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SERMONIC.

RELIGION IN A BUSY LIFE.

BY HENRY M. BOOTH, D.D., IN THE PRES-
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Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.—Dan. vi: 10.

It is always interesting to catch a glimpse of the private life of a distinguished man. A public career is seldom a revelation of character. The demands of official duties and the proprieties of an exalted station act like barriers which conceal the individual. The king is known, but the man who is king is a stranger to the people. They never see him out of uniform. It is hard for them to believe that he has ordinary sympathies, that he can be familiar and playful, that he has his own sorrows, and that he craves the consolation of intimate friendship.

When, however, the opportunity is given of reading the correspondence or

of entering the living room of a great man, an acquaintance is quickly formed. The real life then announces itself. Thus history is constantly reversing the partial, imperfect judgments of a passing generation. Heroes are destroyed or ennobled, as conduct is traced to its motives, and as motives discover character. Thirty of Germany's principal statesmen once sat with Prince Metternich of Austria around a council table while that astute diplomatist led their discussions with reference to the federal relations of the German Diet; and no one of them supposed that a broken-hearted father, whose leisure moments were all passed at the bedside of a dying daughter, was their presiding officer. Yet Metternich's journal of that date bears witness to the agony of his soul in such records as this: "I have happily the gift of keeping my feelings to myself, even when my heart is half broken. Of this I have given certain proof during the last months. The thirty men, with whom I sit daily at the conference table, have certainly never guessed what I was going through while

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been the face of an angel, as the sublime vision of divine perfection passed before him." Dr. Hodge, in speaking of this chapter, says that "for moral elevation, for richness and comprehensiveness, for beauty and felicity of expression, it has been the admiration of the Church in all ages." It is the precious gem amid the jewels in Paul's epistles. He turns love about and holds it up to view, that all may see its charms and desire its possession. Long ago it was said "his description of love is uttered with all the force of the Spirit. This love is the light and life of the moral universe." Now, in looking at this marvellous chapter, we discover that the apostle enumerates fifteen characteristics of love. The Corinthian chapter is the inspired commentary on the Roman text. Read the golden text in the light of that commentary, and think what a world this would be if this love dominated all the actions of men! Social life would be regenerated; commercial life be consecrated; heaven would be begun on earth.

Lastly, this "love is the fulfilling of the law." Reference is had here to the law of Moses, particularly to the ten commandments. Love completes the law of God on this point—that is, in regard to our duty to our neighbor. Christ was asked, "Which is the great commandment in the law?" His answer is well known. He gave not any one precept of the decalogue, but a comprehensive summary thereof. He gave us a statement of the great law of love, first, to God; second, to men. The first is a summary of the first table of the law, the duties we owe to God; the second is a summary of the second table, the duties we owe to man. As a door hangs upon its hinges, so do the law and the prophets hang on these two. From these all other duties spring; in these all other duties are comprised. If the law of love to God and man be in the heart the whole law of duty will be illustrated in the life. Love has been called the abridgment of the law, the new precept of the Gospel. Luther

calls it "the shortest and the longest divinity: short for the form of words; long, yea, everlasting, for the use and practice, for 'Charity shall never cease.'"

Have we this love? Supreme love to God involves appropriate love to man; this twofold love is the fundamental requirement in both law and Gospel. The same Paul who wrote the thirteenth chapter wrote also the sixteenth of First Corinthians, in which we have the solemn words: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha." Love to Christ is the essential matter of religion. It matters not what a man's endowments may be, though he have the gift of prophecy and all knowledge; it matters not what his wealth and liberality may be, though he give his goods to feed the poor and his body to be burned; it matters not what gifts of eloquence he may have, though he could speak with the tongues of angels: if he do not love the Lord Jesus he cannot be saved. Heaven is love. God is love. Without love to God and man heaven, by the most natural of laws, is simply and eternally impossible. God cannot give to a man heaven so long as the man hates God. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Let us meet God in Christ, and we shall possess the love which is the fulfilment of the law—the love of which the apostle so grandly sung: "But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

Victory Over Death.

(Lesson May 11, 1884.)

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D., BROOKLYN.

Oh death, where is thy victory?—1 Cor. xv: 55, Revised Version.

All over this broad earth, death has reared its millions of monuments; but lo! here is a monument to death himself! The conqueror is conquered! Captivity is led captive! The destroyer is destroyed at last by Him who proclaims, "Oh! death, I will be thy

plague; oh! grave, I will be thy destruction."

