

THE  
UNION SEMINARY MAGAZINE

NO. 4—MAR.-APRIL, 1896.

I.—LITERARY.

WHY SHOULD CHRISTIAN PEOPLE FEEL SUCH  
DEEP INTEREST IN THE CONVERSION OF THE  
YOUTHS IN OUR SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES?\*

*The Southern Presbyterian Church* has, from the first week of its organization to the present, evinced a most intense concern for this part of her people. It had been no matter of wonder, if the detonating clouds of the awful war which was to be fought during the years 1861-'65—if those clouds, by which the country was overhung by a canopy darker than night, had driven from the minds of our first Assembly all

\*DEAR BRO. LINGLE :

This paper was prepared for delivery in the College Church on the last Thursday of February, 1895. I send it to you in place of the article on "The Testing System in the Irish Presbyterian Church" which I had promised. I have all the material gathered for the latter article but my present circumstances make its putting into shape embarrassing.

I am glad to publish the paper sent, for notwithstanding its marks of hasty preparation, it is really a plea for the observance of a day of prayer for the youths of our schools and colleges. Our last Assembly did much toward the practical abolition of the observance of such a day, by changing the time to a Sunday in November. The observance is so important that the Assembly may well appoint from year to year a week day; and the Church may well meet for prayer on the subject. I very much fear that under the inspiration of our last Assembly the Church would soon reduce this honored and useful observance to a mere incident in the regular service of the Sunday appointed—a reference to our youth in the long prayer it may be.

Yours very truly,

Orlando, Fla., 11th March, '96.

THOS. C. JOHNSON.

thought of fixing a day of special *prayer*, in behalf of their boys and girls in schools of the several grades. But that Assembly of 1861, by a formal resolution, designated the "first Wednesday in December to be observed annually as a day of special prayer for the youth of our country ; that the almighty grace of our God may sanctify them in their homes, their schools, their colleges, and their seminaries, to the great work of preaching the Gospel to every creature ; and that the churches should take up a collection on that day for this purpose."\*

The Assembly of 1862 resolved, instead of the first Wednesday in December, which had been designated by the Assembly of 1861, to "appoint the last day of the next February, to be observed as a day of special prayer for the youth assembled in our various schools, colleges, and seminaries and for all the baptized children of the Church—that God would be pleased to pour out his spirit upon them and sanctify them to the blessed work of making his way known upon the earth, his saving health among all nations."†

This recommendation was insistently renewed from year to year in words of similar import ; and others still more urgent were, from time to time, made. For example, in 1867 the General Assembly recommended the observance of the third and fourth Sabbaths of February as days of prayer for the youth gathered in the seminaries and colleges and schools of our land ; and that all our ministers be requested to preach on the Sabbaths above mentioned upon the subject of Christian education, and to call upon all the members of our churches, by prayer and supplication, and by a diligent use of all the means of grace, to dedicate their sons to God for the work of the ministry."‡

The Assembly of 1883 urged "upon all our people the devout observance of the last Thursday in February ; the day," it asserts, "that for more than fifty years had been observed in the Church, and that had been so often and so signally blessed in the ourpouring of the Holy Spirit upon our institutions of learning."§

Many other citations from the minutes of our highest judi-

\*Minutes 1861, p. 23.

†Minutes 1862, p. 15.

‡Minutes 1867, p. 151.

§Minutes 1883, p. 43.

catory might be added in proof of the allegation, that our Church has always evinced the deepest concern for the conversion of her youths in schools and colleges. Nor is the Southern Presbyterian Church at all peculiar in respect to the subject before us. The *Northern Presbyterian Church* proves her deep interest in the conversion of her youth in training in a manner similar to our own way. The great *Congregational* body, too, has her day of prayer for youth in schools and colleges; and all denominations of evangelical Christians have an analogous interest in their young people in schools and colleges, whether the interest is expressed or not.

*Now why should Christian people feel that deep interest in these chosen youth which as a matter of fact they do feel?* This question seems worthy of our consideration to-day. If there are good and sufficient reasons for the concern felt in regard to the conversion of these youths, we may derive great profit from bringing the reasons out articulately and distinctly in consciousness. By thus making clear the ground on which we should have great concern for the conversion of the classes under consideration, we shall at once make our action more rational and add to the feeling itself; we shall give opportunity to the considerations to act upon our minds and hearts with all the greater power.

