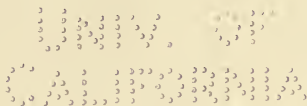


BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

BY

THE MEMBERS OF THE FACULTY OF
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

PUBLISHED IN COMMEMORATION
OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE FOUNDING OF THE SEMINARY



NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
MCMXII

BR 50
P 75

Copyright by the
Trustees of the Theological Seminary
of the Presbyterian Church at
Princeton, New Jersey, 1912.

12-10660

250 263

TO VINDI
ANROTLIAC



MODERN SPIRITUAL MOVEMENTS

CHARLES ROSENBURY ERDMAN

Introduction: Spiritual Life and Religious Activities. Phases emphasized by Modern Movements.

I. *Holiness.*

"Sinless Perfection"—"Christian Perfection"—"The Oberlin Theory"—"The Transferred Self"—"Practical Holiness".

II. *Peace.*

"Quietism"—"Assurance"—"The Rest of Faith"—"Perfect Peace".

III. *Power for Service.*

"The Gift of the Spirit"—"The Infilling of the Spirit"—"The Baptism of the Spirit"—"The Pentecostal Movement".

IV. *Confidence in Prayer.*

"The Ministry of Intercession"—George Müller—Hudson Taylor—Faith Healing—Seasons of Prayer.

V. *Fellowship.*

"Christian Mysticism"—"The Indwelling Christ"—"Christian Fellowship"—"Conventions"—"Retreats".

VI. *Knowledge.*

Bible Study—Theological Seminaries—Bible Schools—Sabbath Schools.

VII. *Hope.*

The Study of Prophecy—Perversions of Doctrine—Inspiration of Hope.

Conclusion: The Possibilities of Personal Progress.

MODERN SPIRITUAL MOVEMENTS

The last century of Christian history has been characterized by notable achievements in various spheres of religious thought and endeavor. It has been an era of great activity in biblical and theological science, of marked development in philanthropic and social service, of unequalled progress in evangelistic and missionary work. All these activities have been manifestations of the spiritual life of the church. In its essence this life has been the same in all ages, however varied may have been its providential expressions and embodiments. The absolute necessity of maintaining this life in vigor is quite obvious. Upon it depends not only the service, and the growth of the church, but its very existence. In these days of vast and complicated religious enterprises there should be proportionate efforts to insure the growth and development of this essential energy. There is a temptation to attempt service without strength, to project great movements without the supply of power, to expect activities without life. It is therefore encouraging to find, even in days of reputed spiritual indifference, large groups of Christians who are facing the problems of Christian experience, and, to use a conventional phrase, are striving for "the deepening of the spiritual life". Obviously "the means of grace" and the processes of spiritual growth are the same for all generations, yet it is helpful and stimulating to note the phases of spiritual life which have been emphasized by certain modern movements. Few of these movements have been definitely organized or clearly defined, yet they have expressed the aspirations of sincere souls for something higher in Christian attainment, for something deeper in Christian experience; and their influence has resulted in the elevation and maintenance of truer ideals of Christian living. Many of them have been attended by extravagances and

misconceptions, but these have been like waves which, as they break above the surface, show the direction and power of currents hidden and silent and strong. These movements draw attention to elements which have never been wanting in the true life of the church, but which need to be recognized and developed continually if this life is to be maintained in purity and developed in power.

I

HOLINESS

Among the essential characteristics of the followers of Christ, personal holiness has ever been regarded as of first importance. Christians are "called to be saints". Hence there is a deep interest and significance in the "holiness movements" which, under various names and in differing forms, have appeared during the past century. Among their leaders are many types, from the advocates of "sinless perfection" on the one extreme, to the mild advocates of "ethical revival" on the other; yet all have emphasized the Christian duty of closer conformity to the will and character of God.

Occasionally those have appeared who claimed absolute sinlessness; they confessed no further need of penitence and forgiveness; they claimed to have perfectly fulfilled the law of God; but they exerted slight influence and aroused little interest, possibly because their impeccability was a phenomenon discovered by none save themselves, while to unbiased observers there was much in their ideals and actions which apparently fell below a divine standard. This was notably the case with the American "Perfectionists", the followers of Noyes, who held that Christ had returned to earth in the Apostolic age, and so completed his saving work that all who accepted his rule were no longer under law but under grace and could do no wrong; but their conduct so far invalidated their claims that unsympathetic neighbors broke up their community in 1847, after an experiment of little more than ten years. "Absolute perfection" does not seem to make a very serious appeal to the modern imagination.

More commonly, however, the claim has been made of a relative holiness, or of "Christian Perfection". This doctrine is of course associated with the name of John Wesley, who, in the previous century, had advocated the theory, but had carefully limited his statement by declaring that it was neither a divine, nor an angelic, nor an Adamic perfection; but such as is possible for fallen but regenerated man. It does not exclude ignorance and errors of judgment with consequent wrong affections. "It needs the atoning blood for both words and actions which are, in a sense, transgressions of the perfect law". As Wesley declared "it is the perfection of which man is capable while dwelling in a corruptible body;—it is loving the Lord his God with all his heart and with all his soul, and with all his mind." While this doctrine has been subsequently misrepresented, and has led to delusions and self-deceptions, while even in its original form it is open to serious question and criticism, yet there can be no doubt that it has been of wide and helpful influence, and that the teachings of Methodism have stimulated the desire for holier living, and have led many to higher levels of Christian experience.

About the middle of the century there appeared a curious phase of holiness doctrine, which was first advocated by two theological students of Oberlin. According to the theory of "the simplicity of moral action" it is impossible that sin and virtue should coexist in the human heart at the same time. "All moral action is single and indivisible; the soul is either wholly consecrated to Christ or it has none of his spirit. The two states may alternate. The man may be a Christian at one moment, and a sinner the next, but he cannot be at any moment a sinful or imperfect Christian". Dr. Finney seems to have accepted the logical conclusions of the theory and to have taught that regeneration involved complete sanctification.

The errors in such a system it may not be difficult to discover; yet at the same time it is not to be denied that Dr. Finney proved to be a great power in promoting personal holiness. While undoubtedly carrying his doctrine too far and suggesting that a perfect choice of God is essentially a perfect life, he did emphasize the responsible activity of the human will. While Christians were apparently waiting for

some mysterious, divine impulse, and meanwhile were living carnal lives of selfish indulgence, he sounded out his commanding message of responsibility, of the duty of moral choice, of the absolute necessity of immediate and continual effort to attain the holiness which is possible for the believer and is demanded of the follower of Christ.

An equally curious theory of holiness, which has had a wider acceptance than is usually realized, has been falsely attributed to the Plymouth Brethren. It was a perversion of "Plymouthism" and should never be regarded as forming a part of that system. According to this peculiar theory, regeneration consists in the creation of a "new nature" which is sinless, and which constitutes the "real self". Meanwhile the "old nature" still exists, but is no longer identified with the "Ego". Whatever this "old nature" may do involves the believer in no sin, for he is identified with the new nature which does no sin. Every Christian therefore possesses a dual personality; he is a veritable "Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde", only, no matter what may be done by him, he is accountable only for the actions of the genial Doctor. This would be a comfortable doctrine, if we could only persuade ourselves of its truth; but most of us are compelled to believe that the continuous identity of personality is a fundamental fact in all human consciousness and experience.

