

THE = TREASURY =

AN EVANGELICAL MONTHLY
FOR PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

VOL. VI.

NEW YORK, APRIL, 1889.

No. 12.

→ SERMONS ←

NATURE AND REVELATION.

BY PROF. ARTHUR M. GROWDEN, CHRISTIAN CHURCH, FRANKLIN, TENN.

The fool hath said in his heart there is no God.—PSALMS xiv., 1.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.—GEN. i., 1.

For I delivered unto you that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures.—I. COR. xv., 3, 4.

THE sweet singer of Israel uses a strong expression when he says "The fool (*nabal*) hath said in his heart there is no God." The Hebrew language is very expressive; the word for fool means one who is sunk in depravity, an imbecile, referring not so much to natural stupidity as to spiritual corruption, wilful perversity.

We find the thought in Isaiah xxxii., 6, "The vile person (*nabal*) will speak villany and his heart will work iniquity." In the next clause of the first verse of the fourteenth Psalm, David elaborates the thought, "They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good." *At every step the pure in heart see God.* They shall see Him in His glory at the consummation of the kingdom; it is also true that they see Him to-day. A writer has beautifully expressed it, "The mountains are God's thoughts piled up. The ocean is God's thoughts spread out. The flowers are God's thoughts in bloom. The dew-drops are God's thoughts in pearls."

Nature is filled with myriad tongues. We hear her voice as we walk through her valleys; or climb her towering mountain peaks; or explore her

just live by faith." It gives to piety its true objects—correct principles, holy stimulants, supports, consolations, and hopes.

5. Faith gives the great family likeness of God's children. Abraham, God's friend, is the father of the children of faith. It is not a matter of any moment of what nationality the Christian may be, in what zone he was reared, at what Christian period he has lived; if he is a true believer in Christ, the holy lineage is seen impressed visibly on brow and face, on language and lip, on soul and life. Faith unites the hearts, warms the zeal, directs the efforts, and consolidates the strength of God's people in their conflicts with the enemies of truth and righteousness.

6. Faith is the divine reason why God will give eternal life. Heaven, the embodiment of all that we can think, imagine, or hope, is bestowed on the believers in Jesus who are "faithful unto death." As nothing can be more precious than Heaven itself, with death destroyed, sin an eternal prisoner of hell, what can be more "precious" than the Christ who bestows this, and the faith which adores Him as "the Lord"?

7. The Apostle seems gladly to take in the brotherhood in Jesus, and with rich delight rejoices to give to each one "the

right hand of fellowship." "Like precious faith with us." Amid the tear-drops of his penitence, when he heard the cock crow, and especially when thrice Jesus puts to him the pointed question, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?" he felt how precious was that faith which could procure forgiveness of the lie of denial of Christ, and the attendant oath to that lie, and restoration of himself to his dear forgiving Lord.

8. The same "precious faith" which gave to Paul such beautiful visions of Heaven, and sang to him such divine hymns set to heavenly music as he laid his head upon the block, that he scarce felt the keen edge of the Roman axe that set his soul free to accompany the waiting angels to his beautiful Heaven, is the Christian's faith now, when God may need martyrs for the truth.

9. "Like precious faith." It is matter of pure experimental enjoyment by the Christian. "It is of the operation of the Holy Spirit." It is the test and witness of God's truth, a living evidence of Christ's Messiahship, and trains and educates the soul in the school of Jesus, for the hymns and homes of Heaven.

Would you know how sweet is the honey, get it directly from the hive. "Oh! taste and see that the Lord is good."

MINISTERS—YOUNG AND OLD.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D.

I have read the late racy article of A Young Minister with a mixture of amusement and amazement. Boston has had the credit of originating the idea that a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ commonly reaches the "dead line" at fifty. But now comes the alarming announcement that the dead line has been pushed back by ten years, and a Yankee deacon declares that "a man of *forty* would be of no use in this field; he is too old!" If the fatal line recedes much farther, we shall be tempted to ask the question of the disciples, "Who then can be saved?"

This principle of early superannuation

seems to apply to no other occupation under heavens except preaching the Gospel. At the bar, in medicine, in banking, in all commercial business, a long and large experience, and a vigorous training add prodigiously to a man's value. Nearly all the leaders in secular affairs are past forty; many of them are past three-score and ten. But the new theory in regard to the ministry seems to be: for making money or making machinery, or making books, or making arguments, give us large and ripe experience; but for expounding God's Word, and saving souls, give us a raw youth recently from

the seminary! If this preposterous theory should gain a foothold among the churches, two things would soon happen: the ministry would become extinct, and the churches would die in disgrace.

Happily this new theory is so false as to facts that it ought to be hooted out of existence. If any one will run over the names of the ministers who to-day are attracting the largest congregations, doing the greatest work and commanding the widest influence in the Christian world, he will find that, with scarcely a single exception, they are the men who have passed that ridiculous "dead line of forty." For example: Mr. Spurgeon is fifty-five, Dr. Joseph Parker fifty-nine, Newman Hall seventy-two, Dr. Farrar fifty-eight, Dr. Storrs sixty-eight, Dr. John Hall and Dr. William M. Taylor each in his sixtieth year, Dr. Alexander Maclaren sixty-three, Dr. Talmage fifty-six, Dr. Phillips Brooks fifty-four, Dr. Kittridge fifty-five, and Mr. Moody fifty-two. If you have any promising youths under forty in New England who can outdraw, outpreach and outwork the above mentioned veterans, I hope that Mr. Beal of the Boston Bureau will kindly furnish their names.

