



The
CHRISTIAN TREASURY

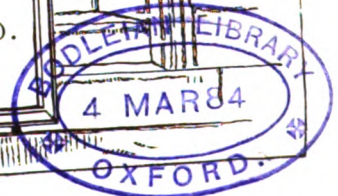
CONTAINING

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MINISTERS AND MEMBERS
OF
VARIOUS EVANGELICAL DENOMINATIONS



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CHRISTIAN TREASURY.

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FOOLISHNESS AND POWER.*

BY EUGENE BERSIER, PASTOR OF THE REFORMED CHURCH OF PARIS.

‘For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us
which are saved it is the power of God.’—1 Cor. i. 18.



FOOLISHNESS—power! These are the two names that Paul here gives to the preaching of the cross. I propose, my brethren, to study in succession these two ideas, in order afterwards to show you the tie that closely unites them together. This will be the plan

of our reflections.

The preaching of the cross is **FOOLISHNESS**. I pray you to remark, my brethren, that it is not an enemy of the gospel, but an Apostle, who says this to us. Christianity has not waited until the world cast this reproach at it; it has not left it this satisfaction. This insult it has itself seized, and been the first to claim as its lawful property. And let not men say to us that it is here a figure of speech, a bold apostrophe, that has escaped from the Apostle. The gospel is sparing in its use of these exaggerated epithets, of these figures of rhetoric; and, moreover, the same thought is found underlying the entire teaching of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ presented His doctrine as a thing that the world would charge with folly. He clearly speaks of the incompatibility that there is between man's view of things and that which He preached; He foretold

His disciples that they would meet with opposition, hatred, and contempt.

This is, indeed, a strange method of seeking to gain men; so strange that it would be foolishness if it did not show a divine inspiration. Usually, when a man wishes to succeed, he promises to himself and to his disciples success. Every general well knows that in order to succeed he must announce victory to his soldiers. It is the same in the order of intelligence; a philosopher, a chief of a school, is forced to prove that his doctrine answers to all the needs of the age, and will satisfy all its aspirations; he points out intelligences already prepared to embrace it, and proselytes who are about to range themselves under his standard. We ourselves, sometimes yielding to this attraction, have we not announced the near triumph of our beliefs! Jesus Christ alone said to His disciples, ‘You will be judged, calumniated, hated because of My name;’ and it is this thought that Paul takes up when he speaks with so much assurance of the foolishness of the cross.

The cross specially merited this distinction and this reproach, for it is it which epitomises our entire Christianity. It is its centre; it is in it, above all, that there appeared what was strange and opposed to human wisdom. The preaching of the cross was designed to be foolishness; it has been so, my brethren, and Paul has said not a word too much.

And, first of all, considering it only from an

* Translated from the French for the *Christian Treasury*, by permission of the author, from the seventh edition of the second volume of his sermons. Paris: M. Fischbacher.

A Portion for the Aged.

THINGS THAT CANNOT BE SHAKEN.

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

AMONG the fleeting things of earth are human friendships.

How like delicate porcelain many of them are! They will not stand rough usage, and are easily broken by a sudden jar. When the storm smites us, fair-weather friendships are 'shaken' like the brittle reed. But there is a Friend who sticketh closer than a brother.

'Men, when raised to lofty stations,
Often know old friends no more,
Slight and scorn their poor relations,
Though they valued them before;
But my Saviour always owns
Those whom He redeemed with groans.'

Few things on earth are more unreliable than wealth. There are aged men in charitable institutions who helped to build those very asylums in the days of their prosperity! Every commercial panic shakes down hundreds who were accounted the 'solid men' and always solvent. But there is one bank that never breaks; it is the one which holds the Christian's everlasting treasures. The promises of God never 'go to protest;' though the mountains were removed and cast into the sea, the word of our Heavenly Father endureth for ever. Let the things that are shaken go to the winds. Let the perishable things perish. If I am sitting at the cross of Jesus, washed in His blood, and linked unto Him, then no commercial earthquakes, no failures of men or institutions, no losses of the most beloved and faithful friends, can touch my soul's inner

life that is hid with Christ in God.

'I know in whom I put my trust,
I know what standeth fast
When all things else dissolve like dust
And smoke before the blast.'

These are days when scholarly scepticism is bombarding the bulwarks of Christianity; and some men who wear the outward uniform of the Church are sapping and mining under the walls! But as we walk about Zion and tell her towers and mark the bulwarks, we do not discover the *slightest jar* under the most tremendous assaults. The Bible is its own defender. The strongest evidence for the Gospel is its own self-evidencing power. These are God's 'things that cannot be shaken;' and we Christians are playing the part of fools if we waste our time in merely defending what needs no defence, instead of moving in aggressive work for the salvation of souls. Mr Spurgeon's course is the wise one; he leaves God to take care of His own Word, while he takes care of perishing sinners.

While we feel sure that God's Word and kingdom are immovable, are we equally sure that our own personal hopes for eternity are among the things that cannot be shaken? Certainly not one of us can stand for a single hour if left entirely to ourselves. Paul had no assurance of salvation except that he was 'kept by the power of God, through faith.' Not I, but Christ that liveth in me. Let no

one presumptuously boast, 'I shall never be moved.' It is the 'shaky' professor who indulges in such vain self-confidence. When I hear a Christian talk too glibly about his own attainments, I always feel suspicious that there may soon be a fall. Peter's brag went before Peter's denial of his Lord.

Yet there are children of God who cannot be shaken, because they have built on the rock and abide there. They are 'God's building,' and reared on the chosen cor-

ner-stone and precious. Many are called, but few are *choice*; and these are the choice ones who walk humbly and live closely to Christ. Their foundation standeth sure, having this seal, 'The Lord knoweth them that are His.' They are watchful; they keep a Bible-conscience, and walk circumspectly. If God ever brings me to His everlasting home, I expect to find them there. Reader, where is thy hope for eternity? Is it one of the things that cannot be shaken?

'CAN I TAKE MY SINS BACK?'

THE question was asked by a boy who, under the convicting influences of the Holy Spirit, was made to feel that he was a sinner. His sins, in an unwonted manner and measure, were set before him, and he was troubled on account of them. Nor are such experiences uncommon. It is a part of the office-work of the Spirit to convince of sin; and whenever He thoroughly does this, there is an anxious desire to get rid of it. Many then have been led to ask, 'Can I take my sins back? Can I cancel them, and blot them out? Can I make them as though they had not been?' The answer to such inquiries must always be, 'No. You have committed them; and, for all that *you* can do, they must for ever stand against you.'

And yet there is a way by which you may be rid of them, and they shall be as though they had never been. God says, 'I am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.' He says, 'Come, now, and let us reason together:

though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' On certain reasonable conditions your sins, numerous and great as they may have been, shall all be pardoned, and be no more remembered against you. God will freely forgive them, and treat you as though you had never sinned.

In the first place, you must exercise godly sorrow for your sins, and with the spirit of the publican you must come, saying, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' And, in the second place, you must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. He has died for you, the Just for the unjust; and in the case of those who trust in Him as a Saviour, His blood cleanseth from all sin. Do these simple things. Cordially comply with these gracious conditions, and it shall be just as well with you as though you could take all your sins back, and make them to be as though they had not been. Will you do it? And will you do it now?—*American Messenger*.