

AS SEEN BY OTHERS.

Leading New York Clergymen Talk on the Pittsburgh Movement.

THE VIEWS OF REV. DR. TALMAGE.

A General Expression That Great Care Should Be Exercised.

PLANS THAT ARE OUTLINED IN PART

New York, Dec. 11.—A page of to-day's Herald is devoted to the recent movement of Mayor Gourley and Pittsburgh's ministers. The tone of the article is decidedly critical, but it includes interviews with such prominent figures as Rev. T. De Witt Talmage, Father Thomas J. Ducey, Rev. Thomas Dixon, Jr., Rabbi Aaron Wise and Rev. Dr. J. H. Rylance. In introducing the subject the Herald says: "Go and sin no more" is not the gospel as preached in Pittsburgh. There they have changed it to "Go and sin somewhere else." The students of sin and its cures are convinced that you cannot cure such women with a club. You must wean them from their wickedness. The Pittsburgh crusaders offered them the dilemma, sin or suicide. No tender was made to them by the churches of an opportunity to reform. Women can't reform in the gutter.

When Rev. T. De Witt Talmage was found he said: "The law has no right to be harsh. Judges, juries, district attorneys, sheriffs, police, constables have no right to be harsh. All of their actions, though they be firm, should be tempered by mercy and kindness."

He had in mind the recent crusades against fallen women of this city and of Pittsburgh. He spoke with the vehemence of thorough conviction. There was no mistaking his meaning, and if there had been any possibility of a mistake it would have been immediately dispelled by his vigorous repetition of the remarks.

Nothing Gained by Harsh Measures.

"Nothing is ever to be gained by harsh measures," he continued. "The law of the land, of course, must be upheld, and those in whose hands its execution has been placed must do their duty fully and firmly. If the law is not enforced, there is no deterrance for society, but the enforcing must not be harsh. Put a man down, throw him into a dungeon, punish him harshly and he will brood and brood over his unequal condition and his unfair treatment by his fellow creatures. He broods and what will he hatch out but vultures? There is nothing good in that."

"The Church has a tremendous responsibility upon its hands. The law may defend society, but it remains for Christianity to complete the work. Christ and His followers must reform society and give to it a new being. These spasmodic attacks upon vice and immorality, and if there had been any possibility of a mistake it would have been immediately dispelled by his vigorous repetition of the remarks.

"How few of us realize that we, too, might have been in their position, might have fallen into the same depth of degradation that they have! Where would we be to-day if we, too, had been rocked in the same iniquitous cradle in which these poor wretches have been rocked? What if we were if the same baleful influences had guided our footsteps and dominated our career? How then shall we dare to be harsh? The social evil, or any other evil, is not to be stamped out of existence under an iron heel. Let the law do its duty and let the Church follow with its beneficent offices. Then there will be a hope for a moral regeneration."

The Gospel of Charity.

Father Thomas J. Ducey, who is asked for his views, said: "If the reports as presented in the press are true, it seems to me that the action of the representatives of religion was worse than pagan. It certainly was not after the example of the Divine Master, Jesus Christ. To an outcast, an unfortunate woman, well known in Jerusalem, He extended every kindness and courtesy. He protected her from the attacks of the hypocritical Pharisees and scribes. In my judgment no one should be treated with greater kindness than the poor outcast child of sin when she seeks protection and desires to amend her unhappy life. Jesus Christ commanded us to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked and to house the homeless. And who is so sated or so homeless as the woman excommunicated from society by her life of shame? If we would bring them back to virtue, make them lives of hope or usefulness, it must be by charity and purity of action."

"I haven't followed the Pittsburgh matter closely, so cannot answer as to details," says Rev. Thomas Dixon, Jr. "But I can say this: There is now a growing movement in all our civic customs for a cleaner public life. It is the advance move of a great revival of practical religion. It amounts to a revolution. There are not too many enough in our ranks to lead in the pulpit or out of it, to stop it. It will sweep this generation with resistless power. The man who resists fights against the very stars of heaven. It is sure to result in a larger incarnation of righteousness in public life."

Only Methods of Indirection.

Rev. Dr. J. H. Rylance, of St. Mark's, says: "As to the matter you ask my judgment upon—the clerical doings in Pittsburgh—I can scarcely trust myself to speak, so needless do I deem all such methods of dealing with what is called the 'social evil.' There are no methods available, in my judgment, of healing this and other such open sores, except methods of indirection. But men of hot moral impulses cannot wait for results from these methods. Let them somehow be prevented from doing public mischief, however. If our moral detectives are really bent upon saving the fallen let them get their hands 'home,' where the moral nature might have a fair chance to recover itself. But even this was impracticable, or would only prove effectual in a mitigating degree."

