

Converting the Pocket.

It has been universally recognized that there is no more difficult task than to convert a man's pocket. This part of the man seems to be the last which converting grace reaches.

To convert the tongue or the pen, to change the views and sentiments is a comparatively easy work, but to convert the pocket, how great an achievement is this!

The present writer remembers a time when parental authority threatened him with the indignity of having his pockets sewed up, on the ground that he made bad use of them, filling them with all manner of things for which, it was held, pockets were never intended.

There are some grown-up people who would quite deserve to have their pockets sewed up. We do not refer to that large class who have nothing to put into them, and to whom, therefore, the pocket is a useless appendage, but rather to those who have their pockets filled to no purpose. It is difficult to see the good of having one's pockets filled with gold and silver for the mere sake of carrying it about with us, or perhaps that we may gingle it in the audience of the impecunious in order to raise their envy, perchance their scorn, yet this is almost all that some rich (?) people do with their wealth. They do no good with their money; the little or much that they spend they spend upon themselves; they make no home bright nor any heart cheerful; they dry no tears, and heal no wounds with their gold.

We sometimes read in the newspapers of a miser's death; the man had lived in silt and rags, and, when he died, people found hundreds of pounds hid in all manner of odd places. We speak ill of that man; we call him a miser, and we say, poor man, what a defusion! Yet some who read the notice and join in the pity and scorn, are in the same condemnation. They are hoarding up their money in such odd places as banks, heritable securities, companies, and cooperative societies. Perhaps their first ambition was very modest; they would be content, thought, with a hundred pounds, but when that limit was reached it became the starting point of a new departure, and they strove to make the hundred a thousand; and if asked, Why all this striving after wealth? they would have to pause for a reply. It is simply a delusion, an intoxication, worse in some respects than the winecup, cramping and withering up the best instincts of humanity. They are making money for the mere love of making it; and in the indulgence of this vice, they will condescend to tricks and meanness of which the drunkard would be almost ashamed.

We desire to ask whether the whole man has been converted while the pocket remains uninfluenced? Who does not know that there is the most intimate connection between a man's heart and his pocket, responding to each other as the needle to the magnet? It is as true that "where our heart is there our treasure will be," as it is that "where our treasure is there will our heart be also," and until the Gospel has reached the pocket, its converting power is very partially experienced indeed.

Christians are not, as a rule, rich, but there are some rich people amongst them, and there are a great many "well-to-do," for godliness is very good for helping people to moderate success in life; the Christian artisan has usually the highest wages, and the most constant employment; the Christian merchant if he permits himself to be guided by the principles of his religion, is sure of real if not rapid success in business. Of course there are poor as a legacy which our Lord left his church, when he said, "The poor ye have always with you," and the church which has no poor, because it avoids seeking to bring the poor under the influence of the Gospel, or dis-

courages their application for membership, forfeits its right to be called a church of Christ.

We must, therefore, make large allowance for those who can give no money to the cause of Christ, but when we have done so there are many left who can. Amongst those who can, there are, we rejoice to think, some who are giving all they can, and that to schemes worthy of their support; these also we must make allowance for. And after all how many remain who can and do not! These people are making much effort to fill their pockets with gold; they might as well fill them with pebbles from the brook. The boy with his tops and marbles, knife and bits of twine, has his pockets filled to more purpose than they. It would be better that all such persons should have their pockets sewed up, it would at least prevent them adding to the dead weight already deposited, and which is like to help their drowning when the great storm comes. It would be better still to pick a hole in their pocket, so that the gold might run out for if it were scattered on the highway it would do more good than where it is. It would, of course, be best of all if the man could be persuaded to unbutton his pocket, and, dipping his own hand into its depths, furnish forth in cheerful mood a due proportion of God's gifts for God's work.

To induce Christians to give much and cheerfully for the cause of Christ is the task of tasks. What eloquence has been expended! what ingenuity of phrase and argument! what pathos and bathos! Our readers will excuse a brief reference to an humble attempt in this direction which we made in last month's issue of the *Christian Advocate*. We mention it for the purpose of illustrating what has been said above. We set forth in a single modest plea for help in publishing the Gospel in Norway. We did not try to be eloquent, or impressive, or pathetic, but we pointed out in a few words what we regarded as a good channel for Christian giving. It was our first effort in this direction, if our memory is not at fault, and our plea may have failed through lack of the subtle skill of the practised collecting agent. At any rate we have failed, or at least we have not succeeded, as well as we expected and yet perhaps it is premature to say we have failed, for it may be that our friends are but "thinking the matter over" all this while, and, if so, the foregoing remarks may help to bring them to a speedy and, we hope, favorable decision.