What the Plymouth Brethren actually taught was the contrast between the tendencies, motives and inclinations of the regenerate and unregenerate soul, and not a transferred nor a dual personality. They continually exhorted believers to "identify themselves" with the "new nature", or in Pauline phrase, "to reckon themselves dead unto sin", "knowing that the old man was crucified with Christ". It was this scriptural doctrine, or their possibly imperfect statement of this doctrine, which was perverted into the theory of the "transferred self". "Plymouthism", whatever its faults, never made for antinomianism. It arose as a protest against the worldliness of the church and the unscriptural practices of professing Christians. Its adherents advocated absolute submission to the scriptures, and proclaimed with clearness and fidelity the great truths concerning the work of Christ, the justification and

standing of believers, and the absolute need of continual identification with Christ. To this movement more than to any other one influence the church is indebted for the teachings and work of the late D. L. Moody. He was never identified with the "Brethren", yet he was fully imbued with their doctrines and they formed the substance of his message. Such an example may suggest the general relation of Plymouth teachings to evangelical truth in general; but it is in the specific matter of the promotion of holiness that these teachings had their most helpful influence, an influence extending widely beyond the circles of the Brethren. According to these tenets, the justified soul is free from the guilt both of "sins" and of "sin", from condemnation not only for actual transgressions but also for the possession of an evil nature, and so of a tendency to sin. Of course if one allows that nature to express itself in acts, those acts are sins, and bring with them guilt and separation from God. But the mere possession of these evil tendencies is not sin. "There is no condemnation for them that are in Christ Jesus." The apprehension of such a truth has lifted a crushing burden from many a soul and resulted in immediate and unprecedented progress in holiness. The result has been like the difference between the experiences described in the seventh and in the eighth chapter of Romans. It has come from the fuller understanding of what is involved in the pregnant statement: "What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." It is this very truth of "the standing" of the believer, in spite of his possession of evil tendencies, as stated by the Plymouth teachers, which was perverted into the doctrine of the "transferred self". Possibly as stated by these teachers,—who were not usually expert in metaphysical distinctions, and who often were unconscious of the psychological implications of their own statements as they spoke of old and new "natures", of identification with "the new man", and identification with Christ,—the propositions may have been open to such perversion; yet none can sympathetically review the Plymouth teach-

ings without gaining a fuller apprehension of our relation to God through Christ. In spite of their divisive tendencies, their occasional misinterpretations of scripture and their fondness for controversy, the Plymouth Brethren have been examples to their fellow Christians in practical separation from the world, in loyal adherence to the great doctrines of grace, and in personal holiness of life.

Another phase of holiness teaching with even less apparent foundation in Scripture than could be found for the theory of the "transferred self" was advanced by the advocates of "The Higher Life". While this movement had various forms, and was indicated by different phrases, as "the second blessing", "entire sanctification", or "complete salvation", its essential teaching was that absolute sinlessness might be attained by a single act of complete consecration to God. It was held that as a result of such a dedication of self and of a simultaneous act of appropriating faith, a state could be attained where henceforth the believer would be kept from sin. This extreme and obviously untenable position was soon modified by suggesting that the experience to be secured was not absolute sinlessness, but a perfection of Christian love, and a relative holiness, which was later defined as a "deliverance from known sin". In this modified form the movement exerted wide influence. Among its leaders will be remembered the name of R. Pearsall Smith, whose rather pathetic story reminds us of the powerful and effective appeals made by these teachers for the abandonment, not only of positive sins, but of all "weights", and hindrances to Christian progress, and for a definite and complete consecration to Christ. It is to the meetings held for such consecration, and to the suggestion of the possibility of attaining a truer Christian experience, that we are to trace the inception of the movement associated with the names of Oxford, and Brighton and Keswick.

This last is the most definite and powerful and familiar of all the movements for holiness which the century has witnessed. Like the advocates of "The Higher Life", its early leaders insisted upon an experience in the nature of a "crisis", and aimed to secure "freedom from sin". Yet this crisis was such, in its essence, as most believers needed to experience,

and the deliverance promised was from "known and discovered sin". Some of these teachers insisted that the "crisis" must be obtained by a mechanical process, involving "seven steps", which were to be taken by all, and in an invariable order, to secure "the fullness of blessing". Keswick teachers no longer hold such a stereotyped form of experience to be essential or requisite. In fact the peculiarity of the Keswick movement is that its true helpfulness has been found, not in changing the doctrinal beliefs of its adherents, but in aiding them to appreciate and appropriate the riches of grace in Christ Jesus which are offered in common to all believers. Its supreme aim is indicated in the invitation to the original Oxford meetings in 1874, "For the Promotion of Scriptural Holiness", or in the title of the first Keswick gathering, in 1875, a "Convention for the Promotion of Practical Holiness." The purpose therefore has been to make men holy. It has never suggested "sinless perfection"; it has advocated no new doctrines of theology; but it has insisted upon the necessity of abandoning all known sin, of complete dedication to Christ, and of appropriating, for holy living, the power of God in Christ.

Such a message the church needs to-day; such a movement, in some form, it should welcome and promote. Too long has the mere mention of "holiness" awakened suspicion and a conscious contempt for theories of "sinless perfection" on the part of those who feel content with practices of sinful imperfection. It is no new doctrine to declare that Christ came to save us from the power as well as the guilt of sin; but it comes like a divine revelation to many, who are in bondage to some particular form of evil, to be assured that they may enjoy and should expect continual victory. Every Christian is familiar with the divine command: "Be ye holy for I am holy"; yet by what qualifications and excuses do we allow ourselves to be guilty of pride and indolence, and covetousness and censoriousness, of self-indulgence and spiritual indifference! Conscious of secret faults, yet facing our serious tasks, we need to be reminded anew that our Lord will use only clean vessels. Let us review the written pledges of divine help and divine fellowship, and "having these promises,

let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit perfecting holiness in the fear of God ”.

II

PEACE.

A second element of spiritual life, which these movements have emphasized, is the possibility of rest and peace of soul and heart. This was the promise of the Master, “ Come unto me and I will give you rest ”. This was his legacy: “ Peace, I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.” This was the continual salutation of the apostles: “ Peace be multiplied unto you ”. Yet in how few lives is unbroken peace either an habitual experience or a recognized possibility. In its place are doubts as to acceptance with God, the distraction of pressing duties, the depression of conscious and continual moral failure, worry in the present and anxiety for the future. Yet the leaders of these various movements speak, with an unquestioned sincerity, of their experience of “ perfect peace and rest ”. It is noticeable that the Brethren, the advocates of “ The Higher Life ”, and the Keswick teachers have this in common, that they have laid great stress upon the experience of an abiding tranquility of soul. It is described by different phrases, as “ assurance ”, or “ the rest of faith ”, or the “ fullness of blessing ”; but it seems to indicate an element of life noticeably lacking in the modern church. The experience was said to arise from different sources, and was explained on different grounds, and in all cases was evidently distinct from the Quietism of earlier centuries. According to the tenets of the many sects who have been classed under this general term, the perfect state of the soul is one of perfect quiet in which it ceases to reason or to reflect either upon itself or upon God, or to exercise any of its faculties, being completely under the influence of God’s Spirit, without performing the ordinary acts of faith or hope or love. Modern spiritual movements have known but little, if anything, of such speculative errors; and yet when open to criticism in their suggestions as to the means of securing peace, it has been along a closely related line of indicating a too passive acceptance of supernatural influen-

ces. Unlike the "Quietists", modern teachers have always insisted upon faith, and consciousness, and the active states of the soul. If peace has come it has been the "peace of believing", if rest has been enjoyed it has been the "rest of faith".

