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→ SERMONS ←

THE MASTER'S SUMMONS TO ACTION AND TO ITS RESULTS.*

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Arise, let us go hence.—JOHN xiv., 31.

THESE words are found at the end of the record of that most deeply interesting discourse of Jesus addressed to His disciples on the last evening of His life, which is presented to us in the fourteenth chapter of John's Gospel. In our English versions they stand by themselves as an independent sentence, and are simply a summons to the company to join Him in leaving the room where they had been taking their sacred meal and conversing with each other. But according to the view of the ablest of the recent writers on the interpretation of the New Testament, who, as I cannot but believe, is correct in his explanation of the passage, they form the principal clause, to which the former part of the verse is subordinate as expressing purpose. There is thus a certain contrast between this verse and that which precedes it; and what Jesus said and meant to say, as He closed the conversation and discourse, was this: I will not continue to speak with you longer, as I have been speaking, for the hostile element is now coming in upon us. This is the time for action. In order that the world may know that I love the Father and, as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do—to this end, arise, let us go hence.

Viewed in this light, the words are not, as they are according to the other

* Baccalaureate Sermon, delivered, June 26th, 1887.

fellow-graduates, their term of service so arranged that one should be elected each year and all serve six years. Of this corporation the legal title is "The President and Fellows of Yale College in New Haven," and it controls every department of the college. Each department is practically independent, but the president is *ex officio* the head. Degrees are conferred by the corporation and on candidates only after passing a satisfactory examination. The rector was the only permanent instructor at first, assisted by temporary tutors. Public worship was maintained, a church established, and in 1755 a professor of divinity appointed who was also college pastor, and in 1771 there was added to the corps of instructors a professor of mathematics, physics and astronomy. From about the beginning of this century and under the presidency of Dr. Dwight, the progress of the college was rapid. In 1812 the department of medicine was organized, in 1822 the department of theology, in 1824 the department of law, in 1847 the de-

partment of philosophy and the arts, in 1864 the department of fine arts, in 1871 the department of original research in astronomy. In this year the corporation organized the university, without adopting the name, with the departments of theology, medicine, law, philosophy and the arts. Every department is amply provided with all needful facilities for thorough work and the highest possible attainments by the students. The invested funds amount to about two million dollars. The annual income from tuitions to over one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, the several libraries open to students contain about one hundred and thirty-five thousand volumes, over 13,000 degrees have been conferred, about 2,200 of the graduates of the academical department have been ordained as ministers and during the last year of the university course there were over 1,200 students in attendance.

The corporation in 1886 adopted the name of Yale University instead of Yale College.

—LEADING THOUGHTS OF SERMONS—

Christian Philosophy.

BY PRESIDENT JAMES MCCOSH, D.D.,
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Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics encountered him.—ACTS xvii., 18.

The three most famous cities of the ancient world were Rome, Athens and Jerusalem. Rome represents law, Athens refinement and Jerusalem religion. In this college all the three impart instruction to the rising generation. A man is not a scholar who does not know something of the ancient world, as well as of modern history and science. But he who would know antiquity must study it in the form in which it appears in these great cities; that scholarship is so far limited and partial which does not take in these three grand positions—these three types of philosophy:

I. The Epicurean. His chief end was pleasure; his characteristic maxim, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." This philosophy was the weakest of the

three, but it was the most popular, especially among the mass of the people, in so far as they had any philosophy. Some sought for pleasure merely in the gratification of the senses, but sensualism never furnished anything but a fleeting pleasure which afterward palls upon the taste. The great body of the Epicureans, however, pursued pleasure in its higher forms—in rest and a life of peace. There are those who practise this philosophy among us even at this day, those who will not bestir themselves to relieve suffering and distress, nor serve their day and generation in any way whatever.

II. The Stoics. These were wholly different—They taught that virtue lay in being impassable, not moved by joy or grief, not to complain at whatever might occur as an unavoidable necessity governed all. The Epicureans and the Stoics then were at that time the prevailing philosophic sects of Greece. There was

a precisely parallel division in Judea at the time of our Lord, the Sadducees corresponding to the Epicureans and the Pharisees to the Stoics. The Stoics and the Pharisees professed to practise a high and unbending morality—stiff, rigid and formal.

III. When you go out into active life you will find the keenest thinkers earnestly discussing the question of whether this is a good or bad world, whether optimistic or pessimistic. You can make this a good world for you to live in by being and doing good, and this will also prepare you for the world to come. You may have trials and be obliged to endure much that you cannot understand, but if you are compelled to pass through dark tunnels it is only to avoid mountains of difficulties which you are not able to surmount.

Stand Fast.

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

Stand fast in the Lord.—PHIL. xiv., 1.

I. Let us stand fast as men who are appointed to keep their places until their guard is relieved by the coming of their Lord. There is the pith of all I have to say to you this morning. If you have won the day, oh, do keep it! You must not suppose that the whole of religion is wrapped up in the day or two, or week or two, which surround conversion. Godliness is a life-long business. Especially in London—I don't know how it may be in country towns—our churches suffer considerably from the great number who drop out, who either go back to the world or else must be pursuing a very secret and solitary path on the way to Heaven.

II. Stand fast doctrinally. In this age all the ships are pulling up their anchors. Now, put your anchors down. Learn no teaching but what Christ teaches you. If you see a truth in God's Word, grip it; and if it be unpopular, grip it the more. The one watchword now for the whole army of God is, "Stand fast."

III. Stand fast practically. All the barriers are broken down. People try to make the Church and the world meet. Therefore it becomes Christians to gather up

their skirts, and be more Puritanic and precise than ever they were.

IV. Mind that you stand fast experientially. Pray that your inner experience may be a close adhesion to your Master. Stand fast without wandering into sin. Only so will you be preserved from the vortex of iniquity. Stand fast without wearying. Stand fast without walking with any kind of error. The weather is very bad just now spiritually. Stand fast because of your citizenship.

Christianity Imperishable.

BY PRESIDENT ROSWELL D. HITCHCOCK,
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Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me.—JOHN, xiv., 1.

These words probably apply to more diverse circumstances than any other chapter. They are read to the troubled, used at communion, spoken to the dying, and over the dead. It is Thursday, April 6th, A.D. 30. Jerusalem is crowded with Jews eating the Paschal lamb. Jesus is with His disciples. It is about 9 o'clock in the evening, and Judas, having taken the hint, has left the company. He hurries along the moonlit street, and Jesus in his retreating footsteps divines His immediate future, an awful plunge into the unknown world. The eleven are with Him and feel deeply troubled; then Jesus comforts them.

The great types of character are constant, although the persons may change. The things that are, have been and shall be. In this sense apostolic succession fails. There are Judases and Peters still. It is the same old story, with the old refrain, "let not your heart be troubled." To-day the Judas Iscariot of Christianity is Christendom. At first Christianity had not Christendom behind it; not Constantine, Charlemagne nor Henry VIII. to carry it; no Great Britain driving opium down Chinese throats; no America driving them from San Francisco across the continent. If Christendom were only Christian, Confucianism and Buddhism would not exist. It is truly painful and humiliating, but "let not your heart be troubled," only