

The Pastor and People.

Conscience.

There's an old little voice ever speaking, within. That prompts us to duty and warns us from sin.

It is sure to upbraid if we fall but a lie. Nor will it let the least evil pass silently by.

'Tis the voice of the Lord that is whispering thus. Who, knowing our proneness to wander astray, seeks thus to incline us to his laws to obey.

Oh, then, let me listen with reverence and awe To this voice of my God, as my guide and my law.

May conscience and I live together in peace; My awe of my honest companion increase; That may refuse not its bidding to do, Whether it denounces or bids me pursue.

—Rhymer's Worth Remembering.

Devout Young Ministers.

We extract the following from a very admirable address lately delivered to the students of the Theological Seminary at St. John's Wood, London, by the Rev. Samuel Martin, of Westminster:

"It is written in the Acts of the Apostles that on the day of Pentecost there were dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews—devout men. Also that devout men carried Stephen to his burial. It is written of Cornelius that he was a devout man. One of his attendants is called a devout soldier. We read of devout women and devout Greeks, and devout persons at Athens. Ananias is called by Paul a devout man according to the law.

May I commend this devoutness to your serious and earnest attention! May I talk a little of devout speech and devout behaviour! From devout, and sanctimoniousness, and moroseness, and mock seriousness, and morose Lord deliver you! And may He also preserve you from flippancy, and lightness, and frivolity, and unchastened hilarity! You are devotees to Jesus. Vows are upon you. You are consecrated to God for a special service. Then there should be reverential and ceaseless attention to worship and religious meditation, absorption by religious pursuits, self-sacrifice in doing good, seriousness everywhere, and seriousness about every thing. Seriousness! There is enough in ourselves to make us serious if we only know ourselves.

There is more than enough in the world, if we are observant and thoughtful. And how much is there in Christian truth which begets the same chastened state of mind? The seriousness of which we speak is quite consistent with buoyancy of spirit and thorough cheerfulness. No old heads on young shoulders. On young shoulders, young heads. I entreat you, be devout. I do not say put on devoutness as a garment but let devoutness come forth from that which is within you, as a wholesome and unspotted skin from pure blood, and as the colour of true foliage from the vegetable sap.

There is that in your creed which should make you devout. There is depth and there is breadth, and there is height in your religious beliefs, which ought to subdue all irreverence, and secure the utmost devoutness of spirit and behaviour. Your creed is not held by your fingers grasping a book. Your creed is not in your mouth as it recites a form of doctrine. Your creed is in your heart, engrained therein by the living God with His own hand. And what a creed is yours! It is full of gospel. It embraces the reign of law. It is full of facts. It includes many doctrines—some grand and lofty like the overtimes—mountains, others sweet and tender as a fertile valley; some shining as the sun, others glistening as a glow-worm; some speaking with the voice of ocean, others with the voice of singing birds; some doctrines like milk for babes, others like meat for men; some like blocks of marble, others like precious stones.

What a glorious creed is the faith of a Christian! Hold it fast, my young brothers, and hold it over. Then in all times of your tribulation and in all times of your wealth, in the hour of death and in the day of judgment, it will hold you, and will be as a tried and trusty anchor to your soul.

"Be devout. This is the true and proper outcome of your spiritual life. The principles of that life, as I need scarcely remind you, are faith, hope, and love. Each of them exceedingly important, but all of them grave. These graces can all laugh and sing, but there is a seriousness in their very singing and laughter. It is not a light thing to believe in God, and in His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and in the Holy Ghost the Comforter. It is not a light thing to fix our hope in the redeeming God. It is not a light thing to love God and our Saviour, and to love all mankind as brothers. The man who has these principles fairly at work within him will be a devout man—devout in work and in worship, and in intercourse with others. Frequent not these principles. Give them free action, and they will secure in the behaviour all that can be desired.

