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OUR DAY



THE GREAT ARBITRATION TREATY
A TRUMPET CALL TO CHRISTIANS
HOW I READ THE DAILY PAPER



A RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE
By FRED'K L. CHAPMAN

A MONTHLY RECORD OF
PROGRESS AND REFORM

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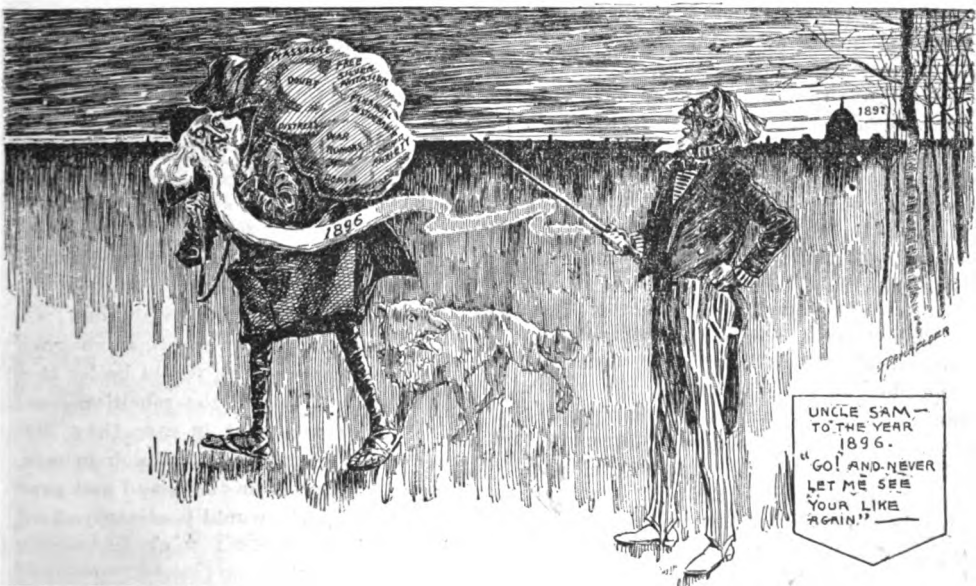
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OUR DAY IN REVIEW

A BAD OLD YEAR THE year which has just gone into history will not be memorable for its blessings. It has been a long twelve months of hope, submerged in despair. Brave men have trod the winepress of financial worry and good wives at home have devotedly fanned the embers of a flickering hope. The good feeling between friends and families has been strained by partisan strife and from the very dawn of 1896 the powerful Anglo-Saxon family of nations has been in more or less danger of a fratricidal struggle, which would have put back for a century the hands on the dial of progress. Therefore, with a lively mem-

ory of the distracting campaign, and of the long continued panic and of the Venezuelan wrangle and of the ineffable crimes in Armenia and of the unequal struggle in Cuba, we bid cheerful good-bye to a bad, old year.

Lest this view of recent history may seem to our readers to be over provincial or pessimistic we quote with mingled pleasure and regret the words of a London journalist, according to whom "the year of shame" will be the name attached to 1896 in the minds of the future historians of Europe. It has been chosen by Mr. William Watson as the title of his recently published volume of poems, dealing with the attitude of the nations on the subject of Armenia. The Bish-



—From The Chicago Times-Herald.

THE DEAN OF THE AMERICAN PULPIT.

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. THEODORE L. CUYLER

BY GEORGE T. B. DAVIS.

"I know of no one whose life work as a Christian minister, and as an advocate of everything calculated to promote the welfare of suffering humanity, has been more faithfully and successfully done than Dr. Cuyler's." — WHITTIER.

THE world today runs to specialism. This is true not merely in the realm of intellectual research, but as regards the whole modern man.

The Sandow in strength is nearly always deficient in intellectual and spiritual power, while the mental giant is often a physical wreck and a scoffer at religion. Alas, also, the men and women who are filled with the spirit, frequently neglect the proper development of their brains and bodies.

In the midst of this multitude of one-eyed Cyclops it is refreshing to find a person whose faculties are so evenly unfolded as to form a harmonious unit. Such a man is Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler, primate of the American pulpit today.

Dr. Cuyler has achieved the highest success in three different fields of activity. For more than fifty years he has been a "model minister." As a journalist he was recently called "America's most popular writer for the religious press." While as an author he has won world-wide fame.

