect of their duties and privileges have drifted away from it, and have become careless and indifferent, or they may have taken offence at some person in the Church, perhaps the pastor or some one of the members, and for that reason are to-day outside, and though perhaps not of the world are certainly not of the Church. The other class are those who are secretly but none the less Christians, but who have never united with the Church for some reason or other, and such people frequently have many reasons, at least they fancy they have. Have you fully considered the position you are in? Did it ever occur to you that your persistence in such a course is one of positive disobedience to the express commands of the Word of God? What meaning has this Scripture to you? "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father and the holy angels, and whosoever shall deny me before men him I will deny before my Father and the holy angels."

If you have been a member of a church formerly, but are outside now, does not your position involve a question of no less moment than your own personal honor? Are you keeping the terms of that covenant you made with God and his people years ago? Are you keeping those solemn vows now that you made then? Were they not made *for life*? My brother or sister, can you meet God with such promises unkept? If you love Christ why not show your colors? Is there no church good enough for you? You are not so conceited as that. Why not help some church to be what it ought to be? You can do this better by being an active member of it than you can by practically showing by your example as you are doing that Christians are just as well out of the Church as in it.

An eccentric man visited New York, went to church, and seated himself in the nearest pew. Soon the owner came in, eyed the stranger critically, and then writing "My pew" upon the fly-leaf of a prayer-book, handed the book to the intruder. The man read the message, smiled a beautiful smile, and wrote underneath, "Nice pew. What do you pay for the seat?"

Mr. Spurgeon attains his jubilee on June 19, next and it is proposed to celebrate this event in a suitable and effective manner.

Sermons in Brief.

WITH AND WITHOUT TEXTS, FOR THE SAVED AND UNSAVED.

John iii. 8.—"The wind bloweth where it listeth," &c. The Spirit, like the wind, is (1) invisible in agency; (2) purifying in effects; (3) free where it will manifest itself; (4) variable in working; (5) Divine in regulation.

Prov. xxiv. 4.—"Pleasant riches." Riches to be pleasant must be (1) honestly acquired; (2) properly valued. (3) restrainedly used; (4) generously shared; (5) Divinely blessed.

Isaiah xli. 4.—1. Divine companionship when earthly friends fail. Even to your old age I am He. 2. Divine support when earthly strength fails. Even to hoary hairs will I carry you. Let the young learn that they may outlive their companions, but God will be ever the same; some day their vigor will fail, but the everlasting arms will support even to the end all who trust in Him. Let all learn to fix their hearts on a God whose help is best when other helps fail.

Go and toil in any vineyard,
Do not fear to do and dare;
If you want a field of labour,
You can find it anywhere."

"It is not," says Dr. Arnot, "the devil out of you, but Christ in you, that is the hope of glory."

How easy it is to propose good things, great things! How difficult it is to achieve that which is good and great! When we recognize anew our failure in the line of our noblest endeavors, or of our highest opportunities, we are prompt to feel and to say that this shall never be again. But it *is*—again, and again and yet again.

"The wave is mighty but the spray is weak!
And often thus our great and high resolves,
Grand in their forming as an ocean wave,
Break in the spray of nothing."

It is good to purpose wisely. It is better to perform faithfully.

A vague desire to be better, stronger, holier, will come to nothing. Character is built, like the wall of an edifice, by laying one stone upon another. Lay hold of some one single fault and mend it.

He can never be rich toward God who despises a pennyworth of true piety. Holiness is just the living to the Lord in the least things as well as the greatest; for graces can only be gathered one by one.

"The blood of Jesus Christ His son cleanseth us from all sin."

Said a clergyman in his prayer on Sunday: "Oh Lord, bless the poor, and bless those who would be poor if they were honest." The congregation tittered.