"Be devout. Devoutness may be expected from your calling. I say calling, for the work to which you are consecrated is a vocation. It is not a profession which you have chosen, but a work and service for which you are elect of God. There is a sense in which you are apostles, God's sent ones, unless you are deceived, and others deceived in you. Are you all called of God? No man can prosper in the ministry who enters upon it as a matter of taste, or as a means of livelihood, or in response to the wishes of kindred and friends. God has, we trust, planted the talents of the ministry in your hearts. God has awakened the desire in your hearts. God has led you step by step to your present position. O, what a frontier to wear! Called by God to be a preacher and a pastor. What a privilege to put upon your raiment—'Ministers, by the will of God.' What a calling! Called to be shepherds of men under the Chief Shepherd, Christ Jesus. Called to be teachers of men, leaders of men, guides of men, preachers to men, spiritual overseers, and, in matters of religion and benevolence, servants to all men. There

is a pressure and weight in such work which ought to make a man devout. Is there any calling like unto it—to be compared with it? A feigned and sham ministry is a contemptible thing. It is wicked, and, as a consequence, wretched. A real ministry from God to man is one of the highest missions with which a creature can be entrusted. A man may look at this sacred burden and not be devout, but no man can lift it and carry it—really lift it and carry it, without being serious—lift it all serious men, most serious—withal prayerful and reverent. Devoutness is your proper raiment—the garment which you ought to wear. Considering your religious profession and calling, it becomes you. Considering your present pursuits and prospects, it becomes you. Nor need you supplement the spiritual raiment by monkish attire, or ascetic habits. The Son of Man came eating and drinking. We students and ministers may live as other men, so far as other men live innocently and harmlessly. But spiritually, we cannot follow the ungodly; we must come out from the ungodly, and not touch the unclean thing. The robe of our behaviour is not made of the same material, or fashioned after the same shape, as the robe of the unbeliever. Devoutness is reasonably expected from you. There are unreasonable expectations from which we would shield you, and against which we protest. But frequent private worship, the reading of the Scriptures for personal profit, converse with fellow-believers, assembling with other Christians in worship, communion with all believers with whom communion is possible, ministering to the spiritual necessities of others, are to be looked for as fruit from a tree, and as a stream from a fountain. And the light created by all this is not to be put under a bushel, it must be allowed to shine forth.

"Be devout. Devoutness will commend you to others, to the confidence and respect of unbelievers, to the sympathy and love of Christ's disciples. But what is of far greater moment, it will keep you in a position to receive continuous spiritual blessings from the redeeming God. With a devout spirit you will see God walking with you and working with you, will hear God speaking to you, and you will be conscious of His hand upon you. Undevotedness is blindness, deafness, paralysis. The undevout man is 'like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness a salt land and not inhabited.' Undevoutness hammers down carved works with axes and breakers. The mere breath of undevoutness makes the fine gold become dross. On the other hand, the devout man shines with divine lustre. His precious things are enshrined in a sanctuary, and he is like a tree planted in rivers of water, which bringeth forth his fruit in his season, whose leaf doth not wither."

In the directions given by Paul to Timothy, we find this advice:—'Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father, and the younger men as brethren. It is in the spirit of these words that I have ventured to give you counsel, and to say to you, 'Be devout men, devout students, devout companions, devout pupils, devout ministers, devout preachers; in the class-room devout, and in the student's room; in the house, temporary or permanent, devout, and in the houses of friends and acquaintance; in the pew devout, and in the pulpit; devout always, and devout everywhere.'"

Threescore and Ten.

