

SUNDAY READING.

Is there a Hell?—Why Men do not go to Church—Selections from Chicago Sermons.

To an audience composed of almost as many men as women Dr. Calvin S. Black, well, at the Central Church of Christ, spoke the other evening in substance as follows:

Last week the "Tribune" presented to me three questions.

1. Why do fewer men go to church than women?

2. Do you believe in Hell?

3. Is orthodoxy dying out?

They make an interesting trio. To the first a facetious answer might be given—Because more men go to the penitentiary. I am told there are 1,700 men at Joliet and only nineteen women. The answer is not merely facetious, it is philosophical. Men stay away from church because they are worse than women. They are grosser, they lack the fineness of the feminine nature, they are not so holy in tendency. They are kept from religion by the same moral inferiority which carries them to the penitentiary.

The greater liberty which social laws permit men to take accounts, too, for their disregard of a propriety like church-going. A man can dissipate all Saturday night, lie under cover through Sunday, and appear at his office Monday with a head as big as a flour barrel—and nothing is said. But let his female typewriter do the same thing, and he says: "You may go." The result of so much liberty during the week is that by the time Sunday comes around a man's conscience is too sore to go to church, and have it pricked. Let social etiquette, however, bind men to the same rules of social purity it does women, and they will come to church in larger numbers.

Another reason, of course, is business. The whip of competition makes many men drive themselves down by Saturday night. They may be morally clean men but their physical and nervous natures demand Sabbath quietness. To dress up for church would be a task.

The increase of Sunday work is also an important factor. Employments which engage men over Sunday are multiplying. These workers not only stay away but the fact that they are putting the Sabbath on a business use has its effect on others. It hasn't the same holy separateness from other days it has to women, who are more removed from business.

Then there is another kind of man—a sort of so-so man—with a thin veneering of supposed intellectual life—indifferent to everything but himself. He stays at home to read the Sunday newspapers. Its thirty-two pages afford him recreation and make him think he is keeping up with the times.

A great many well-meaning men stay away from church because they happen to be on some committee of one of the benevolent societies. As these societies are increasing the class is growing. The committee usually meets for a few minutes on Sunday. It's just enough to satisfy the conscience of its members. It doesn't take much spiritual food to satisfy some men. They say a bear can live on one good meal a whole winter—and a little committee work goes a long way.

They, moreover, notice their wives, mother, and sisters getting ready every Sunday morning to go to church, and they are apt to reflect about it in their masculine way. The unspoken form of the reflection usually is: "This thing isn't suited to my colossal intellect—my four-square mind. It may do for my wife, or my mother, or my sister, but I'm too strong for that kind of thin soup diet."

At this point the speaker delivered a eulogy on women, in which he said that he regarded it as the highest proof of the divinity of Christ and religion that more women than men attend church. He then took up the second question: "Is there a Hell?"

The Bible says so. I believe it. There at least ought to be. If for no other reason than to give some of the great rascals punishment in the other world who escape it in this. Why, the big soundrels never get punished in this world. It's only the little ones who are sent to the ails and prisons. It isn't only so in Chicago, it's so everywhere. Horace Greeley was once approached for a subscription.

"What's it for?" he asked.

"To found a society to keep people from going to Hell."

"Not a cent."

There are too many people who ought to go there not to believe in it. I do not believe in a material hell, for the simple reason that flesh and blood are things of this life.

Here the speaker sketched the terrible torments of the hell of conscience.

"Is orthodoxy dying out?"

I hope so. The sooner it goes the better. Orthodoxy is a set of formulas gotten up in the past by men who had no more sense than men of to-day. It is a sort of monopoly of dogma. Mental and spiritual monopolies are as bad as other sorts. All progress, every reform, has been made by heterodoxy. Christ was heterodox to the orthodox Jews. Luther and Wesley and so on down—all have been heterodox to the special orthodoxy of their day. The best hope for the future is in continuing to throw off all forms of orthodoxy as rapidly as it can. It is upon true Christianity that spiritual advancement must depend.

REPLY OF DR. LAWRENCE.

Every seat in the Second Baptist Church at Monroe and Morgan streets was occupied last night to hear the reply of the pastor, the Rev. Dr. William M. Lawrence, to the questions propounded by "The Tribune" to the clergymen. Dr. Lawrence said he did not believe in the first place that there was a great disparity between the male and female attendance at church. At least that was not the case in his church. But coming to the question: "Why do not men attend church?" he said the explanation would be found in the fact that men had not the courage of their consciences. Young men coming from Christian homes in the East did not have the courage to stand up against the scoff of unbelievers. They went to church at first openly. The sneers of companions in boarding-houses caused them to steal to church and after a while they abandoned the practice of devotion altogether. A stronger reason would be found in the fact that men are obliged to work too hard during the week. They are not in physical condition to attend religious devotions Sunday.

