

Pastor and People.

Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

GOD'S JEWELS.

BY GEO. W. ARMSTRONG.

Mal. iii. 17.

Jewels of the Lord of Host,
Radiant for the crown divine,
Gems of grace, in that great day,
They who serve Me shall be "mine."

As a father spares his sons,
Who, to do his will delight,
So the Lord will spare His own,
They who serve Him day and night.

They who serve with tireless zeal,
Pure in life, in thought, in word,
Strong in faith, in hope, in love,
Make the jewels of the Lord.

As the jewels of this earth,
Need the light to make them shine,
So the jewels of the Lord
Need to bask in light divine.

Make me precious in Thy sight,
Clean and holy, perfect, pure;
Witness give while here below,
Seal the covenant—make it sure.

Let me bear Thy image Lord,
Constant, true and ever bright;
Jewels dim when clouds arise,
Shining only in Thy light.
London, Ont.

THY WILL BE DONE.

"Thy will be done"—carelessly
Fall the words upon the air,
Lightly breathed by the lips of youth,
Bearing nought of praise or prayer.

"Thy will be done"—tremblingly,
Fearing how the blow may fall.
Hopes and idols, O my heart!
Can I bear to lose them all?

"Thy will be done"—trustingly,
Feeling God's great love for me;
Resting sweetly in the faith,
What he wills is best to be.

—Esther A. Clark, in the Golden Rule.

All those who journey soon or late
Must pass within the garden's gate,
Must kneel alone in darkness there,
And battle with some fierce despair.
God pity those who cannot say,
"Not mine, but Thine;" who only pray
"Let this cup pass," and cannot see
The purpose of Gethsemane.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

Content to know that God is great,
And Lord of fish and fowl, of air and sea,
Some little points are misty.
Let them wait.

—Norman Gale.

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DEFICITS IN THE FUNDS: THE CAUSE.—II.

BY R. A. DIX.

In my first paper, I spoke of the seat of power in the church. The truth is that, while the governing bodies do manage certain things which are entirely within their immediate control, and do go through the form of legislating for the whole conduct of the Church's affairs; while they control the expenditure of the corporate funds; the daily life and conduct of the Church as a whole is fashioned, and the line beyond which its supposed ruling bodies shall not go is defined, by the less experienced and more worldly of its members. A number of evil consequences follow. The lines of principle are blurred. The very idea of patient continuance in well-doing is lost. Privilege sinks to duty. Duty becomes a burden. "Thus saith the Lord" is no longer a power. The Church is told to keep "within its own sphere," is told to stand aside from interference with the business of the world; becomes a mere beggar for consideration.

"Ye are the salt of the world; if the salt has lost its savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned?"

Some time ago I heard one of our ministers speak of the then standing of the Church in tones of exultation. I took occasion to question him, saying something to the effect that the reports as to the state of

religion seemed rather discouraging. "Well, yes," he said, in the manner of one discussing a detail, "the tone of spiritual life is rather low; but"—and his tone changed again to exultation—"we have a splendid doctrinal body, sir, a splendid doctrinal body." Faugh! I felt as if I had suddenly been dropped out of the sweet air of the summer evening into a charnel house.

Not that doctrine is to be undervalued. If the editor will allow me, I may have something to say on that subject by and bye. But doctrine will not save the world; and to save the world—to prepare it for the day when He shall come, whose right it is to reign—is the first business of the Church. If the tone of spiritual life is low, it is evidence that the Church is not fulfilling its mission; and it is evidence, also, that it is approaching the state of him from whom was taken away even that which he had.

That temptation of Our Lord in which the devil offered Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, used to puzzle me. An offer of the temporal sovereignty of the earth would be no temptation to the Son of God; or even if we suppose that in some way which he cannot grasp, it would be a temptation to the man Christ Jesus, yet the Son of God knew that it was not in the devil's gift. Where then the temptation? And since it is evident that the devil knew Christ to be the Son of God, how came he to suppose that there was any temptation in such an offer? No; Satan's mistake was, that he was blind to the difference between reformer and Redeemer. He has power over men, especially over those about whom the Angel of the Lord encampeth not, and his offer was an offer to withdraw his opposition to Christ's work if Christ would consent to some compromise tantamount to an acknowledgement of that power.

I trust I shall not shock anyone—I must speak the truth as I see it—when I say that if the practice of too many of our congregation in these days is right, it must follow that Christ should have accepted the offer.

Think a moment. Am I mistaken in supposing that a large percentage of our latter day religion is no more than morality (and a lop-sided morality at that)? If I am not mistaken—and if you have eyes to see and ears to hear, you need not go far afield to be satisfied that I am not—then the Church is ignoring the difference between reformer and Redeemer. Am I mistaken in supposing that the Church is acknowledging the devil's power over men, when it seeks to bring them to its services by the appeals which socials and bazars and fine musical performances and all such side-shows make to the sensuous, pleasure-loving side of human nature? If I am not mistaken—and you need not go afield at all to be satisfied about that—it follows that the Church has accepted the compromise which its Master rejected.

But, say the advocates of these things, these attractions bring people into the Church and afford an opportunity to influence them for good. How the author of such arguments must laugh when he hears them used by good people who do not suspect their origin!

How much good do you do them? I ask the question of those who are about in the business of the world and have a chance to know! And to those who imagine that big congregations are in themselves sufficient evidence of success in the work of the Church, I say, Did you ever read the story of Gideon's army? Do you remember that sermon at Capernaum after which many went back and walked no more with Him? Have you, when glorying in large congregations and large additions to membership, considered the significance of certain facts—the fact, for example, that the effect of a profession of religion on a man's worldly prospects in these days is very different from what it was in Paul's time? Then, heathenism was the mode, now, conventional christianity is the most eminently respectable thing in the world.