Among the Plymouth Brethren the experience has been known as "the assurance of salvation". It has sprung from confidence in a divinely wrought work of regeneration, in the possession of a new nature, and in the promises of scripture. It has been inseparable from belief in the atoning work of Christ, in the renewing and sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, in the changeless love of God. Even though there were, in the minds of many, certain mistaken conceptions as to the "new nature", this experience was evidently based on the acceptance of truths which have been the common possession of the church of all ages. There was nothing novel in this aspect of their teaching; they were enjoying a peaceful assurance, perfectly possible for all, but utterly unknown by vast multitudes of the professed followers of Christ. Nothing would be more helpful in preparing the modern church for service than the possession of this confident "assurance of faith".

In the case of the advocates of "The Higher Life" the experience was not so much a peace born of a conscious acceptance with God as a joyful but passive reception of deliverance from sin. If we associate the name of R. Pearsall Smith with a call to holiness, we cannot fail to remember Hannah Whitall Smith as an advocate of "the rest of faith". When reading "the Christian's secret of a happy life" one cannot but feel that too little stress is laid upon the need of human effort, of resolution, determination, conflict; yet none the less there is awakened a hunger of heart for the peace and rest and joyous confidence which the writer shows to be the rightful experience of every Christian, but which the average reader regards with the yearning of one who is tossing upon a troubled sea, but dimly discerning the distant quiet haven he seems unable to reach. The Christian life is of course a struggle, a contest, a buffeting of the body, a warfare; and any theory is to be deprecated which makes us less mindful of the necessity which is ever upon us to "watch and pray lest we fall into

temptation". It is just possible that the very phrase "the rest of faith" has at times concealed this aspect of truth. It has come to us from the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews and has usually been employed, not only by advocates of the "Higher Life", but by many other teachers, in a sense rather at variance with the usage of the author of the Epistle. It appears that he is speaking, not of a present rest, but of a future experience, which he finally describes as "a Sabbath rest" which yet "remains for the people of God". For the present there is continual conflict, yet there may be continuous victory. "The rest of faith" should never denote a state of inactivity. As a scriptural phrase it denotes the future experience of those who are united to Christ by faith; and if, by accommodation, it is applied to a present experience, it should be employed to describe the peace of those, who, in the midst of conflict, have the consciousness of a Saviour's presence and confidence in his unfailing power.

Such is "the rest of faith", as suggested by the teachers of the Keswick platform. They have never held the theory that sin is dead, or that it has been eradicated. They have ever warned their hearers against the seductions of the "self-life", and of the power of "the world and the flesh and the Devil"; but they have sounded out the triumphant note; "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ".

There can be peace amidst conflict, yet this thought does not exhaust the meaning which Keswick teachers have intended to embody in the phrase "the rest of faith". There can be not only peace in the midst of conflict, but restful service for those at toil, and quietness of heart for those beset by the perplexities and disappointments and uncertainties of life. This again is no new doctrine. Such perfect peace has been enjoyed by unnumbered followers of Christ during all the passing centuries, and is known to-day by many who never may have heard of "The Higher Life", of Keswick, or "the rest of faith". Yet the church can be glad that the message has been so clearly emphasized in these latter days in which it is peculiarly needed. "Christian Science" and "The New Thought", and similar movements which have promised peace

of mind and freedom from worry, might not have attained their popularity and power, had Christians claimed and enjoyed and manifested the rest of soul which Christ is ever ready to give; or had they, in faith, obeyed the exhortation of Paul: "Rejoice in the Lord always. In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God; and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus". That such peace and rest are possible to-day is the message of that beautiful hymn by Miss Havergal, which, because of its frequent use, is inseparably connected with Keswick Conventions:

"Like a river glorious
Is God's perfect peace,
Over all victorious
In its bright increase;
Perfect, yet it floweth
Fuller every day—
Perfect, yet it groweth
Deeper all the way."

"Stayed upon Jehovah
Hearts are fully blest;
Finding, as he promised,
Perfect peace and rest."

III

POWER FOR SERVICE.

The true end of life is service. It is first of all "to glorify God" if it is secondly "to enjoy him". This obvious fact has been overlooked by many advocates of the higher phases of Christian life. They have been tempted to reverse the order, if not to make the subjective experience an end in itself. Yet even these teachers have not failed to call attention to the indispensable work of the Holy Spirit. All modern movements for the deepening of the spiritual life devote the greater portion of their literature to the discussion of the operations of the Spirit upon the soul and in the life of the

believer. In most cases, however, the purpose has been to so relate the life to the divine will, and to be so endued with divine grace, as to secure what is commonly designated as "power for service". The phrase itself is objectionable as open to a misinterpretation. It may seem to suggest that spiritual power is a distinct entity, imparted to the believer to be used in Christian service; whereas in reality the believer is only the channel or instrument which the Spirit employs. This would be freely admitted by most exponents of the doctrines which relate to spiritual experience. Many may have been guilty of strange extravagances, and of curious misinterpretations of Scripture, yet all have emphasized anew the divine message, so much needed in these days of multiplied organizations, and complicated religious machinery, and human programmes: "Not by might nor by power but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." The scriptural doctrine concerning the Holy Spirit does not seem to be specially intricate or difficult to understand, however varied may be its form of statement by different expositors. The Christian Church through all the centuries has believed that God, by his Spirit, is present with every follower of Christ; that He grants needed grace for every experience in life; that the essential condition of his fuller manifestation is more complete devotion to Christ.

There is nothing mystical about the doctrine. It suggests no need of sudden crises or mechanical and esoteric processes. Yet a great number of modern movements, seriously intended to secure greater efficiency in Christian service, have been led by those who have intimated that either the presence or the power of the Holy Spirit, is in some way extraordinary, and that his gracious operations can be made possible only by some special method or peculiar plan of action which will result in an experience distinct, separate from and subsequent to conversion.

For instance there are those who teach that "The Gift of the Spirit", which was promised at Pentecost to all who repented and believed, is now granted only to certain Christians, and as a gift separate from regeneration. They urge others to pray for his coming, to seek for "the blessing", to "receive the Holy Ghost". The scriptures, however, plainly teach that to speak of a Christian in whom the Holy Spirit is not

dwelling, is a contradiction in terms. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his"—he is not a Christian. "No man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit." One may have grieved Him by his life, or failed to yield to his gracious bidding; but, in the Bible, Christians are never urged to become holy in order that the Holy Spirit may come to them; even the most impure were urged to cleanse themselves because their bodies were already "temples of the Holy Ghost". It is at once the encouraging and inspiring doctrine of scripture that the Comforter has come to abide with every Christian forever. The prevalent misconception has been due to the careless interpretation of certain passages.