The Sunday newspaper was also to blame. He was of the opinion that a way could be found to make a Sunday newspaper so as not to conflict with the fourth commandment. But the Sunday newspaper as it existed was the product of the state of things which de-

manded a change. It was a disgraceful and deplorable fact that 20 per cent of those who are employed in Chicago have to work Sunday. He had no doubt that if the question was tested before the Supreme Court of the Nation it would be pronounced unconstitutional. He thought that intermeddling of religious women in matters of Statecraft had something to do with the laxity of men. When women ceased to browbeat they lost their influence over men.

He believed in a place of punishment because he believed in the New Testament, because he believed in good, and because it was a logical deduction from the observation of human life. If there was a place of reward, as the Scripture taught, there must be a place of punishment. A future place of punishment should be preached with all solemnity, not declared as a threat, but as an awful fact. But a belief in God was logically followed by a belief in a future state of punishment.

Most certainly orthodoxy was not on the decline. It was on the increase aggressive and progressive. The impression that it is on the decline arises from the fact that heterodoxy is assertive. Just as crimes receive wide publication while virtues are passed over unnoticed, so the negative in matters relating to religion is always in evidence in the public prints. Orthodoxy is taken for granted and does not receive publication. This was especially the case in this city, where heterodoxy when it asserted itself was made the topic of wide and general discussion, while orthodoxy was passed over with a joke or a sneer.

One of the great reviews of the country had given itself up to the promulgation of heterodoxy—through a spirit of sensationalism perhaps. When Timothy Dwight connected himself with Yale College eighty years ago there was but one communicant among the students. To-day Yale College is the home of orthodoxy. In Harvard College Unitarianism has lost its ascendancy. The Episcopalians, Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians are in the overwhelming majority. The orthodox schools and colleges throughout the land are in a flourishing condition. Heterodoxy has only one college of any note.

DR. THOMAS' VIEW OF REST.

"Rest" was Dr. Hiram W. Thomas' subject at McVicker's.

Rest means enjoyment, contentment, in their higher sense, said Dr. Thomas. Contrary to the general notion, the class of people who get least true rest are those who are raised up in plenty and begin to be supplied with everything they want the moment appetite and tastes awaken in them. They early become pampered beyond the possibility of fresh pleasure. The defect at the bottom of their life is that they do not pay in work for what they get. It takes a Lincoln, a Cass, or a Garfield, tramping over a prairie or along a canal path in search of a higher life, getting knowledge after hungering for it, to achieve that enjoyment which is rest. One must go to the patriot to learn what "rest" means, and to the man who has doubted for illustration of "faith." In the same way those only who have toiled know rest.

The physical activities of this age are in no danger of straining its workers. But the intellectual forces behind need a high rest than they get. This is to be found in the cultivation of the spiritual side of mind. Men must throw off the idea that the burdens of life are altogether on their shoulders, and leave the outcomes of things to the Creator of a energy. In this is rest.

After the service Dr. Thomas stated that he would take a subject next Sunday, "A Religion for Men." He had been struck by "The Sunday Tribune's investigations into 'Why Men Don't Attend Church.'" The article, he said, with its carefully collected data of male and female church attendance, opened up the most remarkably interesting subject of inquiry that had been brought to his attention in a long time. The religious conclusions to be drawn from "The Sunday Tribune's" material would form the text for his study of the subject.

THE WICKED ACTORS.

The Rev. Mr. Goss preached to a large congregation at the Chicago Avenue Church the other night on "The Theatre." He had nothing to say about the theatre as an educator, about the drama from a literary standpoint, nor of the art of the actor. The only question he wished to ask his hearers was: "Does the theatre develop Christian character?" Mr. Goss had no interest in anything which did not tend to develop Christian character, and he was opposed to anything that exerted an influence in the opposite direction.

"It is hard enough to be good," he said, "when you are being paid for it, as I am. Though he could not speak from experience, the pastor still believed himself competent to discuss the question. Was it necessary for a man to be drowned in order for him to be aware that it was dangerous for him to plunge into the sea if he couldn't swim? From what he had learned from reliable sources and judging by results passing under his own observation the influence exerted on society by the theatre was pernicious. He understood that there were several young people in the congregation who were looking forward to adopting a theatrical career. He wished to warn them that there were several reasons why such a course would probably result disastrously with them. It must be that there existed behind the scenes of a theatre a lack of restraint that could not but be most injurious to the moral character of a young man or woman. Then the nature of the actor's duties were such as to exhaust his vitality and nerve force to a degree that speedily drove him to the use of stimulants. He was in danger of becoming a drunkard.