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PERSONAL INFLUENCE.

BY J. R.

"None of us liveth to himself."

"Little thinks in the field yon red-cloaked clown
Of thee from the hill-top looking down,
The heifer that lows in the upland farm,
Far heard, lows not thine ear to charm,
The sexton tolling his bell at noon
Deems not that the great Napoleon
Stops his horse, and lists with delight,
Whilst his files sweep round some alpine height,
Nor knowest thou what argument
Thy life to thy neighbor's creed has lent."

—Emerson.

Years ago in a growing town in our own fair land of Canada, a mother was left with a boy to bring up. She was a Christian woman, earnestly desiring her boy should become a good man. He was taught to attend the services of God's House and every Sabbath found him in his class at Sabbath school. His teacher was a young business man, popular and successful. Harry thought there was no one quite so good as his teacher. One day, when Harry was about fourteen, just beginning to rough the world, as all boys do, he and some comrades were standing near one of these traps, that are placed here and there along our streets, to beguile the unwary. Harry's teacher walked up, did not notice the boys, and stepped into the saloon. The boys thought they would just have a peep too. What did they see think you? Harry's teacher and another man, who held a prominent official position in their own congregation, walk up to the bar and unconcernedly, without any appearance of hesitancy or shame, order glasses and drink them down.

A strange feeling came into Harry's heart. His high ideal of Christian manhood as embodied in his teacher was dispelled. He lost there and then the high regard he had felt for his teacher. He could scarcely have told why; but, boy though he was, he felt it was not consistent for any man to be a Sabbath school teacher, and go into a bar-room and take a glass as he had seen his teacher do. From that time Sabbath school lost all its charm, and was soon given up. Harry's desire being to be a sailor a position was secured for him on a steamer.

Thrown among companions who tempted him, and having no strong resolutions against the temptation, he too took the fatal glass into his hands, and drained its contents. If men who were professed Christians could do it and be none the worse why could not he!

Poor Harry was not made with the hard-grained disposition and bodily powers of such men. The fatal draught taken again and again soon told on him, and ere he had fairly entered manhood, or realized any of its hopes, he was laid low and the sentence of death pronounced on him. Christian friends endeavored to brighten these last days, and lead him to the sure foundation upon which he might set his hopes for that future life; but Harry found it hard to believe. It was then he told his story to an interested friend. He said: "That day when I saw my teacher and that other man who I had always been taught was a Christian go into the saloon and drink at the bar, I lost faith in Christianity. Before that I had desired to be a Christian, but after that I gave it all up."

"You know," he said, "I never could enter a saloon or drink a glass without a feeling of shame. I always looked around to see if any one was watching me. These men did not appear to feel it any disgrace. I could not understand how it was possible for them to do it and be Christians." As the days passed and he knew his hours were numbered, he saw his own need of salvation through Christ, but some how he could not lay hold on the truth or believe it for himself.

Harry's teacher for long years gave up work in the Sabbath school, and his face was seldom if ever seen at the weekly prayer-meeting; but as far as I know he never gave up the practice of taking a drink in a bar-room.

He was very prosperous in business and could give liberally to the Church, and always held an official position in the congregation of which he was a member.

We cannot judge but God knows whether his personal influence was such as to lead men towards the Saviour; or to make them lose faith in the Christianity which he professed.

"Everyone of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way."

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TROUBLE AND PRAYER.

BY C. H. WETTERBERG.

But for trouble many a prayer would never have been offered. Trouble has been God's hand leading many a soul to the throne of grace, who would, in all probability, never have gone there without it. Very significant are these words: "Lord, in trouble have they visited thee; they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them" (Isa. xxvi. 16). See that unconverted person, whose early life has been comparatively free from trouble? Good health, pleasant surroundings and a bright flow of material prosperity have combined to make his life the envy of others. Yet he has been prayerless and felt independent of God. But now trouble comes. It is a deeply-cutting trouble. Death invades the household. A fondly loved one is taken away. In the mean time serious thoughts of God and of eternity have been stirring the depths of the heart. The man remembers that it is written that God hears and answers prayers. He prostrates himself before the mercy seat. His wretched soul lifts up its appealing cry to the heart of the great Father. He pleads for mercy and seeks forgiveness. God responds and grants pardon and fills the penitent soul with ecstatic peace. And blacksliders, too, have "poured out a prayer when God's chastening was upon them," and they have returned with joy to their Father's house. Trouble and prayer often go together. But better pray before trouble comes.

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THE SICK CHILDREN.

BY REV. JOSEPH HAMILTON.

We of the human race are the children of God's great family. Not only so, but we are the sick children of the family. Almost every family knows what it is to have a sick child. In such a case, how the strong brothers and sister are softened into pity and solicitude for the little sufferer; how they hang about the cot where the sick child is lying; how eagerly they address themselves to any service that gives promise of relief. And, oh, when the child gets well, what joy there is in that home, and how all the members of the family are drawn into closer and sweeter bonds. And so, we are the sick children in God's family. We are sick with sin, and sorrow, and toil, and care. Our older brothers and sisters are the angels. With more pity and solicitude than ever we have known, these angelic brothers and sisters of ours hover about us in our sickness, ever on the alert with their watchful ministries of mercy, that they may heal the sore wounds and sickness of sin, and see us strong and well again. And what a day of joy and triumph it will be, if ever that day shall come, when all the sick children will indeed be well. There is joy now "in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

Toronto.

The Golden Rule says: Some English Endeavorers have become slave-owners! Hearing of a young Chinese maiden, whose parents were going to sell her as a slave, they gave to the London Missionary Society enough money to buy her, so that she could be trained in Christian liberty. The price of the Chinese girl was £3, 10s.