"How art thou become a picture of confusion, oh, death—standing there with a crumbling bone in thy hand and looking at a celestial being once connected with earthly life by that very bone—but now walking amid the groves of the New Jerusalem! Behold the keys of death and of Hades are in the hands of our Lord; and what wonder if hereafter thou shouldst be compelled to restore even the dust of thy victims. Sweep as thou wilt with thy scythe from pole to pole; there is a sword impending over thee. What canst thou do to him whose life is hid with Christ in God?" *

All this is fine rhetoric, replies the skeptic; but I put my spade into the ground where the fairest human form was once laid, and I find only a heap of dust. The greatest and the proudest and the best are alike; a Shakespeare is no better off than a beggar, for when the sexton's spade once smote through his coffin, he only found a little pile of ashes. Very true; the ruin was complete. Reverently they opened the sarcophagus of Washington years ago, and the form of the Father of his Country crumbled at the touch! The havoc which death had wrought upon the imperial figure was shocking to the senses. There is no such picture of utter ruin, I admit, as that which the grave presents to our pitying eye. The conquest seems complete; the havoc seems hopeless and irremediable. Over such a heap of dust human philosophy stands dumb and confounded. Science says, This is the last of it; these ashes can no more live again than a pebble can sprout into a verdant, stalwart cedar. "Can these dry bones live again?" Science answers, No! it is impossible! Death makes clean work, sure work, final work; his conquest over the body is complete. Death reigns, and has reigned over this race of ours for thousands of years; and to talk of dethroning him, and of restoring his myriads of victims to life, is

pious nonsense—sheer infatuation. So says physical science; and if science knows *everything* about God's universe, then there is no help for it, and no hope. Then we may as well write on the entrance to Greenwood what infidelity once wrote on the portal to Père la Chaise Cemetery, "Death is an everlasting sleep."

Now, my good friends, far be it from me to deny or even to belittle the utter havoc which death makes upon the fairest form or the mightiest brain. I acknowledge the remorseless sweep of a conqueror who has turned a Paul himself, and a Peter, and a Plato, into senseless dust, as surely as he will turn you and me into dust before many years shall have rolled away. Science is perfectly right when she declares that there is no law of nature that ensures the resurrection of that dust to life. No sane man will dispute that. Burn up the Bible of the living God, and with it burn up forever all the revelation which it brings to us, and I will agree to turn skeptic also, and admit that the grave ends all and ends it forever. Extinguish the Bible, and I will admit that the "Greenwoods" and "Woodlawn," with all their exquisite gardenings of green and wealth of flowers, are nothing but hopeless and horrible haunts! They would be charnel houses and nothing else; I should shun them while living, and be frightened at the bare thought of being ever cast into them myself. But, thanks be to God, this Bible light is inextinguishable! The light that has broken into the tomb can never be put out! A truth once known can never be unknown. A divine voice once spoken can never be silenced. And with this inspired, immutable, infallible book of God in my right hand, I go out into yonder beautiful city of the dead that looks out on the "great wide sea," and opening its pages I read, "I am the resurrection and the life;" "All that are in their graves shall come forth;" "Death is swallowed up in victory!"

I. Since all this is not religious-ro-

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mance, but blessed reality, let us look at the truths which are revealed to us. The first thing that God's book teaches us is that there will be an *actual* "resurrection of the dead." What died shall live again. What went into the tomb shall come out of the tomb. Grant indeed that what went in "mortal" shall come out "immortal," that what went in "corruptible" shall come out "incorruptible"; grant that the subsequent transformation shall be from a "natural body" into a "spiritual body;" still the fact remains that what went into the grave shall come forth. We must hold to this or surrender everything. If the Bible teaches anything, it teaches that "all who are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth." There is to be a resurrection, in some form, and by some mysterious method, of the physical structures which our souls now inhabit. The reference cannot be to the immaterial spirit; for the Scriptures never hint even at the imprisonment of the spirit in the tomb. Paul, furthermore, declares to his Roman brethren, that "He who raised up Jesus from the dead shall also *quicken* (*i. e.*, bring to life) your mortal bodies." "This mortal shall put on immortality." What else can possibly be referred to but this tenement of flesh in which my spirit dwells?

