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→ SERMONS ←

A CONTRAST WITH A LESSON.

BY JAMES M. DICKSON, D.D., PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, PROVIDENCE, R. I.

It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honor of kings is to search out a matter.
—PROV. xxv., 2.

WHEN Church painted his justly celebrated "Heart of the Andes" he placed in the foreground the figure of a man. It was but as a speck on the canvas, but it gave the eye a standard of measurement, and thus suggested the real altitude of the towering heights above.

We have something akin to this in divine revelation. We have man in the foreground, not in his physical only, but in his intellectual and moral constitution made in God's image, after His likeness, and above him towering in infinite grandeur and glory the eternal Jehovah. But mark the difference. The mountains have been scaled. The altitude of the highest of them has been measured. But go as far as we may in the study of the being and perfections of God, we hear a voice as from the Eternal, "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as Heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea."

This is the antithesis in our text: "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honor of kings is to search out a matter." Let us first look at the man in the foreground—the king, the most favored of men. In common

An Ideal Ministry.*

BY CHARLES PARKHURST, D.D.

"My ideal for the ministry consists of three very simple conceptions: 1. Be true to your Bible. 2. Be true to yourselves. 3. Be true to your people."

"If you would be true to your Bible, you must know it. I think I might make a strictly accurate circular axiom here: The minister who would be true to his Bible, must know his Bible; the minister who knows his Bible will be true to it."

"The crying need in the ministry of to-day is for critical, intelligent, reverent and spiritual exegetes of the Sacred Word."

"Hitchcock's 'Eternal Atonement' is a wonderful volume, and seem to show consummately how the Sacred Word should be handled. Hitchcock quotes this in it: 'If God were to give me ten years more to work for Him, I would study His Word all the nine years to preach it most effectively in the tenth.'"

"Get into your souls the one thought—you are called to preach this Word, and this Word only, and only this Word!"

"James Freeman Clarke says that John Wesley led the greatest religious reform since the Apostle Paul, because he was a critical exegete of the Word. Frederick Robertson of Brighton—to whom I owe more perhaps than to any other man—was a thorough exegete. William M. Taylor is here a model. Bishop Simpson, the Chrysostom of our Church, was the prince of preachers, because his pictures—the truest and tenderest possible—were done with such profound and at the same time thoroughly critical touches. Coleridge knew the Word, especially that story of the prodigal son, until he broke forth with the cry, 'It's divine! It finds me!' Whitefield sobbed and prayed over his Bible. Wesley wrote: 'I am but a spirit come from God and returning to God, just hovering over the great gulf until a few years pass. Then, seen no more, I drop into an unchanging eternity. I want to reach the happy shore. God has written the way in a Book. Give me

that Book. Here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be a student of that one Book.' Let us to-day clasp hands with the founder of Methodism, and swear to be true to the Book."

"Be true to yourself, your higher self, the self dominated by the Lord Jesus Christ."

"Be men. Show manliness—sympathetic, cheerful, helpful manliness. Dare to do anything that becomes a man. Be first a man, then a minister. Don't expect or accept considerations because you are ministers. Deal with men as a true man."

"Nothing is so uncongenial as the conventional and stereotyped minister. His picture haunts me. Like Cassius, he has a 'lean and hungry look.' He is a bloodless and dehumanized creature—as an anatomical subject he could be utilized at sight. He would make a good ascetic of the middle ages, or a pillar-saint. Children shun him. His voice has the 'Nevermore' croak of Poe's Raven. Brethren, don't pose as ministers. Be men."

"Be true to your people, frank with them, sincere. Carry your heart on your sleeve. Don't lay upon them burdens that you yourself cannot bear. Don't make believe that you understand all theological difficulties, if you don't. Be as candid as Paul was with his people. Learn to say honestly, 'I don't know,' when it is necessary. Let them know, too, that you are men of like passions with them. These little glimpses into your own soul that reveal a kindred humanity will be appreciated. They will be bonds of truest sympathy."

"Be courageous in your ministry. Call no man master, for one is your Master, even Christ. Let no clique of men silence your tongue. Denounce sin even if you find it in the very bosom of your church."

"Say what you mean. I felt my soul leap when recently I read in Dr. Warren's 'In the Footsteps of Arminius' this strong definition of Calvinism—'the blasphemous limitations which narrow dogmatists have placed on God's impartial

*Abstract of an address to the students of the School of Theology of Boston University.

and exhaustless love.' When your soul is stirred, then let your convictions pour forth, even though they are seething hot."—*Zion's Herald*.

— Mission Fields —

Papal Propaganda.

BY JEAN PAUL.

1. Roman Catholicism has always displayed marvellous missionary zeal. In the Christianization of the Goths, Gauls, Saxons, Teutons, Britons, Celts, Scandinavians, etc., true devotion to the cause of our Master was manifested.

2. In 1542, Francis Xavier, a disciple of Loyola, an ardent Jesuit, undertook to evangelize Japan. Many missionaries came to his assistance. In less than fifty years about one-half of the entire Japanese population had become Christians. But soon this apparently glorious work came to naught. Two causes brought about the collapse: (1) The missionaries did not insist on entire abolishment of heathen error, being content with blending Christianity with the same. (2) The missionaries, like wily intriguers, frequently joined the parties opposed to the emperor. They assisted the subaltern governors in repeated conspiracies against their superior. Finally the emperor was dethroned. Two rebels shared the imperial authority. The missionaries had rendered material assistance. But the new potentates having learned to despise them, knowing from experience of what villainies they were capable, were afraid of them and brought about their destruction. Thousands were slain. The majority of the laity relapsed into heathenism.

3. The mortification attending this disastrous defeat led in 1622 to the organization of the *Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*, i. e., missionary society, for the purpose of carrying on missionary enterprise systematically, superintending all missionary work and workers and providing the necessary funds. It is composed of nineteen cardinals, appointed by the pope, one of them acting as prefect.

4. The Propaganda supports several

large colleges, where young men are trained for missionary work. Native youths of heathen countries are sent there. The students are entirely supported by the Propaganda. Before securing admission the candidates pledge themselves by solemn oath to devote their entire lives to missionary work, and that in due time they will labor at such places as the authorities may select.

5. Roman Catholic missions entail less expense than those of Protestant churches. Their missionaries have no families. Besides, they have large numbers of monks and nuns at their disposal, who, without remuneration, conduct schools, orphanages and hospitals—institutions which soon yield a regular revenue. With all this the Propaganda is immensely endowed. So much of the real estate was in its possession that in 1874 the Italian government was compelled to have recourse to semi-sequestration of said property, selling it to business men, rendering it productive of profit to both State and Propaganda. So long as it was held by the latter the State derived no benefit from the property in the way of taxes. To call this robbery is base slander. The proceeds of the sale were invested in Italian State bonds. These bonds, bearing interest, were handed to the Propaganda in lieu of the real estate.

The Home Field and Regions Beyond.

BY J. F. AVERY, PASTOR MARINER'S
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The Macedonian cry still echoes from the Rock of Ages. "Come over and help us" is caught by every gospel breeze. In the stillness of the night the meditative saint hears the cry for help. The wheels of time move on night and day, and the hurry of time presses on the generation present towards the future, and in the dim line not far distant the multitude