

PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

"ABIDE IN ME."

"Abide in me, the living vine,
That life perennial may be thine.
Except by faith you're joined to me,
Your 'withered' life must fruitless be."

"Abide in me, and I in you,"
What condescension here we view!
Then if His words our hearts retain,
Not one request shall be in vain.

"Abide in Me," thy life, thy light,
Thy source, the vine, still keep in sight
"Thy life and health, and joy and peace
That this sweet bond should never cease.

"Dear as my Father loveth me,
Thus dearly I have loved thee;
His love has been my constant theme,
Let yours to me be still supreme."

"Abide in Me," thy Lord, thy all,
My strength is thine, what'er befall;
My Father then much fruit will see—
The life is mine—the crown's for thee."

"Abide in Me," responds the soul,
"Thy life, Thy truth, this heart control;
Guard thou my every thought with care,
Shall be my earnest, daily prayer."

His wondrous grace and mercy tell,
Who deigns in humble hearts to dwell!
The King whom heavenly hosts adore,
Will up with us this life is o'er.

"Abide in Me," stretch forth thy hand,
Let faith be strong at his command;
That trembling hand he'll grasp and hold
Till we His glorious face behold.

"Abide in Me, and I in you,"
Have peace abounding, ever new,
Meet for the Master's use in life,
Enthroned with him when ends the strife.

Orangeville, Ontario, June 1884.

J. W. SHAW.

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH—A CIVIL INSTITUTION.

The following is from an excellent sermon recently published, by Rev. C. B. Pitblado, of Winnipeg.—"The truth may be stated thus, the institution of the Sabbath is a law of life rest being a necessity of man's nature. It is a law of love—the duty to secure rest for others being a moral obligation. It is a law of Christian culture worship being the type and foretaste of perfect rest for man.

The Sabbath is, no doubt, in its first and highest sense a religious ordinance. It was instituted at the introduction of human life on earth by a positive command of God. The authoritative sanction for its observance is to be found in the Bible, whose precepts for the regulation of man's conduct are always in harmony with the laws of nature—on the side of what is kind, humane, and charitable—and are illuminated with the light of Christian love. The institution of the Sabbath recognizes the fact that man is a worshipper. He is emphatically a religious being, and the highest end that the Sabbath serves is religious rather than secular, and without doubt the religious teacher has a great deal more to do in securing Sabbath observance than the civil magistrate. It is to moral suasion rather than to legislation that we are to look for the efficient instrumentality to make men good citizens and true Christians. In matters of morals and religion moral suasion sows the seed of truth in the soil of men's hearts, and legislation can do little more than fence off the public highways to protect the fields of individual rights from invasion. The civil law ought to go no further than to be a restraint upon wrong doing and a protection to well-doing. And so all Sabbath civil law should be protective rather than coercive in its character. It should protect those who desire to rest from disturbers of the peace. It should protect worshippers against revellers and persecutors. In fact it is this protective idea that underlies all the legislation which secures for us civil and religious liberty. We do not expect to force men to be loyal when we execute laws against treason, but we do expect, by punishing the traitor, to be able in some measure to restrain or prevent rebellion, and it is sheer nonsense for a man to declare that his liberties are interfered with when he is forbidden by law from shooting the "sovereign." Booth shouted "tyranny" when he shot Lincoln. Guiteau cried out "persecution" when he was condemned for assassin-

ation. Think of giving Booth a place among heroes, and Guiteau a place among martyrs—all in the name of liberty! The very thought is sinfully absurd. We do not expect to make men honest by punishing theft, but we do expect, in some measure, to protect the property of citizens against robbery. And it is sheer nonsense for a man who is prevented by law from taking the money out of his neighbour's till to say that this restraint is an unjust or tyrannical interference with his personal freedom. We do not expect to make men religious by any civil legislation. Presbyterians always and emphatically repudiate such an idea. The persecuting principle neither colours their creed nor stains their history. But we do expect to be protected in the enjoyment of our religious rights by the laws of a free country. If every man has a natural and moral right to rest on Sabbath then no man ought to have the legal power to compel him to work. And it is unreasonable for either mammon worshippers or pleasure-seekers to complain of tyranny or persecution because they are restrained by law from forcing men, either through intimidation or bribery, to sell their birth-right. If every man has a moral right to worship on the Sabbath, then no one should have the legal power to molest him on that day in the exercise of his devotions; and it is unreasonable for men who are restrained by law from drowning the voice of Sabbath worship, either by the noise of riot, revel, business, public sports, or religious exhibitions, to complain that their liberty is invaded. Worshipers in a free, Christian country have a right to be protected against all unnecessary interference with their public devotions.

THE UNREASONABLENESS OF THE PEW.

