

PACIFIC CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"GO YE, THEREFORE, TEACH ALL NATIONS."

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Pacific CHRISTIAN MESSENGER,

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Moody and Sankey in San Francisco.

These eminent evangelists have been in San Francisco about three months. They have succeeded in organizing a good work, for their success is largely to be attributed to the thorough and effective organization of all the earnest Christian workers in this city and Oakland. We would, by no means, intimate that the preaching is without power, for Mr. Moody does preach the Word with great force; and Mr. Sankey sings with beauty and pathos. The work has been greatly assisted by Mr. Stebbins and his wife, also from the East. They are very fine singers. A young man came with them from Chicago, a reformed drunkard, now an evangelist. He is very earnest, and tells his experience in the meetings held in the various parts of the cities. By this means he is enabled to reach a class which could not be reached by the ordinary ministry. Such as, like he formerly was, are in the depths of degrading from strong drink. A great number of this class, and they are numerous in all our large cities, and especially in San Francisco, have been at least temporarily reclaimed. Let us hope they may be saved. I have attended many of these meetings, and participated in the work where opportunity offered. There is very little of human systems taught. The aim seems to be bent on the one purpose of making men and women feel that they are lost without Christ; and that sin is very *sinful*; and the danger of being lost is great. These men are not afraid to warn men of damnation. They speak of the devil as a real being, and a very great and powerful enemy. They talk about hell, as a place, as real as heaven. They magnify the word of God, and tell men to obey it, and trust God's promises, rather than to trust to *moods of feeling*, dreams, etc. They follow the practices common among what is usually termed "Orthodox Churches," as to praying for sinners, and having those who claim to be converted, to relate their experience, which they call "bearing testimony." I observe that when any one gives testimony that they believe and trust in Jesus as their Savior, and declare their determination to follow him, their testimony is received as genuine. While there is much practiced that we do not think warranted by the Word of God, we rejoice, nevertheless, that the fear of the Lord, and the love of the Savior is spreading among the people. We regret, however, to see one tendency, in Mr. Moody's preaching, he

rebukes severely and justly, the churches of our day. He lays much of the blame of the skeptical condition of the people at the feet of ministers, and the chief men in the churches, all of which is true. But coupling this with the entire absence of teaching upon the subject of the duty of new converts toward the churches, except to advise them to join some church, the impression is made that joining church is *not at all necessary*. A great many who have professed a change, have not, and perhaps will not, take membership in any church. The whole chapter of duties, taught in God's word, as to loyalty to the church, is left out. Baptism is treated as *non essential* as a matter of course. The logical consequence is followed more openly than I have ever seen it, in that the whole of that class of duties which may be grouped under the head of "loyalty to the church" is left *untaught*. I say "untaught," for if you ask these men privately, or even publicly, whether one must join some church, you will be told to do so. But the practical effect of not teaching it, is to educate the people *one sided*. We have been accused of educating, in our preaching, overmuch on baptism. I am quite sure there is a lack of it in the work of these men. Still I presume it would be impossible for them to hold the union meetings they do, if they discussed all these questions. The proceed on the basis of a few of the great facts and promises of God's word, and do effect a union of God's people on these. In this I see a promise of a church in the future taking in a larger scope of truth, and thus the greatly desired union of the disciples of Christ may be brought about, on the word, and the word alone.

But while I rejoice in this work, I feel more than ever, that we have a work to do. In the journey across the wilderness, the Lord's people, who are carrying the tabernacle forward to pitch it where the cloud shall hover over, that spot of union; the *laws*, and several other things, have been left behind, and the great Captain has detailed us to bring them up. Let us organize our forces and push on. There is a glorious day for the church just ahead of us. She will soon emerge from the wilderness, God is on our side, if we are on the side of truth and righteousness. Don't get disheartened if God, in his providence, has called you to fight in the thickest of the battle.