Accordingly, I propose to give at this time some suggestions looking toward the true answer to the question: "*Why should Christian people be so interested in the conversion of the youths in their schools and colleges?*" And I affirm that this interest is obligatory because:

1. *There are so many of these youths.* Later statistics are inaccessible; but in 1891-'92, there were, in the United States, 13,234,101 pupils enrolled in our public schools. During the same year there were enrolled 133,682 students in the universities and colleges of liberal arts of our country. There were in our professional schools—such as schools of Theology, Law, and Medicine—about 32,000 students, during the same year, and in special educational institutions of other sorts, about 96,200. That is, in our schools of all sorts in the United States there were, in 1891-'92, 13,495,883 young people—very considerably more than one-fifth of the total population of the country—the fifth that is going to be the controlling fifth inside twenty years, too; and already reaching forth its hand to

grasp and hold the helm of Church and State during the coming generation.

Thirteen and a half millions! Some of them, thank God, are already converted; but we would have the other half or three-fourths converted and we would have the whole body edified, and filled with a divine energy and holy zeal for the service of God.

We Southern Presbyterians should remember that we have our fair share of these young people. And while we pray for all the young people of the land, or of the world for that matter, we should pray particularly for our own young people who are bound to us and for whom we are responsible in a peculiar manner. We ought to pray for the conversion of our young people, then, because their number is so great.

2. *The conversion of these young people in their early years is so important in its bearing on their future development.* For his own sake a man should turn to God in his youth. In order to develop power to achieve the most and to enjoy the most; in order to his growing into the most perfect servant of God and coming into the fullest communion with God; in order to the noblest development of his being; in order to his maturing into the fullest and rotundest manhood; a man must turn to God in his youth.

There is no little popular heresy afloat on this point. It is no uncommon thing to find a man who believes that in order to being a great Christian a man must first be a great sinner. And it is, indeed, true that occasionally an outbreking sinner becomes a great saint, e. g., the slave-trader, John Newton "once an infidel and libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa"—the "old African blasphemer," as he called himself in later days—"was by the rich mercy of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, preserved, restored, pardoned, and appointed to preach the faith he had long labored to destroy;" and to phrase that faith in some of the most precious of British Psalmody. *But John Newton* might have developed into a nobler being than he became by starting on a clean, pious, and Christlike path earlier. Look back through history: The men who stand out in conspicuous eminence for all that is highest in Christian manhood are, for the most part, men who have early walked in God's ways; or who have at least made an honest effort to do so. At any rate, they are men who were charac-

terized by intense moral and religious earnestness in their earlier years.

Who, for instance, in our own denomination would be pronounced the princeliest man, the man who has made the most splendid development of his mental, moral, and religious nature, in all the Church? If this question should be submitted to the judgment of our people qualified to judge, I take it, that the answer, practically unanimous, would roll up, "James Henley Thomwell." And moral and religious earnestness was a characteristic of his *earliest* years; while he was preaching that Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation before he was twenty-two.

In the Reformation Period two figures stand out before the world, clothed with dignity sublime. They are characters beside which kings, emperors, the popes, potentates secular or ecclesiastical of every grade and taken singly or in the lump, appear as dwarfs. And they too were men who betrayed in their youth an intense desire to do God's will. Martin Luther early tried to serve God. He was born in 1483. In 1503 he was pouring over the Bible as the one book of supreme interest, in the world. He had never had access to the *whole* Bible before. Two years later he was trying to serve God in an Augustinian Convent. He was in sad need of more light, being under the tuition of the Pharisees of his time; but he was doing the best he knew how to do. He was doing what was absolutely necessary in order to his developing into the splendid man of his later years. So, also, John Calvin, so early and with such intensity of purpose, gave himself to acquiring God's truth and living it, that when a young man of twenty-six, he could produce, as an apology to Francis I. of France, for the Protestant religion, his immortal "Institutes," a work which marks at once the creative epoch of the French language as a vehicle of the most facile and clearest expression; and the creative epoch of Protestant systematic theology. And, when but a few years older, he was enabled to prove himself the most sagacious political, moral, and religious leader of his time. No such development as that of Calvin would be possible to one not converted early.