(a) It is asserted that the Spirit came to the disciples at Pentecost, although their acceptance of Christ and their regeneration were experienced long before. It may be answered that while at Pentecost there was a new manifestation of the Spirit's power, he did not then for the first time, come to the followers of Christ, but had long been with them, as he was with Jesus, and with John and Mary and the saints of old. Nor was the gift granted only to the eleven, but to all the "one hundred and twenty" and to three thousand converts on the day of their accepting Christ.

(b) The delay in the impartation of the Spirit to the Samaritan believers, is adduced as an argument; but it should be remembered that the bestowment of special supernatural gifts at the hands of the apostles is a matter quite distinct from the previous regenerating and sanctifying operations of the Holy Ghost.

(c) Paul is said to have asked the followers of John the Baptist at Ephesus whether they received the Holy Ghost, "when they believed", thereby implying that such a reception is normally subsequent to the acceptance of Christ. The sufficient answer is that they were followers of John the Baptist, and that, when Paul preached to them Christ, they accepted Christ, and immediately the Holy Spirit came upon them with supernatural power.

The typical case for all believers is that of Cornelius and his household. Even in the midst of the sermon, before any open confession, or baptism, or laying on of hands, the full

Pentecostal blessing was received. It is not necessary, therefore, that a Christian should agonize in prayer, or by any peculiar experience or in any particular place seek for "the gift of the Holy Spirit"; but rather he should be encouraged so to live as to in no way grieve the divine inhabitant who has come to abide in every believing heart, and so to seek the glory of his Lord that he may use him continually for the doing of his will.

The case of Cornelius may also serve as a helpful corrective to many others, who, while believing in the presence of the Holy Spirit with all believers, insist that "the infilling of the Holy Spirit" is a unique experience, subsequent to regeneration, and only to be attained by some specified and uniform process. Certain teachers brought an unnecessary and unfortunate discredit to the Keswick movement by the advocacy of this theory. Six "steps" were insisted upon as preparatory to the desired experience: (1) Abandonment of every known sin; (2) Surrender of the will and the whole being to Jesus Christ; (3) Appropriation by faith of God's promise and power for holy living; (4) Voluntary renunciation and mortification of the self-life; (5) Gracious renewal or transformation of the inmost temper and disposition; (6) Separation unto God for sanctification, consecration and service. Then would follow the desired blessing, namely (7) Endowment with power and "infilling with the Holy Spirit".

Now it should be remarked that these seven acts or states, at some time or in enlarging measure, should be those of every Christian; but the first three should be regarded as inseparable from conversion; the second three should be continuous processes; and the last, the goal of all, should be regarded as an experience often to be repeated. As to the first three, they are involved in a true acceptance of Christ; and one who has taken those steps has been born of the Spirit who has come to abide with him forever. The fourth is equivalent to "taking up the cross" and must be done "daily". The fifth and sixth are descriptive of the progressive sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. The seventh is the normal state of all Christians; to be "filled with the Spirit" is as natural as "not to be filled with wine". Those who daily devote them-

selves to Christ should expect to be led and empowered and controlled by his Spirit. Yet this ideal state is not the usual state of professed followers of Christ. There may be an interval between conversion and the fuller manifestation of the Spirit's power; there need be none; but there may have been some lack of knowledge or imperfect obedience, or unconscious disloyalty to the Master, and then gradually, or possibly by a sudden crisis, a more complete knowledge and appropriation of Christ results in a new experience of peace or holiness or power. In such a case, however, this "second blessing" is only, what has been well called, "the missing half of the first blessing."

This experience of being "filled with the Spirit" may be repeated; the early disciples were filled again and again; sin may have grieved the Spirit; or there may be need of some new manifestation of his power; then repentance and renewed consecration result in new blessing. The "second blessing" may be less notable than the twenty-second. By insisting on a process of six steps resulting in a "crisis" called "the infilling of the Spirit", the false implication is given that to have been "filled with the Spirit", is to have attained a level which never can be lost, to have been granted a gift which never need be renewed, whereas we need daily fillings, and continual bestowments, and "grace for grace".

This "filling of the Spirit" may not be attended by the manifestations which have been expected. Many Christians torment themselves by the fear that they are not "Spirit-filled" because they are judging themselves by some fictitious or arbitrary standard. They are looking for some power of utterance, some specific result in service, some particular emotion which the Lord may deny. It is not for us to dictate the mode of his operation but to yield to his sovereign will.

The "fulness of the Spirit" may be an unconscious experience. One most truly under his power will not at the time be much concerned about himself, but will be conscious anew of the love of God, or the glory of Christ. There is no suggestion in scripture that the Spirit glorifies himself or manifests himself; he "sheds abroad in our hearts the love of God", he has come to "glorify Christ". The Christian should not be pausing to continually test his spiritual condition by self-

imposed standards, but should ever be asking whether he is wholly devoted to his Lord. Such devotion will be inseparable from all that is meant by being "filled with the Spirit".

In most cases the experience will be gradual. It is true that in the early chapters of the Acts there were recorded sudden and unusual manifestations of the Spirit's power; but, through the entire course of the Epistles, only one such reference is made. Wherever, in the Bible, such experiences are mentioned, nothing is said of uniform "steps" or "processes". Repentance and faith and identification with Christ are mentioned, and each one of these may involve a crisis; and then the faithful following of Christ may involve a series of crises. But normally the usual "means of grace" may be expected to result in a gradual increase of power, enabling us to serve or to suffer, or to grow into the likeness of our Lord.

Closely connected with these theories as to "the infilling of the Spirit", is the doctrine concerning, "The Baptism of the Spirit". This is defined as "a conscious experience, distinct from and additional to regeneration, designed to give power for testimony or service." It is also designated as "the endowment for power", or "the baptism for service". It is obviously, therefore, the claim of a similar experience more clearly defined in character than "the infilling", or is a specific application of the previous theories. It is supposed to be proved by the same passages of scripture, and demands a similar series of prescribed "steps". The latter are as follows: (1) Acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord; (2) Renunciation of sin; (3) An open confession of this renunciation of sin and acceptance of Jesus Christ; (4) Absolute surrender to God; (5) An intense desire for the baptism with the Spirit; (6) Definite prayer for this baptism; (7) Faith that the baptism has been given.

It is even more clear in the case of these steps, than in those once insisted upon at Keswick, that the four which are preliminary and preparatory to "the experience" are absolutely identical with those in conversion; if one has not "accepted Christ", "renounced sin", "confessed Christ", and "surrendered to God", he is not a Christian; if he has taken these steps he is a Christian, and as such has been baptized by

the Spirit into the one body of Christ. Special work may be given to do, native talents may be developed, special gifts may be received, but this will be as occasions may arise and by the normal guidance and influence of the Spirit which animates this "one body".