II. Personal identity shall be entirely preserved in the resurrection process. The Lazarus who went into the rock-sepulchre at Bethany was the veritable Lazarus who, at the bidding of Omnipotence, came forth. If four days did not change his identity, neither would four thousand years have done so. The crucified Jesus was the Jesus who smote down death and spoiled the tomb of its possession. Personal identity was preserved; it was the same vital organism. As to what constitutes personal identity, we are perfectly sure that we are the *same* individuals that we were twenty or forty years ago, even though the processes of life may have carried away every particle that entered into our bodily formation at *that* time.

The same vital principle is there, the same sex, the same physical characteristics remain. God does not create another man every seven years, and put him into my place to wear my raiment. The oaks in yonder Prospect Park are the identical trees with the saplings which stood there and heard the roar of the Battle of Long Island; they were all acorns once. Resurrection from the tiniest surviving particle of my living organism is as easy to the Almighty as the production of a full-grown oak from the acorn-germ. When the Bible asserts our sameness, it does not explain precisely wherein the sameness consists. Who knows, and what scientist can tell, just where the principle of the organic life of the body is? As Dr. Hodge justly says, "It may be in the soul, which (when the time comes) may unfold itself into a new body, re-gathering its materials according to its own law, just as the principle of vegetable life in the seed unfolds itself into some gorgeous flower, gathering from surrounding nature the materials for its new organization." When thou sowest a grain of wheat, says the apostle, God giveth it a form such as His creative will determined. We cannot infer from looking at a kernel of wheat just how a spear of golden grain will look next August. Equally impossible will it be to determine from what goes into the grave just what will be the nature of the bodies that shall rise on the resurrection morn. But it is the *same* individual wheat-plant, and the *same* individual man. Identity is not lost. The personality that went into the tomb shall be the personality which issues from the tomb. Hold on to that great revealed *fact*, and leave the process of reconstruction in the hand of infinite wisdom and Omnipotence. Hold on to the revealed fact that that which *died* is identical with that which shall be "raised up at the last day." Hold on to the wonderful fact that just what is "sown in corruption is raised in incorruption; what is sown in weakness is raised in power." Grant that the body

decays to dust; it shall reappear imperishable and free from all liability to decay. Grant that the beloved form we attire for the tomb is powerless under our touch; yet it shall reappear instinct with energy and clothed with capabilities of which we have no conception. Yet, mark you, it shall be the *same personality*.

Hold on also to the still further revealed fact that what goes into the grave as a "natural body" shall reappear as a "spiritual body." By this, "*σῶμα πνευματικόν*" (soma pneumatikon) we are to understand a body that shall be adapted to the spiritual and immortal state of being. These mortal bodies are adapted to this present world and are subject to chemical changes, to disease, to decay, and to death. For the purposes of this world they are adequate; but not for those of another and a higher state of existence. They will answer very well for earth, but not for heaven.

III. The third great fact, therefore, which the spirit of inspiration reveals is, that when the "trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised" a marvellous and mysterious transformation shall be wrought. "We shall be *changed*." Not as to identity, observe! Paul distinctly declares the very opposite. He affirms that "*this mortal*" (not something or somebody else), "shall put on immortality." "This corruptible shall put on incorruption." Then the poor body that was racked with sickness and sin, and riddled with diseases, and ruined by death, and turned into a dust-heap, shall be transformed and fashioned "like to the glorious body" of Jesus himself! Mysterious and marvellous change! We cannot comprehend it; but faith rejoices to believe it. Perhaps that appearance which our Lord wore upon the Mount of Transfiguration may give us some hint of what we shall be when we awake in His glorious likeness. Upon Hermon's top the Man of Sorrows, for a few moments, shone with a splendor like the splendor of the sun; His worn and dust-stained garments glittered

with a lustre whiter than the snow! It was the same body *transfigured* and glory-clad. Why may not our "vile bodies" take on as glorious a transformation when they shall be re-fashioned like unto the body of His exaltation?

When this mighty miracle has been wrought; when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be fulfilled the prophecy of the Hebrew seer, "Death is swallowed up in victory!"