That age, when it is reached with a comfortable exemption from earth's trials, is about as happy as any other. When the old frame is literally free from infirmities, and the mind is clear, and faith strong, and temporal wants supplied, and a tranquil pleasure, and the retrospect of life peaceful, and no hopeless grief for the dead or the living of kindred is upon the soul, and there be peace with God and man, there is a condition of things that leaves no room to envy the youth of the middle-age, or the most prosperous of earth, in mid-career of success and honour. It is a period full of ripe experiences, usually also of calm passions, of enlarged charity, or deep humility, and of growing heavenly-mindedness, the reflex of a nearer approach to the better land. And then death generally comes easier to the aged than to others, as ripe fruit is readily plucked, as the worn out labourer soon falls asleep when the day's toil is over. Our Lord says, the old cloth must be put with the old garment, as matching best therewith, and so the old age of the Christians joins in happily with the older eternity. God Himself gives the promise, "With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation, as a reward and favor, and so it is. Happy are they who have reached a serene, peaceful, religious threescore and ten. Let them render thanks to the God of all grace, who has brought them through the wilderness to the Nebo on its border; let them stand there, and look awhile on the goodly land beyond, and then yield up the soul into the hands of a most merciful God and Saviour, and the body to His keeping for the Resurrection of the Just.—Rev. W. H. Lewis D. D., in the Churchman.

Perhaps the largest thank-offering ever made by any individual to the cause of Foreign Missions was the gift of £20,700, or more than \$100,000, sent by Mr. Walter C. Jones, of Manchester, to the Church Missionary Society.

There has been revival meetings of a very hopeful character at Calcutta. The principal gatherings took place in the Government building, St Andrew's Kirk, and recalled the days when the fervor of Dr McKeljohn, the appeals of Dr. Duff, and, more recently, the eloquence of Norman MacLeod filled its spacious galleries and pews.

A Home-rule meeting was held in Glasgow recently. About two thousand people took part in it. The orators on the occasion were Mr. Ferguson, publisher, the Rev. Isaac Nelson, of Belfast, and Mr. Bigger, M. P. Resolutions protesting against the continued incarceration of the Fenian prisoners were carried. A display of a like nature took place simultaneously at Conbridge.

Holding up the Pastor's Hands.

It is both the privilege and duty of church members to hold up the hands of their minister. The strife with sin and Satan has long been waged, and his hands are growing weary. The tide of battle seems sometimes to turn against him, and his heart is growing sad. These hands must be held up, and that fainting heart cheered.

Writing thus the Canadian Baptist goes on to suggest how it may be done:

Hold up his hands by earnest prayer. The responsibility of his work is overwhelming, and sometimes from the very depth of his soul, he addresses his brethren and sisters in the language of the apostle, "Brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified." If he attends meeting after meeting in which no prayer is offered for him, he will rightly conclude that there is but little sympathy with him in his work, and little interest in the success of his labours. But if, on the other hand, he enters a prayer-meeting where one after another sends up to God earnest petitions on his behalf, he is cheered with the thought that God will answer these prayers, and bless his labours to the prosperity of the church and the conversion of sinners. He prays for his people: let them send back benedictions on him. In the meeting for prayer at their family altars, and in their closets, let them pray that his own soul may be refreshed with the gospel which he preaches; that he may reap some precious fruit, when, with weeping, he sows the precious seed; and that he may be encouraged by the warm devotion, the quickened love, and the generous zeal of his people. Christians should pray too fervently for their ministers.

Hold up his hands by a generous support. If the pastor ministers to his people in things spiritual, is it too much to ask of them that they minister to him in things temporal? Never should it be forgotten that "the Lord hath ordained that they that preach the gospel should live of the gospel." If he doubts or accumulates they will soon wear out the patience of his heart, and overtake a spirit that is probably already taxed to the uttermost. It may be that owing to the increased cost of all the necessities of life, the pittance that was paid him a few years ago is quite insufficient for his support now. But whether his salary be large or small, let it be freely and promptly paid, not as a charity, but as a rightful remuneration for earnest work. Both God and men love a cheerful giver, and that minister will be encouraged to yet more energetic and self-denying labours for a people, among whom he lives without any fear or anxiety about his daily bread.