The phrase "baptism with the spirit" is never applied in the New Testament to an experience subsequent to conversion, except in the case of the unique Pentecostal manifestation; and if it is there applied to the little group of believers it is also applied to the three thousand souls who were not previously converted but on that day were united to the Christian church. The impossibility of limiting the use of the term as suggested by this theory appears at once on reading the account of the conversion of Cornelius and his household. Here the experience is described by such phrases as "poured out", "fell upon", "received", "baptized", "gave"; and it was said by Peter to be identical with the experience at Pentecost which was also described as either a "baptism" or a "filling" or a "gift". The scriptural usage is to apply the word "baptism" to the initial operation of the Spirit by which a believer is regenerated and incorporated with the body of Christ, while successive "fillings" describe subsequent special manifestations of the Spirit's power. "One baptism but many fillings" seems to be the teaching and the terminology of scripture.

But we are not so much intent upon the name as upon the nature of the alleged "endowment for service". There seems to be no reason for believing that the New Testament describes an operation of the Spirit distinct from regeneration, from the miraculous gifts of the early church and from the continual supply of grace for the various necessities of the Christian life; nor does it in any place suggest that power for service can be obtained by any prescribed spiritual process, or *tour de force* of faith. The conditions of spiritual power are the same for all the experiences of the believer. Nor again does Christian testimony confirm such a theory of a special baptism given once and for all. Dr. Finney declared that he received "an overwhelming baptism of the Holy Spirit" on the day of his conversion, but that he needed to have this same experience repeated again and again. The Spirit is an

abiding presence; of course he grants power for service, but so too does he impart patience in suffering, and growth in grace. It is laudable to desire an enduement of power; but we should no more expect this to be secured by a mystical crisis, than we should claim an instantaneous transformation into the likeness of Christ by a sudden exercise of will. Why not as properly expect a sudden "baptism for purity", or "baptism for love", as a "baptism for power"? And why are we to suppose the supply of "power" is given once for all, and not as frequently repeated as occasions may demand? Or, admitting such bestowals to be repeated, why distinguish the first from all the rest, and designate it by the special name of "the baptism"? It is the duty of the Christian to devote himself to the service of his Master, believing that by his Spirit, he will equip him with all needed power for the accomplishment of his perfect will. Crises will come and special difficulties will arise, and particular manifestations will be given; but, for all the experiences of life, the abiding Comforter will supply every need.

The essential fallacy in the theory of "the baptism with the Spirit", is the arbitrary selection of one manifestation of his indwelling, namely, "power for service", and of regarding it as differently conditioned from his other operations, or as a proof that the believer is truly under his control. This fallacy is emphasized by the extraordinary developments of the recent "Pentecostal movement" which has caused so much of excitement and unrest among many faithful Christian workers in America, and England, and India, and China. It is taught that one who is truly "filled with the Spirit" will be granted the miraculous "gift of tongues". This gift is coveted not as an instrument for service, so much as a demonstration of "the fullness of the Spirit". Whether the whole movement is an outburst of fanaticism, and whether the supposed gift is in every case a pitiful delusion, are questions of fact to be determined upon the investigation of evidence; but it is beyond all question that the movement is inspired by a false conception and involves a mistaken theory. No one manifestation can be selected as proof of the indwelling and the operation of the Holy Spirit, least of all some extraordinary gift which tends

to draw attention to the possessor rather than to Christ the giver.

Such a movement is manifestly strongly contrasted, in its unscriptural doctrines, with the teachings of those sane and devoted Christians who have held their special theories as to the "filling" or "baptism" of the Spirit. The influence of the latter has been salutary; it has suggested the unquestioned truth that the lives of many Christians are so worldly and selfish that a "crisis" is truly needed,—a new consecration to Christ,—to be followed by a "process" of increasing transformation into his likeness and of larger achievement in his service. Much of the apparent divergence of views, among those who have been discussing the biblical doctrine of the Holy Spirit, is due to a difference in phraseology. All are united in declaring that he is the source of all life and grace and power:

" And every virtue we possess
And every victory won
And every thought of holiness
Are his alone."

IV

CONFIDENCE IN PRAYER.

Prayer is the vital breath of the Christian church, it is at once the source and expression of its spiritual life; it, alone, makes possible the inception and renders permanent its various forms of service. The "secrets" of prayer have been "open" during the whole history of the race; no recent discoveries have been made as to its nature or conditions or power; yet God has granted, during the past century certain definite messages which have inspired the church to a new confidence in prayer. There has been a new appreciation of the blessed "ministry of intercession". Many "hidden servants of the King" have learned how to wield in secret an omnipotent power which has achieved marvellous results in distant lands; while certain forms of public service have been so identified with prayer as to stimulate others to depend more definitely upon the willingness of God to honor the believing petitions of his people. Of the latter two examples may be cited as illus-

trations of the many forms of testimony embodied in the Christian history of the past century. George Müller, the founder of the great orphanages at Bristol, England, felt specially called to a service which would prove that prayer is a reality, and that definite petitions receive specific answers from God. He undertook his great charity on a faith-basis, determining to solicit no funds, and to mention no needs save to God alone; and to do this, not to suggest a method which all Christian workers should adopt, but to demonstrate a power which all believers might wield. He conducted his work, not only to save orphans from distress and to bring them to Christ, but primarily to prove the efficacy of prayer. During all the decades of his prolonged life he made no appeal for aid; in times of special scarcity he even delayed the publication of his annual report, lest it might suggest to his friends the need of relief. He went directly to God. The record of that life, so thrilling in interest, presents facts as to answered prayer which can be explained away by no theory of coincidences, and by no reasoning of naturalism. More than seven and a half millions of dollars came to this one Christian worker in answer to believing prayer.

A second familiar figure, which had a definite and inspiring message to this century of Christians, was that of Hudson Taylor. He never insisted that all Christian enterprises, nor even that all Christian missions, should be conducted upon exactly the principles he followed in his work. He held that other forms of organization might be quite as compatible with a life of faith; yet he felt called to a peculiar work and for its accomplishment his sole reliance was upon the power of prayer. At the time the eleven great interior provinces of China were wholly unevangelized. That was a memorable day, when, at Brighton, Hudson Taylor wrote on the margin of his Bible: "Prayed for twenty-four willing, skillful workers, June 25, 1865." It was the actual record of the founding of the China Inland Mission. How speedily the prayer was answered is well known; also how subsequently the specific petition for "seventy new workers within three years" was honored; and most remarkable of all, how, in 1886, the definite request for "one hundred missionaries and money for their

equipment" was offered at the opening of the year with such confidence that a meeting for praise was held to return thanks for the blessed reply which the months would and did bring. It all reads like the veritable romance of missions, and yet it was designed of God, not only to open Inland China to the Gospel, but to incline the hearts of all observing believers to a new confidence in prayer.

Such are among the many examples which might be cited of a renewed manifestation of the spirit of prayer, and to that spirit are to be traced, in largest measure, all the great missionary and benevolent activities of the church, during the century just ending.