This is what Rabbi Aaron Wise thin k. "In answer to your question a command of the Talmud occurs to me—'Cast away with thy right hand; with thy left hand draw him nearer. Chastise and fondle together. Administer correction to the wicked, but immediately alleviate the pain of his punishment.' In the treatment of the great social evil, which engrosses the thoughts of all men, should our measures for relief not be influenced by the lofty sentiment contained in the teaching of the rabbis? There exists an evil which must be eliminated, that action must be taken ere it gains too strong a foothold, who would deny? And yet we cannot demand an unconditional surrender. The wretched enemy has the right to expect some quarter if it yield to the superior power. Shall we then oppose this unrighteous enemy to the social and moral order with harsh, immediate measures, without any concession to its imperative needs? We must seek to exterminate this incubus, but we dare not refuse protection to those whom we thus render homeless."

Knows No Compromise.

Rev. Madison C. Peters writes: "I know no compromise; boldly condemn the sin, but have Christianlike compassion for the sinner. Luther truly said, 'This is a hard world for girls.' Their woes should commend them to our loving care. I believe that one-half of the women who go to the bad are given there through scanty wages. Think of many of our large stores paying competent girls from \$2.50 to \$3 per week. Let our churches and philanthropists open doors of refuge. While Christ lives none are beyond hope and forgiveness."

Matron Prindle, of the Florence Mission, says: "I believe it to be the duty of every Christian worker, all clergymen and laymen, to seek the salvation of all fallen women, and especially after their husbands."

Mrs. Lyman Abbott

Wife of the pastor of Plymouth Church, in Brooklyn, and one of the most experienced and earnest women identified with American church-work, shows the wisest manner of

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have been raided and they are left to secure other places of abode more terrible still.

"It ministers and missionaries went hand in hand with the police, and while one was administering the law, the other, with love and good will, should hand forth the bread of life to win these poor motherless, homeless girls back to God and virtue, it would be a glorious work."

"For the sake of society," says the Rev. Dr. C. E. Wilwood Nash, pastor of the Church of Our Father, Brooklyn, "whose very foundations in the home it undermines, the social pest should be stamped out remorselessly, immediately. The individual sinner should be dealt with in exhaustive pity as a soul to be saved. Repressive measures to be effectual must be continuous, not paroxysmal. The laws are already stringent. The police are guilty of their non-application. Rampant, ruthless partisans are responsible for a bribable police. The voters who sustain them are to blame for reckless partisanship, and thus for the default of the police and the persistence of the plague. Enforce the law and give the gospel crank a more vigorous turn."

Three Interested Parties.

The Rev. David James Burrell writes: "With respect to the uplifting of the fallen, as in other benevolent movements of our time, there are three interested parties. "First—The civil government, upon which devolves the responsibility of punishing the guilty, but their reformation for society's sake."

"Second—The Church, which customarily relieves the State of much the largest part of its reformatory work, and "Third—The fault finders, who are of no use whatever in these premises except to malign the Church for neglecting at times to entirely perform this particular function of the civil authority of the State. In the special cases referred to the Pittsburgh clergymen were probably as short of accommodations for fallen women in their homes as the municipal authorities were in the public institutions of the city."

Rev. Joseph R. Kerr said: "The Pittsburgh clergymen meant well, but for the time being they were trapped by their own rashness. They inaugurated a crusade which they found themselves unable to follow up logically and thoroughly. The Mayor stepped back with the plea that he did not look for his official order to be so promptly enforced, and the ministers were invoked to face the new situation with the good Samaritanism of the gospel. The gun kicked, and if the shot went out of the muzzle the recoil was stunning. There was no lack of courage, but there is more than one kind of that admirable virtue. Experience justifies the belief that ministerial leadership along municipal and civil lines is not the most fortunate. Nor is it necessary in this day, when there is such a splendid host of educated and consecrated Christian laymen entirely competent to concert measures and lead in their execution, aided and encouraged by the moral support of spiritual guidance of the ministerial profession."

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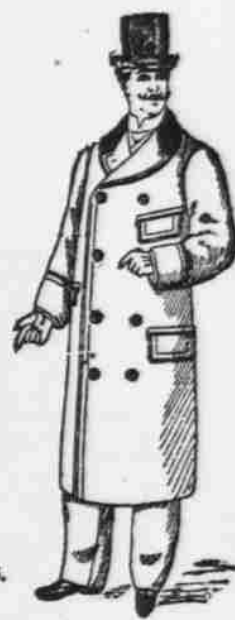
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