

Selected Articles.

ENDEAVOR.

A moaning cry, as the world rolls by Through gloom of cloud and glory of sky, Rings in my ear for ever; And I know not what it profits a man To plough and sow, to study and plan And reap the harvest never.

GOOD LIFE, LONG LIFE.

He liveth long who liveth well; All else is life but flung away; He liveth longest who can tell Of true things truly done each day.

THE FIRST DEATH IN THE HOUSEHOLD

How touching that mournful cry of Job—'Oh that I were as when the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were about me.' The storm sweeps by in its awful power, and what is left for history?

FIRST—THE STRICKEN FLOWER

The years have quietly passed in Shunem. Child laughter fills all the great house with sunny melody; the father renews his youth amid the prattle of his first born; the mother's cup is full of holiest joy.

SECOND—THE BROKEN STORY.

Whose funeral is that in the grave yard to-day? Oh, only some little child. Yet trifter, the death of one child may be the death of a thousand fondest hopes and plans.

feels no weakness, knows no weariness. How she got through that journey she never rightly knew. One thought filled her, and carried her on the only help on earth is with the man of God in Carmel. Give us living love, and no seeking or serving God is ever wearisome. Elisha may have been the last to perceive the one want in the great house, but he is the first to see the swift steps of the soul in trouble.

THIRD—THE USELESS STAFF

The moment the story of death is told the command is given—"Take this staff, Gehazi, and run and lay it upon the face of the child. Lose not one moment saluting any man; straight to the house of mourning."

FOURTH—THE WRESTLING BY THE DEATH-BED.

When Jesus entered the door of Jairus, the mourners ceased their wailing, listened to His word for a moment, and then laughed Him to utter scorn. So even to-day if you speak of the resurrection some laugh at the very thought.

FINALLY.

Mothers, when dread sickness shadows the household, seek not only the physician's remedies, the earnest prayer of the Christian minister, but especially cry to the Father of Fathers. God will never do wrong to a believing soul.

you stand beside them the silent tears fall like precious gems on the grassy sod. Yet by Christian faith your soul is lifted up, and you see them in the Father's bosom, shined in glory, and thus there is not only a living gratitude for, but a personal interest in, Jesus Christ the Resurrection and the Life.

TOO MUCH PREACHING.

(Our contemporary the Presbyterian Witness of Halifax has the following remarks on "too much preaching". There is evidently a good deal of force in what is urged, though we more than doubt if it is quite correct to say that no one who is worth retaining would leave the Presbyterian Church provided such a plan were put in operation.

There is an innovation which we should like to see all over this Christian land; a revolution, we may call it. In our opinion it is much required, and it would produce many very good results. Taking the country as a whole there is not too much preaching in it on any day.

It is impossible for the average minister to prepare two sermons a week, it is just impossible for the average parishioner to receive and remember and appropriate two sermons a day. No man of ordinary observation and experience—no man who has carefully observed his mental processes in the reception and appropriation of truth—has failed to notice that the digestive powers of the mind are limited.

It is too obvious that to a large proportion of hearers the sermon is simply an exercise to be criticized or a performance to be enjoyed. The excitement is sought after, like any other stimulus. The appetite of your religious dyspeptic becomes daily more difficult to satisfy.

The hearers go away from their Sunday sermons and talk about them as coolly as if they had only been to a show. They gorge themselves—many of them preferring three sermons to two. Then they go into their weekly work, and do not look into a book from Monday morning until Saturday night.

One half of the people are greatly overfed while the other half are starving. In some places the rain is so abundant that it floods the ground and prevents healthy vegetation; while elsewhere the land is waste and arid for lack of refreshing showers.

How would it do then to have but one sermon every Sabbath in our churches, and to let our ministers devote the remainder of the day to missionary work if they felt strong enough to try it? There are moral desolations in the

neighborhood of all our congregations where the presence of Christ's messengers is greatly needed. To preach in "stations" or in school houses, or barns or private dwellings, would require no special preparation beyond what was already prepared for the morning service.

The congregation could then devote the afternoon to Sunday School and missionary work. And the evening would be spent in happy christian homes, reading God's word and other books, teaching and training the children, resting, thinking, praying, enjoying cheerful christian converse.

We often quote with some degree of amusement, instances of long sermons and services in other days—when ministers preached and people listened for three or four hours. But our grand children will probably be quite as hard on our habit of exacting too many sermons from our ministers.

There is no way to improve the character and quality of our preaching except by reducing the quantity. The advancing intellectual activity and capacity of the people, demand a better sermon than the fathers were in the habit of preaching—such a sermon as our preachers cannot possibly produce with the present demand for two sermons on a Sunday.

For all practical purposes and results, one sermon on Sunday is better than two. It is all that the average preacher can produce, doing his best, and all that the average hearer can "inwardly digest."

One sermon each Sunday gives the whole Church half a day in which to engage in Sunday school, and missionary work, and a Sunday evening at home—an evening of rest and family communion.