The *most splendid character of the Middle Ages*, in spite of all his hair-splitting and false teaching; the man of the most gigantic speculative powers, of the broadest sympathies, of the most splendid humility, of deeply sincere piety; the teacher

of teachers, and the preacher to the common people of his day; the man who justly won the title "*Doctor Angelicus*"—Thomas Duke of Aquino—showed, from his earliest years, his unshaken purpose to serve God according to his light. At the age of eleven he was so grounded in correct morals that during his university career in the city of Naples, which followed on his eleventh year, he was never betrayed into gross sin. At the age of seventeen he was a postulant for admission into the Dominican Order—one of the noblest of his time. Thomas Aquinas's youth was the necessary precursor to his unfolding in maturer years.

The greatest of all the early church fathers was Augustine the bishop of Hippo in North Africa. In his maturity he was a man of the most magnificent parts. In point of *political sagacity* he stood incomparably above every other man of his age. The age was a hopeless one. The barbarians were coming in upon the empire in deluges. Civilization was being submerged. Men everywhere were singing the dirges of a dying world. But Augustine was farsighted. He could look beyond the coming destruction of Roman civilization to a newer and higher civilization. He believed in destruction in order to salvation, in death in order to life. In his imperishable "*City of God*," that great work on which he labored for twelve years, he preached, indeed, the funeral discourse, as Dr. Schaff says, of the kingdoms of this world; but he also described the growth of the Church to the consummation of all things—a growth to be attended by civilization of a nobler type than any the world had known. When we think of Augustine, however, we hardly ever give a thought to his unrivalled political sagacity: We think of him rather as the philosopher, the psychologist, the theologian, the tender preacher, the great, big, loving-hearted man, with sympathies generally as wide as humanity. We think of him as the most royal, the most lovable, the superbest man, in his many-sided excellences, in all the reach of time from the Apostolic to the age of the Reformers.

And Augustine's youth was marked by a large degree of moral earnestness. Very true, in his youth, he fell into grievous sins, the thought of which gave him great pain in his later years; but his youthful life was relatively—was considering his surroundings—a pure life. And *his* subjection to Manichaeism, for a time, was itself a proof of his moral and relig-

ious earnestness. A close study of Augustine's life would, we are sure, illustrate the truth of our present contention, viz.: that in order to the most perfect development of an individual he should be in earnest trying to serve God in his youth, he should be converted.\*

There remain more splendid as well as more familiar illustrations of the same truth.

The youth of the Great Apostle to the Gentiles was one of the most splendid religious earnestness. He could say: "My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee." No expression could more strongly set forth the religious and moral earnestness, although sadly misdirected, of his life. He was still a young man when he became an apostle of the Gospel of which he says. "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile.

The apostle who is almost always ranked next to Paul for service to the world of men, is John; and John, the beloved disciple who leaned his head on our Lord's breast; who had above every other disciple our Lord's confidence; who looked most deeply of all the inspired teachers into our Lord's character and person; who proved himself the greatest seer of them all; was but a youth apparently while yet following Christ over the hills and through the valleys of Galilee and Judea.

Back among the prophets, Jeremiah—the Dante of Israelitic poetry—the man who lived in an evil time; who saw sorrow as no other man saw it; who spoke the truth against the spirit of his age and in spite of all the persecutions men could bring against him—Jeremiah who foretold evil to his generation because there was evil coming, and God had bidden him tell it; one of the *bravest* albeit one of the most mournful souls in all history—Jeremiah was sanctified before he was born; and apparently while yet in the period of childhood—a mere lad—was called to the work of a prophet.

And Isaiah, the king of the Hebrew prophets, the man of

---

\*We have taken this position with reference to Augustine after a full knowledge of *what* he reveals in his Confessions touching the impure life—a portion of his youth. His was a rotten age, morally.

seraphic fire, the foreteller of the Messiah, the evangelist of the Old Testament Dispensation, the man whose mouth had been touched with a live coal from off God's altar, seems to have been hardly twenty when he began his work as a prophet of God.

David, too, began his service to God while a *youth* following his father's flocks; and in his youth he seems to have written the sweetest of all the Psalms: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want" and so forth. Samuel also entered on the Lord's service while yet a child. Daniel had to have such a youth in order to his great service as a mature man.

And if we be not supposed too daring we may find another illustration, in the life of the manliest, princeliest, most royal, most imperial man in the life of the world. Jesus of Nazareth in his boyhood felt that he must be about his Father's business.