Hold up his hands by hearty co-operation. A faithful minister of Christ is almost certain to make enemies, when he boldly denounces the iniquity that prevails in the world around. If the opposers of the gospel murmur and malign, surely its friends should rally around God's servant, and applaud him for his honest speaking. They are the servants of Christ as well as he, and equally with him must bear the responsibilities of their position. Sometimes a complaint is made that the pastor is lukewarm; may it not be that the ardor of his zeal has been cooled by the indifference of his people? Sometimes the plea is urged that he is not the man for the place; and that the members meeting all the duties that belong to their position? When they invited him to become their pastor, they assumed the position with the promise and hope of their generous and continuous co-operation. Perhaps he is giving at the thought that little fruit attends his labours, if so, he will still trust in God for the spiritual harvest, if he sees his members in the possession of a devout and active spirit. One loving word of encouragement, one warm grasp of friendship, one earnest prayer for prosperity will strengthen his faith and re-enforce his zeal.

Then let the Aarons and Hurs of the churches fill their places! When Moses was faint through long holding up of the hands, the battle still prospered, if only his two chief men came to his assistance. Brethren, hold up the hands of your minister, and both you and he will be blessed?

Church Union.

The promoters of the movement which has resulted in the negotiations now pending between the various Presbyterian bodies appear to be on the point of directing the scheme to a successful issue. The parties interested are the Scotch Church and the Canada Presbyterian, in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces of N.S.A., and the Church of Scotland in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and adjoining Provinces. The movement commenced in 1870, and since that time Committees on Union have been annually appointed by each of the Churches for the investigation of the matters of variance to be proposed as likely to arise at first on the subject of so important a change. Very full has been the discussion of the whole matter, at the various Assemblies and Synods, and through the medium of the denominational press, and the results of it all appears to have been, so far, that minor differences have been such a satisfactory basis obtained, and by the majority of the Presbyterians of the Dominion are now strongly in favour of Union. As far as we can ascertain, the feeling amongst the Presbyterians in Lindsay is very near on a par with those of their brethren east and west. After the satisfactory solution of these little difficulties which cannot but be expected to arise in the sudden suppression of a rivalry which has existed for many years, our people will be ready to join hands over the purely imaginary guilt between them which has hitherto hindered their efforts and weakened their cause.—Victoria Warder.

Mr. Spurgeon has had a wildcat for the Orphanage and Students' College. A gentleman who had only attended the Surrey Tabernacle for a few months has died, and left a legacy of £10,000 to be divided equally between these Institutions.

"Bonds and Mortgages."

To ministers who question whether "bonds and mortgages" should be "dedicated to the Lord," we commend the thought of stern old President Finney. Before offering the prayer of dedication in the new "Council Hall," built for the use of Oberlin College, he alluded to the fact that the building was not paid for, and remarked that he had sometimes thought he would never assist in such a dedication. But it occurred to him that he dedicated himself to the Lord, and yet he was not finished and it would seem that all we have that we can do is to consecrate all we have now; and in like manner to consecrate all improvements as they may hereafter be made.

When we come to reflect upon it, does it not appear that an unwillingness to consecrate the little we possess is at the bottom of a good many of the failures that shadow the heart of Christianity? It is not always possible to build the house of worship that we need and be free from debt. Must we therefore not build at all, but suffer the harvest to rest on the ground, or must we build so small and poorly that only a part of the sowing can be reaped; or may we build largely, according to the necessity, placing ourselves under bonds to make all good out of the increase that the Lord will give? Why, indeed, may we not be as prudent in the Lord's cause as we are in the interest of our material comfort?

But when the temple to be dedicated is that not made with hands,—one's own soul,—how much the more foolish it is to defer the consecrating act because of the love of money, before he offers his life to the God that gave it; that man would escape the entanglements of vice before he invites the indwelling of the holy spirit; and that would throw off the chains of worldly ambition before he avows himself a servant of the Most High.

Whence springs this feeling of reluctance? It is a mistaken feeling certainly, as the mere formulating of it in words makes evident. And yet the sentiment, that only a pure offering is fit to be placed on God's altars, is one that does honor to the human heart. Is there not an error somewhere? Let us reason together.