Such a prayer movement, as is not unnatural, has been marked by certain occasional extravagances, and by partial misinterpretations of the marvellous promises of God upon which confidence in prayer is based. In this connection might be mentioned, as illustrative, the movement which has been known as "faith healing", or "spiritual healing", which has relied upon the efficacy of "the prayer of faith." Such reference should be made if only to state again the impropriety of confusing such a movement with "Christian Science" or "mental therapy". "Christian Science" is anti-Christian, involving a false philosophy and a false religion. It denies the existence of matter, the personality of God, the guilt of sin, the deity and work of Christ. "Psycho-therapy" has no necessary connection with religion, but is based on the scientific principle of the effect of "mind upon matter"; it endeavors to influence physical conditions by mental states and processes. It is at times allied with certain religious doctrines; and at others with the usual practice of therapeutics.

"Faith healing", however, is wholly a religious movement. Its followers normally hold all the doctrines of Christianity; only their understanding of the promises relative to prayer are such as to lead them to abandon, in cases of bodily sickness, all suggested means, and rely wholly upon "the prayer of faith". In meeting this theory, or in opposing this practice, one should be careful to admit that God can and may effect cures without the use of known means, but should maintain that it is not of faith to dictate either what God is to do, or

how he is to do it. Submission is of the very essence of prayer. Nor are we to insist upon the use of some particular means; scientists still differ as to methods of treatment. Above all we should remember that there is a greater temptation among Christians to resort to means without prayer than to depend upon prayer without means.

Even such side currents as "faith-healing" suggest what the direction of the stream has been. There are similar suggestions to be found in the appointment of special seasons for prayer. Among these, the most notable is that at the opening of the year, when according to the request of missionaries in India, half a century ago, a special week has been observed annually as a period of prayer "for the evangelization of the world". Such too are the days of "prayer for colleges", and the days of "prayer for young men". In later years these have been observed too much as days of preaching rather than as days of prayer. In most churches, also, the weekly prayer meeting is being displaced by a lecture, or maintained as a mere formal service. The time has come for a new and definite movement. There must be a new resort to prayer. The encouragement has been given by providential examples and credible witnesses. If the church is to succeed in accomplishing the great activities now projected, if she is to enter the doors open before her, it can only be possible by a revival of the spirit and practice of believing prayer.

V

FELLOWSHIP.

Prayer is not only petition but also communion; it suggests not merely intercession but fellowship; and many modern writers and speakers express a definite longing for a more real and conscious and direct communion with the Divine. Such a desire and such a professed experience is characterized as "modern mysticism". There are and ever have been forms of mysticism which are perilous, fanatical, and unscriptural; but, in a certain sense, all Christians are mystics, although not all mystics are Christians. The Bible is ever emphasizing the privilege of divine fellowship, and suggesting the possi-

bility of meeting with God " face to face ". Paul has not been improperly characterized as a " practical mystic "; and it is not difficult to discern the mystical elements in the teachings of St. Augustine; nor can one deny a certain reality in the experiences of a St. Francis; while St. Bernard, the mystic, speaks for the hearts of uncounted believers as he sings:

" Jesus, the very thought of thee
With sweetness fills my breast;
But sweeter far thy face to see
And in thy presence rest."

As a modern writer has suggested: " As soon as there comes a consciousness of a divine response, in prayer or sacrament, a sense of providential guidance, and faith begins to be confirmed by experience, the resulting state may be called mystical, since it involves a conviction of personal communion with God, of contact, in one degree or another, with divine reality. All Christian life, therefore, which is sustained by this conviction is mystical at heart." This state has been common to the greater number of Christians in all ages, but it has been especially emphasized by certain modern teachers.

It may be noted that, in many minds, confusion has been caused by the contrasted phrases used in describing this state. Some today are speaking continually, as did Jeremy Taylor and " Brother " Lawrence, of " The Practice of the Presence of God ", others, as has been already suggested, dwell upon " The Spirit-Filled Life ", while others emphasize the truth of " The Indwelling Christ ". To many, a totally different experience is suggested by each different phrase; and the question is being asked, most earnestly: " Should we seek for the conscious presence of the Father, the Spirit or the Son." It suggests another familiar question: " In prayer, should we address the Father or the Son or the Holy Spirit?" To the second question, it may be safe to reply, that there can be no impropriety in addressing any one of the three persons of the adorable trinity; but the more common scriptural usage suggests prayer to the Father, in the name of the Son, by the power of the Spirit. So to the question occasioned by the varying phrases of the mod-

ern exponents of a true Christian mysticism, it may be replied, that the experiences indicated are all identical, in so far as they express the presence and indwelling of God. We have not three Gods, and where one person of the Trinity is present, the others are present also. The Holy Spirit has not come to take the place of an absent Christ, but to make manifest a Christ who is present. It was the Son who said, in connection with the work of the Spirit: "If a man love me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and *we* will come unto him and make *our* abode with him." It may, however, be suggested that the more frequent expressions in the New Testament would indicate that in the matter of this divine fellowship it is well to emphasize the relation of the soul to God as Father. Christ declared himself to be the way: "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." "Through him," writes Paul, "we have our access in one Spirit unto the Father."

A still more important question has been raised by the modern mystics who have brought their helpful message to an age of materialism and naturalism: "How is the consciousness of a divine presence to be secured?" In spite of much that has been written to the contrary, in spite of many misleading but popular figurative expressions, it should be maintained that the human soul does not have an immediate and direct consciousness of God. There is merely an acceptance of what God has revealed of himself as recorded in the Scriptures; faith accepts what is said of his presence and of the possibility of communion with him; acting upon this belief there comes to the soul a validating, by experience, of the truth believed, and so an assurance of "the presence of God", "the power of the Spirit", or "the indwelling Christ". Many a heart is sorely distressed by the feeling that God is very far off; even in the moment of prayer there is no sense of His presence; and so doubts arise as to the state of the soul, self-condemnation is felt because an experience is lacking which is supposed to be common and necessary to all Christians; and thus discouragement issues in despair. It would not be just to attribute such frequent and painful experiences to the influence of the modern teachers under consideration; only it does seem at times, that they should show more clearly that the state they are

describing is not due merely to nature or a "new-birth", but to the simple acceptance, by faith, of revealed truth. The recorded words of our Lord and his apostles thus form the ground of our belief in the presence of God. As Lord Tennyson once remarked to a friend: "God is with us on this down, as we two are talking together, just as truly as Christ was with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. We cannot see him, but he, the Father and the Saviour and the Spirit, is nearer, perhaps, now than then, to those who are not afraid to hear the words of the apostles about the actual and real presence of God and His Christ with all who yearn for it."