J. H. McCOLLOUGH.

—Mr. Joseph N. Prescott, the father of Mrs. Harriet Prescott Spofford and Miss Mary N. Prescott, died January 22, at the residence of his son-in-law, Hon. Richard S. Spofford, in Newburyport, Massachusetts, in his seventy-fourth year. He was a native of New Hampshire, and was the grandson of Judge Newmarch, and grandnephew of Sir William Pepperell. He was among the Pacific coast pioneers of 1849, and was one of the founders of Oregon City, of which he was thrice elected Mayor. In the prime of life he was stricken down by paralysis, which wrecked his usefulness without destroying the courteous, genial nature that survived during a twilight of life lasting over twenty years.

—"Lufe God abufe all, and ynichtbour as yiself," is the inscription yet to be seen upon the front of the house in Edinburgh in which John Knox lived and died.

Texts with a History.

There are two ways of reading the Bible: One way is to go through it blindly and unintelligently, in obedience to the feeling that it is our duty to read it daily. The other, and better way, is to read it from the love of it, with a heartfelt appreciation of its truth and beauty. In this latter way Bible truth becomes a part of our being and our history.

A friend told the writer of this article that he once saw a Bible checked like a tourist's guide-book, the owner of which called his attention to two pencil-marks in Solomon's Song, showing that he had got so far on in reading the volume twice through. He admitted that often he found it dull, but he continued because he knew it was his duty. He was doing "his task of" persistent perusal with not the least possible interest in the chapters over which his eyes were roaming, and apparently with no sense of the connection between truth and life. This may be an extreme case; at any rate, most Christians who feel listless while studying the word of God are not quite so frank in confessing it. Meantime it is soberly asserted that the more advanced believers among the churches are found beyond power of words to express, in their affection for favorite divisions of the Scripture. Their private Bibles would open of themselves at their favorite chapters. There is a quaint story told of a pastor who went in to see his old bed-ridden parishoner, found in her Testament some marks along the page, asked what they could mean. Here was a capital P: "oh! that means *precious*," she said. There was a letter T with the P: "That means *tried and proved*," she continued.

Such experience is far beyond mere story-telling. In the Temple Church of London, in a shadowed aisle to the left of the great altar, is a white marble monument erected to the memory of one whom John Milton called "the chief of learned men reputed in England." John Selden was one of the most extraordinary scholars that Britain has produced. The volumes which he poured forth in an endless stream were filled with research and discrimination. Of one of these—a work on the Law of nature and of Nations—Hallam said it was among the greatest achievements in erudition any Englishman has performed. This most excellent man comes down to our times by his "Table-Talk." Coleridge once remarked about this, as he laid it aside after a thoughtful perusal: "There is more weighty bullion sense in this book than I ever found in the same number of pages of any uninspired writer." To Archbishop Usher, who preached his funeral sermon in the church where he lies now, this learned man Selden said just before he died: "I have surveyed most of the learning that is among the sons of men, but I cannot recollect any passage out of all my books and papers whereon I can rest my soul, save this from the sacred Scriptures: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of

good works."

Would it not be a profitable exercise,—it certainly would be an interesting one,—to gather together the parts of the word of God which have been helpful and dear to individual Christians along the ages? How many histories, for instance, have been poured into the Fifty-first Psalm! John Rogers recited it to himself all the way down to the stake. Oegylampadius, the reformer, panting for his breath, yet persisted in saying verse after verse of it, till he died, with the words still on his lips. The Lady Jane Grey asked the headsman to wait for her a decorous moment in which to say her *Miserere*; then she bound her eyes calmly, and laid her head on the block. So this same dear Psalm was read at his request to Dr. Arnold of Rugby on his death-bed. Thus it seems instinct with a life of its own.

Here would be a fresh and quite safe use to make of Christian biography. Many a volume might be read to profit just with the purpose of ascertaining favorite passages of Scripture which have proved helpful under peculiar exigencies to any believer. Oliver Cromwell once read aloud Philippians iv. 11-13, and then remarked: "There, in the day when my poor child died, this Scripture did go nigh to save my life." The venerable Augustine was converted by Romans xiii. 11-14. One biographer tells us that the poet Cowper was brought to Christ by reading Romans iii. 24. Matthew Henry wrote a record of himself in a diary he kept at about thirteen years of age; "I think it was three years ago that I began to be convinced, hearing a sermon by my father, on Psalm xli. 17. I think it was that by which I was melted; afterwards I began to inquire after Christ."

