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→ SERMONS ←

CHRIST, THE TRUE INTERPRETER OF HISTORY.

BY REV. W. J. HARSHA, D.D., FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, OMAHA, NEBRASKA.

He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne.—REVOLUTIONS v., 7.

THERE stood in ancient Rome a statue of special interest even in that luxuriantly adorned capital of wealth and splendor. It was constructed of pure gold, and being colossal in size, was of immense value. But that which endeared it to the heart of every Roman was rather its age and meaning than the mere intrinsic worth of the precious metal of which it was composed; for the statue had been placed upon its conspicuous site by their fathers, and on its base was inscribed the proud old Latin word, "*Virtus*." It was consecrated to manliness; it presented to the eyes of the growing youth of the city the advantages of strength and courage and activity; indeed, of all those things which went to make up a "*vir*" or man. Our word "virtue" has changed somewhat from this meaning of its original source; for it was something very sturdy and manlike that the old Roman meant by the word, and it was supposed that the presence of so fine a thing as a statue of gold would forever render the thought sacred to the progeny and followers of Romulus and his wolf-suckled brother.

Now around this statue of *Virtus* there gathered a vast crowd one day; and certain discussions of evident moment were going on. Our imaginations might very easily supply the items of an interesting medley of tongues, if we

ness, and voicelessness are directly induced by the constant and continued efforts of speech in a heated and relaxing atmosphere, and the faculties of the congregation are dulled and blunted by the same cause. Church windows are not made to open; and even if they were, unless the entering air is directed upward to a considerable height, it falls upon the heads of the congregation, and complaints of draughts are made to the church-wardens, which promptly secure the closing of the windows. Most churches are heated by stoves or hot-water coils, but in very few cases is there any arrangement for admitting fresh air to come into contact with the heated surfaces of pipes or stoves before passing into the church. Exhaust ventilators in the roof are practically unknown in churches; consequently the foul and heated air never escapes, and after service as the heated air cools it descends, and a fresh congregation re-breathes the used air of its predecessors.

In this respect churches are even worse off than theatres, where the cubic space per head is far less, for all theatres have sunlight burners in the roof of the auditorium, which act very efficiently as exits for foul air. Although different systems commend themselves to different persons, we are inclined to advocate in winter the admission of fresh air warmed by contact with hot water coils beneath gratings in the floor, and numerous exhaust ventilators in the roof provided with rings of gas jets to keep up the temperature of the escaping air. In summer fresh air should be admitted by revolving panes in the windows, so as to secure an upward direction, the exhaust ventilators being also kept in action. If places of worship were adequately ventilated, "church headache" would soon become as little known as "theatre headache" now is, thanks to the regulations that the latter places of amusement are now subjected to.—*British Med. Journal.*

Christian Edification

Solid Certainties in Christ.

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D.

Amid all the disappointments of this world, no one was ever yet disappointed in Jesus Christ. Our cisterns of enjoyment often become broken cisterns; our little rills dry up and vanish away. But who ever saw the fathomless ocean run low? Oh the depth of the riches of wisdom and knowledge and grace in Jesus! "Of His fulness have all we received," said that favorite disciple who leaned upon His bosom at the feast of love. John was never disappointed in his Master; nor was Paul when he found himself filled unto all the fulness of God. There is a fulness of power in Him who is able to save unto the uttermost, and a fulness of love in Him who loveth His own ransomed flock unto the end. All the needy sinners in the universe cannot exhaust the infinite supply which Christ hath in store for us.

We cannot ask too much or too often from Christ. Nay; He must take it ill that we ask so little, and then with such a hesitating faith. "Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it." "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do." These are imperial promises; and the only limitations are in the infinite wisdom which decides just what He ought to give, and what He ought to withhold. Christ must wonder at our feeble faith and stammering hesitations, in presenting requests to Him who "loved to be inquired of." Pint-cup praying brings only pint-cup blessings.

It is good to carry a large cheque-book, and inscribe on it "My soul, wait thou only upon God, for all my expectations are from Him." Paul realized his own splendid heirship, and drew large drafts on the inexhaustible treasury. "I know whom I have believed" gave backbone to Paul's faith, and kept the sunshine of

assurance playing on the old furrowed face. After he had tested his Lord for more than thirty years, he summed up his glorious experience in these words, "I have finished my course. I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the righteous Judge shall give me in that day." The veteran Apostle had never been disappointed in Christ's service—its joys, its toils, or its rewards; he knew that he never would be. He felt just as certain of Heaven as he did of the rising of the morrow's sun.

So, should we, if we have given ourselves to Christ, and aimed to follow Him honestly in the spirit of obedience. Salvation is not guess work. If I have given myself to Christ, I ought to feel confident that no man—or devil—can pluck me out of those omnipotent hands. I confidently expect that through faith I shall be kept by the power of God unto salvation. I expect that when I walk through the valley of the death-shadow, His rod and His staff will comfort me. I look forward to an hour when—poor im-

perfect sinner as I am to-day—when I shall become like Him, and shall see Him as He is. I have not seen anybody who has seen Heaven, any more than I have seen anybody who has seen next week. but they are both coming. I feel sure that if I hold fast to Christ, He will bring me into His Father's house, and show me its indescribable splendors. I confidently expect to find there a joy that shall be to me a "harp" and a triumph that shall be to me a "palm" and a reward that shall be an "unfading crown." Whether the words used by the inspired are figurative or not makes no difference. If they are figures of speech, they represent *solid certainties*. The eloquent Robertson of Irvine closed a discourse on Heaven by saying in his inimitably tender way, "There is only one preacher that can show you what Heaven is like; *he can*—his name is Death."

Our knowledge of that life is small,
The eye of faith is dim;
But it is enough that Christ knows all,
And we shall be like Him.

—New York Evangelist.

PRAYER MEETING SERVICE

The Christian Life, a Way.

BY REV. S. W. ADRIANCE.

There is a favorite designation for the Christian life—a way. It is often called so in the Psalms, and perhaps a good way to use my space this week would be in a sort of Bible reading.

1. A way denotes a certain definite course of life. It is more than an outward life. It describes the inward as well. Ps. cxix., 9; xxv., 9; xxxvii., 23.

2. A way denotes a progress onward. Prov. ii., 20; ix., 6; xii., 28; Ps. cxix., 35; Prov. iv., 18, 26; Ps. xxiii., 3; xvii.,

5. When the Bible speaks of a man in the way of life, all the suggestions are of an earnest pilgrim, not idly sleeping or playing, but pressing forward. Phil. iii., 18, 14.

3. A way denotes a path to a certain end. Matt. vii., 14; Jer. l., 5; Isa. xxxv., 8-10. Each day's march brings us to some blessing, some of God's inns by the way. But the great end of the journey is God's own presence.

4. The way of life is distinguished from the other way. Indeed, the Bible insists that there are only two ways. However different they seem to be, they resolve themselves into the way of life and the way of death. Matt. vii., 13, 14; Prov. xiii., 15; xiv., 12.

5. The way of life has other names which characterize the lives of those who walk therein, as well as the blessings which belong to them. It is the way of truth, Ps. cxix., 29; "of Thy commandments," cxix., 32; the good way, I. Kings viii., 36; Isa. xxxv., 8; Luke i., 79.