A semi-centennial celebration of Dr. Cuyler's work as a preacher was held a few months ago in the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian church of Brooklyn, N. Y. For over thirty years he was pastor of this one field. Under his ministrations this church

had such a marvellous growth that for several years it was the largest Presbyterian church in the United States. He received 4,650 members into the church, of whom nearly 2,000 were on confession of faith.

Nor was his activity as a journalist less remarkable during this fifty years. He has written more than 4,000 articles for the religious press. These have been translated, reprinted in many languages, and scattered broadcast all over the world. It is estimated that more than 200,000,000 copies of his articles have appeared in the newspapers of this country alone! Who can estimate the influence these silent messages have exerted in purifying and elevating the mental and spiritual life of our nation!

He has written fourteen volumes on different phases of the Christian life. "Heart-Life," published by the American Tract Society, and "The Empty Crib" and "God's

Light on Dark Clouds" have been among the most popular. Six of his works have been translated into the Swedish language and two into the Dutch. He is probably the most successful tract writer living. It is stated that one of his little pamphlets issued by the American Tract Society, entitled "Come to Jesus," has reached



DR. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

a circulation of over a million copies.

Dr. Cuyler's life has not been a raging torrent or a mountain brook, but rather the clear, calm, deep stream flowing through a peaceful valley. It has been flooded with the sunlight of God's favor. His lines have fallen in pleasant places. His large, brick, vine-covered house in Brooklyn, standing far back from the street, is typical of the career of its owner. While it has been in the main quiet and serene, strewn with flowers, yet in no sense has it been small or weak.

As the years have passed Dr. Cuyler has realized more and more the tremendous power of the modern press and has spent more and more of his time in the preparation of articles for religious and secular newspapers. And so in 1890, advancing age compelling him to curtail either his pastoral or journalistic duties, he resigned his charge, and became a kind of pastor at large to the American people, at the same time devoting his time and talents more than ever to work with the pen. At the present day he gives his services freely on all occasions when he can lift high the banner of the Cross. He writes regularly for a religious syndicate, in addition to his weekly letter to the New York Evangelist and numerous other literary duties.

At seventy-five years of age Dr. Cuyler is a mine of the richest wisdom. For fifty years he has kept close watch of the progress of events; for fifty years he has observed all kinds and conditions of humanity; for fifty years he has been a constant student of that greatest of all earthly productions—the Book of Books. Today with silvered hair, but still hale and hearty, he is passing through the afternoon of life. The sun is nearing the horizon and the sky is radiant with the most resplendent colors. The air is calm, the fleecy clouds float ruby red o'er head, and peace reigns supreme.

In surroundings appropriate to the closing years of a noble life I found Dr. Cuyler. It was at Lake Mohonk, among the Catskills, his favorite summer resort. For beauty of landscape, and ruggedness of nature, few spots in America surpass it. Like a diamond the gem of a lake sparkles and flashes in its setting of mountain rock, far

up above the surrounding plain. I arrived at the hotel just as the western sun was setting on fire the myriad windows of the buildings and taking a last look at the grain-laden valley spread out below in a beautiful panorama for miles in every direction.

In the midst of a group of boys and maidens and fathers and mothers on the hotel piazza stood Dr. Cuyler. He was earnestly talking politics with a young man. Into this as into everything in which he engages he was throwing himself with all the energy of his nature, gesticulating frequently and speaking, as is his custom, probably on account of a slight deafness, in trumpet tones. He is of about medium height and has grown stoop-shouldered of late. His face is stamped with the courage and iron determination of an old Roman. He means in the depths of his soul every word he utters. After making an appointment with me for an interview after dinner the doctor and his wife started off to engage in their favorite exercise of mountain climbing.

The brightly-lighted and carpeted halls of the Mohonk House, with their cosy alcoves and cheery fireplaces, form the reception rooms in which the guests gather in the evenings to pleasantly pass the time in games and quiet conversation.

Meeting the doctor as he emerged from the dining room he took me by the hand and laying his arm upon my shoulder, said:

"Have you been up to Skytop?"