The last enemy shall be vanquished. The conqueror shall be conquered! As the apostle in the transporting vision beholds Death thus finally vanquished, he cries out, as in a holy taunt: "Oh! Death! *where* is thy venomous sting?" The rider is unhorsed and in the dust—his lance shivered to fragments. The encircling barriers of the grave, too, are burst asunder; they can hold their prey no longer. "Oh, grave!" oh, thou den of darkness, thou prison-house of helpless dust, thou tyrant that held thy innumerable spoils through the ages, thou swallow-up of all humanity—*disgorge!* Thou art thyself "swallowed up in victory!" So final, so decisive, so complete is the triumph, that the grave itself shall be a *thing of the past*—only a dreadful memory and nothing more, for ever and ever. To Jesus the Christ; to Jesus the conqueror, belongs the glory of this most magnificent triumph. Human agency never brought it about. Science never discovered it, or planned it; "nature" never constructed any law to accomplish it. The law of nature is to die and turn to dust. Mere mortal matter, such as human flesh and blood, has no inherent power of resuscitation. God never gave it any. An eternity might roll away and never disturb the slumber of the tiniest babe that you or I ever laid in its little narrow crib of earth. Left to itself, the "grip" of the grave would *never*, never have been relaxed; what went into its ravenous maw would never have been disgorged.

The Resurrection is—reverently be it

spoken—*Christ's own idea*; it is Christ's stupendous achievement! "I AM the Resurrection!" "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live again!" "Now is *Christ risen* from the dead and become the first fruits"—(the first harvest-sheaf)—of all them which have slept in the tomb. He is the real conqueror and the only conqueror! This crown of triumph flashes on the brow of the glorified Redeemer. He has purchased the redemption of both the bodies and the souls of His own flock. Them "which sleep in him," in His embrace, shall awake in His likeness, and He shall present them in their attire of glory before His father with exceeding joy. "Thanks be unto God who giveth us this victory through our *Lord Jesus Christ!*"

"Cease, cease, ye vain, desponding fears!

When Christ our Lord from darkness springs,
Death, the last foe, is captive led
And Heaven with praise and wonder rings."

The Uproar at Ephesus.

(Lesson May 18, 1884.)

BY ARTHUR MITCHELL, D.D., CLEVELAND, O.

Acts xix: 23-41; and xx: 1, 2.

The Gospel encountered at Ephesus a pair of giant enemies—*Superstition and Selfishness*. A great victory was won over both when the very sorcerers themselves were converted, exposed their former impostures, collected their books of magic, and made a public bonfire of them, at a cost of fifty thousand pieces of silver.

But this victory only opened the conflict. Superstition still held the thousands of Ephesus under darkness; and selfishness in the form of *covetousness*, as we shall see in this lesson, soon mustered its forces and developed a terrific power.

There are not many passages of Scripture which give us a stronger picture of covetousness than this graphic outline of Demetrius' business, and of his tactics in defending it.

I. We have, in the first place, a picture of *covetousness undisturbed*. Nothing in Ephesus could have been easily

found which looked more thrifty, well-behaved and friendly. It asked nothing of the Gospel except to be let alone. Shrine-making at Ephesus was a perfectly "legitimate business." These men, Demetrius and those of his craft, were industrious, worked quietly in their shops, supported their families, and eschewed "fanaticism." To be sure, even in religious matters they had an eye to business. They proposed, however, to aid the power of Religion by Art. Certainly that was ingenious, and from their point of view, was it not a little pious, too? It had a touch of patriotism in it as well. Ephesus might well be proud of sending her renowned fabrics by every road and every fleet to all shores, and rub her hands with quiet satisfaction in every bank and "clearing-house" as she saw the figures of her "giant industry."

Yes; the shrine manufacture was in a very "healthy condition"—industrious, ingenious, respectable, prosperous—every way a nice, quiet business. Shaving notes could not have been more quiet, nor the liquor traffic, nor Sunday railroads and newspapers more enterprising and up to the times.

Besides, within the business itself everything was harmonious. Capital and labor had no quarrel. Demetrius & Co. controlled the capital, but it was well understood that they were no enemies of the "working classes." They brought much gain to the "craftsmen." And when anything imperilled the business, it was beautiful to see how the leading firms could just "call together the workmen," and how perfectly they agreed.

And now the business *was* imperilled. Look, and you will see next:

II. *Covetousness alarmed*. You will learn now

1. How *sensitive* it is. Philosophy, superstition, idolatry even, covetousness itself in the *abstract*, the preachers might assail with comparative impunity; but *business*, especially a good paying business—ah, that is a different thing! "*Business is business.*"

2. How *energetic*. Other sins are some-