Thus history makes it plain that the noblest Christian manhood of mature years has been fathered by noble Christian youth. Nor are these phenomena of history hard to explain: "The soul of man is a thing capable of everlasting development—capable of growing to-day, to-morrow, the next day" and so on to eternity—capable of incessant enlargement in power to know, to feel, to will. If it, for any cause, develop not to-day, it will sustain an eternal loss. If it, for any cause, develop in a false direction to-day, it tends just so far below the religious and moral zero on God's and nature's great measuring scale. It sustains a loss equal to that inaction plus the wrong action.

Hence, for their own sake—for the sake of their completest and fullest development—for the sake of their growth into the largest Christian manhood—we desire to see these youths turn to God while they are young. We yearn to see every one, for his own sake, living for God as well as he can; we would see him a truly converted man.

3. In the third place, *as to many of these youths large opportunities are given, great things will be required of them at God's hands; and they, without conversion, can't meet these expectations but will be awfully condemned.*

Every youth, no matter what his want of opportunity, should feel that God has a right to expect much at his hands. He bears enstamped upon him the likeness of God even though it be marred. And such opportunities as he has, when rightly used, are always followed by larger ones. If the son of a



slave could become the Emperor Diocletian ; if a street waif singing for his bread could become Martin Luther, the leader of the Reformation, the mightiest man in all Europe of his day ; if the ten thousand instances of rise from the most degraded conditions in life to places of supreme power and dignity mean anything, they mean that God has a right to expect much at every man's hands. It is in accord with this position that the Great Teacher has asserted that he who knows not God's will and does it not, shall be beaten indeed, even though it be with relatively few stripes.

But while every youth is bound to regard God as expecting much at his hands, *the youth to whom God gives much should feel that his responsibility before God for high achievement is correspondingly great.* Our Lord has solemnly announced as a principle of God's action : "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." And the truth of the principle thus avouched by the lips of Jesus receives abundant illustrations in the events of the world about us. The common judgment of mankind has decided as our Lord : "To whom men have committed much, of him will they ask the more."

As human societies have become more civilized ; as the members of these societies have given more advantages to each other—more in the way of opportunities for the enlargement of wealth and comfort—more in the way of increased facility for advancement in personal well-being of every sort—these members have expected more of one another. The members of a savage tribe expect little, each of the others. They expect but little sympathy, but little kindness, but little nobility, and, in short, but little of that kind of greatness which expresses itself in service. None are astonished when puny children are exposed to death by famine or by prowling beasts ; none are filled with mournful and indignant amazement when aged fathers and mothers are left to die of starvation without a touch of tenderness or a look of sympathy. They give little to one another. They look for little from one another.

In the nomadic state of civilization—in such a tribe, for example, as Abraham brought with him from Mesopotamia into Canaan—where the members give more ; where an able and faithful chieftain, say, looks after his people with wisdom and goodness, he expected *much* of them ; and where the people

gave the chieftain devoted service, they expected much at his hands. How different was the treatment of the aged in this nomadic people from that in savage tribes. In Gen. 35: 7, 8 we read that when Jacob came to Bethel, he built there an altar, and called the place El-bethel, because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother. But Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried beneath Bethel under an oak; and the name of it was called Allon-bachult," i. e., oak of weeping. The most important thing, apparently, which happened at Bethel was, after the building of the altar, the burial of the old nurse. She had served much and looked for honor, and was not disappointed.

And in forms of society still more developed; where men give to each other still more largely, they expect at each other's hands still larger things. Our best men say: We have a right to look for every sort and degree of unofficial civic service on the part of those whom the State educates, protects, and to whom it gives free scope for all legitimate personal advancement; and upon whom, also, it confers other and various positive benefits. And when our citizenry shows itself indisposed to serve the state properly in return for these gifts there is an indignant protest in the heart of every rightly thinking man against affording to these men the advantages which they enjoy.

Furthermore, in every grade of society the most is expected of these members of the body to whom the most has been given. In countries where the classes are distinctly marked, if the class which enjoys the greatest advantages does not do the greatest services, the mutterings of revolution are sooner or later heard. And the terrors of the French Revolution are but a very lurid instance of the peoples' demanding much of these higher classes. When the guillotine was deluging the streets of Paris with blood of the higher classes—when the rabble were decreeing the God of the Roman Catholic Church a non-entity—when the fairest land in Europe was reeking like pandemonium; there was to be heard with every chop of the guillotine—with every fall of a noble's head—with every stroke at the higher classes—with every blow at the established Church—along with every blast of the bugles that winded the outset of the Devil's forces in the destruction of so much that was good—there was heard *the voice of justice* in

the human heart crying out : "To whomsoever much is given of him shall much be required."