Even this matter of texts preached from with remarkable results would give the verses interest, if we would look them up. As for example, Deuteronomy xxxii. 35, "Their foot shall slide in due time," which was the text for one of Johnathan Edwards' most famous discourses. In the midst of his words that day the people actually rose up from their pews, so awful was the impression produced by them. Whitefield was once preaching at Exeter, on Psalm xli. 17, "a broken and a contrite heart." He says that after the service a man came up to him with a pocket full of stones, and a big one in his hand, and told him in tears: "Sir I came here to hear you this day with the view to break your head, but by the grace of God you have broken my heart."

But possibly the best exercise of all both for the sake of awaking our interest in particular passages, and of gathering a list of effective verses for actual use, would be that of setting down in a written record all texts which we have found to accomplish permanent good, and do real service for souls. For men and women are very nearly alike, and what has helped one will be likeliest to help another in the same mood or the same exigency. Some of us have been down by the seashore, perhaps, and have noticed the great mass of what seems mere rubbish cast upon the shore. It was all nothing to you, this heap of refuse remnants of ships. But along came an old sailor, and asked you, "Do you see that spar over yonder with a knot of rope around the middle of it? That brought a mother

and her baby ashore last week from a shipwreck." Now you looked again, of course; nay, you went and cut a piece off from the beam to carry home. You could never make that stick commonplace or insignificant hereafter, if you tried. The lives it saved went into its history.

Just so, with many passages of God's inspired word. They may seem all alike to us in our dullness and indifference, until suddenly we discover what they have done. Then many a verse springs out into a marvelous impressiveness and beauty. It has brought some tired Christian ashore from the deep waters of trouble, or delivered him from the wreck of a shattered hope. What did good once will do the same sort of good again.—*S. S. Times.*

Dress at Church.

There are proper dresses for proper times—we do not go to a funeral in cheerful garments, nor to a wedding in *craps* and hat-bands. However we may talk about the indifference of the manner in which we are dressed, a sure instinct tells us that it is not a matter of indifference, and that it is most in accordance with the dictates of sound judgement to comply with those rules which custom has sanctioned. Now, what is the dress suited to the public worship of God? "All of you be clothed with humility," is a very good general answer. This points out the general tone and color of the garment of praise, which befits a Christian in God's house; but more particularly study neatness and eschew finery. Do this, both for your own sake and the sake of others; for your own sake, because what you must aim at is, to forget yourself and think only of God; and how can you forget yourself, if you have just been studiously getting yourself up to be admired, and if your own appearance has been haunting your brain all the morning before the church-bell rang? For the sake of others, because if your appearance is half as striking as you think it, you cannot but interfere with the devotion of your neighbors, by attracting their attention to you. Oh, how utterly pitiable and shocking is any parade of finery in the presence of God! To think that the poor giddy creature, who is setting off her face and figure with ribbons and silk must soon appear before God, naked and bare! Dear young friends when you stand at the looking-glass, think for one moment, of death and judgment.—*Ec.*

—"William, do you know why you are like a donkey?" "Like a donkey?" echoed William, opening his eyes wide. "No, I don't." "Do you give it up?" "I do." "Because your better half is stubbornness itself." "That's not bad. Ha! Ha! I'll give that to my wife when I get home." "My dear," he asked as he sat down to supper, "do you know why I am like a donkey?" He waited a moment expecting his wife to give it up. But she didn't. She looked at him somewhat commiseratingly as she answered, "I suppose because you were born so."

—Laying fowls need bone constantly, as it is largely made up of material which enters into the composition of eggs and shells. Give your fowls plenty of bone-meal if you want good layers; besides, it contains animal matter of great value to fowls when freshly ground.