We read lately the experience of the editor of a weekly whose circulation must be thousands for our hundreds; he had made an appeal for a thousand sovereigns to aid in a great and good work, and in response he obtained one! Why therefore should we be discouraged; have not we got three, or us say, four sovereigns? that is four sovereigns to evangelize Norway. — *Apostolic Times*.

Take Heed to Their Reading.

We have often sought to impress upon parents and guardians the necessity of giving strict heed to the class of reading in which their children indulge. The seed that is planted is not more sure to produce its fruit than the ideas that are implanted in young minds by the blood and thunder Boys' and Girls' Story papers are to excite to passionate adventure, if not to crime. We are not surprised at the revelation by the *National Baptist*, of the fact that two boys, whose imaginations had been heated by the thrilling recitals of the deeds of highwaymen and pirates, recently started out in a skiff on the Allegheny River, fascinated with the purpose of becoming pirates on that peaceful stream. There are reckless publishers who, for gain, provide this pernicious literature for eager excitable youth. Why should parents encourage them in their conspiracy against the innocence and

purity of their children? — *Illustrated Christian Weekly*.

We have occasion to drop into a news office once in awhile, and thus get some idea of the immense piles of publications, of the sort referred to above, now circulating through the country, and read with avidity by all classes of people, though principally by the poorer and more illiterate. And we have reason to believe that the children of many families which regard themselves as too poor to take a religious paper, at \$2.50 per year, are buying these papers at 10 cents per week; and as a result some Christian parents wonder why their children are not converted, and why the pastor can not interest them. In our judgment one of the most prevalent causes of the failure of the Gospel to reach a certain class of persons — of the complaint of a want of interest in the preaching of the Gospel — is found in the circulation of these poisonous publications, which are producing an unhealthy and destructive influence upon the minds and hearts of the young, causing them to demand "blood-and-thunder," love and adventure, romance and nonsense, instead of the plain, simple and soul-saving truths of the Gospel of Christ. We advise every parent to look well to this thing, and take heed to the reading matter furnished to their children; for, in our judgment, there is death in a large proportion of that which now delights them. — *A. C. Reiter*.

Married Life.

Good counsel from a wife and mother: "I try to make myself and all around me agreeable. It will not do to leave man to himself till he comes to you, to take no pains to attract him or to appear before him with a long face. It is not so difficult as you think, dear child, to behave to a husband so that he shall remain forever in some measure a lover. I am an old woman, but you can still do as you like; a word from you at the right time will not fail of its effect; what need have you to play the suffering virtue? The tear of a loving girl, says an old book, is like a dew-drop on a rose; but that on the cheek of a wife is a drop of poison to her husband. Try to appear cheerful and contented, and your husband will be so; and when you make him happy you will become so, not in appearance, but in reality. The skill required is not so great. Nothing flatters a man so much as the happiness of his wife; he is always proud of himself as the source of it. As soon as you are cheerful you will be lively and alert, and every moment will afford you an opportunity to let fall an agreeable word. Your education, which gives you an immense advantage, will greatly assist you; and your sensibility will become the noblest gift that nature has bestowed on you when it shows itself in affectionate assiduity, and stamps on every action a soft, kind and tender character, instead of wasting itself in secret repinings." — *Selected*.

The setting of a great hope is like the setting of the sun. The brightness of our life is gone, shadows of the evenings fall behind us, and the world seems but a dim reflection of itself — a broader shadow. We look forward to the lonely night, the soul withdraws itself. Then stars arise, and the night is holy.

Those who get through the world without enemies, are commonly of three classes: The supple, the adroit, and phlegmatic. The leaden rule surmounts obstacles by yielding to them; the oiled wheel escapes friction; the cotton sack escapes damage by its impenetrable elasticity. — *Whately*.

The misery of the young man who courts a sparkling fashionable belle, and loses her, is only excelled by the misery of the man who courts her and wins her.

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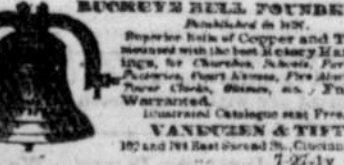
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