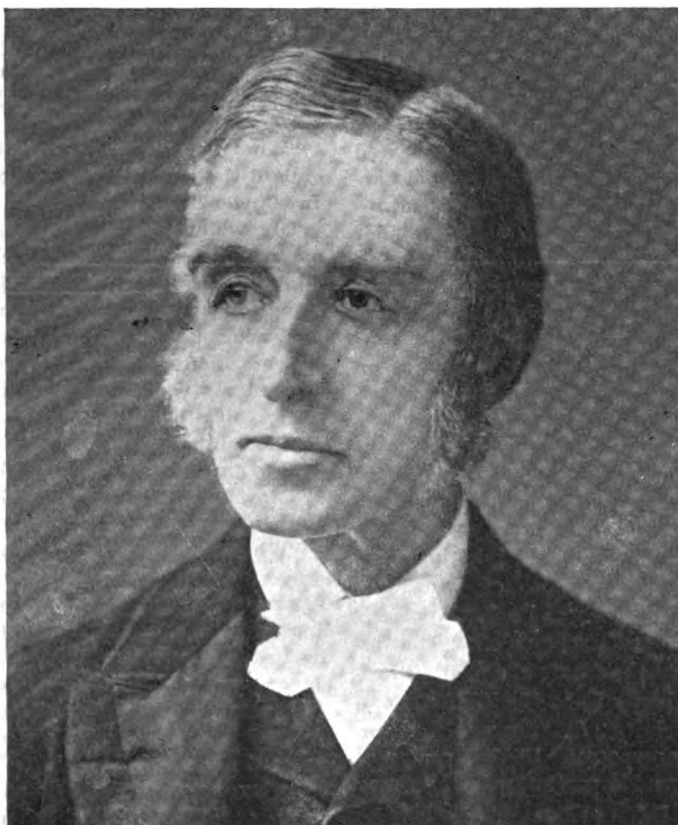
"No," I confessed.

"Well," he exclaimed, "you must be sure to go there before you leave. Why, from there you can see fifty miles in any direction. It is a grand sight. You can see five different states, not counting New York!"

These words at the very outset of our talk afforded a clear commentary to Dr. Cuyler's character. He was thinking of others, not of self. Like his master, he lives "to minister, not to be ministered unto."

Arm in arm we walked down the corridor among the stream of fashionably dressed men and women until we reached a quiet alcove. Surveying this a moment the doctor remarked that it was appropriate for our purpose.

"In the first place, Dr. Cuyler," I suggested when we were seated, "I wish you



DR. CUYLER TODAY: SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS OF AGE.

would indicate a few of your life preferences and experiences. For instance, what was the favorite book of your boyhood?"

"My favorite book, outside the Bible, in youth as well as in middle life and old age has ever been the immortal 'Pilgrim's Progress,'" he replied.

"What books have exerted the largest influence upon your life as a whole?" I next asked.

Dr. Cuyler referred me to a former utterance in which he says:

"During my student days in the seminary appeared the biography of the Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne, and if I ever meet Dr. Andrew A. Bonar in heaven I shall thank him again as I often have in this world, for that portraiture of a model minister of Jesus Christ. It is doubtful whether McCheyne if he had lived to an old age, would

have been more useful than he is in the pages of that quickening biography. Every young minister ought to read it at least once in every year. Fifteen minutes spent over it always brings a glimpse of eternity into study life. Biographical works have always been a favorite reading with me, although the faultless specimens of that style of literature are very few. Boswell's "Life of Dr. Johnson," Dean Stanley's "Life of Dr. Arnold," Trevelyan's "Life of Lord Macaulay," the "Life of Dr. Channing," by his nephew and the "Life of Dr. McLeod" belong to this scanty repertorium of almost perfect biographies. Edward Payson of Portland had a prodigious influence on my early ministry in spite of his marvelous melancholy. Dr. Chalmer's life gives a grand idea of how immense a human life can be; he walks into my study like a giant. The

biographies of heroic characters like Dr. Livingstone, William Wilberforce and the missionaries, Brainerd, Martyn and Judson, have always been an inspiration to unselfish toil for the Master.

"During my student days at Princeton the brilliant papers of Lord Macaulay appeared in a collected form in this country, and Carlyle's first books were also coming into a wide American popularity. Dr. Alexander MacLaren of Manchester told me that he "was more indebted to Carlyle for mental inspiration than to any other man." I acknowledge also a debt of gratitude to Carlyle; he has often acted like a "blizzard" on my mental stagnation. But Macaulay I almost knew by heart. If Bunyan taught me the power of idiomatic English, Macaulay has always been to me the model of perspicuity in the art of putting things. All his oracular judgment I cannot subscribe to, but his style is still, to my thinking, well nigh faultless. Alongside of Macaulay stand my six volumes of Daniel Webster's massive and magnificent orations. That reply to Hayne in the senate chamber still remains and is likely to be the high-mark of sonorous and lofty American eloquence. Webster is unsurpassed in the power of statement, a most important point for every preacher. Too much preaching is what Robert Hall called a "continent of mud."