When we dedicate a church building to the service of God, do we indeed dedicate also the bonds and mortgage that rest upon it? Is that a fair way to state the fact? Certainly not. We consecrate to the Lord all the toil and sacrifice that have been put into the walls and pillars and we pledge ourselves to the future toils and sacrifices which are required in the church debt. For the Master we have done this accomplished work and for Him we are ready to take up this fresh burden. Is there anything imperfect in our gift?

So, likewise, when we consecrate ourselves to the Divine service, what is that that we do? We devote to God all that there is in us of the strength of righteousness, and we pledge ourselves to strive to overcome the burden of our sins. We offer nothing impure; our holiest hopes, our loftiest aspirations, our noblest might—these make up the sacrifice of the contrite heart—and these are pure and acceptable in the sight of God. This fixed resolve for wealth—what do we do with it? We put the power of resolution on the Lord's side, and pray that the unworthy object be replaced by a better one. And we beg that the lusts of the flesh be burned out of us, and the spiritual longings set free in our souls; that our hearts be turned from the things that perish and set upon the eternal realities of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Did Jesus call the righteous or sinners to repentance? Did he go as a physician to them that were whole, or to them that were sick? And what said he, even when upbraiding the cities which received not the Word and lamenting the stubborn blindness of this poor humanity? Did he denounce mankind? Did he cast them off as unworthy? did he command that they rid themselves of all weight of sin, all stain of unrighteousness, before daring to approach Jehovah's throne? No! pitying, sad, seething, he said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."—Heavenly Leader.

Scotch Preaching.

A Review thus writes:—"The Presbyterian Daily Review thus writes:—"The Presbyterian Ministers who come to London have to adjust themselves somewhat to the habits and modes of thought of the people among whom they are. A Presbyterian service in England, even with a Scotch minister, is sometimes very different from what that minister was accustomed to in Scotland. I expected to find in the heart of the Gram pians, therefore, a different style from what one finds in Regent Square. The Church, however, was new as well as the surroundings. All was neat and tasteful, and the choir sang and led the people just as if we were in a metropolis. But I felt vexed at the manner in which the service was conducted. I learned that the regular minister was absent, and that he who officiated was a brother from a distance, but in any case he was a minister of the Free Church, and his people, wherever they are, get the same style of ministrations regularly which we got temporarily. He was a man of ability, for his sermon showed some reading and some thought. He was also, so far as one could judge, a pious man, for he anxiously for the good of the people. But he had, in a very exaggerated form, the fault which many Scotch ministers have. He had never been taught to pray, he had only been taught to preach, and so he preached long wearisome sermons addressed to the Almighty, and gave Him much information and much advice, and many long quotations from His own Word, and the minister daily forgot that he was the mouth-piece of a company of poor sinful creatures seeking from the fulness which is in God what he delights that they should ask for His Son's sake."

An inexpensive way of making indelible ink is to put worn filings of old nails in strong vinegar and when they stand for about ten days. Before using filter the liquid.

Random Reading.

Death to a good man is but passing through a dark outlet, out of one little dusky room of his father's house into another that is fair and large, light and glorious, and divinely entertaining.

What an incentive to holiness, to purity of life and conduct, lies in the fact that the body of a saint is the temple of God! A truer, nobler temple than that which Solomon dedicated by his prayers, Jesus consecrated by His presence!

The coin which we cast into the Lord's treasury is weighed in scales not adjusted to our standard. In the balances of the sanctuary spirit has weight, and a grain of grace is heavier than pounds of gold.

I see the necessity of cultivating with assiduous care the first dawns of religious feelings, and of insisting on practical obedience to God, ever remembering that this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.—Dr Wayland.

We hold to more earth and earthly things by so many more links of thought, if not affection, that it is far harder to keep our view to heaven clear and strong; when this life is so busy, and, therefore, so full of reality to us, another life seems by comparison unreal. This is our condition and its peculiar temptations, but we must endure it and strive to overcome them, for I think we may not try to flee from it.—Dr Arnold.

