

## CHRISTIAN HERALD.

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## Grumblers.

Every church has its grumblers. They are very necessary, from the fact that we always have them. They are the brakes to the wheels to keep the church from going on and converting the world too rapidly, and very powerful brakes they are, too, for they are all the while trying to turn the wheels in the opposite direction.

They are at meeting when the humble preacher occupies the pulpit, to blame the church for not having a better preacher. They are there when the "big gun" discharges his shot over the heads of the congregation, to apply the sermon to the cases of brother A and brother B, and to blame the church generally for not living up to the preaching. They are at the business meeting, but never vote on a question; they are not there to vote, but to go away and talk about the way others voted, and complain at the measures adopted.

One place they never go—to prayer-meeting, and very seldom to Sunday-school; but they are able to do their part at grumbling nobly, because they hear there are but few go to prayer-meeting and that the exercises are not interesting, that the Sunday-school meets at the wrong hour of the day, the songs are too giddy or too slow, the organ is played or there is no organ, and if they were running things, they would go differently.

When they get to heaven (poor souls we hope they may) they will complain because people walk on the golden pavements, because the robes of the saints are all white and lack variety, and because God himself sits on the throne and does not come down and be more sociable.

## The Fruits.

Paul presents in wide contrast, the works of the flesh and the works of the Spirit. While the works of the flesh present an array of sins of darkest die, the works of the Spirit embrace all that is good, holy, lovely, or of good report. Concerning men, the Savior says, "by their fruits shall ye know them;" and John the Baptist re-

flects the same thought when he tells those whom he baptized to "bring forth fruit meet for repentance."

All these present most forcibly that rule of action now so generally recognized, that we are to judge men by their actions. In doing this we may sometimes judge wrongfully, because we may not be able to understand the motives that actuate the doer, yet it is the best rule and the only safe one that can be given.

We stand or fall in this life before our fellow men, in the deeds we perform. This fact should stimulate us to renewed exertions continually to holier, purer lives. In the end we will not be misjudged, for though man may man deceive for a time, the deception must be discovered sooner or later and when discovered will only add to the value of the deceiver.

But should it be possible to pass this life under a deceptive garb, not so in the next; for man will be judged according to his deeds.

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." II Cor. 5:10.

## The Scope of Christian Activity.

How far does the responsibility of a disciple of Jesus extend?

Some say he shall take no part in the affairs of the government. Others say he must not practice law or medicine. He may raise grain, but must sell direct to the consumer or he is a sinner.

His usefulness should also be circumscribed to a narrow routine of daily duty. From what we often see displayed one would conclude that the sum of Christian living is in attending a protracted meeting once in awhile, "saying grace," at the table, slipping a worn half-dollar into the preacher's pocket with the admonition, "See thou tell no man," and occasionally quoting a Proverb to the boys.

Should some one venture the assertion that a school house or a church house is a good thing for a neighborhood, he finds no Scripture for it.

Should it seem to some liberal hearted ones, necessary to have an institution for the blind and deaf and dumb, he can understand that the State looks after all such measures, makes appropriations, and

builds the institutions. Should the taxes be high, it is his prerogative to find fault with the legislators and declare he will never support them again. If on next election, his fiat is not brought to pass, he declares that all this thing of politics is a failure and no Christian should have any thing to do with voting. He would estrange all his brethren that vote, resign all such "worldly practices" over into the hands of fools and knaves, and finally declare that this government is run by thieves and robbers. And that would not be far from the truth could his wish be gratified.

In the business departments of life we find also a great many, of which it is often said, "No Christian should engage in such enterprises."

While there are avocations in themselves wrong, such as the whisky traffic, lotteries and such like, yet by far the greater number, if wrong, are so because of the abuse to which they are liable.

Of the many honorable callings none are entirely free from abuse of some kind. But let it not be forgotten that the abuse of a good calling is not the calling; and that in this abuse it is not the fault of the calling but the man.

There are times and places when some otherwise honorable callings are so prostituted to ignoble purposes that no honorable person will feel free to engage in them. His duty is plain—refuse to engage until a reformation is effected. Even then he has a duty seldom recognized. He is bound to use all means in his power to restore that calling to its proper channel.

Take the trade of a mechanic, the profession of a doctor, or the avocation of a merchant. When it is absolutely necessary for any one engaging in these callings to act dishonestly for the purpose of making a living, he should refuse to "join hands with the wicked." On the other hand he is in duty bound not to patronize or in any way assist those thus engaged.

With this thought in view, it is plain to be seen how that in all the activities of life, honest Christian effort is required. Man can be serving God just as fully at his daily work if done in the name of Christ, as when in prayer.

This solves the question before us. What should a Christian do? What will for him fill out the measure of his whole duty?

He is here for a purpose. That

purpose is to save himself and others. Then the full extent of his responsibility is discharged in the accomplishment of everything and in every department of life where humanity can be raised up and God can be glorified. Without this object in view,—with only self and self's advancement in view—all life in any vocation is, before God, a great and stupendous failure. Some people with the greatest advantages, even in the noon-day of their fortune fail, simply because on looking around they know nothing for which all their labors are given but self.

Others again, in adversity rise, for God is their refuge and strength. And in fields which others fail to enter they succeed simply because theirs is a consecrated effort, the toil is sweet, and the success which crowns their labors sanctifies to them these open fields.

Then, debate not so much the lawfulness or unlawfulness of an enterprise—though this must never be lost sight of—as the spirit with which we engage in any work.

The Lord needs Christian men in the commercial avocations, in the trades and professions, men who by honest endeavor will prove that "this is of God." He wants them at the helm of state, as well as in the Sacred desk and around the bedside.

Then when "we have done all that we can"—think of it—working where we can, we are still unprofitable servants.

## Preach Christ.

The Disciple says some good things on this subject that are worthy of re-production:

We are now in an age, in which there is too much tendency to neglect Christ and him crucified, in sermonizing. In place of the presentation in plain, forcible and earnest teaching, of the great spiritual truths of the Gospel, many pulpit orators of the day are spending their time, wasting their energy, vitiating public taste and secularizing the public ministry by preaching a *melange* of matter, moral perhaps in its tendency, yet lacking the essential and necessary elements of soul-food. Some one has truthfully said, that to be merely a moralist is to be half an infidel. An elaborate and flowery expatiation on humanitarianism, and general morality, day after day is far from performing the incumbent duties of a servant of God. Morality, and philanthropy are excellent soul qualities in their proper provinces; but without Christ, they are nothing in the sight of God; they are