Many a good man in the pulpit is saddened and discouraged by the fault-finding of the pew. This carping of the hearer sometimes extends to almost everything connected with the pastor. His sermons are usually first attacked. They are didactic and uninteresting in matter and cold in delivery. This petulance of speech never takes into consideration the drain made upon the mental resources, by the preparation each week of two discourses, the numerous drafts each week upon his time and sympathies by the multiplicity of matters that require his attention not only among his own flock, but in his relation to the Church at large and to the world. Comparatively few hearers seem to comprehend that the rush and pressure of the present age affect the minister in his sphere of labour quite as much as the occupant of any pew in the scenes of his daily life. It requires time for reading, study, research, meditation away from worldly care and bustle to formulate even one sermon a week, that will meet the demands of this exacting age. But to find a few hours for this preparation-work for a sermon any week is often a problem whose solution puzzles the ingenuity of many a pastor. How much more difficult the question when two sermons must be in readiness for every Sabbath, and several addresses must be delivered during the week. The impossibility of accomplishing such a task has been felt by men of great ability in an age when the exactions of the pew were comparatively gentle, and the quietude of the study was comparatively lengthy and uninterrupted. Bishop Andrews, no weakling in intellect and no idler in the vineyard, was accustomed to say, when speaking of these trials of the ministry: "When I preach twice on Sunday, I have to prate once." Brethren of the pew, be considerate. Your pastor's godly life is his best sermon.—*Pulpit Treasury*.

POSITIVE PREACHING.

The ambassador should understand the nature of the message with which he is intrusted. Without this knowledge he cannot fairly represent the government whose deputy he is, nor intelligently discharge his duties. His knowledge of the subject which he has to present, and it may be defend, should be full, accurate, in accordance with his own views, have not only the assent of his judgment but the consent of his heart. He should be himself an embodiment of his subject. In this way only will he speak with clearness, precision, force and convincing power. The apostles were men of this stamp. They believed and therefore they spoke. Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost was a splendid specimen of the expression of a heartfelt truth. There is no evidence in that sermon of a clouded understanding, nor of a sceptical

faith, nor of half-formed conviction, nor of a qualified statement. Every utterance is clear, bold, decided, charged with fire, sent forth from a burning heart, to make an impress—irresistible, pungent, overwhelming—on hearts that needed these home truths, these positive, all conquering verities of God and of His Christ. Why should preachers in our day address immortal souls in any phraseology except that which conveys a fact that has embedded itself in the inmost recesses of the speaker's heart? Hesitancy in belief begets hesitancy in speech and cannot form the stalwart men that God's own truth is adapted to produce and which Christianity demands. Let the preacher keep his doubts and his speculations, if he has any, to himself, and preach the truth that has possession of his own soul, to his people. The arrow shot from a relaxed bow is forceless and has no piercing power.—*Pulpit Treasury*.

"KEEP UP, CHRISTIANS."

As I was riding along in the south of France one day I saw a pair of fine birds overhead. The driver called out in the French tongue: "Eagles!" Yes; and there was a man below with a gun, who was wistful to get a nearer acquaintance with the eagles; but they did not come down to oblige him. He pointed his rifle at them but his shots did not reach half way, for the royal birds kept above. The higher air is the fit dominion for eagles. Up there is the eagle's playground, where he plays with the callow lightnings. Up above the smoke and clouds he dwells. Keep there, eagles! Keep there! If men can get you within range, they mean no good to you. Keep up, Christians! Keep up in the higher element, resting in Jesus Christ, and do not come down to find a perch for yourself among the trees of philosophy.—*Rev. C. H. Spurgeon*.

PURE WATER FROM THE FOUNTAIN.

Last September, when a few tired toilers left the city for the pathless woods of the north, and encamped far from the haunts of men in the aisles of God's first temples, we drank from a stream which came musically down from the hills, and which was as clear as crystal and cold as if it had just been born in a glacier. We knew it was perfectly pure and uncontaminated. We drank fearlessly, and with the perfection of faith in that water. If we could only have a stream as pure as that at home, what a blessing it would be! There would be no malaria, no typhoid, no organic poison of any kind in the goblet. No one trusts the water of the great lake, brought to the city from the depths two miles beyond the harbour, it is drunk of necessity, but the suspicion that it is contaminated cannot be cleared away by its sparkle in the glass. As for the wells in the suburban villages, they are even more suspicious, and a victim here and there, of typhoid, is traced to their influence. The less the stream has to do with man, the more it wins our confidence. The more man has to do with it, the worse it is—worst of all when he pours it into his foaming vats, or sends it through the serpentine coils of his alembics. It is just so with the water of the River of Life. It is freshest, purest, most invigorating, when dipped from the stream which flows from the eternal hills. All these new attempts to sweeten it, to perfume and spice it, to take the chill off it, and adapt it to depraved digestions, to put a dash of spirits in it, to ferment it in vats, or distill it, are in the direction of bad spiritual health, if not of death. It is a very homely and primitive and "uncultured" act, this of dipping water from the original stream of salvation, and drinking it as it flows; but those who do so have clear eyes, a firm step, and a strong hand. Give us the water as it flows, untouched by man. *Interior*.

FIFTEEN millions of Chinese women, says Rev. Mr. Henry, are now ready to receive instruction. There are now started in Canton and vicinity twenty-five schools for girls. These are taught by pupils from the boarding-schools established by our missionaries. These training-schools are the power for the future of China. Nine-tenths of those educated have become Christians. Every graduate from there can repeat the entire New Testament, Genesis, Exodus, Proverbs, Psalms, and Isaiah; and more than this, they can each give quite a thorough exposition of what they repeat. The Chinese women make earnest and sincere Christians. Much has been done for them in the way of medical treatment.