Sometimes God calls us to put on the armour and go out into battle, or calls us to His vineyards, full of heavy clusters, or His fields white with the day still by the wayside; when the others come back flushed with victory and crowned with the fullness of the harvest, we think there can be nothing for us, but the twilight is radiant with the wings of His angels, bearing to us blessings.—Duff Porter.

The river that runs slow, and creeps by the banks, and bogs, is drawn of every turf of grass to let it pass, leaves into little hollows, and spreads itself in smaller portions and dies in diversion; but when it runs with vigorosity, and a full stream, and breaks down every obstacle, making it even as its own brow, it stays not to be tempted with little vocations, and creep into holes but runs into the sea through full and useful channels. So is a man's prayer; if he moves on the foot of an abated appetite, it wanders into the society of every trifling accident, and stays at the corners of the fancy, and talks with every object it meets, and cannot arrive at heaven; but when it is carried upon the wings of passion and strong desires, a swift motion and the hungry appetite, it passes through all the intermediate regions of clouds, and stays not until it dwells at the foot of the throne, where it rests, and thence sends holy showers of refreshment.—Bishop Taylor.

A Christian can say what no other man can say. He can see consumption wasting his flesh; he can see the hectic flush upon his cheek by the mirror; he can see his own hollow eye; he can feel the pain of death thrusting through his system; he can stand on the last avenue of life; he can stand on the verge of death; he can look down into the vista of the grave; he can defy death, the scalpel, the execution, all forms of human suffering; he can go down the Jordan slope to the grave; he can plunge into Jordan, and as his voice is suffocated by the waves you hear the shout coming from his lips, "Nevortneiss I live." Presently on the other side he emerges from the lethean wave, he puts his feet upon the celestial shores, and stands up, saying:—"I live forever at God's right hand. Glory be to God!"—Bishop Dogget.

The air is full of talk against catechisms, and creeds, and the theology of the past. One might be led to suppose that the loose theological talkers of the world were doing all the good, upholding all the beneficent institutions, and that the men who believe in the gospel out-and-out, in-and-in, were fossils on the shelf. Take out of the past John Calvin, and John Wesley, and Martin Luther, and John Howe, and Richard Cecil, and Jonathan Edwards, of the Scotch Covenanters, and how much of the best part of the world's history would be destroyed! They all believe in creed, whether written or unwritten; adopted the whole or a part; and knew there was a heaven and a hell, and that the only way of escaping the one and getting to the other was through the Lord Jesus Christ, the Almighty and Eternal Son of God. All that the skeptics and loose religious thinkers have done for the Church and the world you can put in a quart jug, and have room left for a full quart besides. While these men pass their time tinkering Christianity, hoping to repair it until it shall be fit for the acceptance of this enlightened age, the plain gospel goes on making its grandest triumphs, building larger Churches and more magnificent universities. If there were not calamity mingled with the force, we should laugh day and night to see these mighty hunters working the Rock of Ages.—Christian at Work.

Doings of Frogs.

Naturalist have not left us without anecdotes of froggy. Dr Roots has had a frog which demotivated itself in the kitchen. Every evening, when the servants went to supper, he peeped out of his hole, as if to reconnoitre, jumped out if all seemed right, basked on the warm bright hearth, and there remained till the family went to bed. A friendship sprang up between frog and an old cat, who shared the fire-side with him, and was solicitous not to be disturbed or incommode. His strange companionship. A writer in the Zoologist states that on one occasion he saw several frogs gather round a window, crawl up the sill, and jump into the room, each in his turn. At a deep into he did not understand what it meant, but on the following morning he found a frog which had accidentally been imprisoned between the window and the blind. The episode became clear enough, the frogs had anxiously clamored up to see a comrade who was in trouble, and were no doubt sorry at being unable to extricate him.—All the Year Round.