More than this, it was necessary that the actor should be a migratory personage with no fixed habitation, and this everybody knew was, whenever it was found, a fruitful source of loose conduct. When a man got away from home restraints he was sure to yield to temptations. In proof of this was the notorious fact that a few years ago, when commercial travelers made extended trips over large territory, they were regarded as a most reckless and immoral class of people; whereas, since the custom had so changed as to enable them to have homes and families and return to them every Saturday night, the verdict regarding them was wholly different. The pastor could not explain how it was that the theatre had lived and thrived for so many centuries. It had apparently entrenched itself with society like the gambling den, the saloon, and the Sunday paper, which, by the way, did not prove that it was not harmful in its influence.

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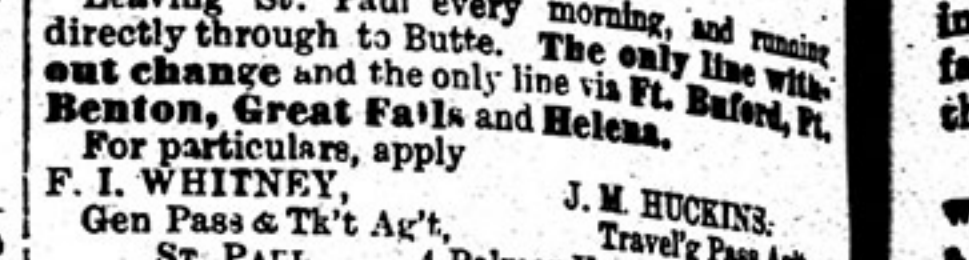
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What Institute is that?

able enquiry of the tourist.

"The Mercer Reformatory, provided the ground of a well informed citizen.

Passing through the front of reformatory proper, I was shown privilege corridors, a bright, airy day containing some dozen cells.

These cells are really tiny bed each lighted by a separate window contain the needful toilet appliances, bracket shelves and small stand.

The bedding consists of blankets pillows and white quilts, and looking as any weary boy or girl in their cleanliness, must be factors in purifying the hearts of their occupants.

"These cells are awarded to the whose good conduct justifies the a special privilege," remarked "and they are a possession much the inmates."

Further on we entered the section where the clothing is made and I examined the piles of underclothing on readiness for use, and for articles needful for a woman's neatly made of heavy factory cloth.

The inmates wear a uniform blue denham, a material much that used for shirting and overalls, and a linen collar. Their hair, privilege of dressing their hair, cut upon entering the institution method.

"The inmates are not allowed any of their own clothing during in the institution," said the "It is put away for them until expires."

"Do they generally come in plied?" I asked.

"Occasionally they are very ed," was the reply; "but often a terrible state of destitution, good deal upon the offence for are arrested."

Retracing our steps, we next knitting room. In this department required by the institution in addition to contract work, occasionally given.

"In the knitting and sewingments," said the attendant, "women who, by reason of bodily are unfitted for more arduous work."

"Have you any difficulty in those under your care?" I enquired at the groups who were knitting in quiet conversation.

"Not much," she answered, largely by impulse, and have no need of purpose than little children difficult also to retain their any length of time. We have classes in the knitting room, winter months, for an hour or two, when those who wish to do to read and write."

An education is certainly an action, it would surely be a de to continue these classes all the

The laundry is financially ductive department in the Mercer revenue last year amounted to There are two distinct laundries used for the Mercer and Central ing; the second being reserved contract washing.

As we entered the ironing room of the busy workers cease to bent over their tables in silence

"Do you allow conversation hours?" I enquired of the manager.

"In this department, yes,"

"The girls are constantly moving remarks must necessarily be a loud enough for me to hear.

It is talking that troubles us, but carried on in low tone and good or evil but most likely the

Then we descended to the prison. "What forms of punishment adopt?" I enquired.

"Deprivation of privileges, finement in light cells, dark extreme cases the dungeon, resort to corporal punishment."

I inspected the dark cells and found them to be clean, lit, furnished with a straw pallet.

"The dungeon, with bread diet, will generally reduce the to obedience," said the attendant have rarely to resort to the Months may go by without a and this ward is often vacant.

Upon further enquiry I women are locked in their cells seven each evening. From five or six in the morning the any supervision beyond that an overworked watchwoman long rounds through the extent and who cannot make more hurried visit two or three night.

These thirty-three inmates their varied experience in the restraints of the work and the freedom of night about them, have unlimited croachance confidences of the tion without check or re desirable thing?

But this is but a small with the fact that there classification of the inmates freely in recreation hours, eat together in one large room and sleep in adjoining

For vagrancy, larceny, and emence and prostitution of degree, these women are sent together for a period of months

Many are first offenders minor evil, sentenced to county judge at the request father who desires the rerring child. Many other and criminals who have vilest sin that womanhood