

OUR HOME.

Let us look at our homes from the point of view of religion. To many the home is no more than a place to eat three meals a day, to rest eight hours at night, a locus, a centre from which there is a wide circumference.

To others the home is the place of social intercourse. The family meet there, and outside friends are brought in and social pleasure reigns supreme.

Surely God intended the home to minister to more than the animal or gregarious instincts of man. This place ought to be the religious inspiration of the man's soul. It is intended to put a shield around the tender shoots of the new and spiritual life, and thus give them a chance to grow straight and strong. The religious tendency is found in the young, and while that is only the glow of a new birth, it may, by the spirit's regenerating power, and the grace of God, go on to better things.

Then the principal thing the home is to be, is a righteous nesting place of the untried soul. If it is devoid of religion it is only a gilded palace. It may abound in luxurious equipage, and ring with social delights, but if the religious note is lacking the home fails of its highest and best function.

The home is the place of our first and most lasting impressions. The young mind is like the unmarked tablet; the first writing is the best. It is familiar enough to old people that the things of last year are easily lost; while the things of childhood come back with an imperishable vividness. Now, if the power of memory is in direct proportion to the vividness of the impression, these long-lost thoughts and sights come back because they were the most powerful—fresh on the unscratched tablet of the youthful life.

This is an age when men are hunting for new thrills. The jaded tastes of the pleasure-hunter is frantic for a new exhilaration. Who can ever forget the sensation of a boy in the country as he runs out early in the morning down into the edge of the woods to his rabbit-trap, and sees the door is down. The sense of successful capture will abide all through life.

The home is the place where piety is real. If we show the fruits of the Spirit in the home we need never fear about the world outside. The gentleness, love, joy, self-control, goodness exhibited in the home are real and indisputable evidences of a new life. A wife of vision and vicious tongue once applied to the Session of a Church for admission. So bad was the woman's reputation that the Session turned Methodist, and put the woman on probation. A few weeks after the pastor inadvertently overheard the husband of this woman—a man as wicked as the wife had been—say, "I don't know what has come over my wife, she hasn't spoken a cross word in months." The pastor and Session were convinced. The home is the object of Satan's heaviest assaults. It is the Verdun of his mightiest offensive. For he well knows that when the religious nature of the home is destroyed, all is destroyed. So he entered the first innocent home and attacked in a most subtle fashion its innocent defender.

Then we can see what the home needs.

Religion should be the very first thing in it. Before elegant trappings and furniture, proper and abundant food, should come that preparation of the heart of man that is from the Lord. It is no simple thing that the Christian church was born in a home. The family altar should be erected in the home. If father and mother should seek God for themselves and then carry their children up to the throne daily, the

children will forget the elegant dishes, the abundant company, the good fellowship of the home, but never the sacred impressions of the family worship.

The home ought to be the place where conversation on religious topics is most unaffected. The familiar talk of the home can be easily directed in this direction. The problems may be thus disposed of. So the whole tenor of the light of the home may be led in the direction of religious expression.

The religion of the home is seen in doing as well as speaking. The homely duties may be made to shine with a supernal light. These done in a gentle and faithful and joyous way will do much to keep up the religious tone of the home. This is no place for irritable fault-finding, and scolding. The place to bend to the faults of others in the home, that we may show them a better way.

Above all, make Jesus the welcome and honored inmate of the home, guiding and moulding it after his own blessed example.

A. A. L.

ELEVEN O'CLOCK ON SABBATH MORNING.

"What happens at 11 o'clock on Sabbath mornings?" is the question asked recently by an evangelist. This question has set us to thinking, and it may be well to call attention to some of the things which we have known to happen at that time.

That hour sometimes finds professing Christians, as well as others, asleep or else lazily lolling about their homes. It finds a great many more people reading the Sunday newspaper, which is one of the greatest causes of the desecration of the Sabbath which we know. There are many other Christians, who are found in their automobiles, but not on their way to church. They are off on some long pleasure ride or business trip. Almost every passenger train that is running at that time has on it some of those who call themselves God's people. In offices and stores and other places of business many are engaged in business who claim to be Christians. In many homes Christian wives and mothers are busily engaged in preparing dinner for their own families, and for visitors, whose coming keeps them at home, and gives them extra work to do on the day of rest.

A visit to the churches will show many unoccupied seats, which should be filled by those Christians of whom we were speaking.

But there is another and brighter side of this subject, which is well worth looking at. Just before this hour is the time when a procession begins to move, which increases as the eleven o'clock hour moves around the world. This procession increases in number, until it becomes a vast host. The line may be thin in some places, but altogether it makes up a great army.

When we go into the house of God, we find there those who come in the spirit of true worshippers. God's ministering servants proclaim the message of salvation found in God's word, telling lost sinners of the Saviour who died for their sins, and telling Christians of the mercy and grace and help which God is always ready to give to those who are in need of these things. There we see the congregation led to the throne of grace. There praise is offered to God for His goodness and loving-kindness. When confession of sin is made and a number of petitions are presented to God for His blessing upon themselves and upon the world, we hear the sweet psalms of Zion sung which express the feelings of God's people,

coming from the depth of their very souls.

As we look over the congregation we can see the comfort and peace which is brought to troubled souls. We can see the earnest determination shown in the faces of those who resolve to lead a better and more consecrated life in the future than they have in the past. Here, too, we see offerings made by those who want to express their love to God and their love to their fellowmen, by sending the gospel to those who are without it.

The Sabbath is a great bulwark of the Christian religion. There would be no Sabbath if it were not for the gospel that is preached at the 11 o'clock hour. Would that Christians everywhere would support the services of the church, sustain the gospel, and observe the Sabbath. If this were done, the Church would be built up and the world would be saved for the Saviour.

Contributed

NEW YORK PRESBYTERY'S OVERTURE.

A prominent minister of the Northern Church, who is well known to many in the South, though we are not at liberty to give his name, writes as follows:

"You well stated in your editorial of January 3d, exactly what I take to be the position of the Southern Church as to the proposals of New York Presbytery for union. The men are blind who cannot see that proposals from that quarter only hinder the cause and that union will not come till that element is eliminated from our Church.

"You speak as if you had not seen the clear and cogent editorial in the Herald and Presbyter of last week. I am sending you a copy of it. It is well worth reprinting, for it represents the conservative sentiment of our Church."

This is the editorial:

LIKELY TO BE FUTILE.

New York Presbytery has passed, unanimously, a resolution asking the General Assembly to take measures for securing reunion with the Southern Presbyterian Church. The overture is to be sent to all the Presbyteries of the Church, asking them to unite with New York Presbytery in its request to the General Assembly. As there is only a friendly feeling in the Presbyterian Church for the Southern Presbyterian Church, it is to be anticipated that there will be a general response to this, and that the Presbyteries generally will ask the General Assembly to take the suggested action.

And yet, notwithstanding the friendly overture, it is much more than doubtful whether it will accomplish anything. The friendly position of our Presbyterian Church is very generally known throughout the South. The attitude is that of conciliation, invitation and readiness to welcome. Every one who knows anything about the matter knows that about it. We have nothing to conceal. We are not coy. We are outspokenly ready for union on any basis that will honor Jesus Christ and be for the glory of God.

Nor is the Southern Church distinctly unfriendly and averse to union. On the contrary, it is friendly. It is not given over to a grudge or a bitter animosity. It is on pleasant terms with us. But it says it is afraid of us. It is afraid that we are not altogether sound in the faith. If it were entirely satisfied as to this everything might be arranged. It knows, too, that all our standards are sound and that the actions of our General Assembly ring true.