In our own republic, when Congresses and Senates, when municipal governments, when great corporations, when any body to whom much has been given, fails to show readiness in making large returns, there goes up a cry, "Give much or get out of existence." And however this voice may be rendered hoarse by the passions, prejudices, and vices of man, the voice itself is the voice of God. He is the moral governor of the universe and he speaks forth a law of his moral kingdom through this universal instinct of the heart of man. It is God that, through the people, demands much of him to whomsoever he gives much. The voice of God might have been heard speaking in that Satanic whirlwind, the French Revolution.

Now, mark you this, Christ pointed to this law which obtains in the terrestrial part of God's universe and asserts that it is a universal law of God's kingdom—obtaining over every man in every sphere of his living. Wherever a man is in God's great realm : and whatever he does in thinking, feeling, willing ; this law is applied by God to him : "In proportion to his opportunities God will demand much of him." Hence it follows that the condemnation of the youth who comes short in this land of religious liberty as well as civil freedom ; in this land where Christianity is preached in at least tolerable purity, where the youths have much given them beyond what is given in most other lands ; is vastly more severe than the condemnation of the youths of less favored lands. And much more severe is the condemnation of unrepentant youths in our distinctively christian institutions, such as Hampden-Sidney College.

"Woe unto thee, Chorazin ! Woe unto thee Bethsaida ! for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you."

My young friends if you do not avail yourselves of your opportunities, it were better for you to have been born as a nomad, and better still to have been born as a savage, and best of all not to have been born at all. As long as you remain

unrepentant you are doing that which turns every blessing in the way of opportunity and advantage into a *curse*.

If Dante's idea of that awful place where doomed souls go after death has any degree of truth in it, then, in a circle much lower certainly, will be found the youth who go down from our schools and colleges than those who go down unlettered from the shovel and the pickaxe—much lower than those who go down from the more uncivilized and unchristianized parts of the earth.

When we think, my brethren, of the awful condemnation of those who are lost from these places of privilege, simple humanity should move us to pray for their conversion as we could not pray for those from less favored spots. For it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for them. Without conversion they not only go to hell, but to one of the lower circles of hell.

4. In the *fourth place God's cause on the earth stands in need of just such servants to-day as may be made of these students.*

Men are only able to do service in proportion as they are men. A man must be in order to do. If he is, he can do. If he is not, he cannot do. If he is developed into a powerful and loving creature of God's he can and will do great service for God. In order to the most perfect service to God he must be not only God's child but God's child with trained and developed powers. And the Church needs servants of developed and polished powers—always needs them—needs them to-day not a whit less than in the critical ages of her past history; as even a superficial glance at certain apologetic, polemic and aggressive features the Church's present life shows. Look and see:

The world, and even certain portions of the Church of to-day, treats the scriptures in an irreverent and rationalistic way. These infidels can't be met by the denials of ignoramuses. They cannot be adequately and evidently sufficiently met by even the Christlike lives of humble christians. Yet for the sake of this and the next generation they should be refuted. They can be refuted only by quick-witted, skillfully trained, reverent Servants of God.

Again, the sacrifice of truth to sentiment is widely prevalent. The Gospel of "Do the best you can: That is all that is needed," is rampant to-day. We need, honest, and fearless, and trained, and able men, to stand up and say, "There is a way

which seemeth right unto a man but the end thereof are the ways of death."\* We want men who can support the teaching of God's word that it is not enough for one to be sincere in his belief ; but that God expects him to be sincere in following the right—men able to enforce this teaching by proofs drawn from ten thousand happenings around us—from the railroad train which crashes through a bridge sincerely believed to be sound and strong, from the La Gascoyne's piston rod supposed to be of flawless metal, from every catastrophe following on action based on an incorrect creed.

So, also, the utilitarian interpretation of providence, is abroad : Anything that seems for the time to be followed by preponderantly good results is judged to be approvable. For example, certain good results are seen to flow from certain women's preaching, and from certain forms of machinery used in revivals and so forth. Many in the church, jump to the conclusion that we should use this machinery and should have women preachers again. Certain organizations within or without the church are seen to be followed by some good ; it is concluded that they are to be regarded and adopted as right. Now, the church needs men educated to the point of knowing that an institution is not to be judged solely by its immediate and most obvious consequences ; but by the whole *train* of its consequences ; and we want men lifted by correct education *above* utilitarianism, men who believe that we should do right, too, whether it looks expedient or not, in the calm confidence that one day right action will appear to have been of the highest *utility* as well as right. And we look to our schools and especially to our colleges for such men—to the converted men of our colleges. We desire the conversion of college men *particularly* therefore.

