

"LOOK UPON ZION"

I have been watching the papers to see what attitude they would take on the closing of the churches during this epidemic of the influenza. Many of our church papers have written on the subject and a few of the daily newspapers. The Boston Herald has an editorial on this subject under the caption above, as follows:

Seldom in the three centuries of civilized life hereabout have church buildings stood without assemblies as in the weeks now passing. This hiatus in the public ministrations of the churches may well occasion thoughtfulness in minds not usually heedful of what churches are doing.

Just as we may speak slightingly or censoriously, as many do nowadays, yet how few would welcome a churchless city! Who would not hear with genuine regret of a permanent cessation of gatherings where prayer is wont to be made and the words of men essay to reach the often dim but ever dear realities of the human spirit? This temporary hush and emptiness in the churches may, indeed, make their meaning and worth in the community the more apparent to world-drawn minds.

There is a splendid passage in Isaiah describing the disordering of common life in war time, which closes its assurance of deliverance with the words, "And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick"—thus aptly matching our present conditions. It declares: "Thine eyes shall behold a far-stretching land." Then, as if to furnish aid in so doing, and recalling how the temple-crowned hill of Jerusalem looms above the wilderness wherein the hard-pressed have taken refuge in "the munitions of rocks," the prophet enjoins: "Look upon Zion, the city of our Solemnities."

For, in time of trouble, there is no greater aid to seeing the goodness of God and the wide range of our resources than to turn attention to the place where God is worshipped and his mercies made known.