"I have my favorite masters of the pulpit, whose discourses have given me great delight. Among living preachers MacLaren of Manchester is to me facile princeps. Our young ministers will find him a model of lucid style, and deep insight into the very core of Bible truth. In illustrations he is unequalled. Robertson of Brighton was of immense service to me, not in teaching me sound doctrine, but in stirring thought and in arousing courage in the utterance of honest convictions. He was an intellectual prodigy in homiletics. My beloved friend, Spurgeon's, sermons have taught me how to present vital evangelical truth in the racy dialect of the common people.

"My favorite poets are Wadsworth, Cowper, Tennyson, Burns, and my brave old Quaker friend, Whittier. Hymnology has always been a delight, and helped also in my pulpit ministrations."

"Who was the hero of your early years?" I next asked.

"Abraham Lincoln has been my hero as a man. I suppose he would have been my boyhood hero as well, had he lived earlier in the century."

"What one person do you think has exercised the largest influence over your life, Dr. Cuyler?" I next asked.

"My widowed mother did more to bring me to Christ and to mold my character than all other persons combined. She was everything to me in our country home. My father died when I was four years of age and her prayers, her sayings and her teachings formed my earliest and best school days. When but a babe my mother dedicated me to the ministry though I did not fully decide to enter it until I left college."

"May I ask, doctor, what finally led you to the decision?"

"Why, certainly. It happened in this way. I had gone out to speak to a little company of people one Sabbath afternoon. I spoke with earnestness and the Lord wonderfully blessed my words. Then and there I consecrated my life to God's service as his messenger. The next day when I informed my mother of my decision she expressed no surprise whatever."

As our conversation turned again to the early period of life, I asked Dr. Cuyler what, after his three-score and ten years of experience he considered the best test of true character in a young person.

"A live, healthy conscience," he answered quickly.

"Do you think boys and girls should read the Bible every day, and if so, how would you have them do it?"

"Yes!" he replied emphatically. "They should read it in course, and especially the Sunday school lessons. Indeed, I would have them commit to memory as much of each Sunday school lesson as possible. And that brings up the entire problem of the Sunday school of today."

"Do you think they need reforming?" I asked eagerly.

"Many radical changes are needed," Dr. Cuyler replied warmly. "I'd have the scholars prepared before they come to the class. Then let the teacher draw out instead of pour in. Education means draw-

ing out, not pouring in. If the boys and girls do not study any themselves they will forget in ten minutes what they are told by their teacher. This is the great fault of our present Sunday school system. The teachers come together to discuss how and what to talk about and give scarce a thought of having the lessons prepared before hand by the scholars. What would be thought of a public school or college or university where the pupils never studied the lessons! And why should not our Sunday schools, where the greatest truths in the world are taught, be conducted according to the most approved educational methods? The children should come to recite rather than to listen. They should put at least half an hour's study upon each lesson!"

"Would you advise every boy and girl to have one definite aim in life?" I next asked the doctor.

"None of the great things that have been done in the world have been the result of accident, but they have been achieved by a definite purpose. This is illustrated throughout all history.

"To what one thing more than another, Dr. Culyer, do you attribute your success as a minister?"

"To my devotion to the pastorate," he answered quickly.

"From what books of the Bible have you drawn the largest number of texts?"

"From the Psalms, Luke and John. Probably from John, because it contains more of the sayings of our Lord; and from Luke because therein is found more of the incidents and events of his life. I think if I could have but one text out of the entire Bible I would choose that grand verse in Isaiah, fifty-third chapter: 'All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.' Here we have in a single passage both the doctrine of human depravity and of the atoning work of God. The grandest piece of sublimity and tenderness in the Bible is found, I believe, in the seventh chapter of Revelations. I read this passage oftener than any other when making addresses away from home on a journey."

It is a remarkable fact that during his

half-a-century of preaching Dr. Culyer never spent a Sunday in bed.

"What has been the secret of your wonderful health?" I next asked.

"Sleep!" he replied. "Sleep has been everything to me. I never fail to secure plenty of sound sleep. Then also Saratoga water has been a wonderful health promoter to me. I have drank it every summer for the last 44 years. It has been one of my standing jokes for years that I would have this inscription written upon my tombstone:

:..... :
 : 'Here Lies Theodore L. Culyer. :
 : He Lived — Years by the Grace :
 : of God—and Saratoga Water.' :
 :..... :

And the doctor laughed lustily at his truthful witticism.