Mr. Beal tells us that one reason for the "cry for young men" is that the churches are now making special efforts to reach the young. They may well be doing still more of that, and be learning still better how to do it. Mr. Beal further says that "men in middle life cannot adapt themselves to the new conditions"—such as the existence of Christian Endeavor Societies, and the increased attention now given to Sunday-school work. What Solomon gave him that information? If delicacy would allow me to draw on my own experience, I could state that in my church is a Young People's Association of over seven hundred members, which had been doing good work for a dozen years before the "Endeavor" societies were ever heard of; a large portion of our Association have been under my eye from their infancy. Do white hairs frighten them out of church? No more than they frighten them out of their own homes.

I am just completing the forty-fourth year of my ministry, and am quite sure that I have never addressed so many auditors during any year as during the last twelvemonth. Some of the driest, dullest and most metaphysical sermons that I have ever been bored with were preached by *old* young men recently from the seminary. Some of the most arousing, popular and powerful preaching I have ever listened to has been by *young* old men, who laughed at the shaking of Time's spear. God knoweth that we have few enough ministers of the Gospel in our country already; but if this inexorable dead line of forty is going to shelve a large portion of those now in the field, we shall soon have a famine of the Gospel that will make a jubilee in hell.

It is also true that the most zealous, able and godly-minded ministers have quite enough obstacles now to contend with. They have to encounter the increasing trend toward materialism and mammon. The atmosphere is malarious with skepticism, and there is a spirit of self-indulgence abroad which makes too many church members oblivious to prayer-meetings, and too daintily fastidious as to the æsthetic qualities of preaching. In our large cities the pastor finds that thousands of his hearers have, on Sunday morning, been *snowed under* by sixteen or twenty-four pages of the godless Sunday journals, and he must shovel out their hearts from under that avalanche of secularity before he can find admission for his gospel message. Now if, in addition to all these obstacles, there is to be an arbitrary and cruel "statute of limitations" which demands that, as soon as a minister has been enriched and ripened by experience and practice, he shall be demitted from his work by a "dead line" of forty or even of fifty years, then no man of common sense or self-respect will enter the ministry. I make no plea for indolent or incapable ministers; such have no divine call to the holy work. But when God has unmistakably called a man to the pulpit, and has blessed him there, the church that wantonly dishonors him for trivial

reasons puts an insult on the Holy Spirit. Unjust contempt upon an ambassador of Jesus Christ is a contempt cast upon Christ Himself.

At this time there is a great demand for more ministers of the right stamp—men of staunch orthodoxy who are not frightened by every “spook” that issues from the graveyard of infidelity; men of evangelical fervor who hunger for the salvation of souls; men of Holy Ghost power, and men who do not consider it an unmanly drudgery to spend part of every day in visiting the sick, the poor, and the unconverted. There is a crying demand for not only good pulpiteers, but for *good pastors*. They need not be always men of genius or great oratorical gifts; but they ought to possess a “genius for godliness,” and an unquenchable love for their glorious calling. Some of the most effective ministers do not possess either great talents or great scholarship. Some have reached the pulpit by a “short cut,” without graduating from any college. Our theological seminaries are not furnishing now a sufficient number of licentiates to meet the increasing wants of the vast swarming population of the United States, and the de-

mands of foreign fields. *America must have the Gospel*; and if trained ministers enough are not forthcoming, then the churches will have to license their best and godliest laymen as lay preachers or “local preachers.” But in the name of the Master, let us shun, like the leprosy, any abominable injustice that will drive out a faithful, useful servant of God on account of his age. Churches should beware how they imitate the horse-jockeys, who open the mouth of a steed, and inquire, “How old is the creature?” God’s grace does not go by the almanac; as long as a minister can do Christ’s work effectively, let him do it.

In conclusion, I desire to make a fervid appeal to the bright, earnest, godly young men in our schools and colleges. *Jesus Christ wants the best*—the best brains, the best tongues, the best hearts. There is no such “opening” in our land as the Christian ministry offers. An archangel might covet the honor and the joy of being a successful preacher of the good tidings of salvation, and a winner of precious souls to the life everlasting. If God has endowed you with any gifts for preaching, “neglect not the gift that is in thee.”—*Congregationalist*.

WOMAN'S WORK FOR WOMEN.

BY REV. GIDEON DRAPER, D.D.

Women is happily coming to the front in Church work. On both sides of the separating ocean new and enlarged effort is made in this direction. Hitherto this most efficient agency has been left to the Church of Rome and the Romish section of the Church of England. Since the Reformation the results of the labors of nun and sister among Romanists have been incalculable, well-nigh, if not entirely, rivalling those of the priest. In a historical record of this new departure among Protestants, the name of Mrs. Ranyard is pre-eminently prominent. In the year 1857 a woman of the people was first employed by her as district visitor and Bible-colporteur. The wholly novel

experiment was made in St. Giles, the Five Points of the British metropolis.

The visitor from the poor, with sympathy for those of her own class and a tact in reaching them, went from house to house, and room to room, telling them of the precious Book, urging, if destitute of it as most were, to purchase it, in parts or by instalments. Once in the week they were invited to her room to hear the lady explain the Scriptures they were just beginning to read. This was the origin of Mothers' meetings, so popular now in London that the organization of a church is considered incomplete without them. These meetings were from the first designed as nurseries to the churches,