Of course we shall be met with stereotyped questions: "Will not our people go somewhere else to hear preaching if they cannot get the two sermons at our church?" "Will not young people go to worse places on Sunday night if the churches should be shut?"

SHAMEFACEDNESS.

In the young (as I hold in my old-style creed) this sensitiveness, bashfulness, "shamefacedness"—to use again the fine old word—is the beginning of all goodness whatsoever; and those who have not been trained up in that temper will never become true men and women—because they have never been true children.

When a man tells me that he does not care what people think of him, that they cannot shame him, in the first place I do not quite believe him: for his very words make me suspect that he cares, at least, what I think of him; and, in the next place, I do not wish, for his own sake, to believe him.

But if he tells me that prophets and apostles, and the holy and heroic of all ages, never cared for the opinion or the ridicule of their fellow-men, were insensible to shame, provided they were doing right according to their conscience, then I shall answer that he knows nothing about the matter; that he has not honestly read the lives and sayings of these men. I say that the Psalmists—take any one of them, take, as an instance, him who wrote the 119th Psalm—were men, on their own showing, who felt intensely what was said of them; who were intensely sensitive to slander, insult, injustice.

We talk now-a-days of independent patriots. I say that David was one, Isaiah one, Jeremiah one, Ezekiel one. But I say that these four men were specially shamefaced men; men who

felt intensely scorn and rebuke; whose worst dread, perhaps, was lost the scorn and rebuke might be sometimes just; who—as their own writings set forth—dreaded just shame more than death and as much as hell. Nay, it seems in the mind of some of them to be part and parcel of hell itself. Certainly it did so in the mind of another prophet, Daniel. Many, he says, that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Strange, but true. An old Jewish hero's conception of infinite ruin was the same as an old Norseman's—infinite disgrace. Charles Kingsley, in Independent.

DR. BONAR PREACHING.

Ever since the appearance of the "Memoirs of McCheyne, by Horatius Bonar," the name of this writer has been familiar to the Christian world. His sermons, his practical interpretations of Scripture, and above all his hymns are known and loved wherever the English language is spoken.

I had not before seen the preacher, and had not been prepared to find him looking quite so full of years—nearer sixty-five, than sixty, apparently. He is of scarcely more than medium height, and squarely built, with a large and well formed head, bald upon the top. His voice is in the tenor register rather than bass, and is very gentle, sedate, careful, and expressive. He seldom rises into any loud paroxysm of elocution, and if he elevates his tones in the early portion of a sentence, he almost never fails to reach his emphasis by dropping to a lower and softer key, and closing with an appealing intonation.

The hymns, I am sorry to say, were all read from the desk below the pulpit by a very sonorous person—if I understood it correctly, the pastor of the Baptist church usually occupied the building. I always like to hear a man who has the divine art of making good hymns, read them, and I was therefore disappointed in this arrangement. Dr. Bonar read the Fortieth Psalm, indulging here and there in a few words of comment, which were devout and apt, and beyond question calculated to edify all Christians usually denominated Evangelical, except those who have been brought up to regard the word of God as being so much better than the word of man, as to make such an addition however "good," really an adulteration of such a service.

His prayers were simple and child-like, except that a child would not have used so much of the exact language of Scripture; were deeply laden with the confession of sin, and then gladdened with the glow of the promises which center at and culminate in the cross of Christ. There was perhaps no forgetfulness of the myriad wants for which supplication needs perpetually to be made; but the petitions were remarkable rather for the depths of devotion which they revealed in the soul of him who offered them, than for the comprehensiveness with which they besought of the Giver of all good the things requisite and necessary for us.

[The writer of the above is mistaken in one particular. It was the Rev. A. A. Bonar, M.A., of Glasgow, and not Horatius Bonar, of Keiso, who was the author of Memoirs of McCheyne.—Ed. B. A. P.]

The statistics of religion for the United States, just completed at the Census Office, show the total number of Church organizations upon the 1st of June, 1870, to be 72,451; the total number of church edifices to be 68,074; the total church accommodations to be 21,650,562; and the aggregate value of the church property to be \$854,420,581. The statistics of church accommodations for the principal denominations are as follows: Baptist, regular, 8,907,119; Baptist, other, 808,019; Roman Catholic, 1,900,514; Congregational, 1,117,212; Episcopal, 601,051; Lutheran, 607,982; Methodist, 6,628,209; Presbyterian, regular, 2,198,000; Presbyterian, other, 409,844. The value of the church property owned by these denominations is: Baptist, regular, \$69,220,221; Baptist, other, \$2,478,077; Roman Catholic, \$60,985,500; Congregational, 25,000,008; Episcopal, \$80,514,540; Lutheran, \$14,017,747; Methodist, \$63,854,121; Presbyterian, regular, \$47,698,782; Presbyterian, other, \$5,486,524.