"Of course I have avoided all stimulants and I never smoked a pipe or cigar in my life."

"What has been the tendency of the pulpit during the last fifty years?"

"The present tendency is toward socialistic preaching, as opposed awakening style of Finney when I began. Pulpit themes today are not as deep and heart searching as formerly. This is sadly to be deplored. Let us have more fearlessness in the pulpit to proclaim the guilt of sin and the absolute necessity of repentance in order to reach salvation. Philanthropic work and all that sort of thing is good, but let it not consume all our time and attention."

"What should constitute a 'call' to the ministry?" I inquired.

"The ability to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ in such a way that people will come to hear it. That last clause is very important. I recall at this instant a man who missed his vocation in just this manner. He was full of holy aims and thoughts, but no one would come to hear him preach and the result was he failed as a minister. They talk about a sudden entrance of the Holy Spirit and all that, but from a large experience I believe that my statement above constitutes the only real call to the ministry, and any one that can't conform to it will, I predict, be a miserable failure!" exclaimed Dr. Culyer in deep earnest tones and gesticulating forcibly with both hands.

"What is the greatest need of the church today?"

"A great outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the development of individual church members in Christian work. We don't want more wheels, but more spiritual steam and power on the wheels. Today they are multiplying causes so rapidly that there are more causes than effects."

"What do you consider the distinguishing features of the nineteenth century?"

"The two pre-eminent features of the nineteenth century have been: First, the development of foreign missions, and the origination and construction of the great benevolent enterprises and religious organizations, such as the Bible Society, Tract Society, Y. M. C. A., C. E., etc. Second, the development of science, theoretical and practical."

"What can Christians do to check the growing Sabbath desecration?"

"Let them observe the Sabbath more thoroughly themselves!" cried the doctor with vigor. "Stop buying Sunday newspapers! Stop the latitudinarian practises! Stop the Sunday excursions! Let them stop denouncing outsiders until they themselves learn to do better!"

"What methods should be pursued to abolish the saloon?"

"Oh!" he gasped, "that's a large question. I have written and talked on it all my life. I will say just this: Abominable and diabolical as the liquor traffic and the saloon are, we've got to go farther back and stop the drinking usages. The most effective way to fight the saloon is to use all our personal influence to check the drinking usages. They try to get rid of the evil all at once in a lump and with a hurrah! No great reform has ever been effected that way. The individual is the first step, the law the second. That is the mistake of our Prohibition brethren (I am a Prohibitionist myself). They rely entirely on the law feature and neglect the individual drinker. The guilt of the saloon is on both sides of the counter. The man who patronizes the saloon is a partner with the man who sells the liquor.

"The first thing we did in Maine," Neal Dow once said to me, 'was to fight the

drinking usages all over the state; then we were ready to take a vote of the people.' It is a great wrong to denounce the seller and say nothing of the buyer. The whole license system has been proved by long experience to be a ghastly failure. In short, as I said, the only way to abolish the saloon is to combine legal effort with moral suasion. The Prohibitionists are trying to fly with one wing instead of with two."

"How can our politics be purified?"

"Only by the thoughtful citizens taking hold of it themselves. As long as the good people neglect their political duties the machine men will run the ship of state into their own harbors."

"How can the church reach and win the laboring class, the masses, to Christ?"

"By going after them!" he exclaimed, striking his fist upon the arm of his chair in his earnestness. "Every large city church should have one or more auxiliary chapels or mission stations, which would provide for the physical and mental, as well as the spiritual, wants of these people. My former Brooklyn church sustains three of these missions.

"Then, in the second place, I would have the cultured and wealthy persons go in person and visit them, and invite them to their own homes for tea or to spend the evening. The educated and well-to-do Christians should also furnish the Sunday school teachers and workers in these missions.

"The only effective method of bridging the chasm," he again said earnestly, "is by means of loving hand-to-hand contact!

"Personal Contact!" he almost shouted in his enthusiasm for the solution of this great problem. "In those two words lies the entire and the only remedy! Contact of wealth with poverty! Contact of virtue with vice! Contact of love with hatred! When the prophet Elijah wished to bring the child to life he stretched his body on the child's body and by personal heart-to-heart contact, by the help of the Lord, he restored the breath of life. So Christians today must infuse the Christ-like life into the masses, not by standing afar off and preaching at them, but by walking arm-in-arm with them along life's pathway!"