Besides, in some quarters, the church is being secularized. It is being turned into a simple reformatory association. Buildings and apparatus are multiplied ; and every thing is done to better physically, mentally and morally, *so far as man can do such a thing*, the condition of the people ; this is a good endeavor ; but it is not the best. The church is vastly more, in the Divine intention than a reformatory institution. And when it is reduced to such dimensions it is because there is practical infidelity as to the great cardinal doctrines, of sin and hell, of grace and the future life of bliss, and of Christ's

---

\* Prov. 14:12.

relation to men not only as teacher and exemplar and sympathizing friend ; but as one almighty priest who offered himself up without spot unto God, making satisfaction for the sin of man by his vicarious death on the cross. We desire men of ability and learning who shall be able to bring the church to right on this point. Hence we look with eagerness to our colleges in the hope that from their walls many truly converted men—men who have become aware of the true nature of sin, and who have experienced the grace of Christ in their hearts.

Further, there are some who would avail themselves of such phenomena as the parliament of religions recently held in Chicago to advocate the effort to frame by synthetic combination of the best elements of the several great historical religions of the world, a religion which shall be absolute and universal. We want men fitted to show all such framers of religious nostrums that he who preaches any other Gospel than the Gospel of Jesus Christ is accursed. We look, therefore, again with keen concern to the output of our youth from schools and colleges ; we yearn to see all of them the Lord's own, and in the Lord's service against his foes.

Turning, now, away from the features of present church life which call for apologetic and polemic effort of a high order on the part of the church ; and turning to the opening for aggressive effort such a view meets our eyes as never greeted the eyes of any previous Christian age. The call for what is popularly called missionary effort at home and abroad, for example, was never so loud before in the history of the world. Look wherever you will. Almost every considerable people is open now to the missionaries of the cross. Even China which has for some time been nominally and partially open indeed, seems now about to become really open. "He who doeth his will among the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth ; in whose hands are the hearts of kings," has been breaking up China. What an opportunity for work there is in that field ! If every young man in all the colleges in the United States could be thrown into China now, as a zealous Christian worker there would still be room among that great people of about 400,000,000, for more workers—many more workers. And this is but a sample. The peoples are calling. We have no time to speak at length of this opening for aggressive mission work. But—

“Saints of God! the dawn is brightening,  
 Token of our coming Lord;  
 Over the earth the field is whitening;  
 Louder rings the Master's word,  
 Pray for reapers  
 In the harvest of the Lord.”

Pray for the conversion of the trained youth of our schools and colleges; and for their sanctification to mission work.

Now, we have looked at but a few features of the life of the Church of God of our own age. Others of perhaps greater importance might have been pointed out—For example the effort which the church ought to make to get members to be governed by Christlike principles in all public and corporate action as well as in private conduct. But from the features already remarked upon we have seen that there is a call for a multitude of trained and gifted men, just such as will go out from our schools and colleges provided only they be converted. Can we be Christians and not pray for conversions? No, we *must* pray for them if we are Christians. The Christian nature will speak out, if it is in us—speak out in this prayer.

But by way of application, let me ask whether we are Christians? Do you my hearers really desire the object for which you are supposed to have come together to pray? Can you pray to-day for this great cause?

Prayer is the outgoing of the desire, it is the expression of the life. Will the words offered up represent your life? Do you try to live so that the unconverted among you may be converted? Do you bear them up from day to day in prayer? What is your life in relation to the conversion of these unconverted boys? Does that life, in God's sight, think you, make for the conversion of these boys? Or does it make against their conversion? May God help us all, my shortcoming Christian brethren, to live out this desire for the conversion of our youths, and may they be converted.

May they be converted while young that they may reach the highest possible Christian manhood! May the whole host of them be converted in order to their escaping condemnation worse than that which fell on the Jews who crucified the Lord of glory indeed but with less of light than the unconverted youths of our places of privilege have! May they be converted and become, according to the Church's need, her apologists, polemics, or missionaries; so that she may soon disciple all nations! And the *praise* be to him who is over all God blessed forever.