It should also be noted that the modern Christian mystic has not wholly escaped the peril which has beset the mystics of all the ages, namely, of using phrases, if not claiming experiences, which suggest the loss of human personality by an absorption into the divine. This has been particularly the peril of those who have dealt with the inspiring and blessed truth of "the Indwelling Christ." Some have accepted with too great literalness the words of the Revised Version: "I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me"; or that other fruitful phrase; "For to me to live is Christ." They have asserted or suggested that their being has been lost in Christ, so that their actions and emotions are those of Christ; as a Christian worker of world-wide notoriety recently declared in public: "I died with Christ, and now my thoughts are the thoughts of Christ, my resolutions are those of Christ; yes, I have the actual blood of Christ flowing in my veins." The perilous implications of such pantheistic utterances are at once apparent. One cannot insist too strongly today upon the eternal persistence of personality. The most blessed conceivable experience of the soul will ever be that of a personal relation to a personal God. The mistake, in connection with the passage from Galatians, is in forgetting that the apostle at once adds: "And that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God"; so that "The Indwelling Christ" should never suggest a mere subjective experience but a conscious and continued dependence upon an objective Christ. So too the phrase "For to me to live is

Christ" should be read in the context of the chapter, and it will probably be found to mean that the service of Christ was the ideal and sum of the apostle's life, and certainly was never intended to even suggest the absorption of personality or the loss of personal identity.

It should, however, be remarked at once, and with great emphasis, that the truth suggested by the phrase, "The Indwelling Christ", has come into many lives, in recent years, with a transforming and transfiguring power. There has been no thought of a transfusion of natures, or of a loss of conscious responsibility, or the absorption of personality; yet the consciousness that the divine Christ was really present, at every hour, to strengthen, to guide, to control, and to effect through the surrendered life his own gracious purposes, has effected a spiritual revolution, resulting in holiness and power and peace. However wise it may be to carefully safeguard the sacred boundaries of personality, the Church needs to be reminded of all the inspiring implications of the Master's promise: "Lo, I am with you always," and to believe more in the reality of the experience embodied in the hymn of the Huguenot:

"I have a Friend so precious,
So very dear to me;
He loves me with such tender love,
He loves so faithfully,
I could not live apart from him,
I love to feel him nigh,
And so we dwell together,
My Lord and I."

But Christian fellowship denotes not only a divine communion, but a human fellowship which the divine makes possible and by which it can be strengthened. Not the least helpful of modern movements therefore, have been those designed to unite believers in a common effort to increase the knowledge of spiritual realities and to attain the higher spiritual possibilities. The reference is not to the movement for church union and Christian coöperation, significant as these may be; but rather to those voluntary gatherings of

Christians intended to cultivate that life which may be expressed in such ecclesiastical movements or in the various forms of modern Christian activity.

A single recent issue of an English weekly contained the announcements of twenty-two conventions to be held for the specified purpose of "deepening the spiritual life". These are indicative of the large number of similar gatherings being held in all parts of the world. The attendance varies from the little groups of intimate friends to the vast assemblies of many thousands. The exercises consist commonly in praise and prayer, in Bible study, and in conference upon various phases of Christian life and service.

Such gatherings are obviously beset by their peculiar perils. They minister in part to some who prefer the delights of religious excitement to the dull monotony of active service, and to others who mistake their growing admiration for popular speakers as increased devotion to Christ. They seem to strengthen the belief of still others in the fallacy that spiritual growth is necessarily conditioned upon special places and times. However, when the largest possible deductions have been made, the net result of these gatherings has been of incalculable benefit to the church of Christ. Multitudes of Christians have been strengthened in their faith, and quickened in their zeal, and prepared for larger and more fruitful service.

Possibly the best known of the summer Conferences have been those of Keswick, and Mildmay and Northfield. Whatever in other days may have been found to criticize in "Keswick teaching", it is now most careful and conservative and scriptural. The inspiration and authority of the Bible, the regenerating and sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, the obligation of world-wide missionary enterprise, and the personal return of Christ, are among the doctrines assumed as fundamental. Stress is laid upon the privileges and possibilities of the Christian life, in truer holiness and in more complete consecration.

The Northfield Conference, established by Mr. D. L. Moody in 1880, at his own home in Massachusetts, has attained a world-wide celebrity and influence. According to the opinion

of many who are unfamiliar with its history and character, it is supposed to teach some peculiar type of doctrine or to advocate some particular form of experience. On the contrary it stands for the doctrines universally accepted as evangelical, and maintains as its platform the truth of the divine person and redeeming work of Christ and the authority of Scripture as the word of God. In different years special stress has been laid upon particular phases of truth and life; the widest variety of character and talent and ecclesiastical connection has been represented by the teachers; but the outstanding feature of all the conferences has been the manifest aim to prepare believers for active Christian service.

It was also under the guidance of Mr. Moody, and at Mount Hermon, across the river from Northfield, that the first great summer conference for students was held, in 1886. Among the two hundred and fifty college men present, some twenty-three were already pledged to service in the foreign field; but before the conference closed the number had increased to one hundred. Two of these were chosen to visit the American colleges and to present the claim of the world-wide work. Such was the origin of "The Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions", which has furnished recruits for every evangelical missionary society and has made its impress felt in all the quarters of the globe.

These conventions are named simply to suggest the wide and stimulating influence of these summer gatherings. Yet it would be unfortunate to pass without notice the large number of smaller conferences held in various places and at different seasons of the year. "Quiet Days" and "Retreats" and "Meetings for Fellowship" have been observed in increasing numbers. They have given new life to the stated services and regular activities of countless churches and mission stations. Such seasons of communion and prayer and recollection and exchange of views and experiences, are not possible for all, but are to be prized and cherished and sought. They nurture and express the life which is found in all sections of the Christian church, and bring to mind the words of the prophet: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remem-

brance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name."

VI

KNOWLEDGE.

The Niagara Conference antedated by a few years the Conference at Northfield, and continued its meetings for more than twenty-five years. It exercised a wide influence in establishing and determining the nature of other summer conventions; yet it maintained a character absolutely unique, in that its sessions were devoted exclusively to "Bible Study." Few inspirational or devotional addresses were delivered, and the time was wholly occupied by the exposition of Scripture. That which was essential at Niagara became a feature of all subsequent conferences, and naturally suggests a phase of spiritual life which has been strengthened by many modern movements; namely, the effort to secure a fuller knowledge of the revealed truth of God.

The past century has been an era of Bible Study. It has produced a notable and numerous company of scholars who have attained distinction in various fields of Biblical science,—in exegesis, in historical and literary and textual criticism, in archaeology and Biblical philology, in systematic and Biblical theology. It has been marked by the appearance of new versions and translations and editions of the Bible, copies of which, in most attractive form and furnished with marginal references and with notes and other helps for the reader, have been supplied at low prices, in every language, and scattered in almost countless numbers among all the nations of the world. New methods of Bible study have been introduced, commentaries have been published adapted to every class of readers and an unprecedented interest has been awakened and maintained.

However, the most notable movement of the century, in this connection, has been the establishment of theological seminaries. Of the nearly one hundred and fifty Protestant theological institutions in America, all except the (Dutch) Reformed at New Brunswick (1784) and the United Presby-

terian at Xenia (1794) were founded in the nineteenth century. Those under the control of the Presbyterian Church were established as follows: Princeton 1811, Auburn 1819, Western 1825, Lane 1829, McCormick, 1830, Dubuque 1852, Danville 1853, Biddle 1867, Newark 1869, San Francisco 1871, Lincoln (Theological Department) 1871, Omaha 1891. Contrary to a popular misconception these are all schools for Bible study; all of their curricula are designed to produce "able ministers of the word". An opposite impression has been prevalent and a different tendency has been noted, due in part to the nomenclature of the departments, to the enforced stress laid upon the discussion of critical theories, to the consideration of changing conditions in the church and in society, to the study of the vast and complicated activities of modern Christianity. Nevertheless, there is manifest on every hand an earnest desire to maintain the original purpose and to produce, as leaders for the church at home and abroad, ministers who are "mighty in the Scriptures".

In additions to these institutions there have recently arisen a number of Bible Schools and Institutes, designed more particularly for those who have not had the collegiate training expected of students in the seminaries, and intended to train lay-workers who are to serve in churches at home and in various spheres of usefulness on the foreign field.

Then, too, the Young Men's Christian Association, since its first inception in 1844 has sought to fulfill the original aim of its founder and to "develop the spiritual well-fare of young men" by religious services and Bible study. One of the interesting developments of recent years has been the work among the colleges and universities of the world. In America alone nearly thirty thousand college students are enrolled in voluntary study classes.

The agency for promoting Bible study, in which the church should feel the deepest interest and concern at the present time, is unquestionably, the Sabbath School. In its present form it is a modern institution. Founded by Robert Raikes of Gloucester, England, in 1780, it did not exist as a church institution nor was it organized as an association until early in the last century; and it is since then that it has attained its marvellous

growth, until it now numbers some twenty-five million scholars. It has now become practically the sole agency for the religious education of the young. It is to be deprecated that, neither in "day-school" nor at home, attention is given, to any appreciable extent, to Christian instruction. The existing conditions only emphasize the duty of the church to provide for the Sunday-School even better methods and to furnish more careful instruction, that the coming generation may from childhood "know the holy Scriptures which are able to make them wise unto salvation."

An increase of biblical knowledge is absolutely essential for the life of the church. Revealed truth is the instrument used by the Spirit in His renewing and sanctifying work. The study of the word without the guidance of the Spirit results in rationalism; but dependence upon the guidance of the Spirit without the study of the word results in fanaticism. If the church is to continue to manifest a divine life by her evangelistic and missionary and beneficent activities, that life must be controlled by the Spirit of God, but nourished and supported by a continual appropriation of the word of God.

VII

HOPE.

One portion of biblical teaching which has received special attention during the past century is that which is related to the Return of our Lord. This "blessed hope" has ever been an essential feature of Christian experience, and its quickening forms an essential factor in those movements which have been making for the maintenance and deepening of the spiritual life of the church.

It is a truth which the New Testament brings into vital connection with every Christian virtue. When the Master inculcated faithfulness in service it was to servants who were told to look for the Lord's return: "Occupy till I come." When he suggested the need of spiritual life and vigilance he speaks the parable of the Bridegroom's Return. When John wishes to impress the need of purity in life, he is saying: "Abide in Him, that ye may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him

at His coming; . . . and when He shall appear we shall be like Him; and every one that hath this hope in Him, purifieth himself even as He is pure." When James suggests patience under provocation and in spite of delay, it is with the words: "Be ye also patient for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." When Paul brings comfort to those in bereavement it is with the blessed assurance that "the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven".

By this hope the church has been sustained and purified in all ages. It has embodied the belief in her hymns and her creeds; and our own Westminster Confession of Faith closes with these significant words: "So will He have that day unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come; and may be ever prepared to say, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

Attention has been called to this doctrine by scholars like Dean Alford and Tregelles and Meyer, by preachers like Spurgeon and the brothers Bonar, and McCheyne, by Moody and many living evangelists, by the "Plymouth Brethren" by conventions like Mildmay and Northfield, by special "prophetic conferences" and by an increasing prophetic literature. Like most important truths it has been earnestly debated by those who differ as to its details and particulars, and it has been pitifully distorted and brought into disrepute by those who have borrowed its phrases and denied its realities. Of these modern perversions possibly the most dangerous and distressing is that which has been known as "Millennial Dawn". This is a strange conglomerate of heresies. It declares Christ to have been a mere creature, asserts that in the incarnation he had but one nature, that his death was that of a mere man, that his body was not raised from the dead, but that Christ became divine after his death. And, as to the Return of the Lord, in which the interest of the system centers, it is taught that "Christ came to earth in October 1874", and has been here in actual person ever since; in 1878 all "the saints" were raised and are now also upon earth at this present time; in 1881 all the professing Christian systems, the "denominations", were repudiated of God and he has given no recognition to them

since; the end of the present order of things takes place in 1914. Such are the teachings received by great throngs of hearers not only in London and New York but in cities and towns throughout England and America. Such are the vagaries contained in volumes which are circulated, not by tens of thousands, but by hundreds of thousands, three editions containing the following figures: 3,358,000; 1,132,000; 909,000.

Such instances of perverted doctrine should only awaken the church to a more careful study of the Scriptures, and to a more earnest proclamation of the truth as it is contained in the word of God. Such faithful testimony could not fail to be used of the Lord in deepening the spiritual life and increasing the devotion of the Church; "for the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

CONCLUSION

Such are some of the elements in Christian experience which modern spiritual movements have emphasized and developed. They present inspiring possibilities to every follower of Christ, and indicate lines of progress which each can hopefully pursue. As, at the very first, it was pointed out that the external activities of the church are wholly dependent upon the spiritual life of the church for their continuance and growth, so, in conclusion, it should be noted that this corporate life is absolutely conditioned by the spiritual strength and vigor of its component members. Reference has been made to certain general movements, not with the purpose of presenting an historical review, but of securing a practical result in the encouragement of individual believers to advance in spiritual attainment, to experience what is real and vital in all the phases of life to which allusion has been made, to strive more consciously to attain the goal towards which, in all centuries the followers of Christ have been pressing,—the goal of likeness to their Lord, of transformation into His image,—“the prize of the

high calling of God in Christ Jesus". All may not adopt the same methods, all may not choose the same paths, but each should seek for definite progress. The ways are not so divergent as is sometimes supposed. Experiences often differ more in name than in reality. "The means of grace" are not secret; they are common to all believers; but by more faithfully following most familiar paths, new experiences will be known, more glorious possibilities will burst upon the view, more perfectly will be realized the fullness of life in Christ Jesus. In many cases the advance will be marked by definite spiritual crises; unsuspected aspects of "self" will assert themselves to be conquered and subdued; "weights" hindering the progress, but long regarded as innocent, will be laid aside with definite resolve; sudden temptation will rise in ever more subtle and surprising forms, to be withstood and overcome; and all this may mean fierce struggles and sudden advances; but, for most Christians, the progress will be more gradual, step by step, hour by hour, day by day; clouds will rise, conflicts be met, only in their case, light and darkness, peace and struggle will seem less sharply contrasted. Uniformity of Christian experience is not essential; what is necessary is the continual effort and resolution and courage which make possible individual progress. By the faithful use of proffered means, by appropriating promised grace, each one can advance, can inspire others to higher experiences, can encourage the church to larger attainments in life and service, can

" Strengthen the wavering line,
Stablish, continue our march
On, to the bound of the waste,
On, to the city of God."